NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL

7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, Herts, EN6 4JA
Telephone: 01707 875825 and 07743 927069
Email: clerk@northawcuffley-pc.gov.uk

Policy and procedure for co-opting a new Councillor

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.

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, Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council will consider advertising the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' by a specified date from anyone in the parish of Northaw & Cuffley who is eligible to stand as a Parish Councillor. All potential candidates will be requested to complete completing an application form (See Appendix A)

At the next Full Council meeting:

i. Clerk to 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;
ii. Chairman to offer opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option;
iii. Chairman may permit candidates to provide statement to members before any vote on co-option, either in person or in writing as long as all candidates are given the opportunity to provide such a statement;
iv. Vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option, utilising the 'person specification' criteria set out below and any personal statements requested from and provided by candidates. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39) (The applicant with the least number of votes will be deleted and the vote taken again. This process will be repeated until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies. In the event of there being only one vacancy a candidate may be co-opted after only one round of voting if they secure a majority of all votes cast in that first round);
iv. Vote to select the order in which acceptable candidates (decided by the vote at iii above) should be approached to offer co-option on this occasion;
v. The Clerk to approach and offer co-option to candidate(s) after the meeting in the order of priority determined by the vote at iii above, if the first choice does not accept the post then the second is to be approached and so on until the ranking list is exhausted;

7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, Herts, EN6 4JA
Telephone: 01707 875825 and 07743 927069
Email: clerk@northawcuffley-pc.gov.uk

vi. Assuming that the co-option position is filled and all paperwork completed, formally ratify the appointment at this or the next Full Council meeting;

The Clerk to notify Democratic Services of the new Councillor appointment, initiate 'acceptance of office' paperwork and 'registration of interests' on the Parish Council website. If no one accepts the vacant post(s), the whole process is to be repeated when new individuals expressing interest are identified.

CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR PERSON SPECIFICATION

Whilst the following personal attributes, knowledge and skills are not considered essential the list is a guide to prospective applicants and is not exhaustive.

Personal Attributes

- Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs, the local community and Parish.
- Enthusiastic and Forward thinking
- Local knowledge and interest bringing skills and expertise to benefit the Council.

Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability

- A good team player
- Good interpersonal skills with the ability to contribute constructively at meetings expressing their own opinions whilst willing to listen to others views and accept majority decisions.
- Solid interest in local matters
- Ability to read and analyse documents and communicate succinctly and clearly, both orally and in writing.
- Ability and willingness to:
    - work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and the Clerk;
    - represent the Council and the Parish;
    - work with the Council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other Parish Councils, principal authority, charities);
    - undertake induction training and other relevant training.
- Experience of working with voluntary and/or local interest groups
- Ability to work under pressure to meet Council deadlines
- Ability to lead and run with a variety of projects, as required

NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL

7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, Herts, EN6 4JA
Telephone: 01707 875825 and 07743 927069
Email: clerk@northawcuffley-pc.gov.uk

Circumstances

Ability and willingness to regularly attend meetings of the Council.

- Candidates should note that the majority of Council meetings are held in an evening and, unfortunately, under present legislation the Parish Council is not permitted to contribute to the cost of Councillors' childcare or care of dependants.
- Current legislation also requires formal meeting of the Parish Council to take place in person. If a Member, once co-opted fails to attend a formal meeting of the Parish Council for six consecutive months they will automatically cease to be a member of the parish council unless they have a qualifying excuse)

NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL

7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, Herts, EN6 4JA
Telephone: 01707 875825 and 07743 927069
Email: clerk@northawcuffley-pc.gov.uk

APPENDIX A
APPLICATION FORM FOR THE ROLE OF PARISH COUNCILLOR
NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL

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

QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A PARISH COUNCILLOR

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below and provide supporting evidence on request)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	
Are you 18 or over?	

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below and provide supporting evidence on request)

Are you on the electoral register for Northaw & Cuffley Parish Council?	
Have you lived either in the parish, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the parish of Northaw & Cuffley for at least a year?	
Have you had your only or main place of work in parish of Northaw & Cuffley for at least a year?	

DISQUALIFICATIONS

(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	
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?	
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	

NORTHAW & CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL

7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, Herts, EN6 4JA
Telephone: 01707 875825 and 07743 927069
Email: clerk@northawcuffley-pc.gov.uk

Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a Parish councillor.

Please tell us something about the 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, listening and organisational skills.

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

Signed... ..... Date: .....