

Co-option Procedure for Melbourn Parish Council

PURPOSE: To provide a consistent approach to the co-option of Parish Councillors

SCOPE: To be used whenever a new Councillor is to be co-opted

1. Background

1.1 This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L 15-08 (Co-option).

2. Procedure – application

2.1 When a vacancy arises, the Council will give public notice and will advertise the opportunity widely within the community.

2.2 The Clerk will invite ‘expressions of interest’ by a specified date from anyone who is eligible to stand.

2.3 All potential candidates will be asked to: submit a letter containing full contact details (telephone, postal address and e-mail) setting out why they are interested in becoming a Councillor; sign a declaration that they are eligible to become a Councillor and are not disqualified (as set out in the Local Government Act s79 and s80); complete a skills audit and confirm that they will undertake training within 6 months of becoming a Councillor.

2.4 The declaration and skills audit are attached to this policy at Annex A.

3. Procedure - selection

3.1 At the next full Council meeting following the closing date for applications:

- i. The Clerk to confirm that each candidate is eligible to become a councillor and is not disqualified;
- ii. The Chair to invite each candidate (in alphabetical order) to spend up to 3 minutes telling Councillors why they want to be co-opted and how their skills will complement those already present on the Council. If a candidate is not able to be present, the Chair will read out the candidate’s letter and skills audit. Councillors may question each candidate.
- iii. Each Councillor to write on a ballot sheet the names of up to [the number of vacancies] candidates. There is no obligation to vote for the same number of candidates as there are vacancies. The Clerk to count the votes and announce the number for each candidate.

MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No. 3.05

Version 1

Review Date: June 2023

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- iv. If a candidate receives a majority of votes from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para. 39), they are duly co-opted so long as the number of candidates with a majority vote is equal to or less than the number of vacancies.
 - v. If after the first round of voting, there are more candidates than vacancies, the person with the fewest votes is eliminated, and the vote taken again.
 - vi. (iv) and (v) are repeated until the number of candidates with a majority equals the number of vacancies.
 - vii. If any of the accepted candidates declines the post, the candidate eliminated last will be approached.
 - viii. The Council ratifies the list of co-opted Councillors.
 - ix. The co-opted Councillors are invited to sign the Declaration of Office and take their place at the table.
 - x. The Register of Interests must be completed within 1 month of taking office.



Document Approval:

(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: 27 June 2022