Parish Council of Newlands

Co-Option Policy

Adopted by the Council at its meeting held on dd Month 2019 [Min ref: ]

# 1. Introduction

1.1 The Parish Council of Newlands recognises that on occasion there may arise vacancies for Councillors due to uncontested elections.

1.2 This policy sets out the approach the Council shall take to ensure that vacancies for Councillors are filled in timely manner by suitable candidates through co-option on to the Council.

1.3 An up-to-date copy of this policy shall be published on the Council’s website.

# 2. Notice of Vacancy

2.1 Following an uncontested election where insufficient Councillors have been returned, the Council, at its first meeting, shall instruct the Clerk to issue a Notice of Vacancy to the electors requesting applications to become a Councillor.

2.2 The Council shall determine the date on which applications close and at which subsequent Council meeting applications will be considered.

# 3. Applications

3.1 Applicants to be co-opted must meet the criteria set out in section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972 that they are:

* Over 18 years old;
* A citizen of the United Kingdom or a European Union country, or a qualifying Commonwealth citizen; and:
1. is a local government elector for the area of the parish; or
2. during the whole of the twelve months preceding occupied land or other premises in the parish; or
3. has had their principal or only place of work during that twelve months in the parish; or
4. has during the whole of those twelve months resided either in the parish or within three miles of it.

3.2 Applicants to be co-opted must not be disqualified from becoming a Councillor as set out in section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3.3 Applicants to be co-opted should set out in their application the qualities and skills they can bring to the Council.

3.4 Applicants to be co-opted should in their application understand and commit to maintaining the standards set out in the Council’s Code of Conduct.

3.5 All applications not disqualified shall be circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which co-options are to be considered.

# 4. Voting

4.1 No applicant to become a Councillor may be co-opted without receiving an absolute majority of the votes of the elected Councillors entitled to vote[[1]](#footnote-1).

4.2 The Council shall vote on applicants by ballot counted by the Clerk with the applicants receiving an absolute majority of votes being successful.

4.3 Where no applicant is successful in the first round, the Council shall not co-opt any applicant at that meeting.

4.4 Where there are more successful applicants than vacancies, a second ballot of those successful candidates shall be held (those not receiving an absolute majority being eliminated) using a preferential vote.

4.5 Where there is a tie at either voting round, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

4.6 The votes of Councillors and individual voting figures shall not be published.

# 5. Co-Option

5.1 Subject to section 4 above, the Council shall, at the same meeting, invite the successful applicant to be co-opted on to the Council.

5.2 Once co-opted, the successful applicant is a Councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member, saving any provision in law.

# 6. Remaining Vacancies

6.1 Where there are remaining vacancies, through no applications being received or insufficient successful applicants, the Council may re-issue a Notice of Vacancy.

6.2 The Council may defer any re-issue of a Notice of Vacancy for up to six months where it is felt that such a delay would better attract the necessary skills and expertise.

1. Section 21 of The Representation of the People Act 1985 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)