



Sway Parish Council

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SWAY PARISH COUNCIL CO OPTION POLICY

When a casual vacancy arises for councillor to the parish of Sway the procedure is to:

1. Notify the New Forest District Council of the vacancy.
2. Advertise the vacancy on the Council's notice board, website and in the local press.
3. An election to fill the vacancy shall be held if within fourteen days (calculated as per Section 4 of the Act) after public notice of the vacancy has been given, notice in writing of a request for such an election has been given to the Returning Officer at NFDC by ten persons who are registered as local government electors in the parish. (Local Elections [Parishes and Communities] Rules 2006).
4. On receipt of notification by the Returning Officer that an election has not been called, to place a notice on the Council's notice boards, website and in the local press requesting that applications to fill the vacancy be returned to the Parish Office within 14 days of publication in the press. (Candidates will be requested to supply a single sheet of typed A4 stating their background and reasons for wishing to serve on the Council and that there is no impediment to their becoming a councillor, as proscribed by law/statute)
5. Vacancy six months BEFORE Parish Elections: Where a vacancy occurs within six months before the day on which a councillor would regularly have retired at the next four yearly election, Parish Councils may co-opt to fill the vacancy. During that final six-month period, there will be no formal election to fill any vacancies.
6. Following receipt of completed Applications, candidates will be summoned to attend the next Full Council meeting.
7. At the above Full Council Meeting (with public and press excluded) the candidates will be given five minutes to elaborate on their submissions and to allow Members to ask questions of them.
8. Following interviews, the meeting to be reopened to the public and press and voting by means of a signed ballot to take place. If there are more candidates than vacancies, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be excluded. If two candidates poll the same number of votes a separate vote to eliminate one of them will be held. Voting will continue with the lowest polling candidate being excluded until the number of candidates matches the number of vacancies.
9. This business to conclude by the Chair of the meeting announcing the names of the successful candidate/s.
10. The Clerk will advise the Returning Officer of the District Council of the names of anyone co-opted to the Council.
11. Before the successful candidate can participate in Council business s/he must sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and deliver it to the Clerk.
12. The Clerk should ensure that all new councillors have read and understand the Code of Local Government Conduct adopted by the Council and receive the same pack as elected members.
13. All new councillors must, within 28 days of appointment to office, Register their Interests with the District Council Monitoring Officer. Usually forms are supplied by the Monitoring Officer to the Clerk.