



Okehampton Town Council

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## Co-Option Policy

The Co-option of a Town Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the Council and no poll (by-election) has been called.

To ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken the following procedure will be followed by Okehampton Town Council:

- 1) On receipt of written confirmation from the Electoral Services Office at West Devon Borough Council that the casual vacancy can be filled by means of Co-option, the Town Clerk will advertise the vacancy for a minimum of 4 weeks on the Council noticeboard, Facebook page, Newsletter and website, and place an advert in the local press.
- 2) Applicants for co-option will be asked to:
  - a) submit information about themselves, by way of completing a short application form,
  - b) confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules, by completing an Eligibility statement.
- 3) Copies of the applicant's application form will be circulated to all Councillors with the agenda prior to the meeting of the Full Council when the Co-option will be considered.
- 4) Applicants will be sent a copy of the Full Council Agenda of the meeting when the Co-option will be considered and invited to attend if they wish to do so.
- 5) Discussion about the applications will take place within an open part of the Council meeting without intervention from the candidates or public.
- 6) Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. Councillors shall vote by written ballot and candidates may stay in the room for the voting process. If there is more than one vacancy, there will be a separate vote for each vacancy.
- 7) 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 a majority of 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.

- 8) After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate duly elected and the Clerk will make arrangements for the Declaration of Office and Register of Interests to be completed.