

DONYATT PARISH COUNCIL

PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING CO-OPTIONS - Adopted at the Annual Parish Meeting held on 3rd May 2024

CASUAL VACANCIES

On confirmation from Electoral Services that a casual vacancy must be filled by co-option, the Clerk will post a notice on the notice boards, website and, if time allows, in the newsletter notifying there is a vacancy with the reason for it and confirming there is to be a co-option. The date of the meeting when the co-option is to be made will be stated on the notice. If the vacancy has occurred through a death of a Councillor, then the Clerk will usually wait until after the funeral.

There will be a deadline for responses of not less than 3 weeks from the date of the insertion.

The advertisement must also state the rules for eligibility and direct interested parties to write to the Clerk confirming their eligibility to sit on the Parish Council, including a short statement explaining the reasons s/he wants to become a Parish Councillor.

Nominees must also be made aware that canvassing of Council members will disqualify them from standing for the vacancy:

22: *Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors*

Standing Order 22:

Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.

In the case of a casual vacancy occurring in the last six months before the ordinary elections, the council is required to give a notice of the casual vacancy but an election is not held. A resolution of the Council can decide whether to co-opt and can leave any unfilled vacancies to be filled at the ordinary elections.

AT THE MEETING

At the Council meeting when the co-option takes place, each nominee will be invited to speak for up to 3 minutes. When all the nominees have spoken the Chairman shall seek proposers and seconders for each nomination and the vote will follow. Provided that the meeting has a quorum, the decision must be made by a majority of members who are present and voting.

Standing Order 12:

12: *Voting on appointments*

Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

The person presiding over the meeting may vote, and if there is an equality of votes they may exercise their casting vote. Members must vote by show of hands unless the council has standing orders that provides otherwise.

The council's debate and vote on the co-option must be conducted in the public section of its meeting. It follows that the candidates, as members of the public, will be entitled to be present during the proceedings.

AFTER THE FULL PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

In the event of vacancies following the close of nominations for the full Parish Council elections, the Clerk shall follow the above procedure to fill the vacancies and the co-option(s) will take place at the first possible Parish Council meeting.

May 2024