

Docking Parish Council Co-option Policy

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

To ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken, Docking Parish Council will use the following procedure:

1. When the Electoral Service of the Borough Council writes to confirm that the vacancy can be filled by co-option, the Clerk will:
 - a. Advertise the vacancy for 14 days for the public to view.
 - b. Send an email to all councillors to let them know there will be a co-option.
2. Applicants for co-option will be asked to:
 - a. Provide information about themselves by completing a short application form. [A copy of the application form is attached.]
 - b. Confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules. [A copy of the Eligibility Form is attached.]
3. Copies of the application and eligibility forms will be circulated to all councillors by the Clerk, at least seven days before the meeting of the full council where the co-option will be considered. The Clerk and councillors will treat these documents as strictly private and confidential.
4. During the public session of the meeting each applicant will have a maximum of 5 minutes to stand and tell the Parish Council, other candidates and any members of the public why they feel they would be a good Councillor and what experience and skills they could bring to the Parish Council.
5. Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must receive an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one, at the first count, receives a clear majority over the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes. The remainder must then be put to the vote again; this process must, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.

Councillors shall vote by show of hands.

In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

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

Co-option Application Form

Name.....

Address for Correspondence.....

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..... Postcode.....

Tel..... Mobile.....

Are you over 18?

Yes/No

Please detail any experience you have that may be relevant to Docking Parish Council. (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)

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Is there any other information you would like to tell us about regarding your application? (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)

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Signed..... Dated.....

Please return your completed form, together with the Co-option Eligibility Form to: Michelle Wroth (Parish Clerk) Hall Farm, Sedgford Road, Docking, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 8LJ or email: docking.council@outlook.com

Co-option Eligibility Form

1. To be eligible for co-option as a Docking Parish Councillor you must be a British subject, or a citizen of the Commonwealth, or the European Union.
2. You must also be 18 years of age or over on the day on which you are nominated, or if there is a poll, then the day of the election.
3. You must additionally meet one of the criteria set out below.

Please circle which of the following four points best applies to you

- a) I am registered as a local government elector for the parish; or
- b) I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option, occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the parish; or
- c) My principal or only place of work during those twelve months has been within the parish; or
- d) I have, during the whole twelve months, lived in the parish, or within 3 miles of it.

4. Please note that under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, a person is disqualified from being elected as a Local Councillor or being a member of a Local Council if he/she:

- a. Holds any paid office or employment of the local council (other than the office of Chairman) or of a joint committee on which the Council is represented; or
- b. Is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or has made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors (but see below); or
- c. Has within five years before the day of election, or since his/her election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has been sentenced to imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than three months without the option of a fine; or
- d. Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 for corrupt or illegal practices.

This disqualification for bankruptcy ceases in the following circumstances.

- i. If the bankruptcy is annulled on the grounds that either the person ought not to have been adjudged bankrupt or that his/her debts have been fully discharged
- ii. If the person is discharged with a certificate that the bankruptcy was caused by misfortune without misconduct on his/her part
- iii. If the person is discharged without such a certificate.

In (i) and (ii) above, the disqualification ceases on the date of the annulment and discharge respectively. In (iii), it ceases on the expiry of five years from the date of discharge.

I (INSERT NAME)..... **hereby confirm, that I am eligible to apply for the vacancy of Docking Parish Councillor, and that the information given on this form is a true and accurate record.**

Signed..... Dated.....

