

The municipal council of the municipality formed by merging the local governments associated with Borgarfjörður, Djúpivogur, Fljótshálsa and Seyðisfjörður will be elected this coming 19 September.

As well as electing eleven representatives to the municipal council of the merged local government, eight regular representatives and eight alternate representatives will be elected directly to the following four community councils within the merged municipality:

Borgarfjörður community council
Djúpivogur community council
Fljótshálsa community council
Seyðisfjörður community council

Votes in the community council elections will not be limited to campaigning candidates; instead, every voter in that community area will be eligible for election.

Voting will occur in the following places:

Borgarfjörður eystri: District office
Djúpivogur: Tryggvabúð (senior citizens' centre)
Fljótshálsa: Menntaskólinn á Egilsstöðum (ME upper secondary school)
Seyðisfjörður: Sports centre

What are community councils?

Community councils will be standing committees of the merged municipality, acting on behalf of the municipal council. Each community council will consist of three representatives, and will be assisted by an employee serving as the mayor's representative for that area.

The jurisdiction of each community council will correspond to the municipal (i.e. local government) boundaries which are currently associated with Borgarfjörður, Djúpivogur, Fljótshálsa and Seyðisfjörður.

What does a community council do?

The purpose of a community council is to ensure the involvement and influence of that area's residents in decisions affecting their locality. A community council deals with the tasks assigned to it by the municipal council concerning that community area.

The community council can pass resolutions on community affairs and in that way put matters on the agenda of the municipal council. A community council's main tasks involve local planning and environmental issues, cultural and agricultural affairs, and commenting on local issues and licensing.

On the website svausturland.is, you can click on *Translate* at the bottom of the page to find considerable information on community council tasks. The scope of such councils is also described (in Icelandic) in Article 48 of the *Charter on the Governance and Meeting Procedures of the Municipality*.

Who can be elected to a community council?

All the residents of that community (i.e. that part of the municipality) who are on the electoral roll have both the right to vote and to stand for office on the community council. This means that everyone on the voters' roll in that area is eligible for election as a council representative.

Although those willing to be nominated do not need to submit their candidacy to the election commission, it is desirable that they present themselves and their points of emphasis to the voters in that part of the municipality. Since voters must write a name and address on the ballot paper, it is important for them to have access to that information.

May I be a candidate for both the municipal council and a community council?

Yes, it is permissible to run for both councils, as well as to become a member of both the municipal council and a community council.

How do I vote for the community council?

Each community council consists of three representatives. In addition, each of these councils is assisted by one employee, who serves as the mayor's representative for that community.

In the election to the community council, two council representatives and two alternates shall be elected directly by the residents of that particular area. The community council elections are held in conjunction with the municipal council elections.

Each voter elects one regular representative to the community council of her/his area by writing the full name and address of that person on the ballot paper. The two individuals who receive the most votes will thus have been elected as regular representatives and the next two individuals as alternates, in accordance with the number of votes.

Next, the municipal council elects one representative and one alternate. Both of them must be regular representatives on the municipal council, with their election occurring during the meeting in which the municipal council elects representatives to standing committees and boards. At the same meeting, the municipal council elects a community council chair out of each group of regular community council representatives.

Elections to the community councils are described in more detail (in Icelandic) in Article 36 of the *Charter on the Governance and Meeting Procedures of the Municipality*. On the website svausturland.is, you can find information on the community council elections in English and Polish.

What does the ballot paper look like?

The ballot paper is quite simple: all you have to do is write down the full name and address of the individual you wish to elect to your local community council. You may only write one name on the ballot paper. The electoral roll will be available at the polling station so that those voting can check who is eligible for their community council.

Where can I vote for the community council?

The community council elections will be held at the same time and in the same polling stations as the municipal council elections. The polling stations and voting rooms will be located in each part of the municipality according to how it was previously divided into the four older municipalities. The central election commission will advertise more details on the polling stations and voting rooms. You may also vote absentee in embassies, district commissioner offices, the public library in Egilsstaðir or the municipal offices in Borgarfjörður and Djúpivogur.

Vote counting and results

The polling stations will have specific ballot boxes for the community council elections. The election commission will be in charge of counting the votes, and the results will be announced when they are available.