



# ST. AGNES PARISH COUNCIL

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## Co-option Procedure Adopted 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024

### Overview

The preferred option to fill a Councillor vacancy is via election. St Agnes Parish Council will advertise a vacancy and if no request for an election is received from the electorate by the closing date (or it is within the six-month period before the next ordinary election) an election will not be called. Co-option is the process by which the Parish Council selects a new Councillor to fill a vacancy by way of an agenda item at the Full Council meeting. This Co-option procedure details the process to be undertaken.

The Parish Council manages the process of co-option and strives to demonstrate that it is fair and equitable by following the procedure set out below:

### Co-option procedure

- The Council will advertise a vacancy for a minimum of four weeks using its website, any social media platforms it subscribes to from time-to-time and notice boards.
- The advert will include:
  - Eligibility criteria as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80
  - Basic information about the Council and the role of a Councillor
  - Information on how to express an interest
  - Deadline date for responses
- Candidates will be required to submit a statement by email giving background information on who they are and why they would like to be a Councillor. The statement should not exceed 300 words.
- Statements received will be circulated to Councillors in advance of the relevant Full Council meeting at which the co-option is to take place. This will form an agenda item.
- Candidates will be asked to attend the relevant Full Council meeting and invited to say something about themselves. Councillors will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. A maximum of 5 minutes per candidate will be allotted (including potential questioning).
- Councillors will always vote by secret ballot in line with normal voting procedure, regardless of the number of candidates. Councillors will have the option to vote for 'none' as there is no obligation to appoint candidates the Council considers unsuited to the role.

If no candidates come forward, or otherwise the vacancy is not filled, this process will be re-activated two months after the initial deadline for responses, or at such a time as requested by a prospective candidate.