

Louth Town Council

CO-OPTION POLICY

1. Introduction

The preferred method of filling any vacancy is by election. However, if the requisite numbers of requests for an election are not received by the District Council by the closing date (set by the District Council) or the vacancy arises within six-months of the next ordinary election, then co-option is used to fill a vacancy.

Co-option is the process by which the Town Council selects a new Councillor and it is done as an agenda item within a normal Town Council meeting.

The Town Council manages the process of co-option by itself and strives to demonstrate that it is fair and equitable by following the procedure as set out below.

2. Procedure

Louth Town Council invites interested candidates, who meet at least one of the qualifying criteria (see below) to contact the Town Clerk in writing by a specified date (as advertised).

At the Council meeting:

- a. Candidates will be invited to say something about themselves, explain why they want to be a Councillor and what they might bring to the role.
- b. Councillors will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates.
- c. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of 5 minutes.
- d. 'Interviews' will not take place in front of other candidates seeking co-option.
- e. The successful candidate will be chosen by recorded vote of the Council.
- f. Councillors will have one vote only and should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be eliminated. Voting will then take place again for the remaining candidates until one person receives a majority.
- g. The Clerk will maintain an accurate record of all votes cast.
- h. The Town Council will pass a resolution confirming the name of the person to be co-opted and that person will be invited to sign a declaration of acceptance of office.
- i. The successful candidate will then be declared co-opted to the Council and will be asked to join the meeting.
- j. The successful candidate will begin their term as a Councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member.

3. Qualifying Criteria

- a. Registered as a local government elector for the Parish on the current Electoral Register
- b. Has during the whole of the previous 12 months occupied as tenant or owner of any land or other premises in the Parish.
- c. His/her principal or only place of work in the previous 12 months has been in the Parish.
- d. Has resided either in the Parish or within 3 miles thereof during the whole of the previous 12 months.