



GELDESTON PARISH COUNCIL

Co-option Policy

1. Background

The process for co-option is only partially prescribed by law but there is best practice advice and guidelines around certain aspects. Items marked in bold are prescribed in law.

2. Scope and purpose

This policy aims to explain the procedure regarding co-option.

3. When a vacancy arises

A co-option vacancy arises when a member of the Council leaves, and the position is formally advertised for 14 days. At the end of this 14-day period if insufficient names have submitted a request to the District Council to call for an election (this is 10 names) then the Council can fill the vacancy by co-option. (Refer Local Government Act 1972 s86 and 87(2)(b))

4. Applications

The Council aim to encourage applications from anyone who is eligible to stand. Co-option vacancies will be advertised on the website and the noticeboard. The advertisement for the co-option will state:

- a) That applications shall be in writing to the Clerk.
- b) The closing date.
- c) That the contact for further information is the Clerk who can provide an application form.

The clerk will confirm if a candidate is eligible. Any candidate found to be offering inducements will be disqualified.

5. Meeting to consider Co-option

All eligible candidates will be invited to attend the next council meeting after the application deadline. All current councillors will receive copies of the application.

6. The process of Co-option

There is an early agenda item, during which each candidate will be asked to make a brief verbal presentation to the open meeting of no more than 3 minutes. Voting for the candidates will be in public.

7. Voting

Only councillors present at the meeting may vote. There will be one vote per vacancy. **The successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of those present and voting** (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12). If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, the candidate with the least of votes shall be discarded and the remainder be put to the vote again. The process will to be repeated until one candidate obtains an absolute majority.

8. New Councillors

The successful candidate(s) will start as a councillor, as soon as they complete a declaration of acceptance of office. **The fact that the new member has not received a summons does not make his / her attendance as a councillor illegal** (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12, para 10(3)). If a successful candidate is absent from the meeting at which they were successful, the Council must agree that the declaration of acceptance can be signed before or at the start of the next meeting.

A new councillor should complete an Interests Form within 28 days of co-option.

Date of adoption of this policy 14 January 2026

Date to be reviewed January 2029

Signed R Fogerty (Chair)