



ALBURY PARISH COUNCIL

Serving Farley Green, Brook, Little London & Newlands Corner

Co-option Policy

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the procedure for co-opting new members to Albury Parish Council when a casual vacancy arises. This ensures transparency, fairness, and adherence to legal requirements.

2. Eligibility

To be eligible for co-option to the parish council, candidates must be:

- Be a UK, EU, or Commonwealth citizen aged 18 or over;
- Be an elector of the parish
- During the whole of the last 12 months, occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish; or
- During the last 12 months, resided in the parish or within 3 miles of it; or
- During the last 12 months, had their principal or only place of work in the parish

3. Casual Vacancy

(1) The Co-option of a Parish Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the council and no poll (by-election) has been called. A casual vacancy occurs when:

- A councillor fails to make his declaration of acceptance of office at the proper time;
- A councillor resigns;
- A councillor dies;
- In the case of a councillor who is disqualified by virtue of a criminal conviction, under s. 34 of the Localism Act 2011 (England), the expiry of the period for making an application or appeal or, if an appeal or application has been made, the date that any such application or appeal process comes to an end;
- On the date of a report or certificate of an election court that declares an election void;
- A person ceases to become qualified to be a councillor for a reason not mentioned above;
- A councillor fails for six months to attend meetings of a council committee or a sub-committee or to attend as a representative of the Council a meeting of an outside body.

(2) **Filling a Casual Vacancy** – In accordance with rule 5 of the 2006 Rules, if within 14 days after public notice has been given, at least 10 electors give written notice to the proper officer of the principal authority of a request for an election to fill the vacancy, then a by-election must be held except where the vacancy occurs within six months before the date when the councillor in question would have regularly retired (e.g. four days after the next ordinary election). If a by-election is called, and an insufficient number of candidates is nominated, those nominated are elected (see s. 39(5)(b) of the 1983 Act), and the district council must call a further by-election to fill the remaining vacancy or vacancies (see s. 39(1)(b))

4. Co-option

If no by-election is called, the council must, as soon as practicable after the expiry of the 14-day period, fill the vacancy by co-option. If the vacancy falls within the six-month period, the council may, but need not, fill the vacancy. In the latter case, it must still give public notice of the vacancy.

Albury Parish Council: Co-option Policy, May 2025

5. Application Process

Interested individuals must contact the Parish Clerk in the first instance.

6. Selection Procedure

- **Review of Applications** – All applications will be reviewed by the parish council
- **Interview Process** – Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview with the council
- **Decision Making** – The council will discuss the merits of each candidate and make a decision through a majority vote
- **Notification** – The successful candidate will be notified in writing and invite to the next parish council meeting

7. Induction

The new co-opted member will receive an introduction pack, including the latest version of the Good Councillors Guide, and training to ensure they are fully informed about their responsibilities and the workings of the parish council.

8. Term of Office

The term of office for co-opted members will run until the next ordinary election of parish councillors.

9. Contact Information

For any questions or concerns regarding this policy or our co-option practices, please contact us at:

Phone: 07856 010 600

Email: clerk@alburyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Address: 1 Mint Cottages, Park Road, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 3DS