

## Newcastle Higher Community Council



### Co-option Policy for new Councillor

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

Community Councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the Council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (i.e. The vacancy has been the subject of a public notice and less than 10 registered electors have requested an election by a deadline date specified by the District Returning Officer).

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.

Whenever the need for co-option arises, Newcastle Higher Community Council will consider advertising the vacancy to seek and encourage ‘expressions of interest’ by a specified date from anyone living or working in the ward of Pen Y Fai, Aberkenfig or within 3 miles of its boundaries who is eligible to stand as a Community Councillor. All potential candidates will be requested to put their request for consideration by completing an application form. Applicants are encouraged to attend a Council meetings as members of the public before applying to become a Councillor.

Please note it is a condition of a Councillor that a means of contact by telephone and e-mail will be public information. A Declaration of Interests Form must be completed and will be published.

At the next Full Council meeting:

- i. 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;
- ii. Chairman to offer opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option

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- iii. Vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option, utilising the 'person specification' criteria set out and any personal statements requested from and provided by candidates. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39) (The applicant with the least number of votes casted will be deleted and the vote taken again and again etc. until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies);
- iv. Vote to select the order in which acceptable candidates (decided by the vote at iii above) should be approached to offer co-option on this occasion.
- v. The Clerk to approach and offer co-option to candidate(s) after the meeting in the order of priority determined by the vote at iii above, if the first choice does not accept the post, then the Council will consider the outstanding candidates at the following meeting following (iii above).

The Clerk to notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor appointment, initiate 'acceptance of office' paperwork and 'registration of interests' on the Council website.

Assuming that the co-option position is filled, and all paperwork completed, formally ratify the appointment at the next Full Council meeting.

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

**The Co-Option Policy was adopted by Full Council at its Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022.**

### Document Amendment History

Policy Number	Originator of change	Date of Change	Amendments
1	Implementation	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	Implementation