Batheaston Parish Council

Application and Personal Statement for consideration as a co-opted Parish Councillor

Please refer to the Co-option Policy, Page 4

1. Personal Details

Full Name	
Preferred title	
Address	
Telephone and email contacts	
How did you hear of this vacancy?	

2. Eligibility and commitments

I confirm that I am eligible to become a parish councillor under the provisions of s. 79 of the 1972 Local Government Act, and I am not disqualified under the provisions of s.80 of the same Act. ☐

I understand and commit to maintaining the standards set out in the BPC members' *Code of Conduct*, and that my telephone and/or e-mail contacts will become public information if I become a Councillor. ☐

3. Personal Statement

Please set out briefly under the headings below the qualities and attributes that you feel make you suitable to fill the role of Parish Councillor.

3.1 Personal Attributes

Criteria to address:

- ☐ Some knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.
- ☐ Able to offer my time and bring relevant skills, expertise or local knowledge.

3.2 Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability

Criteria to address:

- ☐ Having good interpersonal skills, with the ability to listen constructively, contribute opinions and communicate clearly at meetings.
- ☐ Being a good team player in terms of considering the views of others and accepting majority decisions, and able to work closely and maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.
- ☐ If applicable, please flag any experience you have of working within another public body, or other voluntary/community interest group.

- ☐ Similarly, please indicate your level of awareness of the legal status and key areas of parish council business (although induction and training in these issues will be provided)

3.3 Circumstances

Criteria to address:

- ☐ Able to attend meetings as per the Council's current normal meeting schedule, and willing to consider attending ad-hoc meetings and duties at other times.
- ☐ Able to engage with the Council's business via electronic communication.
- ☐ Ability and willingness to undertake induction and other relevant training.

Signature
Date

PLEASE RETURN YOUR APPLICATION TO THE PARISH CLERK, PREFERABLY ELECTRONICALLY TO clerk@batheaston-pc.gov.uk or in hard copy to the parish office at:--
60, Gloucester Road
BATH BA1 7BN

Thank you

COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION POLICY

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedure to ensure there is compliance with legislation and continuity of procedures in the co-option of members to Batheaston Parish Council (BPC). The Co-option procedure is entirely managed by BPC and this policy will ensure that a fair and equitable process is carried out.

2. Co-option

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

- A councillor fails to make his declaration of acceptance of office at the proper time;
- A councillor resigns;
- A councillor dies;
- A councillor becomes disqualified; or
- A councillor fails for six (6) months to attend meetings of a council committee or subcommittee or to attend as a representative of the Council a meeting of an outside body.

BPC has to notify Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES) of a Casual Vacancy and advertise the vacancy for a period of approximately 3 weeks to give electors the opportunity to request an election. This occurs if at least ten electors write to BANES stating that an election is requested.

If a by-election is called, a polling station will be set up by BANES and the people of the parish will be asked to go to the polls to vote for candidates who will have put themselves forward by way of a nomination paper. BPC will pay the costs of the election. If more than one candidate is then nominated a by-election takes place but if only one candidate is put forward they are duly elected without a ballot.

If ten residents do not request a ballot, BPC is able to co-opt a volunteer.

3. Confirmation of Co-option

On receipt, of written confirmation, from the Electoral Services Office at BANES, the casual vacancy can be filled by means of Co-option, the Parish Clerk will advertise the vacancy for a period of at least four weeks on the Council notice boards and website, and advise Councillors that the Co-option Policy has been instigated.

4. Eligibility of Candidates

BPC is able to consider any person to fill a vacancy provided that:

- is an elector for the parish; or
- have resided in the parish for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land or other premises in the parish; or
- had his/her principal place of work in the parish; or
- has lived within three miles (direct) of the parish.

There are certain disqualifications for election, of which the main are (see 5. 80 of the Local Government Act 1972):

- holding a paid office under the local authority;
- bankruptcy;
- having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of not less than three months, without the option of a fine during the five years preceding the election; and
- being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices.

Candidates found to be offering inducements of any kind will be disqualified.

5. Applications

The Clerk and Councillors should seek to advertise the vacancies and the process as widely as possible to any qualifying candidate(s).

Although there is no Statutory Requirement to do so, candidates will be requested to:

- Submit information about themselves, by way of completing a short application form (Appendix A)
- Confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules (Appendix B).
- Submit to a Basic DBS check

Following receipt of applications, the next suitable council meeting will have an agenda item 'To receive written applications for the office of Parish councillor and to Co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy'.

This item will be first on the agenda, and any candidates co-opted may join the remainder of the meeting as Councillors.

Copies of the candidates applications will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk at least 3 clear days prior to the meeting of the full Council, when the Co-option will be considered. All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and all Councillors as Strictly Private and Confidential.

Candidates will be sent a full agenda of the meeting at which they are to be considered for appointment, together with a copy of the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations of BPC. Candidates will also be informed that they will be invited to speak about their application at the meeting.

6. At the Co-option Meeting

At the co-option meeting, candidates will be given five minutes maximum to introduce themselves to Members, give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a Member of BPC. Where the Council wishes to discuss the merits of candidates and inevitably their

personal attributes, this could be prejudicial and the Council will resolve to exclude the members of the press and public.

As soon as all candidates have finished giving their submissions, the council will proceed to a vote on the acceptability of each candidate utilising the 'person specification' criteria set out in Appendix C and any personal statements provided by candidates, with each candidate being proposed and seconded by the councillors in attendance and a vote by a show of hands.

A candidate must receive an absolute majority vote (50% + 1) of members present at the Parish Council meeting and able to vote.

If there are more than two candidates and no candidate with an overall majority in the first round of voting the candidate with the least number of votes will drop out of the process. Further rounds of voting will then take place with the process repeated until a candidate has an absolute majority.

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

Council is not obliged to fill any vacancy or to select anyone from the candidates who apply.

After the votes has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate duly elected and after signing their declaration of acceptance of office, may take their seat immediately.

The Clerk will notify Electoral Services at BANES of the new Councillor appointment. The successful candidate(s) must complete the 'registration of interests' within 28 days of being elected. The form should be handed to the Clerk for forwarding to the Monitoring Officer.

If insufficient candidates come forward for co-option, vacancies can continue to be advertised until candidates come forward.

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Next review due: May 2025