

Do you want to be a councillor?
Do you want to find out what
councillors do?

Councillor Andrew Cooper
Kirklees Council & Regional
Campaigns Co-ordinator



Green Party
for the common good

Who is this?



Who is this?



Sheffield City Council

- 84 Councillors in 28 Wards (3 Councillors/ward)
- Elected for a 4 year term in 1/3rds
- But not in 2016 – All out elections
- Labour - 59
- Lib Dems - 17
- Green Party - 4
- UKIP - 4
- Labour in overall control
- Strong Leader and Cabinet Model



Where does Sheffield City Council's money come from?

- £1.429 Billion Budget
- Approx £1 Billion allocated
- Central Government - 54%
- Business rates - 8%
- Council Tax - 12%
- Charges e.g rents, parking etc – 26%

“I pay full Council Tax and all I get is my
bin emptied!!!!”



Responsibilities of Sheffield City Council

- Education
- Social services – Adult Social Care!
- Planning
- Waste disposal & recycling and collection
- Trading standards
- Emergency planning
- Roads, highways, streetlighting & transportation
- Housing
- Environmental Health
- Library Services
- Parks, open spaces and countryside
- Public Health

The Council/Municipal Year

- February – Budget Setting
- April – ‘Purdah’
- May – Local Elections (3 years out of 4)
- May Annual Council meeting
- Summer – ZZZZZZZZZZ!
- Autumn – Budget Preparation

Councillors in the community



Councillors in the community



Councillors in the community



Councillors in the community



Councillors in the community



What can Green Councillors achieve?

- Free Insulation to 60,000 households
- 2000 council homes with solar panels installed
- Investments in Allotments
- Abolition of Party Conference expenses for Councillors
- Banning Flying Lanterns on Council Land
- Establishing 'Passivhaus' as the standard for building on Council owned land.
- A Living Wage Council

What sort of Councillor are you?

What sort of Councillor could you be?

- **Caseworker** – Every Councillor is a caseworker
- **Policy Lead** - on a particular policy area e.g. shadowing a Cabinet member
- **Scrutiny Councillor** – working on a Scrutiny panel in a particular area of work
- **Budget Team** – working on the Green Party Budget proposals and providing a critique of the Councils budget proposals
- **Community Activist** – issue based – protecting land from development, supporting community groups, developing community facilities

What sort of Councillor are you?

What sort of Councillor could you be?

- **Planning Committee Cllr** - member of committee or representing objectors/supporters
- **Local Party Liaison** – ensuring the Council Group & local party have good lines of communication
- **Party Group Spokesperson** – representing the Green Party Council group to the media
- **Convenor/Leader** – self explanatory – style of leadership
- **Business Manager** – used to be called the whip – handling membership of committees, administrative issues associated with the Group
- **Cross Party Relationship Builder** – Working with others cross party to achieve progress

Casework - Why is it important?

- It is the job! It is the basics. It has to be done.
- People like to feel that if they get what they want or if they don't that they have had their 'best shot' at resolving a matter.
- It is the Councillor role to give them their best shot.

Where does casework come from

- Local residents contacting us –
telephone/email/letter/in person
- Response to newsletters
- Advice Surgeries
- Casework Canvassing
- Election canvassing

How should casework be dealt with?

- Go round and see them? Take a photo!
- Email and/or phone officers with the issue. Which works best with which officer?
- Send copy of email/letter to the resident to show you have dealt with their issue e.g. an email to a Council officer raising their
- Send copy of response/phone the resident
- Build up a casework database
- Info for future newsletters – if appropriate

Casework - Range of issues

- **Personal** – neighbour disputes, benefits issues, bins, applications for housing, planning
- **Community issues** – litter, lack of facilities, potholes street lights out
- **Policy issues** – issues with Council policies e.g. planning, housing allocations

Facilities and Allowannces available for Councillors

Sheffield City Councillor

Role of Lead Cllrs and ward budgets & what they can be used for

Sheffield City Councillor

A Growing Green Group on Sheffield City Council

Influence!

Power!

Control!

A Growing Green Party Group influence, control & power

- Lone Councillor
 - Small Group
 - Large Group
 - Hung Council
- Principal Opposition
 - Minority Control
 - Majority Control

A lone Councillor

- A voice on the Council
- Status and recognition
- Media Interest
- Demonstrably NOT a 'Wasted Vote'
- Possibility of isolation on the Council
- No guarantee motions to Council, amendments to Council Budget will be seconded
- Green Cllr is regarded as a 'one off' or the result of a personal vote.



A Small Group

- 2 members = Group status!
- Not a 'flash in the pan'
- Motions seconded – Guaranteed!
- Budget Amendments seconded
- Leader (20% rule – 17 members)
- Still a 'one or two ward party'



A large group

- Beyond a 'one Ward' party
- No 'Whipping' in the Green Party
- More co-ordination needed
- Sharing out 'Spokesperson/shadowing' roles
- Group consensus decision making
- Examples – Bristol, Norwich



Green Party role in a Hung Council

- What do you want?
- Joint Shared Administration?
- Cabinet positions?
- Confidence and supply support to a minority administration with no Cabinet positions.
- Key support points – Election of Leader of the Council & Budget Council
- Kirklees Council 2000 to present



Principal Opposition

- Cabinet in waiting?
- Green Policies will need to be geared around the possibility of running the Council in the near future
- First point of call for the media wanting an alternative view
- Political temperature in Council meetings will be higher
- - Solihull – 9 Green Councillors



Minority Control

- Brighton
- Are you the largest Group?
- Pressures & Group cohesion
- Hostile and constructive opposition
- Is minority control worth it?
- What can you achieve?
- What are the risks?



Control with a majority

- In Sheffield that means 43 Councillors
- Major shift in support from the Labour Party to the Green Party required
- Manifestoes should always be prepared as if you are going to have a majority

Councillor Andrew Cooper

- 07721 348619
- andrew.cooper@kirklees.gov.uk
- Blog – www.greeningkirklees.blogspot.co.uk
 - Twitter - @clrandrewcooper
 - Facebook – Newsome Green Party



Green Party
for the common good