

Ringmer Parish Council

Co-option procedure

Co-option will be carried out in accordance with the Council's agreed procedures.

Prospective candidates can provide a one-page written statement giving details of their experience and skills and stating why they wish to become a Parish Councillor. The written statement is to be sent to the Clerk at least seven days prior to the meeting where co-option is to be considered by the Council.

- a The Clerk will issue copies of all written statements to Members prior to the meeting.
- b At the meeting, each candidate will be invited to add to their statement by speaking in front of Members for a maximum of 3 minutes, this will be done on an individual basis with any other candidates not being present. Members will be able to ask the candidate questions. If there is more than one candidate then the same questions will have to be asked as a point of fairness.
- c After all the candidates have completed their statements, Members will resolve whether to proceed with the vote. If Members agree to proceed, Members will vote by **signed** ballot. Candidates and any members of the public shall remain present. The ballot will be counted. The Clerk will announce the result of the ballot. The successful candidate will then sign the acceptance. The details of the votes for and against will not be disclosed unless formally requested by a Councillor during the meeting. At the end of the meeting ballot papers are destroyed.
- d If there are more than 2 candidates for one position, then voting will take place in a series of rounds where the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes drops out until only two candidates are left.
- e The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be offered the position and upon acceptance must sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office before becoming a Councillor.
- f In the event of a tied vote, the Council Chairman has a second and deciding vote if he/she chooses to exercise it.
- g If Members, consider that none of the applicants are suitable they will defer the co-option and re-advertise the vacancy.
- h ANY MEMBER NOT PRESENT AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CANDIDATE'S VERBAL STATEMENT WILL NOT BE ENTITLED TO VOTE ON THEIR CO-OPTION.

Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until most votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chairman of the meeting.