# Loughton & Great Holm Parish Council

Community Centre, 87 Kensington Drive, Great Holm, Milton Keynes
Telephone: 0759 123 6263
E-mail parish.clerk@loughtonandgreatholm-pc.gov.uk


## Councillor Co-Option Policy

### 1. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedure to ensure there is compliance with legislation and continuity of procedures in the co-option of members to Loughton and Great Holm Parish Council. The co-option procedure is entirely managed by the Parish Council, and this policy will ensure that a fair and equitable process is carried out.

The Parish Council is composed of two wards: Loughton and Great Holm  The number of Parish Councillors allocated to a ward is set by Milton Keynes Council and is currently:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Loughton** | 5 Councillors |
| **Great Holm** | 5 Councillors |

### 2. Co-Option

The co-option of a parish councillor occurs in two instances:

**2.1** When an ordinary vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council after the ordinary elections held every four years

**2.2** When a casual vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council and no poll (by-election) has been called by the public.

### 3. Eligibility of Candidate

To be eligible to apply for a role as a Parish Councillor you must:

**3.2** Be at least 18 years old on the date of your nomination.

**3.3** Be a British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of another member state of the European Union

**And also meet at least one of the following criteria:**

**3.4** Be an elector for the Parish and continues to be an elector from the day of your nomination onwards.

**3.5** Have resided in or rented/tenanted land in the Parish for the past 12 months.

**3.6** Have your principal, or only place of work in the Parish for the last 12 months.

**3.7** For the previous 12 months lived in the parish or within 3 miles of the parish boundary

### 4. Disqualifications

There are certain disqualifications for being a Parish Councillor (s80 of the Local Government Act 1972), of which the main are:

**4.2** Holding a paid office or employment under the Parish Council

**4.3** Subject to bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order

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**4.4** Having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of three months or more, without the option of a fine during the preceding five years.
**4.5** Being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices
**4.6** Being subject to the notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

**5. Applications**

Candidates will be required to:
**5.1** Attend at least **2** Parish Council meetings as an observer within 6 months of the Co-Option date.
**5.2** Submit information about themselves, by way of a personal statement prior to the 3rd meeting they attend.

At the next avaliabile meeting where the candidate is present, there will be an agenda item titled "**Councillor Vacancy–Co-Option"**. Candidates will be given the opportunity introduce themselves to the Council explaining why they are interested in becoming a Parish Councillor. Questions may be asked by the Council prior to any vote being made.

The co-option will then be voted on by a show of hands by all Parish Councillors in attendance. For a candidate to be elected to the Parish Council the majority of votes must be in favour. In the event of a tie co-opting one candidate the Chair would have the casting vote.

In the circumstance that there are more candidates than vacancies, the candidate with the highest majority will be allocated to a vacant position and the voting will begin again for those positions left. Again the Chair would have the casting vote in the event of any ties.

**6. Taking Office**

Once co-option is completed the successful candidate(s) must complete the Declaration of Office to take part in the subsequent meeting.

The Register of Members Interests form must also be completed and returned to the Clerk for lodging with Milton Keynes City Council within 28 days of the date of the meeting. The Clerk will arrange this.

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