



CO-OPTION POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2024

1. PUBLIC NOTICE OF VACANCIES

[Section 87](#) (2) of the [Local Government Act 1972](#) (“the 1972 Act”) requires a Local Council to give public notice of casual vacancies. There is no statutory requirement to give public notice of Local Council vacancies which remain unfilled after an ordinary election ([Section 21](#) (2) [Representation of the People Act 1985](#)).

The Clerk will inform the Council when a casual vacancy occurs. The Council will ensure that a quorum is always maintained by advertising inviting applications from candidates who satisfy the eligibility criteria for being a councillor and the competencies listed in a person specification. The Council will decide when co-option is appropriate by taking a vote at a full meeting of the Council.

2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

A person is eligible to be co-opted provided he/she is qualified to be a Councillor.

To be able to stand as a candidate at a Community Council election in Wales you must:

- a) Be at least 18 years old;
- b) Be a British Citizen, an eligible Commonwealth Citizen, a citizen of any member state of the European Union or a qualifying foreign citizen and meet one of the following four qualifications:
 - i. You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the community in which you wish to stand from the day of your nomination onwards.
 - ii. You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the community area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election.
 - iii. Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your nomination and the day of election has been in the community area.
 - iv. You have lived in the community area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your nomination and the day of election.

Apart from meeting the qualifications for standing for election, a person must also not be disqualified.

There are certain people who are disqualified from being a member of a local authority in Wales.

- a) A person employed by the community council or holds paid office under the community council (including joint boards or committees)

There are certain people who are disqualified from being elected or being a member of a community council. You cannot be a candidate if at the time of your nomination and on polling day:

- b) You are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order,

- c) The person has had a criminal conviction during the period of five years ending with the day of poll or since being elected they have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including a suspended sentence), without the option of a fine the ordinary period allowed for making an appeal or application in respect of the conviction has passed.
- d) A person has been disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (which covers corrupt or illegal practices). The disqualification for an illegal practice begins from the date the person has been reported guilty by an election court or convicted and lasts for three years. The disqualification for a corrupt practice begins from the date a person has been reported guilty by an election court or convicted and lasts for five years.
- e) A person is subject to the notification requirements under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and the ordinary period allowed for making an appeal or application in respect of the order or notification has passed.

A person who is in the process of making an appeal or application in relation to the disqualifications in c, d and e above are not disqualified at any time before the end of the day on which the appeal or application is disposed of, is abandoned or fails by reason of non-prosecution.

A person may also be disqualified from becoming a member of certain authorities following a decision of the Adjudication Panel for Wales.

The full range of disqualifications are complex and if a person is in any doubt about whether they are disqualified they should consult the legislation, or if necessary, take their own independent legal advice.

3. PERSON SPECIFICATION

COMPETENCY:	ESSENTIAL:	DESIRABLE:
Relevant knowledge, Education, Professional Qualifications & Training	<p>Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.</p> <p><i>Other requirements as appropriate.</i></p>	
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<p>Solid interest in local matters.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community.</p> <p>Good interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Ability to communicate clearly both orally and in writing.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.</p> <p>Good reading and analytic skills.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work with council partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other community councils, principal authority, charities).</p> <p>Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training.</p> <p>Ability to work under pressure.</p> <p>Knowledge of HR, procurement, contract.</p>	<p>Knowledge of HR procurement, contract.</p> <p>management, financial control or risk management and compliance, public relations.</p> <p>Experience of working in another public body or not for profit organisation.</p> <p>Experience of working with voluntary and or local community/ interest groups.</p> <p>Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and community councils or local authorities.</p> <p>Experience of delivering presentations.</p> <p>Experience of working with the media.</p> <p>Experience in financial control/budgeting.</p> <p>Experience of staff management.</p>
Other Requirements	<p>Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the council (or the meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) in the evening and events in the evening and at weekends.</p> <p>Willingness to accept and agree to abide by Council Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Flexible.</p> <p>Enthusiastic.</p>	

4. PROCEDURE

- Interested candidates are encouraged to attend at least 3 council meetings to understand what is expected of them and to give Council an opportunity to get to know them before applying for co-option.
- Interested candidates are to email the completed application form and CV to the Clerk by a specified date given in the Vacancy Notice.
- Completed application form will be circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting date set for co-option and relevant candidates invited to attend. This will be a private meeting.
- At the meeting councillors will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of five minutes. The candidate may at any time prior to the meeting speak to the Clerk to obtain more information about being a councillor and the work of the Council.
- The Chair will request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate.
- When there is more than one candidate the Chair will place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and proceed to vote. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.
- Voting will be in accordance with Standing Orders by a show of hands and will continue until one candidate has received an absolute majority of those Councillors present. At this stage, the successful candidate will be declared co-opted.
- Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. Voting will then take place for the remaining candidates until one person receives an absolute majority.
- A candidate will fail to become elected if not receiving an absolute majority from those present and voting. If the vacancy remains unfilled and is re-advertised an unsuccessful candidate will not be reconsidered for the same vacancy.
- The successful candidate will then be duly co-opted to the Community Council on signing their Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Code of Conduct.
- The successful candidate is a Councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.



CO-OPTION APPLICATION FORM

FULL NAME:
ADDRESS:
LENGTH OF TIME AT ADDRESS:
DATE OF BIRTH:
BUSINESS OR PLACE OF WORK WITHIN THE COMMUNITY:
PHONE:
EMAIL:

The Council requires a statement in writing from candidates that they:

- Meet the criteria for eligibility, set out in S.79 of the 1972 Act, to be a member of the Council and
- Are not disqualified, pursuant to S.80 of the 1972 Act, to be a member of the Council.

I confirm that I meet the eligibility criteria above

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: ____ / ____ / ____

PLEASE COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM, INCLUDING THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND PERSONAL STATEMENT AND RETURN WITH A COPY OF YOUR CV TO:

ADMIN@GCGCC.ORG.UK

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

QUESTIONNAIRE:

Have you attended any Community Council meetings? Please give details of dates attended.

What do you think the role of a Community Councillor entails?

What are you passionate about?

Are you involved in any local groups or organisations?

Do you own any of the following:

- Computer (Desktop/Laptop)
- Tablet
- Smart Phone

Do you have or anticipate any personal scenarios you feel would cause you issues carrying out the role (i.e. technology, language, health, caring responsibilities, etc.)?

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

Your application should be supported by a personal statement to demonstrate your competency (please read the Person Specification included in the Co-Option Policy):