



Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group Parish Council

Councillor Co-option Procedure – adopted 15th February 2025

Introduction:

The co-option of a Parish Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the Council and no poll has been called or where, following a full-term election, vacancies remain on the Parish Council. To ensure a fair and transparent process is undertaken, the following procedure will be followed by Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group Parish Council and is based upon the recommendations of the National Association of Local Councils.

Procedure:

1. Upon receipt of confirmation from the Elections Office of Herefordshire Council that a vacancy can be filled through co-option, the Clerk will advertise the vacancy on the Parish Council website, notice boards and through social media, notifying existing Councillors of the vacancy at the same time.
2. The advertisement will be for a minimum of two weeks but may be repeated if insufficient candidates come forward.
3. Prospective candidates will be invited to put their request for consideration in writing by email to the clerk and indicate:
 - The reason for wishing to become a Parish Councillor, and
 - Skills and experience they can bring to the Parish Council, and
 - Identify any previous experience of Community or Local Authority work
 - Confirm they meet the eligibility criteria to become a Councillor and confirm they are not disqualified from being a Councillor in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 or such other legislation as may from time to time be applicable.
4. At the next full Council meeting, the Council will vote on whether to accept each candidate as a Councillor. A simple majority of Members present will be required for a candidate to be appointed. Voting can be by show of hands in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders or may be by paper ballot if Members so wish. It is not necessary for Members to accept any candidate for co-option
5. If there are more than one candidate for co-option to one or more vacancies, the procedure will be for a vote to be taken for all candidates and the candidate with the least votes to be eliminated. There will then be a repeat of this procedure until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies. If there is no overall majority for any candidate, that candidate will be eliminated.
6. Once co-opted, the candidate must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before taking their seat on the Council and must complete a Declaration of Financial Interests within 28 days of co-option.
7. Following a successful co-option, the Parish Clerk will notify the Elections Office of Herefordshire Council accordingly.