

Holt Parish Council – Policy on Co-Option of Councillors

1. Qualification Rules

Section 79(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 (“the 1972 Act”) provides, unless disqualified a person is qualified to be elected and to be a councillor if they are a qualifying Commonwealth citizen or an EU citizen and on the day on which they are nominated and, if there is a poll, the day of the election they are 18 years of age or over and:

- a) on that day they are and thereafter continues to be a local government elector for the area of the authority; or
- b) they are during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in that area; or
- c) their principal or only place of work during that 12 months has been in that area; or
- d) they have during the whole of those 12 months resided in that area; or
- e) in the case of a member of a parish or community council have during the whole of those 12 months resided either in the parish or community or within three miles of it.

2. Rules Governing Co-option

The legislation (The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006<<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2006/3305/made>>) regarding co-option says, where a casual vacancy in any such office is not required to be filled by election, the parish or community council must, as soon as practicable, co-opt a person to fill the vacancy There is no requirement to co-opt if the period is less than 6 months before an election is due to take place. The Council has the discretion to consider candidates for co-option based on suitability.

3. Suitability Guidelines for Individuals and Councillors

Holt Parish Council welcomes applications for co-option from eligible and enthusiastic individuals who want to make a positive contribution to our village life from preferably within the village. No special skills are needed, just openness, honesty and objectivity. Diversity is important – we need people with differing backgrounds, interests, ages and attitudes. Some people work with ideas, while others are very practical, and some prefer administration. Holt Parish Council needs a range of skills to work as a team.

4. Process

On receiving an application to join Holt Parish Council the individual will be invited to attend a Full Council Meeting where, informally, in the OPEN session, they will be given the opportunity to demonstrate they are suitable to become a Holt Parish Councillor. Suitability will be demonstrated by being able to provide information that they meet the suitability guidelines outlined at (3) above. Councillors will discuss the individual's suitability in the CLOSED session of Full Council and vote where a simple majority will determine whether the individual will be co-opted.