



SPRINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

CO-OPTION POLICY

The co-option of a Parish Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council and no poll (by-election) has been called. To ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken, the procedure below will be followed by Springfield Parish Council:

On receipt of written confirmation from the Electoral Service of the City Council, the casual vacancy can be filled by means of co-option. In this instance the Clerk will:

- a) Advertise the vacancy for four weeks on the council notice boards and website, and place an advertisement in the Parish Council newsletter if the date of the publication is appropriate.
- b) Advise the Parish Council that the co-option policy has been instigated by sending a memorandum to all Councillors.
- c) Speak with any prospective candidates to advise them on the role, responsibilities and conduct required of the office.

Applicants for co-option may be asked to:

- a) Provide information about themselves by way of completing a short application form (a copy of which is attached).
- b) Confirm their eligibility for the position of Parish Councillor within the statutory rules (a copy of which is attached).
- c) Attend a council meeting in advance of the interview meeting.
- d) Consider the committee and working party structure and advise the council at the interview which they would wish to be members.
- e) Consider the current action plan and advise the council on the application form which projects are of interest to them.

Consideration will take place either at an Extraordinary Co-option meeting/Full Council meeting for the purpose of meeting with the prospective Councillors and voting on their appointment. Copies of the application forms will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk to enable the co-option to be considered. All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and Councillors as strictly private and confidential.

Voting will be according to the statutory requirements; a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. It should be noted that the council does not have to appoint a candidate if they are considered unsuitable.

Therefore, Councillors may decline to vote for a candidate if they wish. For this procedure only, Standing Orders will be set aside, and Councillors will vote by a secret ballot/show of hands. The Chairman to direct the method of voting.

In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote. Where there is one position vacant and only one applicant, the candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present. Where there is one position vacant, but multiple applicants, if no one, at the first count, receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes and the remainder must then be put to the vote again; this process must, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute result is obtained. Where there are multiple positions vacant and only one applicant, the candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present and voting.

Where there are multiple positions and multiple candidates, the following applies:

If the number of candidates equals the number of positions:

Each candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present and voting. Councillors will have the same number of votes as positions but are not required to use all their votes if they wish.

If the number of candidates is greater than the number of positions:

If no one, at the first count, receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidates with the least number of votes in order to obtain an equal number of candidates to positions. Then the above procedure will be followed.

If the number of candidates is less than the number of positions:

Each candidate must receive the absolute majority vote of those present and voting. After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate(s) duly elected.

Date of policy: 4th August 2025

Approving committee: Full Council

Date of committee meeting: 4th August 2025

Policy version reference:1

Policy effective from: 4th August 2025

Date for next review: August 2026

CO-OPTION APPLICATION	
Name: Address for Correspondence:	
Tel/ Mobile/Email: (Councillors will be allocated a compulsory councillor specific email address if co-opted).	
Do you agree that you meet the criteria to become a Parish Councillor?	
What experience can you bring to Springfield Parish Council. Do you have any areas of expertise? (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper).	
How would you like to get involved with the parish council? (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)	
What projects on the current Action Plan interest you? (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)	

Is there any other information you would like to disclose regarding your application? (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)	
Can you please provide us with 2 forms of ID (Passport or Driving License and a Utility Bill)	

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

Please return your completed form, together with a copy of your passport/driving licence/ proof of address (utility bill) to the address above or via e-mail.