



# RIPON CITY COUNCIL

## Co-option Policy

Adopted by the Council on 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	
<b>Last updated</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2025
<b>Date of Review</b>	2028

## **Section One – Cooption of Councillor**

This section outlines the procedure to be followed by Ripon City Council when a casual vacancy arises by virtue of Councillor resignation, disqualification, or death.

The Electoral Services Department at the Principal Authority will be informed of the vacancy as soon as practicable after it arises.

The Council will follow the relevant legislation to allow ten electors to claim a by-election. Assuming there is no call for a by-election the Council will fill the vacancy by co-option using the following procedure:

1. A notice will be erected on the Council notice board and the Council website inviting people who are interested in being a Councillor to apply by submitting their CV with the following additional information:
  - a. Reason for wishing to be a Councillor
  - b. Previous Council/ Community work, and
  - c. Other skills they can bring to the Council
2. The notice advertising the vacancy will contain a closing date for receipt of applications.
3. Upon receipt, the Council will check (as far as reasonably possible) that candidates are eligible in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, section 79. To be eligible, the candidate must:
  - a. be 18 years old or over; and
  - b. is an elector for the parish; or
  - c. have resided in the parish for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land in the parish; or
  - d. had his/her principal place of work in the parish; or
  - e. have lived within three miles (direct) of the parish.
  - f. Not be disqualified from being a Councillor by virtue of section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022, or a Criminal Conviction, Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.
4. Following receipt of applications, the next suitable Council meeting will have an agenda item "To receive written applications for the office of parish Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy".
5. The Council will consider all applications at a Full Council meeting and resolve to co-opt the most suitable candidate. All those who have submitted an application will be invited to attend a Council meeting to answer any questions that Members may have with regard to their application prior to resolving to co-opt the most suitable candidate.
6. In accordance with The Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960 members of the press and public will be excluded for the part where the Council is discussing the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes etc.
7. Councillors must vote in public, in the normal way ie proposer, seconder and vote by show of hands and the decisions will be made on a simple majority vote. There will be no debate with regard to the applications in public.
8. The candidate who receives an absolute majority of votes will be co-opted.
9. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes, the candidate with the lowest

number of votes will be removed from the process, and voting will take place again until one candidate receives an absolute majority. If no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes, and two candidates are joint last in terms of the numbers of votes, then a further round of voting may be held to decide which of those two will be excluded from the process.

10. If only two candidates remain and they receive equal votes, giving neither an absolute majority, the Chairman of the meeting may use their casting vote to make the decision.
11. If there are several vacancies, the same process will be repeated until all the vacancies are filled.
12. Where there is one candidate for one seat or any situation where the number of candidates is equal to the seats available, the Council must appoint the candidates as long as they are qualified to hold public office under Section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972 and are not disqualified as summarised at point 4.
13. The decision of Full Council is final, there is no appeal procedure.
14. The successful candidate must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before they can act as a parish Councillor.
15. The Chief Officer will provide the new Councillor with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct.
16. The Chief Officer will provide the new Councillor with the Council's Councillor induction pack.

## **Section Two – Cooption of non-voting Committee members**

This section outlines the procedure to be followed by Ripon City Council when co-opting a non-voting member onto a committee where the terms of reference of that committee allow the same and supersedes any provision contained in any committee terms of reference.

The Council will consider all applications and recommendations for non-voting committee members at a Full Council meeting and resolve accordingly.

In accordance with The Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960 members of the press and public will be excluded for the part where the Council is discussing the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes etc.

Councillors must vote in public, in the normal way, i.e. proposer, seconder and vote by show of hands and the decisions will be made on a simple majority vote. There will be no debate with regard to the applications in public.

The decision of Full Council is final, there is no appeal procedure.