



WEST HOATHLY PARISH COUNCIL

representing Highbrook, Selsfield, Sharpthorne, Tyes Cross and West Hoathly

Procedure for Conducting Co-options

Approved 20th May 2024

Minute reference: 2409/11h

a) Casual Vacancies

On confirmation from Electoral Services that a casual vacancy must be filled by co-option, the Clerk will advertise the vacancy on the Parish Council noticeboards and on the parish council website. The advertisement will state the rules for eligibility and direct interested parties to contact the Clerk confirming their eligibility with a short statement explaining the reasons why they wish to become a Parish Councillor.

Prior to the meeting

The details and statements of all interested parties will be forwarded to all council members prior to the full Parish Council meeting where co-option will take place with interested parties being invited to attend the meeting where possible.

At the Meeting

At the Council meeting when the co-option takes place, each nominee will be invited to speak for up to 5 minutes during the public session of the meeting. Council members will be able to ask questions of the nominees.

Council members will vote at the appropriate co-option agenda item by the means of a signed ballot.

In order to be co-opted onto the Council, the candidate must receive an absolute majority of the vote of those present and voting.

b) After the full Parish Council Elections

In the event of vacancies following the close of nominations for the full Parish Council elections, the Clerk shall follow the above procedure to fill the vacancies and the co-option(s) will take place at the first possible Parish Council meeting.

Rules of Eligibility to be a Parish Councillor

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a British citizen or a citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union and meet at least one of the following qualifications:
- Be a registered elector in the parish: or
- Have occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the parish for the preceding twelve months: or
- Have their principal or only place of work in the parish for the preceding twelve months
- Have lived in the parish or within three miles of it for the preceding twelve months

A person is disqualified if they:

- Hold any paid office or employment to which they have been appointed by the Council
- Are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order
- Have within five years of the day of co-option been convicted of any offence and has had passed on them a sentence of imprisonment for a period of not less than three months (whether suspended or not) without option of a fine
- Have been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices or have been responsible for incurring unlawful expenditure and the court orders their disqualification