

Applying to join Brockworth Parish Council as a co-opted member

When a vacancy occurs, the Parish Clerk is responsible for advertising the vacancy for a parish councillor following the procedures and guidance issued by Tewkesbury Borough Council. If an election is not triggered by local electors, then the Parish Council is free to co-opt a new councillor and the following procedures will be followed.

The Clerk will ensure that the vacancy is advertised via local noticeboards, the council website and through social media channels and will deal with enquiries and questions from interested parties. Potential applicants for the role of Parish Councillor are asked to submit an application through the Parish Clerk and to follow the steps outlined below.

Step 1 – Confirm that you are eligible to be a member of the council.

The criteria set out in s.79 of the Local Government Act 1972 say you have to be:

- a British subject, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union; and
- 18 years of age or over;

and additionally:

- a local government elector for the council area for which you want to stand; or
- have during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the council area; or
- have during that same period had your principal or only place of work in the council area; or
- during that 12 month period resided in the council area.

If you are unclear about how these criteria apply to you, please contact the Parish Clerk for advice: Telephone 01452 863123 or email: clerk@brockworth-pc.gov.uk or call in to the Council office at Brockworth Community Centre, Court Road, Brockworth, Glos, GL3 4ET.

Step 2 – Confirm that you are not disqualified to be a member of the council

The criteria set out in s.80 of the Local Government Act 1972 say you cannot stand if you:

- are subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order.
- have, within the previous five years, been convicted in the United Kingdom of 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 you want to become a councillor for (but you can work for other local authorities, including the principal authorities that represent the same area).

If you are unclear about these criteria please contact the Town Clerk for advice.

Step 3 – make sure you understand what is involved

You are welcome to observe any council meetings to see how things work and it may also be useful to talk to an existing councillor or the Clerk about the role, time commitment and responsibilities.

It is recommended that you also read the publication, “Being a Good Councillor” which explains more about the role and the responsibilities of councillors – copies are available from the Clerk on request.

Step 4 – send a letter of application to the Council

Once a casual vacancy has been advertised the Council is expected to fill it as soon as possible. Applications will be considered at the next available full Council meeting. To ensure that your application is included on the agenda it should be sent to the Parish Clerk at least one week before the meeting (earlier if there are bank holidays). A list of meeting dates is available on the council website. www.brockworth-pc.gov.uk

In your letter you should explain how you are eligible (see step 1) and confirm that you are not disqualified (see step 2). Your letter should tell us why you are interested in applying and what you think you can bring to the role of Parish Councillor. Some topics that you might like to consider are shown in the table below, but please note that you are not expected to be able to demonstrate all of these competencies.

Competency	Demonstrated by:
Relevant knowledge	Knowledge of Brockworth and an understanding of local affairs and the local community.
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	We welcome people with a wide range of life skills and experience that reflects the local community. We are looking for councillors who can bring enthusiasm and commitment as well as some of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interest in local matters.• Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community.• Good interpersonal skills.• Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly both orally and in writing.• Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.• Good reading and analytical skills.• Ability and willingness to work with the council’s partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities).• Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training.
Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the council (or the meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) in the evening and events in the evening and at weekends.• Flexible and committed to the Council• Enthusiastic.

Step 5 – attend a Parish Council meeting

You will be invited to attend the next full Council meeting at which your application will be considered. The Parish Clerk will provide you with an agenda for the meeting, which will normally be held at 7pm on the first Wednesday of the month at the Community Centre on Court Road.

At the meeting you will be given the opportunity to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes to introduce yourself and explain why you want to join the council.

If there are more candidates than vacancies the co-option will be decided by a ballot of the members. If a Candidate is a relative of a Councillor, that Councillor should declare a prejudicial interest and withdraw from the meeting.

Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them at the first count receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes and the remainder must then be put to the vote again; this process must, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.

Councillors shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

The Council may reject a candidate with good reasons for doing so, but it is under an obligation to fill the vacancy as soon as possible.

After the vote has been concluded, the Chairman will declare the successful Candidate duly Elected.

Step 6 – joining the Parish Council

On successful co-option you will be invited to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office which completes the process for joining the council. Within 28 days of co-option you are also required to complete a Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests which will be provided by the Parish Clerk, along with a copy of the Code of Conduct. As a new councillor you will also be provided with an induction by the Clerk and provided with appropriate training as necessary.

If you are unsuccessful you can request that your details be kept on file for up to 6 months should any new vacancies arise.