

New councillor mayoral bid

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DONCASTER'S Conservatives have selected one of their newest councillors to enter for next year's mayoral elections.

The group has announced Coun Jonathan Wood will stand next May, when he will have been a Doncaster councillor for just a year. He is the first confirmed runner in the race for the office.

The party made its selection after a members-only ballot this week, following hustings at the Doncaster Dome. He beat fellow party member Carol Greenhalgh to the nomination.

Mr Wood, aged 41, is from High Melton. Since being elected in Sprotbrough ward in May he has become vice chairman of the council's overview and scrutiny panel.

He has a degree in accounting and has previously worked for the Foreign Office as vice consul for economy, development and investment at the British Consulate-General in Chicago, in the USA.

He described his nomination by the party as "a great honour and a tremendous opportunity", and says he will give the election his best shot.

Doncaster Council's Conservative group leader Coun Patricia Schofield rejected any suggestion that his recent arrival on the council meant he was inexperienced. She said: "He is a very capable young man who is well experienced in business after spending seven years in America with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

"He has also had five years working with the Yorkshire Forward regional development agency. He has only been an elected councillor since May but he has lots of experience from his previous work."

Labour has yet to name its candidate - but will be forced to field a new face because of current mayor Martin Winter's expulsion from the party earlier this year. Other candidates are likely to include nominations from the Alliance of Independent Members and the Green Party.