



BLIDWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Co-option Policy

This policy covers the co-option policy to fill a casual vacancy on Blidworth Parish Council. A casual vacancy is when a seat on the Parish Council becomes vacant, which may be for a number of reasons including resignation, disqualification or death of a councillor, or when a councillor fails to attend meetings.

Once a Councillor vacancy has arisen, the notice must be displayed as soon as practicable but in consultation with Newark and Sherwood District Council's Elections Team to check the dates. However, if the vacancy has arisen due to a death, it is courteous that the notice is not displayed until after the funeral has taken place.

A copy of the vacancy notice must be sent to the Returning Officer, Newark and Sherwood District Council, so that the progress can be monitored. The vacancy notice must be displayed on the Parish noticeboard for 14 working days (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Good Friday or bank holidays). During this time 10 electors may request an election by writing to the Returning Officer. After the 14 days, the Returning Officer will notify the Clerk in writing of the outcome. An election will only take place if 10 electors have requested it in writing. If no election has been requested, then the Parish Council must co-opt to fill the vacancy unless it is within 6 months of the forthcoming Parish ordinary elections.

The next ordinary elections will be in May 2027. If a vacancy occurs within 6 months of the Parish Council's forthcoming ordinary elections then the election will not be held, however, the vacancy may be filled by co-option if wished, but the Council is not obliged to do so.

If a by-election has not been called, the Council may ask for volunteers to fill the co-option. It should be advertised as widely as possible including on the Parish Council website, noticeboard and Facebook Page.

Anyone wishing to serve as a Councillor is asked to complete a short application form which will include their reasons for becoming a Parish Councillor together with their legal qualifications (citizenship / electoral register etc). The Parish Council will then consider all applications at a meeting. Candidates will be invited to attend a meeting of the Council for interview, and to provide an opportunity for them to ask any questions.

At the Parish Council meeting when the co-option takes place, each nominee will be invited to speak for up to 3 minutes. Only Parish Councillors present at the meeting may nominate, second or vote upon the person to fill the vacancy. Councillors will receive a copy of the application form of those wishing to be considered as a Councillor, with their meeting agenda and papers. Councillors must then decide if they wish to nominate any of the persons named at the meeting or any other persons known to them. The decision must be based solely on the candidate's suitability for the appointment. It would be unlawful to come to a conclusion based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the position. No question should be asked, or

consideration given, to the candidate's: Age, Race, Sex and sexual orientation, Disabilities, Creed, Marital status and family, Political affiliation.

A Councillor does not have to nominate any of the persons named. Any Councillor may nominate someone for the vacancy, provided the person is willing to be nominated and the nomination is seconded; that name may then be voted upon. Voting to fill the vacancy is done by a show of hands (unless the Council adopts Standing Orders which allow any other form of voting in Council). If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. The Chair should place the names of those properly nominated into alphabetical order and take a vote. Councillors only have one vote each.

The first candidate to receive an absolute majority of those present and voting is declared elected. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the person with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. 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 chair of the meeting (BPC Standing orders 8).

Once elected, the co-opted Councillor must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and complete the Register of Members' Interests Form which is sent to Newark and Sherwood District Council for recording within 28 days.



BLIDWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

Application form for the role of Parish Councillor

Full name.....

Home address inc. postcode.....
.....
.....

Telephone number.....

Mobile number.....

Email.....

It is a condition of being a Parish Councillor that your email address (official email address will be supplied) will be made public and is to be used for Parish Council business.

Legal qualifications for being a Councillor

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a 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 of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for Blidworth? Yes / No

Have you lived either in the Parish or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year? Yes / No

Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the Parish for at least a year? Yes / No

Have you had your only or main place of work in Parish for at least a year? Yes / No

Disqualifications

(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order? Yes / No

Have you within the last five 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 three months or more without the option of a fine? Yes / No

Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority? Yes / No

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a Parish Councillor.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Parish Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business or trade union experience.

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Parish Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

Are there any questions you would like to ask the Parish Council?

Are you prepared to undertake Parish Councillor training within Nottinghamshire? Yes / No

Please note that the majority of Council meetings are held in the evening and, unfortunately, under present legislation, the Parish Council is not permitted to contribute to the cost of Councillors' childcare or care of dependents.

Blidworth Parish Council meetings take place on the third Thursday of every month from 7.00pm and are held at Blidworth Library, New lane, Blidworth, Notts, NG21 0PW

Declaration and Consent

I declare that I am eligible to become a Parish Councillor in the Parish of Blidworth and I certify that the contents of this application form are true and correct.

I consent to my details being retained if I am co-opted as a Councillor.

I consent to having a Parish Council email address and to receiving Parish Council documentation via email.

I consent to my name, address and telephone number being published together with my Parish Council email address.

Signed **Date**

Please return the completed form to:

Clare Brettell – Clerk and RFO
Blidworth Parish Council
Blidworth Library
New Lane
Blidworth
Notts NG21 0PW

Email: blidworthparishcouncil@outlook.com

Tel. 01623 490358

Some of the Practical skills and attributes you may require in becoming a Parish Councillor

Personal Attributes

- Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.
- Forward thinking
- Can bring a new skill, expertise or key local knowledge to the Council.

Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability

- Ability to listen constructively
- A good team player
- Ability to pick up and run with a variety of projects
- Solid interest in local matters
- Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community
- Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute opinions at meetings whilst willing to see others views and accept majority decisions.
- Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly.
- Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.
- Ability and willingness to work with the Council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other Community Councils, principal authority, charities).
- Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training.
- Experience of working or being a member in a local authority or other public body
- Experience of working with voluntary and or local community / interest groups
- Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and Community Councils or local authorities

Circumstances

- Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the Council (or meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) at any time and events in the evening and at weekends