A councillor is somebody who represents people in their ward to the council.

A ward is an area of a town or a city. In Bradford we have thirty wards and three councillors in each ward.

Councillors are different to MPs. Councillors deal with things locally in the Bradford District like schools, housing and care.

MP means Member of Parliament. They deal with things that affect the whole country like benefits and immigration.

You can find out who your local councillor is on the Bradford Council website. www.bradford.gov.uk
How to contact a councillor

Most councillors hold surgeries every month. You can go and talk to them with any worries or concerns you may have about services that the council provide.

You don’t normally need to make an appointment you can just turn up.

You can find out where the surgeries are on the Bradford Council website. They are also sometimes advertised in local newspapers and libraries.

You can write, email or phone your councillor. You have to make sure that you contact the councillors for your ward.
What does a councillor do?

A councillor does lots of different things as well as representing the people in their ward.

They make decisions about what services the council should provide and how they should provide them.

They work out and review council policies. Policies are the steps that the council follows to carry out the work that they said they were going to do.

They scrutinise. This means they watch over and check the work that the council are doing.

Some councillors sit on committees like the planning committee and health and social care committee.
Anybody can be a councillor.

You must live or work in the ward that you want to represent and be over 18 years old.

You must be nominated as a candidate by ten people who live in the ward. You can then stand for election.

Most councillors are members of political parties but they don’t need to be. Some stand as independents.

Councillors don’t get paid a wage but they do get an allowance to cover their time and any expenses. Most councillors have full time jobs and have to fit their council duties around them.
Councillors are up for election once every four years.

In Bradford this is done on a rotating basis so three out of four years one of the councillors in the ward is up for election.

In other councils all three councillors are up for election at the end of the four years.

Sometimes there is a by-election which means that a councillor has left before the four years is up, maybe because they are ill or have died.
Voting for a councillor is really important. It gives you a say on important issues that affect you like roads, recycling, education and social care.

To vote in any UK elections you need to be on the electoral register. You are not automatically registered even if you pay council tax.

You can register to vote online or download a form from the Bradford Council website: www.bradford.gov.uk www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

If you need help you can phone 01274 432287.
This booklet was made by those who need accessible information working with btm.
For more information or extra copies please contact:

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