

FILLING A CASUAL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF PARISH COUNCILLOR

In the event of a casual vacancy occurring in the office of parish councillor, public notice must be given by the Parish/Town Council in accordance with Section 87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972

In the case where the Parish Council declare the office to be vacant in accordance with Section 86 of the 1972 Act (i.e. through a resignation, disqualification, non-attendance of a member) the vacancy must be publicly advertised **immediately**

In all other cases public notice of the vacancy must be given as soon as practical after the vacancy has occurred.

NOTICE OF VACANCY:

- Section 232 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that a public notice required to be given by a local authority shall be given by posting the notice in some conspicuous place or places within the area of the local authority. (See attached template for the notice)
- **Claiming a Poll** - If ten electors give notice in writing to the Election Manager (West) @ Somerset Council within 14 working days of the notice an election will be called. The ten electors do not need to write to Somerset Council individually but can state:

"We the undersigned request an election is held to fill the vacancy/ vacancies that have arisen at Watchet Town Council and all ten names can appear on one sheet of paper"

- If no notice is given within the allotted time, then the town council must fill the vacancy by co-option and within a 35-day period.
- Once an election has been requested, however, the vacancy must be filled by election and the Council cannot fill it by co-option even if there are insufficient candidates.

CASUAL VACANCY VIA CO-OPTION:

In the case of co-option, the co-option policy document will be invoked, and potential applicants will be asked for the following:

- a. Submit information about themselves, by way of completing a short application form, and submitting their Curriculum Vitae (a copy of the application form is attached as Appendix 1)
- b. Confirm their eligibility for the position of Councillor within the statutory rules, (a copy of the Eligibility Form is attached as Appendix 2)
- c. Copies of the applicants CV and application form will be circulated to all Councillors by the Clerk at least 7 days prior to the meeting of Full Council, when the Co-option will be considered. All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and all Councillors as Strictly Private and Confidential
- d. At the meeting, the applicants will give a short presentation (up to 3 minutes) on the reasons why they want to become a Councillor and the attributes they can offer to the role. Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, the successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting.

If you have any enquiries about the above or the procedures to follow when standing to be a member of Watchet Town Council then please contact Joanne Grellier, Town Clerk, Watchet Visitor Centre, harbour Road, Watchet, TA23 0AQ, Tel: 01984 633344 email: townclerk@watchettowncouncil.org