

# **Old Marston Parish Council: Procedure For Co-Option of A New Councillor**

This co-option policy was adopted by full council at its meeting held on 2019.

This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 – good practice for selection of candidates for co-option to local councils.

Parish councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (i.e. The vacancy has been the subject of a public notice and less than 10 registered electors have requested an election by a deadline date specified by the district returning officer).

Although seeking ‘expressions of interest’ is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

Whenever the need for co-option arises, Old Marston Parish Council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage ‘expressions of interest’ by a specified date from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand as a parish councillor.

The advertisement will be displayed, on the council noticeboard(s) and website, for 30 consecutive days before any co-option will take place.

All potential candidates will be requested to put their request for consideration in writing with the following additional information:

- reason for wishing to be councillor.
- previous community/council work; and
- other skills they can bring to the council.

Please note it is a condition of a councillor that a means of contact by telephone and/or email will be public information.

At the next full council meeting, after the advertising period:

- The clerk will confirm that each candidate is qualified to become a councillor and is not disqualified from being a councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80.
- The council will review the expressions of interests, ask the candidate(s) if there is anything they wish to say which may support their application.
- The chairman will ask councillors if there are any questions they wish to ask of the candidate.
- The criteria can be important however, the council strives to reflective the community it serves. Therefore, from time to time it may decide to appoint a candidate that balances the council/community structure.
- Once the council is satisfied it has reviewed all the candidates it shall vote on each candidate.

- An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 SCH 12 p.39).
- The clerk will then notify electoral services of the new councillor appointment, initiate 'acceptance of office' paperwork and 'registration of interests' on the parish council website.

Please return the completed form to [clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk) or to: The Clerk, Old Marston Parish Council, 8 Nicholas Avenue, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0RN

## **Old Marston Parish Council** **Vacancy For Co-Opted Parish Councillor**

### **Why Become a Parish Councillor?**

Parish councillors are elected representatives who volunteer their time freely to work on behalf of local residents. By becoming a parish councillor, you can become a voice for your community, somebody who residents will look to for help, guidance and support. You will be involved in local decision making and strategic planning for the benefit of the people you serve. Seeing your community change for the better, because of decisions you have helped make, is something that can give you a sense of pride.

### **What Skills Will I Need To Be A Parish Councillor?**

A job description can be found below. However, a council benefits from diversity and welcomes interest from people of different ages, backgrounds, experiences and abilities. Good communication skills, being a good listener, problem solving, analytical thinking and being a team player are all advantageous attributes.

### **Eligibility (Local Government Act 1972 s.79 & s.80)**

A parish councillor must be over 18, an elector in the parish and qualifies by any of the following

- Residing in the parish during the whole 12 months before either the day of nomination or the day of the election.
- Residing within 3 miles of the parish.
- Occupying as owner or tenant any land or premises there.
- Having a principal or only place of work there.

It is a duty of a parish councillor to attend every full parish council meeting (held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month except August) or have a valid reason for not doing so. Parish council meetings are held in Mortimer Hall, Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0PH at 19:00.

### **If you want to find out more...**

If you want to find out if being a parish councillor is right for you, just come along to one of the meetings, meet the councillors and see the council in action. Alternatively feel free to contact any of the parish councillors and have a chat. To register an interest in joining the council, please contact the clerk – Tim Cann by emailing [clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk)

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Telephone number</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>How long have you lived in the parish?</b>	
<b>Your background and interests:</b> (please include details of any work experience and skills which you feel may be relevant including membership of parish organisations or any voluntary sector service)	
<b>Please indicate briefly why you are interested in becoming a parish councillor</b>	