



# St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council

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## Co-option Policy<sup>1</sup>

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy sets out the procedures for the co-option of Councillors in both non-election (casual vacancies) and election years.

### 2.0 POLICY IN NON-ELECTION YEARS

2.1 In the event of the need for co-option in a non-election year, the following process will be undertaken:

2.1.1 The Clerk will advertise for interested candidates by placing notices at various locations in the Parish, on the Council's website, on social media and by placing an advertisement in a local paper. The closing date for nominations will be fourteen days from the date of the press advertisement.

2.1.2 The Clerk will require prospective candidates to:

- Provide written confirmation that they are both qualified and not disqualified from holding office. (See eligibility form)
- attend a meeting of the Full Council, and
- provide a one page 'manifesto' to assist Councillors in reaching a decision. (See application form)

2.1.3 Prospective candidates will be provided with relevant information on the responsibilities of being a Councillor and the nature of their duties and will also be advised that the Council is not obliged to co-opt any candidate if it is felt that candidates are not suitable.

2.1.4 If necessary, an extra meeting of the Council will be held to specifically consider the co-options.

2.1.5 At the co-option meeting, candidates will be given the opportunity to introduce themselves to Councillors, give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a Member of the Council. Council will then discuss the candidates and make a decision regarding the co-option. This process will be carried out in public session.

2.1.6 In order for a candidate to be elected to the Council, it will be necessary for them to obtain 50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted by Full Council at the meeting held on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 under Minute Number FPC116/21. Due for review in May 2024.

- 2.1.7 If an insufficient number of candidates come forward for co-option, the process should continue, whereby the vacancies are again advertised.
- 2.1.8 The expectation is that the co-opted Councillor would fill the positions vacated by the previous Member of the Council.
- 2.1.9 The Clerk will provide all Councillors with copies of the new membership to committees, working groups and representatives to outside bodies as soon as practicable.

### **3.0 POLICY IN ELECTION YEARS**

3.1 In the event of the need for co-option in an election year, the following process will be undertaken:

- 3.1.1 If following the close of nominations at an Ordinary Election, there is a quorum of Elected Councillors, but some outstanding vacancies, the Clerk will advertise for interested candidates by placing notices at various locations in the Parish, on the Council's website on social media and by placing an advertisement in a local paper.
- 3.1.2 The Clerk will require prospective candidates to:
- complete a form providing confirmation that they are both qualified and not disqualified from holding office. (See eligibility form)
  - attend a meeting of the Full Council and
  - provide a one page 'manifesto' to assist Councillors in reaching a decision. (See application form)
- 3.1.3 Prospective candidates will be provided with relevant information on the responsibilities of being a Councillor and the nature of their duties and will also be advised that the Council is not obliged to co-opt any candidate, if it is felt that candidates are not suitable.
- 3.1.4 The closing date for nominations will be fourteen days from the date of the press advertisement, and where possible noon on the Monday after the election takes place. Co-options will be considered at the first meeting of the Full Council following the election, (usually the Annual Statutory Meeting), and will be the first business to be considered after statutory requirements including the Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.
- 3.1.5 At the co-option meeting, candidates will be given the opportunity to introduce themselves to Councillors, give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a Member of the Council. The process will be carried out in public session and there will be no private discussions between Councillors prior to a vote being taken. Voting will take place in the normal way as soon as all candidates have finished giving their submissions.
- 3.1.6 In order for a candidate to be elected to the Council, it will be necessary for them to obtain 50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting.

3.1.7 If insufficient candidates come forward for co-option, the process should continue, whereby the vacancies are again advertised.