



Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Council Co-option Policy and Procedure

The co-option of a Parish Councillor can occur either where a vacancy remains after an election or where the resignation of a councillor causes a 'casual vacancy' to occur. This policy assumes that, where a casual vacancy has arisen, the Clerk has complied with the statutory requirement that will allow co-option to proceed lawfully.

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

- The Parish Council will advertise the vacancy for at least two weeks on the council notice board and any other council media.
- The Clerk will advise any potential candidates of the role requirements and advise of procedure including acceptance of office declaration and Declaration of Interests. The Clerk is also to advise of the council's financial position and copies of the council's Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are to be forwarded. A brief explanation of these may be necessary. Training or reference books should be offered.
- Applicants for co-option will be asked to:
 - a. Provide information about themselves by way of completing a short application form (a copy of the form is attached).
 - b. Confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules (a copy of the eligibility form is attached).
- Applications for co-option must be received by the Council at least seven days before the next Council meeting at which the co-option will be considered.
- If no applications are received, the Council will continue to advertise the vacancy and will consider any applications as they are submitted. However, in order to be considered at a Parish Council meeting, an application must be received at least seven days before the next meeting.
- The Council will have to vote to co-opt at a properly called meeting. The Council will be required to vote even when only considering one candidate.
- When more than one candidate is being considered then each council member shall vote for their choice. Should none of the candidates receive an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the candidate with the least number of votes shall be removed from the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.
- A vote shall be by means of a paper vote, The Clerk will officiate any paper vote.
- Candidates may be asked to speak for up to 3 minutes at a council meeting. Candidates do not have to attend the meeting at which the co-option is considered. If

a candidate is not in attendance then the Council must also agree to the declaration of acceptance being signed later but before the next council meeting.

- Following the co-option, the Clerk is to advise the Elections Officer and Monitoring Officer at the County Council and forward the candidate's Declaration of Interests form.



Co-option Application Form

Name.....

Address for Correspondence.....

..... Postcode.....

Email

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

Are you over 18? Yes/No

Please detail any experience you have that may be relevant to Broomhaugh & Riding 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 disclose 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 the Clerk, 10 Church Close, Riding Mill, Northumberland NE44 6DP or send a scanned copy of the form to ridingmillclerk@gmail.com



Co-option Eligibility Form

1. In order to be eligible for co-option as a Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Councillor you must be a British subject, or a citizen of the Commonwealth, or the European Union. You must also be 18 years of age or over on the "relevant date", that being the day on which you are nominated, or if there is a poll, then the day of the election. You must additionally be able to meet at least one of the following qualifications as set out below:

Please tick which of the following four points applies to you.

- ☐ I am registered as a local government elector for the parish; or
 - ☐ 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
 - ☐ My principal or only place of work during those twelve months has been within the parish; or
 - ☐ I have, during the whole twelve months, resided in the parish, or within 3 miles of it.
2. 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 Broomhaugh & Riding Parish Councillor, and that the information given on this form is a true and accurate record.

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