



WENDOVER PARISH COUNCIL

The Clock Tower, High Street, Wendover
Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP22 6DU
clerk@wendover-pc.gov.uk

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CO-OPTION PROCEDURE

A policy setting out the procedure for co-opting to a casual vacancy following an election process

Introduction

If no request for an election is received by Aylesbury Vale District Council by the date on the Notice of Vacancy, Wendover Parish Council will be advised that it may fill the vacancy. Co-option is the process by which the Parish Council selects a new Councillor and it is done as an agenda item within a monthly Parish Council meeting.

The Parish Council manages the process of co-option by itself and strives to demonstrate that it is fair and equitable by following the procedure set out below:

Procedure

1. Wendover Parish Council invites interested candidates to write to the Clerk. The letters received are circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which a Parish Councillor is to be co-opted. These letters form part of the meeting pack which Councillors receive for every Parish Council meeting.
2. At the Parish Council meeting candidates are invited to say something about themselves and Councillors have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of three minutes.
3. If a candidate cannot attend the meeting of the parish council where candidates are considered for co-option they will forfeit the chance to be co-opted until a new vacancy arises.
4. The Chairman will request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. One candidate needs to receive an absolute majority of votes.
5. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be discussed and voted on in a confidential session. Once the Clerk has calculated the result the public will be invited back into the meeting and the result will be announced by the Chairman. The successful candidate will be informed in writing.

6. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. Voting will then take place for the remaining candidates until one person receives an absolute majority.
7. The successful candidate is then declared co-opted to the Parish Council and will be asked to sign a declaration of acceptance of office and declare pecuniary interests before the next meeting of the Parish Council. Any candidates that have left the meeting will be informed the following day and invited to sign the documents at the Clerk's office.
8. The successful candidate is a Councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.

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