



Hoveton Parish Council

Co-Options Policy

This policy is intended to act both as a guide to persons wishing to join Hoveton Parish Council (HPC) as a Councillor by way of co-option and as a guide to existing Councillors when selecting Councillors. This policy is set out in two parts. Part One covers legal requirements for qualification and disqualification that apply to any individual wishing to become a Councillor and Part Two covers the job description applicable to a Councillor of HPC.

In order for HPC to be certain that any person applying to be a Councillor qualifies and is not disqualified to be a Councillor every candidate for co-option is asked to complete the form attached at Appendix 1 of this policy document. It should be completed and signed and returned to the Clerk to the Council 7 days prior to the date of the Council meeting at which co-option is to be considered.

It is recommended that any person interested in applying to be co-opted to HPC would find it helpful to attend one (and perhaps more) meetings of HPC as a member of the public to observe prior to co-option. Potential co-optees may find consideration of various websites helpful including Norfolk Association of Local Councils (<http://norfolcalc.gov.uk/>) and the National Association of Local Councils (<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/>). Also consideration of the publication "Being a Good Councillor" (<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/publications/801-good-councillors-guide/file>) may be found to be informative as to the role of a Parish Councillor.

Should a potential co-optee require any further information or have any queries then please contact the Clerk whose contact details are on the HPC website - (<http://www.hoveton-pc.org.uk/>).

It should be noted that the role of a Councillor is a voluntary role and not remunerated but it gives people the opportunity to take part in the decision making process in the local community and to contribute in a practical way to benefit the local community.

PART 1: Qualification and Disqualification

In order to qualify as a Councillor the person must satisfy the following conditions under section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972 and have to be:

- A British subject or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union and
- 18 years of age or over.

And additionally:

- A local government elector for the area of HPC; or
- during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in HPC's area; or
- during that same period have had the person's principal or only place or work in HPC's area; or
- during that 12 month period resided in HPC's area.

In addition any co-optee must confirm that they are not disqualified for standing as a Councillor under section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972; so a candidate cannot stand if any of the below apply:

- is subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order;
- has within the previous five years, been convicted in the United Kingdom of any offence and had a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period over three months without the option of a fine.
- the candidate works for HPC; but the candidate may work for other local authorities including North Norfolk District Council and Norfolk County Council.

PART 2: Job Description and Personal Attributes

1. Job Description

HPC is involved in a number of local issues including planning applications, street lighting, litter, playing fields, management of open areas such as Granary Staithe, and parts of Riverside Park, transport and traffic and many others.

- Meetings take place normally on the first Monday every month, with additional meetings on some occasions.
- Councillors are encouraged to adopt (after familiarisation with the Council's practices) a particular role, for example looking after litter or planning. However, it must be remembered that no individual Councillor is allowed to make decisions; these can only be made at a properly constituted Council meeting.
- Councillors are encouraged to attend local low cost training courses to enable them to a better understanding the workings of the Council.
- The Council is encouraged to make decisions by consensus but votes on individual matters are needed from time to time.
- Comply with the Council adopted policies and in particular HPC's Code of Conduct all of which policy documents are available on the HPC web site under 'Reference Documents'.

- Observe all statutory requirements applicable to Councillors and particularly the disclosure of pecuniary interests.
- Support and assist other Councillors in carrying out projects properly adopted by the Council and act as a member of the 'Council Team'.
- Approach all Council matters to be decided upon with an open mind and not to pre-judge before hearing the debate at a Council meeting.
- Approach all Council matters to be decided upon in the interests of the community of Hoveton and to understand and represent the views of local parishioners.
- Commit to preparing for meetings by considering all necessary papers made available for that purpose and making such additional enquiries as you think fit in order to come to a decision at the Council meeting.

2. Personal Attributes

The following attributes are those expected of a Councillor:

- Selflessness – acting in the public interest
- Integrity – not to put yourself under any obligation to others, not to allow people to improperly influence you, or to seek benefit for yourself, family friends or close associates.
- Objectivity – act impartially, fairly and on merit.
- Interest – have a keen interest in local matters.
- Openness – to be open and transparent in the actions and decisions of the Council.
- Honesty – to be truthful in all dealings.
- Have sufficient time available to attend to Council business and meetings.
- Preferably, but not essentially, to have access to an internet connection and a personal e-mail facility. This is because a lot of Council documentation is circulated electronically thereby increasing the efficiency of the Council.

Approved by Hoveton Parish Council 3rd of August 2015

CO-OPTION FORM

The form is intended to be completed by persons putting themselves forward for co-option as a Councillor to Hoveton Parish Council. The purpose of this form is (i) to ensure that the candidate confirms those matters necessary to qualify as a Councillor are satisfied and (ii) to provide necessary information to the Council.

(Please complete in ink using capitals)

Forenames (Please include all names).....

Surname.....

Address.....

Date of Birth.....

Telephone Number.....

Mobile Number (if any).....

Email Address.....

Occupation.....

I hereby confirm that I have read the accompanying notes and I confirm that I qualify to be a Councillor of Hoveton Parish Council by virtue of section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972 and that I am not disqualified by virtue of section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972.

It is not necessary but you may want to set out any particular interests or skills in the box below.

Signed.....

Dated.....