

BARROWBY PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs J Moss, 14 Riverside Walk, Bottesford, NG13 0AT
Tel: 07710 087124 Email: clerk@barrowbyparishcouncil.gov.uk

CO-OPTION POLICY

Although the process for co-option is not prescribed in law, District Councils and County Associations provide best practice advice and guidelines.

It is especially important that all applicants be treated alike so that the arrangements are seen as open, fair and transparent.

The co-option process adopted by Barrowby Parish Council is as follows:

1. The Parish Council will consider any interested applicants who have gone through the nomination/ election process in the first instance. If those persons do not wish to be considered for co-option or are considered unsuitable by the Parish Council, the Parish Council will advertise any vacancies using Parish Council noticeboards, website, newsletters, social media and/or any other appropriate methods.
2. The notices will include:
 - The contact details of the Clerk to Council to enable prospective co-option candidates to obtain further information on the role of a Parish Councillor
 - Details of the co-option process
 - The closing date for expressions of interest
 - The date on which the Parish Council intends to make a decision.
3. The Parish Council (or a parishioner) can legally approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option.
4. When the applications are received, the Clerk to Council will review all application details and check that applicants meet the qualification requirements.
5. Candidates may be asked to submit a short letter with a brief CV giving reasons why they should be considered for the vacancy. These letters will be circulated to elected councillors before the meeting at which the decision will be made.
6. Notice of consideration of vacancies must be given in the appropriate agenda for a meeting of the Parish Council. Candidates may be invited to the meeting to make a brief presentation and to provide elected councillors the opportunity to ask questions. The Parish Council retains the right to rely on written submissions alone.
7. Presentations and questioning take part in public.
 - Discussion by members of council of presentations from candidates, proposals that candidates may be considered as candidates and voting take place in private. Candidates and other members of the public will be asked to leave the room at that point.

Co-option Voting Process

8. If there are equal or fewer candidates than vacancies, the Parish Council can vote on a composite motion, duly proposed and seconded, that all candidates be co-opted.
9. If there are more duly proposed and seconded candidates than seats, it will be necessary for existing councillors present at the meeting to vote.
10. Arnold Baker on "Local Council Administration" (9th Edition) recommends that '*A successful candidate should 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 the first count has an overall majority, the candidate with the fewest votes should be eliminated and the remainder put to the vote again. The process should be repeated as necessary until one candidate has an overall majority. Each vacancy should be filled by a separate vote or series of votes. In a small council there is a distinct possibility that there could be a tie for last place in the first round of voting, leaving the candidate for elimination to be decided by lots.*'

11. The Clerk to Council will notify the candidates of the results in person, by telephone or by email, as soon as is reasonably possible. This is not the duty of any elected member.
12. Successfully co-opted candidates become councillors in their own right with immediate effect, and are no different to any other member. As such, they must sign a declaration of acceptance of office and complete and return a register of interests form at their first meeting, or within twenty-eight calendar days of election, whichever is the sooner. Their term of office runs until the next quadrennial elections for the Parish Council.

Eligibility

You must be either:

- British;
- A Commonwealth National;
- An Irish or European Union citizen;

and

- 18 years of age or over, and fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

1. being on and remaining on the register of electors for the parish: or, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the nomination;
3. have lived in, worked in or lived within 3 miles of the parish boundary.

This policy was reviewed and approved by the Council at the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 15th May 2023.

Review date July 2025.