

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 Declaration of Office and Skills Audit to be presented with this policy.

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.

- 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: ~~24 March 2025~~ 25 March 2026