

Brinton & Sharrington Parish Council Co-option Policy

The co-option of a Parish Councillor may occur when a vacancy has arisen on the Parish Council and no poll (by-election) has been called.

Whenever the decision to proceed to co-option arises the Council will encourage applications from anyone who is eligible to stand. Councillors or Parishioners can approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option. The Parish 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 who apply.

If you have the skills necessary to become a good Parish Councillor - good communication skills, problem solving, analytical thinking and being a team player, then please contact Brinton & Sharrington Parish Council via email: brintonparishcouncil@gmail.com.

However, the most important attribute is to care about the community and be willing to take an active role. The Parish Council is keen that potential candidates understand the commitment which is required of Councillors. Candidates will be encouraged to look on the website for more information on the role of being a Councillor or contact the Parish Clerk brintonparishcouncil@gmail.com for further information.

Should the Parish Council decide to proceed to co-option then, if agreed by the Council, to ensure that a fair and transparent process is undertaken, Brinton & Sharrington Parish Council will use the following procedure:

1. When the Electoral Service of the District Council writes to confirm that the vacancy can be filled by co-option, the Parish Council will consider if and when co-option should take place. When instructed by the Parish Council the Clerk will:
 - a. Advertise the vacancy for 21 days, stating the closing date, on the website.
 - b. Send a message to all Councillors to let them know there will be a co-option process.
2. Applicants for co-option will be asked to contact the Parish Clerk via email brintonparishcouncil@gmail.com for the application forms and any more information , if required.
 - a. Applicants will provide information about themselves by completing a short application form. [A copy of the application form is attached.]
 - b. Confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules. [A copy of the Eligibility Form is attached.]
 - c. Each candidate will be asked to make a brief verbal presentation at a Parish Council meeting on why they would like to be a Councillor and the skills they can offer the Council. Candidates may be asked questions by members.
3. All eligible candidates will receive an invitation from the Parish Clerk and will be required to attend the Council meeting at which the co-option will be considered.
4. Copies of the application and eligibility forms will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk, at least seven days before the meeting of the Full Council where the co-option will be considered. The Clerk and Councillors will treat these documents as strictly private and confidential.

5. Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of Councillors present at the meeting. Voting will be by ballot (voting cards handed to the Parish Clerk and placed in a sealed envelope).
6. After the vote has been concluded, the completed voting cards will be passed to the Clerk who will notify the candidate(s) of the result on the next working day. The Chair of the Council has a second or casting vote.
7. New Parish Councillors must sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office (provided by the Parish Clerk) and they can then join the next Parish Council meeting. Within 28 days the new Councillor must complete a Declaration of Interest form which must be sent to the Council's Monitoring Officer (details will be provided by the Parish Clerk).

Co-option Application Form

Name.....

Address for Correspondence.....

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.....Postcode.....

Tel..... Mobile.....

Are you over 18? Yes/No

Please detail any experience you have that may be relevant to Brinton & Sharrington Parish Council. (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)

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Is there any other information you would like to tell us about regarding your application? (If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper)

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Signed..... Dated.....

Please return your completed form, together with the Co-option Eligibility Form to:

Brinton & Sharrington Parish Council by email: brintonparishcouncil@gmail.com

or post to c/o Linda Jennings - Parish Clerk, Fabbro, Blacksmiths Close, Wood Norton, Norfolk, NR20 5UA

Co-option Eligibility Form

1. To be eligible for co-option as a Brinton & Sharrington Parish Councillor you must be a British subject, or a citizen of the Commonwealth, or the European Union.

2. You must also be 18 years of age or over on the day on which you are nominated, or if there is a poll, then the day of the election.

3. You must additionally meet one of the criteria set out below. Please circle which of the following four points best applies to you:

- a) I am registered as a local government elector for the parish; or
- b) I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option, occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the parish; or
- c) My principal or only place of work during those twelve months has been within the parish;
or
- d) I have, during the whole twelve months, lived in the parish, or within 3 miles of it.

4. Please note that under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, a person is disqualified from being elected as a Local Councillor or being a member of a Local Council if he/she:

- a) Holds any paid office or employment of the local council (other than the office of Chairman) or of a joint committee on which the Council is represented; or
- b) Is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or has made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors (but see below); or
- c) Has within five years before the day of election, or since his/her election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has been sentenced to imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than three months without the option of a fine; or
- d) Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 for corrupt or illegal practices.

This disqualification for bankruptcy ceases in the following circumstances.

- i. If the bankruptcy is annulled on the grounds that either the person ought not to have been adjudged bankrupt or that his/her debts have been fully discharged;
- ii. If the person is discharged with a certificate that the bankruptcy was caused by misfortune without misconduct on his/her part
- iii. If the person is discharged without such a certificate.

In (i) and (ii) above, the disqualification ceases on the date of the annulment and discharge respectively. In (iii), it ceases on the expiry of five years from the date of discharge.

I (INSERT NAME)..... hereby confirm,
that I am eligible to apply for the vacancy of Brinton Parish Councillor, and that the information given on this form is a true and accurate record.

Signed..... Dated.....