



STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL

CO-OPTION POLICY

Policy and procedure for co-opting a new Councillor

Adopted: 2nd November 2023

Review: November 2025

1. When a casual vacancy has been declared (e.g. on receipt of a letter of resignation, death, ineligibility or a seat has been left vacant because no eligible candidate stood at the yearly election) the Town Clerk will immediately notify the Returning Officer, issue the public notice and advise council members accordingly.
2. If the required 10 electors of the ward have not called for a poll within the legally specified time period (currently 14 days) following public notification of a Notice of Vacancy then the Returning Officer will notify the Town Clerk that co-option should begin.
3. The Clerk will:
 - Advise Council of the activation of the co-option process.
 - Prepare notices for Town Council notice boards.
 - Advertise the vacancy as appropriate.
4. Legal requirements to be a local councillor are as follows:
 - A UK, Commonwealth or EU citizen and
 - 18 or over on the day of nomination.

You must also either:

- Be and thereafter continue to be a local government elector in the Council's area; or
 - During the 12 months preceding, have occupied as owner or tenant any premises in the Council's area; or
 - During the 12 months preceding, had your principal or only place of work in the Council's area; or
 - During the whole of that same 12 month period, resided either in the Council's area or within 4.8 kilometres (3 miles) of it.
5. All potential candidates will be asked to complete the application form for consideration by Town Council (as below).
 6. All applicants to be invited to the full Council meeting to give a brief address and answer any questions asked by serving councillors and the Town Clerk. The applicants will then leave the meeting prior to the discussion and voting procedure, which will be by resolution
 7. The Town Council is not obliged to co-opt to fill any vacancy. Even if the council invites applications for co-option it is not obliged to select anyone from the candidates that apply. However, it is not desirable that electors in a particular ward be left partially or fully unrepresented for a significant amount of time.
 8. For a candidate to be successful they must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting.

**APPLICATION FORM FOR THE ROLE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR
ON STURMINSTER NEWTON TOWN COUNCIL**

Full name	
Home address Inc. Postcode	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email	

It is a condition of being a Town Councillor for the Sturminster Newton ward that your phone number and email address (official email address will be supplied) be made public via notice boards and website.

LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A TOWN COUNCILLOR

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes / No
Are you 18 or over?	Yes / No

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you and will you thereafter continue to be a local government elector in the ward of Sturminster Newton?	Yes / No
During the 12 months preceding, have you occupied as owner or tenant premises in the ward of Sturminster Newton?	Yes / No
During the 12 months preceding, has your principal or only place of work been in the ward of Sturminster Newton?	Yes / No
During the whole of that same 12 month period, have you resided either in the Council's area or within 4.8 kilometres (3 miles) of it?	Yes / No

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(You must be able to answer 'No' to all of the questions below)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	Yes / No
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	Yes / No
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	Yes / No

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being Town Councillor.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example; previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business or trade union experience.

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

Are there any questions you would like to ask the Council?

Signed.....

Date: