



**This document sets out the Parish Council's
Co-option Policy**

Version Control

| Version | Date | Description of Change |
|---------|-----------|-----------------------|
| V.1 | 17/4/2025 | New Policy |
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Co-option Policy

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedure to ensure fair and transparent co-option of Parish Councillors, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 86 and 87.

Co-option is the process by which the Parish Council can appoint a new Councillor when a vacancy arises and a by-election is not triggered.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- A fair and transparent process is followed.
- All applicants are treated equally.
- The most suitable candidates are co-opted to serve the local community.

3. Circumstances Leading to Co-option

A co-option will occur when:

- A vacancy has arisen due to resignation, death, or disqualification of a Councillor.
- The Proper Officer (Clerk) has notified the District/Borough Council of the vacancy.
- The required number of electors (9) have not called for a by-election within 14 working days of the notice of vacancy.

4. Notification of Co-option

Once it is clear a co-option will take place, the vacancy will be advertised through:

- Public notice on the Parish Council notice boards.
- The Parish Council's website and/or social media channels.

The advertisement will include:

- A deadline for submission of applications.
- An invitation to interested persons to apply.
- A copy of the application form.

5. Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be registered as a local government elector for the Parish.
- Have lived in the Parish or within 3 miles of it for the past 12 months.
- Have had their principal place of work in the Parish for the past 12 months.
- Have occupied land or property in the Parish as owner or tenant for the past 12 months.

In addition, the applicant must:

- Be at least 18 years of age.
- Not be disqualified from serving as a Councillor (e.g. due to bankruptcy or a criminal conviction).

6. Application Process

Applicants will be required to:

- Complete and return the Co-option Application Form.
- Include a brief statement detailing their reasons for applying and what they can contribute to the Council.

All eligible applications received by the deadline will be circulated to Councillors in advance of the co-option meeting.

7. Co-option Procedure at Council Meeting

- The Council will consider all eligible candidates at a full council meeting, which must be held in public.
- Candidates may be invited to speak briefly about their application (optional).
- Councillors will vote on the co-option by a majority show of hands or by signed ballot, in accordance with Standing Orders.
- If there is more than one vacancy, votes will be taken separately for each.

The successful candidate(s) will:

- Be declared duly co-opted to the Council.
- Sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office before or at the meeting.
- Complete a Register of Interests form within 28 days.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

All applications will be treated in confidence by members and staff, in line with the Parish Council's Data Protection Policy and GDPR regulations.

9. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years or when relevant legislation or Council procedures change.

Adopted by Whalley Council on: 17th April 2024

Next Review Due: April 2028