

BOXTED PARISH COUNCIL – CO-OPTION POLICY

This policy will be reviewed annually.

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

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

Qualifications:

You must be over 18 years old

You must be British or a citizen of the Commonwealth or European Union and meet at least one of the following four qualifications:

- You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the parish in which you wish to stand from the day of your appointment onwards.
- You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your appointment.
- Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your appointment has been in the parish area.
- You have lived in the parish area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your appointment

An eligible Commonwealth citizen is a Commonwealth citizen who either:

- does not need leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom, or
- has indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom

Disqualifications as follows:

You MUST NOT be a paid officer of Boxted Parish Council

You MUST NOT be subject to a bankruptcy restriction order or an interim order

You MUST NOT have been (within the last five years or since election or co-option) convicted of any offence and been sentenced to more than three months imprisonment (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine

You MUST NOT have been convicted at any time of corrupt or illegal practices

You MUST NOT have been convicted at any time of failure to register or declare disclosable interests under the Localism Act 2011 or for breach of the Code of Conduct

Step 2 – make sure you understand what is involved

It is recommended that you read the National Association of Local Council's publication 'The Good Councillors Guide' which explains more about the role and responsibilities of councillors – electronic copies are available on request and printed copies can be made available for a small charge of £7.50 to cover the costs of printing and postage. If you have any questions, you can contact the Clerk to the Council.

Step 3 - Send an application letter or email to the Council via The Clerk to the Council

Your application letter should confirm that you are eligible to become a councillor and that you are not disqualified from becoming a councillor (see step 1). Your letter should explain why you are interested in applying and what you think you can bring to the role of parish councillor with reference to the Person Specification in Appendix 'a'. That aside, we welcome people with a wide range of life skills and experience that reflects the local community and most of all we are looking for enthusiasm and commitment to Boxted and the role of parish councillor.

Step 4 - Informal interview

You may be invited to attend an informal interview where existing councillors will be able to talk with you and decide if they wish to vote for you to become a co-opted councillor at the next available parish council meeting. No decisions will be made at this informal interview meeting.

Step 5 - Parish Council Meeting

At the next parish council meeting your application to become a co-opted councillor will be an agenda item to be considered by the Council. Voting will be according to statutory requirements

- a) An existing councillor will need to propose that you are appointed
- b) This proposal will need to be seconded by another councillor
- c) Voting will be by paper ballot of those councillors present at the meeting. A successful candidate must have received a majority vote of those present at the meeting. In the event of a tie the Chair of the meeting may have a casting vote (and can vote differently to their original vote)

Any candidates who are not proposed or seconded or who do not receive sufficient votes at this stage will not be co-opted.

The Council may elect whom it pleases providing they are eligible to become a councillor (step 1) and if the applicant is not co-opted at the Parish Council meeting following the procedure outlined at Step 5 above this will be the Council's final decision and the Council will be under no obligation to engage in any further discussion or correspondence on the matter.

Step 6 – Joining the Council

If you are successfully co-opted, then you will be invited to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Within 28 days of co-option, you are also required, by law, to complete a Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests which will be publicly displayed on the Colchester Borough Council website. Your contact telephone number and email may also be publicly available.

Clerk Contact Details

Clerk to the Council Karen Thompson

Boxted Parish Council

e-mail: clerk@boxted-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07971 525688

APPENDIX 'A' – CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR PERSON SPECIFICATION

Competency	Essential	Desirable
Relevant knowledge	Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.	Can bring a new skill, expertise, or key local knowledge to the Council
Experience, skills, knowledge and ability	<p>Good interpersonal skills</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff</p> <p>Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community (with support if necessary)</p> <p>Ability to communicate clearly and concisely both orally and in writing</p> <p>Good reading and analytic skills</p> <p>Ability to see both sides of an argument</p> <p>Ability to respond to issues in a timely manner</p> <p>Use of email</p> <p>Willingness to undertake relevant training.</p> <p>Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the council</p> <p>Flexibility in approach</p> <p>Enthusiasm to get involved</p> <p>Patience</p>	<p>Experience of the work environment</p> <p>Experience of working with voluntary and or local community or interest groups</p> <p>Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to parish councils or local authorities</p> <p>Ability and willingness to work with the council's partners (voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities)</p> <p>Ability and willingness to attend the meetings of other local authorities and local bodies in the evening and occasional events in the evening and at weekends</p>