



Newchurch Parish Council Co-option Policy

In line with the principles of fairness and transparency, and to minimise any possibility of discrimination, the Parish Council will have regard to the following guidance in co-opting Councillors:

'Elections and Co-option' (Legal Topic Note LTN08 by the National Association of Local Councils/ NALC)

Chapter 6 THE LOCAL COUNCIL AND ITS MEMBERS in the legal textbook Arnold Baker on Local Council Administration

POLICY

A vacant seat on the Parish Council can arise in a number of ways. The number of seats is set by the District Council. The Local Government Act 1972 and the Representation of the People Acts 1983 and 1985 establish legal procedures to which this policy adheres

- a. At the stage of the process where the Parish Council is required to, or chooses to co-opt, notice should be given to residents and the wider public by several means: WORD OF MOUTH / A NEWS ITEM ON THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE / A NOTICE ON PAPER ON THE PARISH COUNCIL NOTICE BOARD / SOCIAL MEDIA
- b. Interested persons should have access to the information about the Councillor role and any disqualifications through INFORMAL ADVICE FROM SITTING COUNCILLORS /ADVICE FROM THE CLERK / REFERRAL TO ELECTORAL COMMISSION AND NALC WEBSITES
- c. To proceed with the co-option process, volunteers should make themselves known IN WRITING OR VERBALLY to ANY COUNCILLOR OR THE CLERK by EMAILING OR USING THE WEBSITE CONTACT FORM before a closing date set by the Council.
- d. The decision to co-opt will be taken by sitting Councillors at a properly-convened ORDINARY meeting-in-public of the FULL COUNCIL
- e. Volunteers for co-option will ATTEND THE COUNCIL IN PERSON OR SUBMIT A SHORT WRITTEN STATEMENT
- f. The chairman of the meeting will move to vote on EXCLUDING THE PRESS AND PUBLIC OR CONDUCTING THE VOTE IN PUBLIC after volunteer information has been put into the public domain
- g. The voting will be by SHOW OF HANDS
- h. Where there are more volunteers than vacant seats, Councillors will resolve to co-opt only those volunteers who receive an absolute majority of the votes of Councillors present and voting.
- i. Where there is an equality of candidates and seats, or fewer volunteers than seats, Councillors reserve the right not to co-opt immediately. In this case the closing date for volunteers will be extended to 10 days before the next Full Council meeting.
- j. Volunteers who are co-opted and present WILL be allowed to sit as Councillors for the remainder of the meeting at which the co-option is resolved.
- k. The Clerk will prepare the Minute of the decision, ask the new Councillor(s) to sign their Declarations of Acceptance of Office, and inform the relevant bodies without delay. The Clerk will also prepare a Welcome pack and arrange training with Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) or other provider where appropriate.

Proposed Anthony Goode, seconded Antony Youd, Adopted 5th June 2023 Minute 2023-6-4