

Luddington Parish Council

Co-Option Policy

Introduction

When a vacancy arises on the council as the result of a resignation or other circumstance, the Clerk will notify the Democratic Services department of Stratford District Council of the vacancy.

The council will be requested to advertise the vacancy in a prominent place in the village, normally the notice board and the web site. The advertisement invites local government electors to request that an election be held to fill the vacancy. If no such request is received within fifteen working days, the vacancy may be filled by co-option by the remaining members of the Parish Council.

Co-option is the process by which the Parish Council selects a new Councillor and it is done as an agenda item within a Parish Council meeting.

The Parish Council manages the process of co-option and aims to demonstrate that it is fair and equitable by following the procedure set out below:

1. Luddington Parish Council invites interested candidates to write to the Clerk by a specified date. If there is only one applicant for one vacancy, the applicant is automatically co-opted to the Parish Council. If there is more than one candidate, the applications are circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which the Parish Councillor is to be co-opted.
2. At the Parish Council meeting candidates are invited to say something about themselves and Councillors have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of three minutes.
3. In a closed session of the Parish Council without the public present, members consider the candidates and, following a discussion, the public are invited back into the meeting before the voting takes place.
4. The Chairman will request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. One candidate needs to receive an absolute majority of votes.
5. The Chairman will place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and the Council proceeds to vote. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.
6. Voting will be in accordance with Standing Orders by a show of hands and will continue until one candidate has received an absolute majority of those Councillors present. At this stage, the successful candidate will be declared co-opted.
7. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. Voting will then take place for the remaining candidates until one person receives an absolute majority.
8. The successful candidate is then declared co-opted to the Parish Council and will be asked to join the meeting.
9. The successful candidate is a councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.