

Grimston Parish Council Co-option Procedures

Introduction

Co-option is a recruitment process to fill Parish Councillor vacancies. Parish Councils are able to co-opt new councillors:

- after an election when all vacancies have not been filled,
- when a councillor resigns, is disqualified or dies.

The following procedures outline the process for the co-option of councillors in both election and non-election years.

Procedures in a non-election year

1. On receipt of a resignation/notification of the death of a councillor, the Clerk will contact KL&WN Borough Council Electoral Officer to request a formal notice of vacancy. The notice will be displayed on the Council's noticeboards and website in the village. This notice offers the electors the opportunity to request a by-election. If after the statutory 14-day period a by-election has not been requested by ten or more electors then the Parish Council is required to co-opt.

2. The Clerk will then advertise locally to encourage people to apply. Prospective candidates will be provided with relevant information on the responsibilities of being a Parish Councillor, qualification criteria and the nature of their duties. They will also be advised that the Parish Council are not obliged to co-opt anyone if it is felt that candidates are not suitable.

3. The Clerk will then ask prospective candidates to:

- Complete an application form providing personal details and information to support their application for consideration by the Councillors
- Attend a Parish Council meeting at which their application is to be considered.

4. The Clerk will circulate to all Councillors the completed application form and any additional information provided by the candidates.

5. At the Council meeting, candidates will be given up to five minutes to introduce themselves to Councillors, give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a member of the Parish Council.

The process will be conducted in public session and there will be no private discussions between Councillors prior to a vote being taken. After candidates have finished giving their submissions, Councillors will vote using their voting slip with all candidates' names listed and select the same number of candidates as there are vacancies.

6. In order for a candidate to be elected to the Council, it will be necessary for them to obtain an overall majority of votes cast (50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting). If there are more than two candidates and there is no candidate with an overall majority in the first round of voting, the candidate with the least number of votes will drop out of the process. Further rounds of voting will then take place with the process repeated until a candidate has an overall majority. The Chairman will as in all Council votes have a casting vote.

7. If insufficient candidates come forward for co-option, the process will be repeated, and vacancies are advertised again. If there is a vacancy within six months of an election then the Council may choose not to co-opt, but to leave it to be filled in the forthcoming Election.

Procedures in an election year

8. If following the close of nominations at an ordinary election of the Parish Council there is a quorum of elected members, but vacancies remain, the Clerk will advertise for interested candidates (as already detailed) after the date of the election. The Council is able to co-opt any time after the election. The procedures outlined in number 2 onwards will then be followed.

Clerk

Adopted March 2022