



Procedure for co-option procedure for a new Councillor

This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 – Good practice for selection of candidates for co-option to local Councils.

Parish Councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the Council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (i.e. The vacancy has been the subject of a public notice and less than 10 registered electors have requested an election by a deadline date specified by the District Returning Officer).

Although seeking 'expressions of interest' is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

Whenever the need for co-option arises, Rooksdown Parish Council will:

Advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' by a specified date from anyone in the Parish who is eligible to stand as a Parish Councillor. All potential candidates will be requested to complete the Co Option application form.

At the next Full Council meeting:

1. Clerk will confirm that each candidate is qualified to become a Councillor and is not disqualified from being a Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80;
2. The meeting will then be closed in order for Council to consider the applications and members of the public and press will be asked to leave
3. Vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option, utilising the 'person specification' criteria set out below and the application form provided by candidates. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39) (The applicant with the least number of votes casted will be deleted and the vote taken again and again etc. until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies);
4. Vote to select the order in which acceptable candidates should be approached to offer co-option on this occasion.

5. Candidates will be notified by e-mail of the Council's decision within 48 hours. The Clerk to approach and offer co-option to candidate(s) after the meeting in the order of priority determined by the vote,

If the first choice does not accept the post then the second is to be approached and so on until the ranking list is exhausted.

6. Assuming that the co-option position is filled, formally ratify the appointment at the **next Full Council meeting**.
7. The Clerk to notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor Appointment, initiate 'acceptance of office' paperwork and 'registration of interests'
8. If no one accepts the vacant post(s), the whole process is to be repeated when new individuals expressing interest are identified or until the next election.



CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR PERSON SPECIFICATION

Personal Attributes

- Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.
- Forward thinking
- Can bring a new skill, expertise or key local knowledge to the Council.

Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability

- Ability to listen constructively
- A good team player
- An interest in local matters
- Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community
- Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute opinions at meetings whilst willing to see others views and accept majority decisions.
- Ability to communicate clearly.
- Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.
- Ability and willingness to work with the Council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other parish Councils, principal authority, charities). Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training.
- Willingness to acquire a basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish Councils or local authorities

Circumstances

- Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the Council (or meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) at any time and events in the evening and at weekends.



Application Form for Co-option

Full name

Home address

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Postcode

Telephone number

Mobile number.....

Email

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR QUALIFICATIONS (To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country? Yes/No

Are you 18 or over? Yes/No

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for Rooksdown? Yes/No

Have you lived either in Rooksdown, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year? Yes/No

Have you been the owner or tenant of land in Rooksdown for at least a year? Yes/No

Have you had your only or main place of work in Rooksdown for at least a year? Yes/No

DISQUALIFICATIONS (You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order? Yes/No

Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine? Yes/No

Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority? Yes/No

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a Parish Councillor.

previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business or trade union experience.

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

Although you may not have any experience as being a Parish Councillor, what is your perception of the role of Rooksdown Parish Council.

Are there any local issues that you are particularly interested in that you believe could be of benefit to the community?

Training is provided by the Hampshire Association of Local Councils. This is arranged through the Clerk, free of charge to Councillors. Training is usually at evenings or weekends.

Are you willing to attend relevant training courses? *YES/NO (*Delete as appropriate)

Are there any questions you would like to ask the Council?

Please note that Council and Committee meetings can be held during the day or evening and, unfortunately, under present legislation the Parish Council is not permitted to contribute to the cost of Councillors' childcare or care of dependents.

Signed: Date:

This form, once completed should be sent to: Clerk to Rooksdown Parish Council, Park Prewett Road, Basingstoke RG24 9XA or e-mailed to Parish.Clerk@rooksdwn.org.uk