

Procedure for Co-option of Councillors Where Two Vacancies Exist and Four or More Eligible Candidates are Nominated

1. The agenda shall include an item to fill the vacancies by co-option.
2. The co-option process shall be conducted during the public meeting of the Council. The public shall not be excluded for this item.
3. Before the item is considered, councillors shall declare any interests in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. Where a candidate is a close associate of a councillor, the interest should be declared. Unless required by the Code of Conduct, the councillor may remain in the meeting and vote.
4. The Chair shall introduce the item and invite nominations for the vacancies.
5. Each nomination must be proposed and seconded by a councillor.
6. Councillors may nominate as many candidates as there are vacancies.
7. Any person who is eligible to serve as a councillor may be nominated, whether or not they have previously expressed an interest or submitted an application.
8. Once nominations have closed, the Proper Officer shall prepare a list of all validly nominated candidates in alphabetical order by surname.
9. The vacancies shall be filled one at a time. The first vacancy must be filled before consideration of the second vacancy begins.

Election to the First Vacancy

9. The Chair shall call each candidate in alphabetical order. Councillors shall vote in favour of one candidate only by a show of hands.
10. A candidate must receive an absolute majority of the votes cast by councillors present and voting in order to be co-opted. For example, if there are 7 councillors voting then to be co-opted a candidate must receive 4 votes in their favour.
11. If no candidate receives an absolute majority in the first round, the candidate receiving the fewest votes shall be eliminated.
12. Where two or more candidates are tied with the fewest votes, the Chair shall determine which candidate is eliminated.
13. Further rounds of voting shall be held using the remaining candidates until one candidate receives an absolute majority of the votes cast.
14. The successful candidate shall be declared elected to the first vacancy and shall take no further part in the co-option process.

Election to the Second Vacancy

15. The remaining candidates shall then be considered for the second vacancy using the same procedure described in paragraphs 9 to 13.
16. The candidate elected to the second vacancy must also receive an absolute majority of the votes cast.

Completion of the Process

17. Once both vacancies have been filled, the Chair shall announce the successful candidates.

18. The successful candidates shall sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the meeting or before the next meeting of the Council, before acting as councillors.

Notes

- Each councillor may vote for one candidate only in each round of voting.
- Voting shall be by a show of hands unless the Council has resolved to use another lawful method.
- The process ensures that each successful candidate has the support of an absolute majority of councillors present and voting.
- If, after the first vacancy has been filled, only one candidate remains for the second vacancy, that candidate must still receive an absolute majority of the votes cast to be co-opted.

This version follows the NCALC advice while being written as a formal procedure that can be adopted by the Council or included within a co-option policy. It also removes the ambiguity of a single multi-vacancy vote by making each vacancy a separate election.