

NARBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL

Room 206, Council Offices, Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire LE19 2EP Tel: 0116 2863008

Filling a Casual Vacancy for a Parish Councillor

Both Parish and District Council elections are held on the first Thursday in May every four years.

If a seat becomes vacant mid-term, the council will need to fill the vacancy either, through a by-election (if the required number of electors demands a poll) or in the absence of that demand, through co-option of a suitable, duly nominated candidate.

If you think you would like to be considered to fill a Casual Vacancy the following information may be helpful in making your decision.

What is a Parish Councillor & what do they do?

Councillors are elected/co-opted to represent an individual geographical unit on the council known as a ward. This parish council comprises 18 members representing two wards: **Narborough & Littlethorpe** (11 members) and **The Pastures** (7 members).

Councillors have three main components to their work:

(a) *Decision Making* – through meeting and attending working groups with other elected members, councillors decide which activities to support, what services should be delivered and which policies should be implemented.

(b) *Monitoring* – councillors make sure their decisions lead to effective and efficient services by keeping an eye on how well things are working.

(c) *Getting Involved* – as local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their constituents and local organisations. These often depend on what the individual wants to achieve and how much time and effort he/she has available to give. Duties may include attending meetings of local organisations or other bodies affecting the wider community, taking up issues on behalf of members of the public, attending a Members' Surgery prior to a Parish Council meeting or meeting individual residents.

How much time will it take & will I get paid?

It really depends how involved you want to become. Quite often members say their duties occupy them for 2-3 hours per week. For those who wish to become Lead Members on our Working Groups, more time may be required to investigate and research issues and cost items. In the main, being a Councillor is an enjoyable way of contributing to your community and making it a better place to live. Parish Councillors do not receive a salary, however, they are entitled to receive payment for any approved expenses incurred whilst on official council business; for example, travel expenses to attend a meeting outside of the parish. No-one is excluded from being a Councillor due to financial loss.

What training & support is available?

Narborough Parish Council is committed to developing both its Members and staff in order to assist in achieving its aims and priorities. All Members are expected to attend training sessions as new councillors and on-going sessions to continue their development.

Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils holds regular training courses and conferences. Further information at www.lralc.org.uk

Am I qualified?

For most people the answer is - YES, however there are a few rules:

- You must be a British subject, or a Citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union, and
- On the relevant date (i.e. the date on which you are nominated or if there is a poll, the day on which the election is held) you must be 18 years old or over

Additionally-

- On the relevant day you must be a local government elector for the council area in which you want to stand; or
- During the whole of the 12 months preceding that day have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the council area; or
- During the whole of the 12 months preceding that day have had your principal or only place of work in the council area: or
- During the whole of the 12 months preceding that day have resided in the council area or within three miles of it

You cannot stand for election or co-option if you:

- Are subject to a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order
- Have, within five years before the day of the election, been convicted in the United Kingdom for any offence and have had a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine
- You work for the council for which you want to become a member (you can work for other local authorities, including the principal authorities that represent the same area)

What next?

It is helpful to make a written representation to the Clerk for inclusion on the next Parish Council Agenda. You should tell members about yourself, your interest in the parish and your reasons for wishing to fill the current casual vacancy.

You will also be required to sign a declaration confirming your eligibility to become a Parish Councillor.

It is very helpful if you can then attend the following meeting. The Clerk will place your letter on the agenda and members will have received a copy with their papers a week prior to the meeting. The Chairman may invite you to speak to members to expand on your letter. Members will then decide whether to nominate, second and co-opt you.

Should you then be co-opted, on signing of your Declaration of Acceptance of Office, you will be invited to take your seat for the meeting.

After Co-option

The Clerk will provide you with a copy of the current policy and procedure documents pertaining to this parish.

Within 28 days of your acceptance of office, which includes signing up to the council's Code of Conduct, you must by law submit your Register of Members' Interest Form which will be scanned onto our website and that of Blaby District Council.

Register to Vote

Before you can become a councillor you must be registered to vote and entered on the Electoral Register or Register of Electors for your area. This is a requirement for all UK elections and referendums, including Parish, District, County, General and European elections. You are NOT automatically entered onto the register, even if you pay Council Tax. You can obtain a form to register to vote from:

The *Electoral Registration Officer* at Blaby District Council or download a copy from www.blaby.gov.uk or www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

USEFUL INFORMATION

For the Parish Council contact:

The Clerk to the Council, Narborough Parish Council, Room 206, Council Offices, Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire LE19 2EP

Tel: 0116 2863008

Email: clerk@narboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.narboroughparishcouncil.gov.uk

To register to vote in Blaby District contact:

The Electoral Registration Officer, Blaby District Council, Council Offices, Desford Road, Narborough, Leicestershire LE19 2EP

Tel: 0116 2750555

Website for Leicestershire & Rutland Association of Local Councils:

www.leicestershireandrutlandalc.gov.uk

Website for Blaby District Council: www.blaby.gov.uk

Website for Leicestershire County Council: www.leics.gov.uk