



## Ludgershall Town Council Co-option Policy

The co-option of a Town Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the Town Council and no poll (by-election) has been called.

To ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken, the procedure below will be followed by Ludgershall Town Council:

1. On receipt of written confirmation from the Electoral Service of Wiltshire Council, the casual vacancy can be filled by means of co-option. In this instance the Clerk will:
  - a. Advertise the vacancy for four weeks on the council notice boards, website, and any other media available.
  - b. Advise LTC that the co-option policy has been instigated by sending a memorandum to all Councillors.
  - c. Speak with any prospective candidates to advise them on the role, responsibilities and conduct required of the office.
2. Applicants for co-option will be asked to:
  - a. Provide information about themselves by way of completing a short application form (A copy of which is attached).
  - b. Confirm their eligibility for the position of Town Councillor within the statutory rules (A copy of which is attached).
3. An extraordinary Co-option meeting of the Full Council will be convened to take place on the same day as a Full Council meeting for the purpose of meeting with the prospective Councillors and voting on their appointment.
4. Copies of the application forms will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk, with the agenda and meeting pack prior to the meeting of the Full Council where the co-option will be considered. All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and Councillors as strictly private and confidential.
5. **Voting procedure**

Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. It should be noted that the council does not have to appoint a candidate if they are considered unsuitable. Therefore, Councillors may decline to vote for a candidate if they wish.

After the candidates have spoken, they will be asked to leave the room so that the Cllrs can discuss/vote. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

	<b>One candidate</b>	<b>Multiple candidates</b>
<b>One position</b>	Candidate must receive the	If no one, at the first count, receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes and

	absolute majority vote of those present and voting	the remainder must then be put to the vote again; this process must, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.
<b>Multiple positions</b>	Candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present and voting	<p><b>If the number of candidates equals the number of positions</b> Each candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present and voting. Councillors will have the same number of votes as positions but are not required to use all of their votes if they wish.</p> <p><b>If the number of candidates is greater than the number of positions</b> If no one, at the first count, receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidates with the least number of votes in order to obtain an equal number of candidates to positions. Then the above procedure will be followed.</p> <p><b>If the number of candidates is less than the number of positions</b> Each candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present and voting</p>

6. After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate duly elected.

Agreed at Finance & Policy – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, minute number: 044-20/21  
Ratified at Full Town Council – 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021, minute number: 100-20/21