



CO-OPTION POLICY

This Co-Option Policy is procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 – Good practice for selection of candidates for co-option to local Councils.

1. A casual vacancy can occur for a number of reasons.

To be valid, a resignation from the council must be made to the chairman in writing with a 'wet signature' (this means in ink rather than electronically generated and must in hard copy) or from a verified email address. When the chairman resigns, s/he follows the same procedure but serves the resignation on the clerk. If a member fails to attend any meeting of the council for 6 months, without a reason for absence being formally accepted by the council, s/he automatically ceases to be a member of the council. If a member dies, a casual vacancy occurs. There are other circumstances which can cause a casual vacancy, but these are less common.

2. The parish council must give public notice of the casual vacancy as soon as practicable after it is deemed to have occurred (in accordance with s232 of the 1972 Local Government Act). This is effected by giving notice in conspicuous place(s) in the area and in any such other manner, if any, as appears to the council to be desirable for giving publicity.

3. A notice of casual vacancy allows for 10 people on the electoral register to request, in writing to the proper officer of the principal authority, that an election be held. Should this happen, a by-election must be held (unless an ordinary election is due within the next six months).

4. If no request to hold a by-election is forthcoming, parish councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the council to fill a casual vacancy. Although seeking 'expressions of interest' is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

5. Whenever the need for co-option arises, the Parish Council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' by a specified date from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand as a parish councillor. All potential candidates will be requested to put their request for consideration in writing with the following additional information:-

- a) Reason for wishing to be Councillor
- b) Relevant Community/Council work
- c) Other skills they can bring to the Council. It will be made clear that becoming a member of the parish council requires that a means of contact by telephone and/or email will be published in the public domain.

6. At the next Full Council meeting:

- a) The clerk to confirm that each candidate is qualified to become a Councillor and is not disqualified from being a Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80
- b) Chairman to invite candidates an opportunity to speak if they are in attendance and to allow members the chance to ask questions of the candidates.
- c) The chairman will offer opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option to the candidates. In most cases, the candidates will be asked to leave the room while this process takes place.

d) The meeting will vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39). One person will be chosen for each vacancy.

7. If present, the co-opted members may join the meeting, but it should be noted that their vote on any matter requiring prior notice will be discounted in the case of a tied vote for that meeting only.

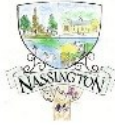
8. The Clerk will notify Electoral Services of the new councillor appointment, initiate 'Acceptance of Office' paperwork and advise the co-opted member of her/his obligations with regard to registration of interests.

9. If no one accepts the vacant post(s), the whole process is to be repeated when new individuals expressing interest are identified or until the next election.

10. The same process will be filled to co-opt members following an ordinary election after which vacancies remained.

The attached form will be used as the basis of ascertaining a candidate's suitability to put his or herself forward for co-option.

NASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL



☎: 01780 435084

📞: 07767 795825

✉: clerk@nassington.org.uk

APPLICATION FOR THE ROLE OF COUNCILLOR ON NASSINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Full name	
Home address Inc. Postcode	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email	

Legal qualifications for being a parish councillor.

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes/No.
Are you 18 or over?	Yes/No.

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for the parish of Nassington?	Yes/No
Have you lived either in the ward of Nassington, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes/No
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the ward of Nassington for at least a year?	Yes/No
Have you had your only or main place of work in ward of Nassington for at least a year?	Yes/No.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	Yes/No.
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	Yes/No.
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	Yes/No.

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a parish councillor.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business or trade union experience.

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

Are there any questions you would like to ask the council?

Please note that the majority of Council meetings are held in an evening and, unfortunately, under present legislation the parish council is not permitted to contribute to the cost of councillors' childcare or care of dependents.

Please type your name below or sign if you are submitting a hard copy and return to clerk@nassington.org.uk or Nassington Parish Council, 15 Station Road, Nassington. PE8 6QB

Signed

Date