

## Council

12 February 2016

### Public Questions (1)

<b>1.</b>	<b>Question from Mrs Jenny Kirkwood to the Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Jon Walklett</b>
	What are Cheltenham Borough Council doing to increase the number of women and younger people to become actively involved in terms of becoming Councillors?
	<b>Response from Cabinet Member</b>
	<p>I thank Mrs Kirkwood for her question and have provided the following background relevant information as part of my answer.</p> <p>Firstly I need to point out that the responsibility for the recruitment of suitable borough (and county) council candidates lies firmly with either established political parties or in the case of independents with local groups.</p> <p>The second point relates to how the profile of CBC Councillors compares by age and sex over time and against the national picture. Taking age first the most recent Local Government Association survey (dated 2013) published the average age of a sitting local Councillor at 60.2 years. The comparative figures for Cheltenham - 63 years in 2012 and 57 years in 2016 tends to demonstrate a reduction in age both in relation to four years ago and set against a national average. Interestingly whilst c.20 per cent serving CBC Councillors are aged 45 or less this also compares favourably with the 12.5 per cent recorded nationally.</p> <p>Moving on, the proportion of female members currently serving on CBC is slightly down on the national average, 27.5 against 32.7 per cent.</p> <p>Cheltenham Borough Council makes every attempt to involve and engage residents in our local democratic process. We encourage young teenagers in school groups and from school councils to visit the Municipal Offices and in recent times the Mayor has chaired debates on matters such as climate change and fostered encouragement with youth to participate. Local branches of the national parties also involve their younger members in political campaigning, action days and fighting for local causes. Similarly contact with local faculties providing tertiary education and training have been encouraged. Further information for those individuals wishing to become involved locally can be found on the Cheltenham Borough Council website under the "Councillors" heading which in turn will take you to the excellent Local Government Association page entitled "Be a Councillor".</p>