

## Co-option Procedure for Melbourn Parish Council

**PURPOSE:** To provide a consistent approach to the co-option of Parish Councillors

**SCOPE:** To be used whenever a new Councillor is to be co-opted

### 1. Background

1.1 This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L 15-08 (Co-option).

### 2. Procedure – application

2.1 When a vacancy arises, the Council will give public notice and will advertise the opportunity widely within the community.

2.2 The Clerk will invite ‘expressions of interest’ by a specified date from anyone who is eligible to stand.

2.3 All potential candidates will be asked to: submit a letter containing full contact details (telephone, postal address and e-mail) setting out why they are interested in becoming a Councillor; sign a declaration that they are eligible to become a Councillor and are not disqualified (as set out in the Local Government Act s79 and s80); complete a skills audit and confirm that they will undertake training within 6 months of becoming a Councillor.

2.4 The declaration and skills audit are attached to this policy at Annex A.

### 3. Procedure - selection

3.1 At the next full Council meeting following the closing date for applications:

- i. The Clerk to confirm that each candidate is eligible to become a councillor and is not disqualified;
- ii. The Chair to invite each candidate (in alphabetical order) to spend up to 3 minutes telling Councillors why they want to be co-opted and how their skills will complement those already present on the Council. If a candidate is not able to be present, the Chair will read out the candidate’s letter and skills audit. Councillors may question each candidate.
- iii. Each Councillor to write on a ballot sheet the names of up to [the number of vacancies] candidates. There is no obligation to vote for the same number of candidates as there are vacancies. The Clerk to count the votes and announce the number for each candidate.

# MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

Doc. No. 3.05

Version 1

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- iv. If a candidate receives a majority of votes from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para. 39), they are duly co-opted so long as the number of candidates with a majority vote is equal to or less than the number of vacancies.
  
  - v. If after the first round of voting, there are more candidates than vacancies, the person with the fewest votes is eliminated, and the vote taken again.
  - vi. (iv) and (v) are repeated until the number of candidates with a majority equals the number of vacancies.
  - vii. If any of the accepted candidates declines the post, the candidate eliminated last will be approached.
  - viii. The Council ratifies the list of co-opted Councillors.
  - ix. The co-opted Councillors are invited to sign the Declaration of Office and take their place at the table.
  - x. The Register of Interests must be completed within 1 month of taking office.

Document Approval:



(Chair to Melbourn Parish Council)

Date of Parish Council Meeting: 6 February 2017

# MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

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## ANNEXURE A

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Experience and skills : Parish Councillors	Level of experience / skill (rate on scale of 1 (none) to 5 (extensive))				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Understanding and/or experience of ...</b>					
Parish Council					
Local government					
Civil service					
<b>Professional skills</b>					
Experience of chairing board / committee meetings					
Experience of professional leadership					
Financial planning / management					
Mediation					
IT					
Strategic planning					
Training Received (please give brief details of specific area of training)					
<b>Skills that may be useful on Parish Council Committees</b>					
Financial planning / management					
Procurement / tenders					
Health and Safety					
Insurance					
Pensions					
HR					
Legal [please give brief details of specific area of expertise]					
Premises and facilities management					

Melbourn Parish Council: 30 High Street Melbourn SG8 6DZ

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Please give brief details of particular local interest / knowledge					
<u>Planning</u>					
<u>Youth work</u>					
<u>Conservation</u>					
<u>Volunteering</u>					
Please give details of any particular area/s of the Parish Council where you feel you would benefit from additional support or training					
There are seven Nolan principles that apply to the conduct of people in public life. Please give details that demonstrate when you have applied these principles in your work or other relevant examples:					
Selflessness : you should act in the public interest					
Integrity : you should not put yourself under any obligations to others, allow them improperly to influence you or seek benefit for yourself, family, friends or close associates					

# MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

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Objectivity : you should act impartially, fairly and on merit

Accountability : you should be prepared to submit to public scrutiny necessary to ensure accountability

Openness : you should be open and transparent in your actions and decisions unless there are clear and lawful reasons for non-disclosure

Honesty : you should always be truthful

Leadership : as a councillor, you should promote, support and exhibit high standards of conduct and be willing to challenge poor behaviour

# MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL

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Name : \_\_\_\_\_

## LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A PARISH COUNCILLOR

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below to serve as a councillor)

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes / No
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Are you 18 or over?	Yes / No
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(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below to serve as a councillor)

Are you on the electoral register for Melbourn?	Yes / No
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Have you lived either in the Parish of Melbourn, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes / No
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Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the Parish of Melbourn for at least a year?	Yes / No
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Have you had your only or main place of work in the Parish of Melbourn for at least a year?	Yes / No
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## DISQUALIFICATIONS

(To qualify you must be able to answer 'No' to all of the questions below to serve as a councillor)

Are you the subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order or Interim Order?	Yes / No
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Have you, within the last five years, been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	Yes / No
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Are you disqualified by Order of a Court from being a member of a local authority?	Yes / No
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