



GREAT DAWLEY TOWN COUNCIL

CO-OPTION PROCEDURE

A policy setting out the procedure for co-opting to a casual vacancy following an election process

Date : December 2016

Introduction

If no request for an election is received by Telford & Wrekin Council by the date on the Notice of Vacancy, the Democratic Services Department will advise the Parish Council that it may co-opt to the vacancy. Co-option is the process by which the Town Council selects a new Councillor and it is done as an agenda item within one of the monthly Town Council meeting.

The Town Council manages the process of co-option by itself and strives to demonstrate that it is a fair and equitable by following the procedure set out below;

Procedure

1. Great Dawley Town Council invites interested candidates to write to the Clerk by a specific date. This date is to be set by the Town Council at a Council meeting. If there is only one applicant for one vacancy, the applicant is automatically co-opted to the Town Council. If there is more than one candidate, the Clerk will circulate to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which a Parish Councillor is to be co-opted a list detailing the information of the interested candidates. This formal list will form part of the meeting pack which Councillors receive for every Town Council meeting.
2. At the Town 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 Town Council meeting, without the public present, Councillors consider the candidates and, following the discussion, the public are invited back into the meeting before the voting takes place.
4. The Chair of the meeting will request those 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 Chair will then place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and proceed to vote. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.

6. Voting will be in accordance with Standing Order 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 Town Council and will be asked to join the meeting.
9. The successful candidate will sign the formal Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Councillor of Great Dawley Town Council.
10. 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.