BURTON GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Contact the Council: clerk@burtongreenparishcouncil.gov.uk
Tel: 01926 754030 Website: www.burtongreenparishcouncil.gov.uk

COUNCILLOR CO-OPTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This is the co-option policy of Burton Green Parish Council, hereinafter referred to as "the Council". This policy sets out the approach used when co-opting members onto the Council and ensures that there is compliance with legislation and that a fair and equitable process is carried out. Councillors elected by co-option are no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.

NOTIFICATION OF VACANCY

In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the office of parish councillor, the Clerk will immediately inform Warwick District Council's (WDC) Elections Coordinator and the Notice of Vacancy provided will be displayed on the website and noticeboard. This will be displayed for the period of time stated on the Notice of Vacancy.

At the same time, the Clerk will advertise the vacancy for co-option within the Parish for a period of 4 weeks (or other such period that the Council may agree) on the Council notice boards and website. The end date for receiving all applications must fall after the period stated on the Notice of Vacancy.

If, by the date on the Notice of Vacancy, WDC have received written requests for an election from ten electors for the area, then the vacancy **must** be filled by election (arranged by WDC) and the Council cannot fill it by co-option, even if there are insufficient candidates.

If no request for an election is received by WDC by the date on the Notice of Vacancy then the Council can fill the vacancy by co-option. This is done as an agenda item within an Ordinary meeting – the Council will endeavour to fill the vacancy within sixty days.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. In the advertisement, the Council will invite interested candidates to apply to the Clerk by a specified date.
2. Candidates will be requested to complete the Application and Eligibility forms in Appendix A and B.
3. Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria will be invited to attend a Council meeting. At the meeting candidates will be invited to say something about themselves and Councillors will have an opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of three minutes. The process will be carried out in the public session and there will be no private discussions between members prior to a vote being taken.
4. The Chairman will request Councillors 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 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 in accordance with Standing Orders 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. As they will not have been officially summoned or have proper notice of the meeting, they will not be permitted to take part in any vote that occurs during that particular meeting.
9. The person elected must sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk (the Proper Officer of the Parish Council); this declaration is retained in the parish records. They will also be required to provide the Clerk with their Register of Member's Interests within 4 weeks of accepting office, this will be sent to WDC.

NOTE: There is nothing preventing Councillors from approaching members of the Parish to encourage them to offer themselves for co-option however it is imperative that all applicants are treated alike in order that the arrangements are seen as fair. Applicants should be discouraged from any personal lobbying.

Signed (Chair):	Cllr Aizlewood (acting Chair)
Date:	20.4.26
Date for next review:	April 2027

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APPENDIX A

COUNCIL CO-OPTION APPLICATION FORM

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Email Address:	
Date of Birth:	

Please detail any experience you have that may be relevant to Burton Green Parish Council (continue onto a separate sheet if needed)

Use of Personal Information
The Parish Council will use information you provide on this application form to assess your suitability to be a parish councillor.

Declaration & Consent
I have read the section entitled "Use of Personal Information" and by signing this form I consent to the use and disclosure of my information included in this application form.

I declare the information given on this form to be true and correct.

SIGNED..... NAME.....

DATE.....

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APPENDIX B

COUNCIL CO-OPTION ELIGIBILTY FORM

In order to be eligible for co-option as a Parish Councillor you must satisfy certain criteria. You must satisfy **both** (a.) and (b.) below and **at least one** of the options (c.) – (f.)

Please tick all those which apply to you:

a. I am 18 years of age or over;

and

b. I am a British citizen or a citizen of the Commonwealth, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union;

and

c. I am, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish;

or

d. I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option occupied, as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the parish;

or

e. My principal or only place of work during those twelve months has been in the parish;

or

f. I have during the whole of those twelve months resided in the parish or within 3 miles of it.

Please note that under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 a person is disqualified from being a parish councillor if he/she:

- Is employed by the parish council or holds paid office (other than chairman, vice-chairman or deputy chairman) under the parish council (including joint boards or committees); or
- Is employed by an entity controlled by the Parish Council; or
- Is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order; or
- Has within five years before the day of co-option, or since his/her co-option, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has been sentenced to imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than three months without the option of a fine; or

- Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices and offences relating to donations) or the Audit Commission Act 1998; or
- Is subject to the notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, and the ordinary period allowed for making an appeal or application in respect of the order or notification has passed.
- Has been convicted of an intimidatory criminal offence motivated by hostility towards a candidate, future candidate or campaigner or holder of a relevant elective office. The effect of a disqualification order is that the person will be disqualified from standing for, being elected to, and holding any relevant elective office for five years.

Use of Personal Information
The Parish Council will use the information provided on this form to assess your eligibility to be a Parish councillor.

Declaration & Consent

I..... hereby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of Burton Green Parish Councillor, that I am not disqualified from being a parish councillor and that the information given on this form is true and correct.

I have read the section entitled "Use of Personal Information" and by signing this form I consent to the use and disclosure of my information included in this form.

SIGNED..... NAME.....

DATE.....

Please complete and return this form, together with the Co-option Application Form to:

The Clerk, Burton Green Parish Council, 19 Brooke Road, Kenilworth CV8 2BD
Email: clerk@burtongreenparishcouncil.gov.uk