

MUNDFORD 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 Mundford Parish Council:

1. On receipt, of written confirmation, from the Electoral Service of the District Council, the casual vacancy can be filled by means of co-option, in this instance the Clerk will:
 - a. Advertise the vacancy for 14 days on the council noticeboard and website.
 - b. Advise the council that the co-option policy has been instigated by sending a memorandum to all councillors.

OR

As any vacancies are regularly advertised on the Parish Council website, noticeboard and the village magazine, interested residents can contact the Clerk at any time to request to apply for co-option and the rest of this process will be followed.

2. Applicants for co-option will be asked to:
 - a. Provide information about themselves by way of completing a short application form.
 - b. Confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules.
3. Copies of the application forms will be circulated to all councillors by the Clerk, at least seven days prior to the meeting of the full council where the co-option will be considered. All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and councillors as strictly private and confidential.
4. The Parish Council is not obliged to co-opt to fill any vacancy, even if the Council invites applications for co-option, it is not obliged to select anyone from the candidates who apply, and does not need to provide an explanation for its decision.
5. The Parish Council will appoint co-opted members using a closed vote.

Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and 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 majority is obtained.

In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote.
6. After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful candidate duly elected.