

St Margaret's Parish Council

Co-option Policy and Procedure

a) Casual Vacancies

On confirmation from East Herts Electoral Services that a vacancy can be filled by co-option, an advert will be put on the Parish Council noticeboard advertising for volunteers to put themselves forward. The vacancy will also be advertised on the website (when completed). The advertisement will state the rules for eligibility and ask interested parties to contact the Clerk by phone or e mail. The Clerk will then send the interested party a copy of the Being a Good Councillor leaflet and a co-option questionnaire with a date for return of the questionnaire and the date of the meeting when the co-option is to be considered. The questionnaire will state that successful applicants will be required to attend the HAPTC Basic Councillor training sessions 1 and 2 at Kimpton (or an alternative venue) on a date to be agreed, but within 1 year of becoming a Councillor. With all reasonable travel expenses to be paid.

All completed questionnaires are to be circulated to all councillors with the meeting agenda.

All interested parties to be made aware that canvassing of Council members will disqualify them from standing for the vacancy.

At the Meeting

At the Council meeting when the co-option takes place, each nominee will be invited to speak for up to 3 minutes and the councillors may ask relevant questions. When all the nominees have spoken they will be asked to leave the room. The Chair shall seek proposers and seconders for each nomination (whether or not they have spoken) and the vote will follow. In order to be co-opted onto the Council, the candidate must receive a 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.

Voting on Appointments

Where more than 2 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 a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.