

Lydiard Millicent Parish Council

Co-Option Policy

Introduction

In the event that a Councillor resigns from the Lydiard Millicent Parish Council thus creating a casual vacancy, the Clerk will contact Wiltshire Council Electoral Services (WCES) elections@wiltshire.gov.uk

WCES will produce the Notice of Vacancy for display in the Parish and on website. If no request for an election is received by WCES by the end date on the Notice of Vacancy, WCES will inform the Parish Council that it may co-opt to the casual vacancy.

Co-option is the process by which the Parish Council selects a new Councillor. The Parish Council advertise the vacancy on noticeboards, website and in the Lydiards magazine.

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. The Parish Council invites interested Candidates (who meet the qualification requirements) to write to the Clerk by a specified date. Applications received are circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which a Councillor is to be co-opted. These letters form part of the meeting pack which Councillors receive.
2. The casual vacancy will be included as an agenda item, and will be considered following apologies for absence. Discussion will take place in Council session without intervention from the Candidates or members of the public.
3. Candidates may be 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.
4. Voting will be in accordance with Standing Orders, by secret signed ballot and all Candidates will be considered. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.
5. If the number of applications received match the number of vacancies then Council will formally co-opt those applicants. At this stage, the successful Candidates will be declared co-opted
6. If there are more Candidates than vacancies, the applicant with the least number of votes in the first round will be deleted, and the vote taken again until the number of Candidates equals the number of vacancies. At this stage, the successful Candidate will be declared co-opted
7. The successful Candidates will immediately sign their Declaration of Acceptance of Office. 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.
8. Candidates will receive a full agenda of the meeting at which they are being considered for co-option, together with the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Register of Interest must be completed and given to the Parish Clerk within 28 days.

Adopted by Lydiard Millicent Parish Council on 5 June 2024