

If a vacancy arises on the Parish Council due to an existing councillor's resignation, disqualification or death, the process to fill the vacancy is as follows:

- Aynho Parish Council will notify the Returning Officer (at SNC) of the vacancy.
- The Returning Officer will send the Parish Council a notice which they have a duty to display for 14 days, informing residents of the vacancy.
- An election will be called if ten residents, who are registered to vote write to the Returning Officer requesting that an election be held.

If An Election is Not Called For

The Parish Council are notified by SNC that an election has not been called and that the vacancy may be filled by co-option. Or, if vacancies remain after a recent election, the following procedure will apply:

The Parish Council will post a notice on their notice boards to advertise the vacancies. The notice will also include the closing date for all expressions of interest to be received.

When the applications have been received the Parish Clerk will consider the application letter(s). If the applicant is:

- elected and not disqualified they may be co-opted on to the Parish Council.
- If there is more than one application then the decision will be decided by a vote.
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Eligibility For Office

To qualify for election as a Parish Councillor, and to hold such an office, an applicant must be:

A British, Irish or qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of any other member State of the European Union and on the relevant day (the day of nomination or election) have reached 18 years of age or over. In addition, they must meet at least one of these four qualifications.

- On the relevant day and thereafter they continue to be on the electoral register for the Parish, or
- During the whole of the twelve months before that day they have owned or tenanted land or premises in the Parish, or
- During the whole of the twelve months before that day their principal or only place of work has been in the Parish, or
- During the whole of the twelve months before that day they have resided in the parish or within 4.8km (3 miles) of the Parish boundary.

Disqualification

An applicant may be disqualified from standing (or being co-opted), if they are employed by the council, have had bankruptcy restriction orders made against them or they have a previous criminal conviction with a prison sentence of three months or more.

Co-Opting a Councillor

Co-option is the process by which the Parish Council selects a new Councillor and it is done as an agenda item within a monthly Parish Council meeting.

The Parish Council manages the process of co-option by itself and strives to demonstrate that it is fair and equitable by following the procedure set out below:

Procedure

1. Aynho Parish Council invites interested candidates to write to the Clerk by a specified date.
 1. If there is only one applicant for one vacancy, the applicant will be co-opted to the Parish Council following a vote of Councillors at their monthly meeting (where co-opting a new Councillor is an agenda item) and where a majority agree.
 2. If there is more than one candidate, the letters received are circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which a Parish Councillor is to be co-opted. These letters form part of the meeting documents which Councillors receive for every Parish Council meeting.
2. At the Parish Council meeting candidates are invited to say something about themselves and Councillors have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of three minutes.
3. In a closed session of the Parish Council without the public present, members consider the candidates and, following the discussion, the public are invited back into the meeting before the voting takes place.
4. The Chairman will request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. One candidate needs to receive an absolute majority of votes.
5. The Chairman will then place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and proceed to vote. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.
6. Voting will be by a show of hands and will continue until one candidate has received an absolute majority of those Councillors present. At this stage, the successful candidate will be declared co-opted.
7. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. Voting will then take place for the remaining candidates until one person receives an absolute majority.

8. The successful candidate is then declared co-opted to the Parish Council and will be asked to join the meeting.
9. The successful candidate is a councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.