



## **Co-Opt of a Member to fill a Casual Vacancy Procedure**

The Council shall comply with all legal requirements relating to co-option of members to fill casual vacancies, and to all procedures required by Cheshire West and Cheshire Council.

Within one week of a vacancy being declared, the Council shall make this known by posting a notice on the Council's website and main noticeboard, and by informing other agencies normally receiving Town Council news items for publication.

The standard form provided by Cheshire West and Chester Council shall be used to advertise the casual vacancy. This makes it clear that 10 residents have 14 days in which to call for a by-election and sets out the process for so doing. Such elections are dealt with by Cheshire West and Cheshire Council but are the financial responsibility of Neston Town Council.

Applicants for co-option shall be required to apply using a forms approved by the Council Manager, such forms requiring full name, full address, a declaration of willingness to undertake the duties of a Town Councillor, a statement of such life experiences as the applicant may wish to publish (eg qualifications, occupational history, status), and a statement advancing the reasons the applicant considers the Council should co-opt him or her.

Application forms shall be published in the same manner as other documents for consideration at a meeting of the Council.

Applicants will receive acknowledgement of receipt of their application and if, unless there is insufficient time, be sent a copy of the Council agenda with details of the meeting at which the co-option will be discussed. Applicants shall be informed via the application form that their application will be published and that they may, but shall not be compelled to, make an oral submission to the Council during that part of proceedings set aside for residents' statements or questions.

If received on the day, co-option applications and nominations can be considered at Council meeting at which the vote to determine co-option will take place.

In the event that there is only one applicant for co-option to fill a single vacancy as a representative of a ward, at the point identified on the meeting agenda, the Chairman shall ask for a proposer and a seconder to nominate the candidate. Should an applicant fail to be nominated, the applicant shall not be accepted.

A councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. In this instance a simple majority of votes in favour of co-option shall be required for the applicant to be declared elected by co-option.

In the event that there are two applicants for co-option to fill a single vacancy as a representative of a ward, at the point identified on the meeting agenda, the Chairman shall ask for a proposer and a seconder to nominate and second applicants. Should an applicant fail to be nominated, the applicant shall not be accepted. Members will

then be invited to cast a vote in favour of the co-option of each duly nominated applicant. Councillors have only one vote each. The applicant receiving more votes in favour of co-option and with the overall majority shall be declared elected by co-option.

Should no applicant receive an absolute majority of votes in favour, the applicant with the fewest votes in favour shall be eliminated and a fresh vote taken in accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council.