

Nunburnholme with Kilnwick Parish Council Co-option Guide

The following guide is designed to advise Councillors when co-opting new members:

1. A Vacancy Notice with a deadline inviting prospective candidates to write to (or email) the Parish Clerk, is posted to notice boards. If the deadline passes and no expressions of interest have been received, then the Councillors will consider each expression of interest as it is received until Vacancies are filled.
2. Notice of co-option will be included in the Agenda for the appropriate meeting of the Parish Council.
3. Prospective candidates must fulfil the same requirements as prospective candidature in an election i.e. They must have lived, worked or owned land in or within 3 miles of the Parish for at least the previous 12 months. They must also be registered as a local government elector for the area covered by the Parish Council. This is laid out in the Local Government Act 1972, section 79.
4. Prospective candidates will be disqualified from being co-opted if they: hold any paid office or employment within the Parish Council; are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order; or have within five years before the day of co-option or since co-option been convicted in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man of any offence and has had passed on a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine. This is laid out in the Local Government Act 1972, section 80.
5. The Parish Council shall satisfy themselves of the eligibility of the proposed candidate by their own investigation of points 3 & 4 above or, if this is not possible, by evidence provided by the proposed candidate. They should also satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the proposed candidate for the role of a Parish Councillor. This will include evidence of participation or interest in community issues and knowledge or experience of issues concerning rural communities. A candidate will not be selected if there is evidence of disruptive behaviour of the individual.
6. Prospective candidates shall provide a brief written resume of their experience, interests and why they would like to become a Parish Councillor. This should be sent or emailed to the Clerk for distribution to Councillors.
7. The Parish Council require each candidate to attend one Parish Council meeting before a decision is made to co-opt.
8. Prospective candidates may address the Councillors during the Open Forum before the meeting where Councillors may wish to ask questions. A vote will then be taken during

the appropriate item on the Agenda, the candidate will be asked to leave the room for the vote.

9. A successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and none of them at first count receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, the candidate with the least votes will be struck off. The remainder should then be put to the vote again, this process should, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.
10. If there is more than one Vacancy and the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies, all the vacancies may be filled by a single composite resolution, but if the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies, each vacancy should be filled by a separate vote or series of votes.
11. Once the vote has been taken, the Chairman should declare the candidate who received the highest number of votes duly elected.
12. The person elected must make a declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of a member of the Parish Council or the Proper Officer of the Parish Council.
13. The Parish Council will not provide reasons for not selecting a candidate for co-option during the meeting. The candidate can ask for this in writing after the meeting has closed if required.