



Local Government Act 1894 initiated the Birth Date of Hessest Parish Council. Amendments to the 1894 Act have been passed but many of the original clauses are reflected in what we see today.

The bill consisted of 71 clauses arranged in five parts.

The first part dealt with rural parishes, and provided that: Any parish included in a rural sanitary district was deemed a "rural parish". Parishes that lay partly in a rural sanitary district and partly in an urban sanitary district; or in more than one administrative county, were to be divided into separate parishes.

Parishes with a population of 300 or more were to have parish councils.

Parishes with a lower population were to be grouped with other parishes so as to reach a population of 300 and have a joint parish council.

Each parish was to have a parish meeting at which each elector had a single vote on all matters raised.

Parish councillors would have a one-year term of office, with the old council retiring and the new council coming into office on 15 April.

Parish councils were to consist of a chairman and councillors. There were to be between five and fifteen councillors, with the number fixed by the county council.

Nominations to the council were to be made at a parish meeting previous to 15 April, and if there were more candidates than vacancies, a poll was to be held.

Every parish council was to be a body corporate with perpetual succession. Where there was doubt as to the name of the parish, this was to be fixed by the county council.

The parish council would be permitted to hold their meetings free of charge in a room in a state-supported public elementary school. The parish council was to assume all powers exercised by parish vestries except those dealing with the church or ecclesiastical charities.

Examples included the maintenance of closed burial grounds, ownership of village greens and recreation grounds and operation of fire engines. A parish council could also take over any property of the poor law guardians within the parish with the approval of the Local Government Board.

Parish councils could take on powers under various statutes relating to bath houses, street lighting, burials or libraries.

Parish councils were to have power to buy or receive the gift of land or property to provide any of these services.

The act received the royal assent on 5 March 1894.

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As shown The Local Government Act 1894 was intended to provide a clear separation between parochial church councils and newly created civil parishes. As such, there was an expectation that the Church congregation, supplemented by the national Church, would provide for the maintenance and upkeep of church property and grounds.

The Local Government Act of 1894, also known as the Parish Councils Act, completed the reform of local government in England and Wales in the 1890's.

This Act gave all women, despite their marital status, the right to vote and serve on parish rural district and urban district councils.