

Great Ayton Parish Council Procedure for co-option of 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 7 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, Great Ayton 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 a Co-Option application form.

At the next meeting of the Parish Council:

- 1 The 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 Once the meeting is closed the Council may then consider the applications since members of the public and press will have been asked to leave.
5. 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);
6. 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.
7. Assuming that the co-option position is filled, formally ratify the appointment at the subsequent Full Council meeting.
8. The Clerk to notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor Appointment, initiate ‘acceptance of office’ paperwork and ‘registration of interests’

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 the 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, principal authorities, charities, local interest groups.)
- 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 participate in events in the evening and at weekends.

Application Form for Co-option

Full name :

Home address:

Postcode:

Telephone number:

Mobile number:

Email address:

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BECOMING A PARISH 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?

Are you 18 or over?

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

Have you and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish in which you wish to stand from the day of your nomination onwards?

Have you occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election?

Has your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election has been in the parish area?

Have you lived in the parish area or within 4.8 kilometres of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election?

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?

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?

Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?



Personal Profile

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

Tell us about any applicable skills / experience that you have had including any previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charity sector, applicable employments, business or trade union experience.

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

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

Are you willing and able to attend relevant training courses?

Signed: Date:

This form, once completed should be sent to: clerk@great-ayton.org.uk