

Aldbury Parish Council

Councillor Co-Option Policy

AIMS

Whenever the need for co-option arises APC will seek and encourage applications from anyone who is eligible to stand as a Parish Councillor. Councillors or parishioners can legally approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option.

The co-option procedure is entirely managed by the Parish Council and this policy ensures a fair and equitable process is carried out.

CO-OPTION PROCEDURE

ADVERTISING A VACANCY

An advertisement will be circulated regarding any vacancy. Interested Parties should contact the Parish Clerk for further details.

ELIGIBILITY AND DISQUALIFICATION

APC can consider any person to fill a vacancy provided they meet the eligibility criteria, which can be found at [www.electoralcommission.org.uk/Parish and Community Council Elections in England and Wales](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/Parish%20and%20Community%20Council%20Elections%20in%20England%20and%20Wales).

APPLICATIONS

The applicant will complete an 'Application for Co-option' form (Appendix 1).

When an application is received, the Clerk to the Parish Council will consider the application, check that the individual meet the qualification requirements and confirm that, if successful, they would be willing to accept the Code of Conduct and other obligations of a Parish Councillor.

Applicants will be encouraged to observe meetings of the Parish Council so that they can get to understand the role of a Parish Councillor and the operation of the Council.

Applicants will be invited to submit a short personal statement providing reasons why they should be considered for the vacancy.

CO-OPTION INTERVIEW

Applicants will be invited to a Co-Option Interview. Where an applicant has been interviewed for a Councillor position within the previous six months, their application will be considered without the need for a re-interview. The interview panel shall ideally consist of three Councillors and the Parish Clerk. The Councillors on the interview panel may vary depending upon availability.

The purpose of the interview will be to determine the applicant's suitability by reference to the Person Specification (Appendix 2) and to respond to any questions the applicant might have.

Each applicant will be asked the same set of interview questions (Appendix 3) and the Parish Clerk will collate any notes taken by the interview panel.

Applicants will be informed of the date of the next full Parish Council meeting at which the co-option vote will take place.

Once all interviews have taken place, the interview panel will review each applicant's suitability and will agree a recommendation to be put to the full Council.

THE DECISION PROCESS

No less than 3 days prior to the next full council meeting the Parish Clerk will distribute to all Councillors the completed application forms, personal statements and the recommendation of the interview panel.

Where the Council wishes to discuss the merits of applicants and inevitably their personal attributes, this could be prejudicial and the Council will resolve to exclude the applicants, members of the press and public.

The council will be required to vote even when only considering one candidate.

Voting will be in accordance with Standing Orders 3.12 and 3.13.

After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate who will be invited to sign their declaration of acceptance of office. Thereafter they may take their seat immediately.

The Clerk will notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor appointment. The successful candidate/s must complete the 'registration of interests' and acceptance of office within 28 days of being elected. The form should be handed to the Clerk for forwarding to the Monitoring Officer.

COMMITMENT

This policy is fully supported by all Members of the council.

The Policy will be reviewed every four years to ensure it remains commensurate with the law and best practice.

Dated: 8 June 2021

Appendix 1

APPLICATION FOR CO-OPTION TO ALDBURY PARISH COUNCIL

I [_____ (1)] of [

_____ (2)]

hereby apply for co-option to Aldbury Parish Council. I declare that on the date of application shown at (3) below:

- I am at least 18 years old.
- I am a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- I meet at least one of the following four qualifications (tick as appropriate)

a. I am registered as a local government elector for the parish of Aldbury in respect of the qualifying address shown at (2) above	
b. I have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (3) below). Show description of land or other premises below.	
c. My main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of this application (shown at (3) below) has been in the parish. Show address of place of work and, where appropriate, name of employer	
d. I have lived in the parish or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of this application (shown at (3) below) Show address in full if different from address shown at (2)j above	
I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being co-opted. I confirm that I have checked the eligibility and disqualification criteria as published by the Electoral Commission.	
Applicant's signature	Date (3)

1. (1) Insert the full name of the person making the application
2. (2) Insert the address of the person making the application

Appendix 2

Aldbury Parish Council		
Parish Councillor Person Specification		
COMPETENCY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Relevant knowledge, Education, Professional Qualifications & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific Vocational training or professional qualification (e.g. accountant, teacher, surveyor, architect)
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid interest in local matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of HR, procurement, contract management, financial control or risk management and compliance, public relations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working in another public body or not for profit organisation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good interpersonal skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with voluntary and or local community/ interest groups
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate clearly both orally and in writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish councils or local authorities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of delivering presentations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good reading and analytic skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working with the media
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to work with the Parish Council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in financial control/budgeting
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of staff management
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work under pressure 	
Other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the council (or the meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) in the evening and events in the evening and at weekends 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enthusiastic 	