



Co-option Procedure

1. Introduction

- The Council must give public notice of a casual vacancy as soon as possible in accordance with section 232 of the Local Government Act 1972
- The Clerk shall duly publish 'a notice of vacancy' giving 14 days within which a by-election may be called.
- Following expiry of the 14 days' notice, West Northamptonshire Council will advise the Council if a by-election is to be held or if the vacancy is to be filled by co-option.
- The following procedure aims to ensure Upton Parish Council meets its responsibilities under equality legislation and provides a fair and transparent process.

2. The Co-option Process

- Where no by-election is called, the Council must meet and fill the vacancy within a reasonable period of time following expiry of the initial 14 day period. The only exception is where a by-election is not called and the vacancy occurs within 6 months of when the Councillor would retire, then the post may be left vacant.
- The Clerk will advertise the vacancy for 4 weeks on the Council notice boards and website, appealing for eligible candidates to come forward.
- Applicants for co-option will be asked to:
 - Submit an application form providing information about themselves (Appendix A)
 - Submit a signed declaration confirming they meet the eligibility criteria (Appendix B).
 - Applicants may also submit their Curriculum Vitae, (Optional).
- Copies of each candidate's application will be circulated to all Councillors, prior to the relevant full Council meeting where the co-option is to be considered. Documents may be tabled in respect of a late application. All such documents shall be treated as Private and Confidential.
- Candidates will be given the opportunity to address the Council for no longer than two minutes in support of their application.
- The press, public and candidates may be asked to leave the Council Chamber while the applications are discussed.
- The press, public and candidates will then be re-admitted to the meeting prior to voting taking place.

- A Councillor present at the meeting, shall nominate and another second the application they wish to support. Any applications not being nominated will fail at this point.
- Voting will be in accordance with statutory requirements. A successful candidate must receive an **absolute majority**, i.e. receive more than 50% of the votes cast.
- If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them at the first count receives an absolute majority over the rest of the candidates, the candidate with the least votes will fail and the remaining candidates voted on again. This process shall be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.
- Voting will be by show of hands.
- In the case of an equality of votes, the matter will stand adjourned until the next Council meeting when the process will be repeated.
- After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate duly elected and arrangements will be made for the signing of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Adopted: March 2025

Review: February 2026

Appendix A – Co-option Application Form - attached below

Appendix B – Parish Councillor Eligibility Criteria - attached below

A Word version of these forms is also available in the Policy section of our website.

Appendix A**Co-option Application Form**

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Email:

Please tell us about any experience you have that may be relevant to Upton Parish Council (you may expand the text box, if necessary).

Is there any other information you wish to disclose regarding your application? (you may expand the text box, if necessary).

Appendix B

Parish Councillor Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for co-option you must meet the criteria below. **It is the responsibility of the Candidate to ensure they meet the criteria; it is an offence to make a false declaration.**

1. You must be a British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen, or an EU citizen with retained rights. You must be 18 years of age or over; and additionally able to meet **at least one** of the following four qualifications set out below.

- ☐ I am registered as a local government elector for the parish
- ☐ I have occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the parish for the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option,
- ☐ My principal or only place of work during the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option, has been in the parish
- ☐ I have resided in the parish, or within 3 miles of it, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option.

Please tick all that apply to you.

2. Please note that under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 a person is disqualified from being elected as a Local Councillor or being a member of a Local Council if they:

- a) hold any paid office or employment of the local council (other than the office of Chairman) or of a joint committee on which the Council is represented; or
- b) have been adjudged bankrupt or has made a composition or arrangement with their creditors (but see below); or
- c) have within five years before the day of election, or since their election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has been sentenced to imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than three months without the option of a fine; or
- d) are otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 for corrupt or illegal practices.

The disqualification for bankruptcy ceases in the following circumstances:

- i) if the bankruptcy is annulled on the grounds that either the person ought not to have been adjudged bankrupt or that their debts have been fully discharged;
- ii) if the person is discharged with a certificate that the bankruptcy was caused by misfortune without misconduct on their part;
- iii) if the person is discharged without such a certificate. In (i) and (ii) above, the disqualification ceases on the date of the annulment and discharge, respectively. In (iii), it ceases on the expiry of five years from the date of discharge.

I (insert name) hereby confirm, that having read and understood **Appendix B Parish Councillor Eligibility Criteria**, I am eligible to be considered for the vacancy on Upton Parish Council and the information given on this form is a true and accurate record.

Signed:

Dated:

Application Checklist

- ☐ Appendix A - Application Form
- ☐ Appendix B – Signed Parish Councillor Eligibility Criteria
- ☐ Curriculum Vitae (optional)

Submitting your application

By email to: clerk@upton-pc.gov.uk

By mail to: The Clerk, Upton Parish Council, St Crispin Community Centre, St Crispin Drive, Upton, Northampton, NN5 4GJ