

Langstone Community Council
Minutes of the Co-option Meeting held on
Monday 2 August 2021
at 7.00 pm

Date: 2 August 2021
Time: at 19.00hrs
Venue: Zoom

In attendance: Adrian Edwards Clerk
2 members of the public.

21/194 Cllr's Present
C Bryant
L Duthie
L Humphries
M Griffiths
J Straw
M Harring-Burn
J Harring-Burn

Apologies received:
None

Absent:

21/195 Agenda Item 1. Apologies for absence.

None

21/196 Agenda Item 2. Declarations of interest

None

21/197 Agenda Item 3. To consider any verbal or written reports from the Clerk;

The Chair explained the following, and hoped that all members have had time to consider the content of the Clerks report. The Chair asked the Clerk to explain about the minute 19/115 regarding nominees attending meetings before anyone can submit an application to be co-opted,

The Clerk explained it would appear, anyone wishing to submit a nomination would need to attend Code of Conduct training and attend 2 meetings before co-option. The Clerk explained that this is not a requirement, Councillors only need to attend training after signing the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and there is no need to attend meetings.

The Chair explained that she had been informed, that Councillors must be mindful of divulging personal information regarding the candidates during this online meeting. If members would like further information the Clerk can provide this.

The Chair explained the Clerk has provided all Councillors with a briefing note of all the candidates. The briefing note is information from the nomination application. The Clerk explained that this note had been redacted in line with disclosing personal data. He explained the reason behind this, the Community Council had received a

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complaint about one of the former co-option meetings where information was assumed to be forwarded on. No personal data has been forwarded on during this process.

Reports to: - Langstone Community Council members
Subject: - Report relating to Co-option vacancies
Report: - by the Clerk/Proper Officer
Date: - 2 August 2021

This report is to give elected members an update on the co-option process. There are basic requirements.

The process for co-option must be open and transparent. As the Proper Officer, I can confirm this process has been open and transparent. A Notice was published calling for an election, but no by-election was called by ten electors. A Notice was then published enabling residents to express an interest for co-option within a set timescale.

This document is intended as a summary of the most relevant points of procedure and legislation rather than a definitive explanation. To be able to stand as a Community Councillor, an applicant must:

- ❖ be at least 18 years old on the day of nomination
- ❖ be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union
- ❖ meet at least one of the following four qualifications:
 - I. *registered as a local government elector for the area named above*;* or
 - II. *during the whole of the last 12 months occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the community named above*;* or
 - III. *your principal or only place of work during the last 12 months has been in the community named above*;* or
 - IV. *you have during the whole of the last 12 months resided in the Community or within 4.8 kilometres of it.*

*named above- relates to the area named in the notice.

Where there are more candidates than vacancies, a vote should take place. Voting can take place using a show-of-hands or on paper by secret ballot. If there are more than two candidates for one available place, the result must be by a clear majority, meaning that the chosen candidate must receive more votes than the total of votes for the other candidates.

However, a nominee cannot be a Councillor if:

- I. If there are employed by the local authority in which you wish to stand or hold a paid office under the authority (including joint boards or committees). Note that you may be 'employed by the local

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authority', for example, if you work in certain schools or in fire and rescue services. A good rule of thumb is if you work for the public sector, check with your HR department to find out if you are unable to stand. The Electoral Commission website will also give you guidance.

- II. Hold a politically restricted post in a local authority (if you are employed by a council, certain posts and all posts above the pay scale of spinal column 49 are politically restricted)
- III. Are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order.
- IV. Have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including a suspended sentence), without the option of a fine, during the five years before polling day.
- V. Have been disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (which covers corrupt or illegal electoral practices and offences relating to donations).

A person may also be disqualified from election if they have been disqualified from standing for election to a local authority following a decision of the Independent Adjudication Panel for Wales.

It's noted under minute 19/115 Co-option of Councillors Council agreed to amend the Co-option policy so that prospective councillors needed to attend only 2 meetings rather than 3 before applying to be co-opted. I don't believe this is a requirement. Every five years anyone can be proposed and seconded to stand for election, and there is no requirement to attend meetings beforehand.

The Community Council has five vacant seats, due to the resignation of former elected members. I can confirm that the Community Council received five expressions of interest before the closing date on the published notice. (Copy attached for members interest) This co-option process is a fairly straight forward process.

Members must be mindful, where the Council wishes to discuss the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes, this could be difficult with the current restrictions, and this could be prejudicial. As the Proper Officer I would recommend the Council resolve to exclude the members of the press and public, and a fresh link or other means are considered.

Following the Co-option:

1. The new councillor must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and, they can then join the council as a member.
2. Within 28 days, the new councillor must complete a Declaration of Interests form which must be sent to the council's monitoring officer.
3. The council should also make its Register of Interests available for public inspection.

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Due to the current restriction on the Community Council relating to Covid-19, as Clerk and Proper Officer to Langstone Community Council, the resident's expressions of interest are attached as appendices and is a brief on the candidates who have expressed an interest. Some of the personal data has been redacted from the expressions of interest on the grounds of divulging personal data electronically.

21/198 Agenda Item 4. Co-opt any person that have submitted an, expressions of interest to the clerk before the closing date on the notice published.

The Clerk explained that members had received papers that related to the nominees who had expressed an interest in the vacancies. It was explained that the Community Council has five vacant seats, and the Community Council received five nominations. The Clerk also explained that all the questions on the nomination forms had been completed.

Members considered the nomination papers and each nomination was proposed and seconded by members.

After discussion it was resolved that all nominees would be invited for co-option. The Clerk formally named the nominees to be co-opted.

The following were co-opted onto the Community Council.

- Mrs Alison Jarman
- Mr Stephen George
- Mr Martyn Kellaway
- Mr Andrew Tucker
- Mr Chris Romani

The Clerk will contact each person to sign the relevant papers and Declaration of Office

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 19.15hrs

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