



FOVANT PARISH COUNCIL

FOVANT PARISH
COUNCIL
POLICY : CO-OPTION
POLICY

Ratified : 03/06/2025
Reviewed:07/09/2026
Next
Review:07/09/2027



General Statement

This policy complies with any government, district council and NALC guidance. The parish council's procedures adhere to this policy so that co-options arrangements are managed consistently, fairly, and equitably.

Events which may lead to a casual vacancy.

According to S. 87 of the Local Government Act 1972 the co-option of a Parish councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen on the council and no by election has taken place. This may be when:

- A councillor fails to submit his declaration of office on time.
- A councillor resigns.
- A councillor dies.
- A councillor is disqualified from serving.
- A councillor fails to attend meetings for six months.

Fovant parish council must first inform the Wiltshire council (WC) of its casual vacancy and then advertise the vacancy on the village website and notice board. Under the Local elections rules 2006 this gives electors the opportunity to request an election, this would occur when ten or more electors write to WC requesting an election.

If no by-election was called, the council will within 14 days proceed with the cooption procedures and move to fill the vacancy by co-option.

Co-option procedure

On written receipt from electoral services of WC the vacancy can be filled by way of co-option. The clerk can then advertise the vacancy on notice boards and the website for four weeks and advise the parish council that the co-option policy has been instigated. The parish council is not obliged to choose from any of the candidates who apply if no applicants are deemed suitable.

Eligibility

The applicant must:

- be at least 18 years old.
- be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights.
- meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
 - Are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for Fovant parish from the day of application onwards.
 - Have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the Fovant
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- parish area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of the application.
- The main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of the application in the Fovant parish area.
- Have lived in the Fovant parish area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of the application.

Disqualified (Local government Act 1972 S5 & 80)

The applicant should not:

- Hold a paid office under WC
- Be bankrupt.
- Having been sentenced to a prison term of not less than three months in the past five years.
- Under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices
- Found to be offering inducements of any kind.

Applications

Candidates will be required to complete an application form (appendix I) and confirm their eligibility to apply.

Following receipt of applications at the next ordinary meeting co-option will be placed on the agenda and copies of the application forms will be circulated to councillors marked as 'strictly confidential' .

Co-option meeting

At the co-option meeting candidates will be invited to introduce themselves, give background information and experience and discuss with the councillors their rationale for the application, this should be limited to five minutes only. Councillors may question the candidates.

When this is complete the council may move to vote on the candidate, however if councillors wish to discuss the merits of the candidate further the council can resolve to hold this debate in a closed sitting and ask members of the public and press to leave the meeting for this section.

The meeting would be reopened for the voting ballot, each candidate would be proposed by a councillor to be co-opted and seconded by a councillor before a full vote takes place by a paper ballot. The result will be counted by the clerk and recorded in the minutes.

For a candidate to be elected they will need an absolute majority of 51% of the votes cast. The chair will announce the outcome.

If there are more than two candidates for each vacancy, the candidate with the least number will be eliminated, until only candidate remains. The chair of the council has the casting vote.



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APPENDIX I

APPLICATION FOR THE ROLE OF COUNCILLOR FOVANT PARISH COUNCIL

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

Legal qualifications for being a parish councillor.

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both questions below)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes/No.
Are you eighteen or over?	Yes/No.

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)

Are you on the electoral register for the parish of Fovant?	Yes/No
Have you lived either in the ward of Fovant, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes/No
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the ward of Fovant for at least a year?	Yes/No
Have you had your only or main place of work in the ward of Fovant for at least a year?	Yes/No.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

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

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	Yes/No.
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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?	Yes/No.
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	Yes/No.

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



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Please tell us something about the life 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.



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Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.



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

Please note that most Council meetings are held in an evening.

Please type your name below or sign if you are submitting a hard copy and return to clerk@fovantparishcouncil.gov.uk. or by hard copy to Clerk of Fovant Parish Council, Buckhurst, Dinton Road, Fovant, SP3 5JW

Signed and dated.



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