

Being a Parish Councillor

Melanie Moorhouse

When someone asked me that question 18 months ago, my answer was no, quickly followed by “What does a Parish Councillor actually do”? Two elections, many meetings and a lot of reading later, I have a much better idea of what a Parish Council does and how I, as a Councillor, contribute but if I hadn’t been asked that question, would I ever have thought about it?

Every Parish Councillor has a different reason for volunteering. I decided to stand for election because I really value community, it has the power to do so much good and because, well, I am just one of those people who likes helping (and possibly struggles with saying no). I bake brownies for the school bake sales, offer lifts and help friends. With my professional hat on for the last 14 years, my career has been focused on helping young people figure out their futures and before that, there were a lot of customer service roles.

Being a Parish Councillor lets me give back to our community in a different and often much more invisible way. It can be challenging, not all issues have obvious solutions and the responsibility of weighing up impact and consequences is one I take seriously. But I get a lot of satisfaction from seeing the completion of projects, like the Coronation Garden, and from helping to find a compromise that works or come up with new ideas.

I have lots more I want to do including helping to improve our community engagement and I really want to increase the voice of young people in our community. But as councillors, none of us can make change happen alone, it takes a team and that team needs to be diverse in backgrounds, skillsets and interests.

We currently have two vacancies on the Parish Council and as there are no Parish Council elections coming up we can fill these places by co-option which means the existing councillors will decide at their meeting on 25 January.

Have YOU ever considered standing as a Parish Councillor?

If you would like to know more about what the Parish Council does, or my experiences so far, please contact me at melanie.moorhouse@kidlington-pc.gov.uk

If you would like to apply to become a Parish Councillor please contact the Clerk, Rachel Faulkner at clerk@kidlington-pc.gov.uk or by calling the Parish Council at Exeter Hall on 01865 372143. She can tell you more about it and let you know the process for co-option.