



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION POLICY

Parish Councils are permitted the power to co-opt a person on to council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (the vacancy has been subject of a public notice and less than 10 registered voters have requested an election by the deadline specified by the returning officer).

Although 'seeking expressions of interest' is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

West Dean Parish Council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand as a parish councillor, this will be for a minimum period of 14 days in the press, on the website and on at least one parish noticeboard.

The attached form will be used as the basis of ascertaining a candidate's suitability to put themselves forward for co-option. At the next Full Council Meeting:

- Clerk to confirm that each candidate is qualified to become a Councillor and is not disqualified from being a Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 & s80.
- The Chair will invite candidates to speak, if they are in attendance, and allow members the opportunity to ask questions of the candidate.
- Only Councillors present at the meeting may nominate, second or vote upon a person to fill the vacancy. A Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate.
- The Chair will offer the opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option to the candidates. In most cases, the candidates will be asked to leave the room whiles this process takes place.
- Voting on the new Councillor will be by show of hands. The Chair will initiate the vote in alphabetical order. Councillors have one vote each.
- An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote. If there is no more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them at the first counts receives a majority, the candidate with the least number of votes will be eliminated and the remainder must be put to the vote again until an absolute majority is obtained (LGA 1972 S12 para 39). One person will be chosen for each vacancy.
- The successful candidate is then declared co-opted to the Council and summoned to attend the next Council meeting.

The above procedure takes place in open Council.

The Clerk will notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor appointment and organise Declaration of Acceptance of Office paperwork. All new Councillors, must, within 28 days of appointment, register their Register of Interest with FODDC – forms to be supplied and submitted by the Clerk.

The attached form will be used as the basis of ascertaining a candidate's suitability to put themselves forward for co-option.

WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

Application form for the role of Parish Councillor



Full Name	
Home Address inc. Postcode	
Telephone	
Mobile	
Email	

It is a condition of being a Parish Councillor that your phone number and email address (official email address will be supplied) be made public via noticeboards and website.

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR

To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both questions below

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or citizen of a European Union Country?	Yes/No
Are you 18 or over?	Yes/No

To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one question below

Are you on the electoral register for West Dean?	
Have you lived either in West Dean or within 3 miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in West Dean for at least a year?	
Have you had your only or main place of work in West Dean for at least a year?	

DISQUALIFICATIONS

You must be able to answer 'No' to all the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor.

Are you subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	
Have you within the last 5 years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of 3 months or more without the option of a fine?	

Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	
--	--

Please briefly outline why you are interested in being a parish councillor.

--

Please briefly tell us what you can bring to the Council.

Signed:

Dated: