

**Kings Walden  
Parish Council**



## **CO-OPTION POLICY**

**Adopted: July 2022  
Review Date: July 2023**



### 1. Vacancies

A casual vacancy can occur for a number of reasons:

- Resignations from the council must be made in writing to the Chairman. When the Chairman resigns, they serve the resignation in writing on the Clerk. Resignations are effective immediately on receipt by the Chairman / Clerk and cannot be post-dated or withdrawn.
- If a member fails to attend any meeting of the council for 6 months, without a reason for absence being formally accepted by the council, they automatically cease to be a member of the council.
- If a member dies, a casual vacancy occurs.

1. Following receipt of a resignation or confirmation of a casual vacancy for any other reason the Clerk must inform North Herts District Council as soon as practicable. (In accordance with s232 of the 1972 Local Government Act).

2. A notice of casual vacancy will then be issued by the Clerk on the instruction of North Herts District Council and will be displayed in a conspicuous place. A notice of casual vacancy allows for 10 people on the electoral register to request, in writing to the proper officer of the principal authority, that an election be held. Should this happen, a by-election must be held (unless an ordinary election is due within the next six months).

3. If no request to hold a by-election is forthcoming, the Kings Walden Parish Council are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the council to fill a casual vacancy. Although seeking 'expressions of interest' is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

4. Whenever the need for co-option arises, Kings Walden Parish council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage 'expressions of interest' from anyone in the parish who is eligible to stand as a parish councillor. All potential candidates will be asked to complete an expression of interest form. (Attached as Appendix A of this policy).

### 2. Co-option procedure:

At the next available Full Council meeting following receipt of expressions of interest:

- Members of the Council will have received copies of the expression of interest forms



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submitted.

- Candidates will be asked to give a brief verbal supporting statement and Councillors will have opportunity to ask any additional questions. In the event a candidate cannot attend the meeting they will have the opportunity to submit an additional written supporting statement and they will be considered equally to any candidates in attendance.
- Within the open session of the meeting members will vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39) (When there are more candidates than vacancies, the candidate with the least number of votes cast will be deleted and the vote taken again and again etc. until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies).
- One person will be chosen for each vacancy. However, where the Council believes it has sound reason to do so, due to the unsuitability of a candidate, it may choose not to appoint a candidate and to readvertise a vacancy. (Any decision not to appoint a candidate and leave a vacancy must be for reasons that would satisfy any future legal challenge.)

If present, the co-opted members may join the meeting after signing the acceptance of office form. However, it should be noted that their vote on any matter requiring prior notice will be discounted in the case of a tied vote for that meeting only.

The Clerk will notify North Herts District Council of the new Councillor appointment/s and advise the co-opted member of their obligations about registration of interests and acceptance of Code of Conduct.

The same process will be filled to co-opt members following an ordinary election after which vacancies remained.

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS A MEMBER OF  
KINGS WALDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

I wish to be considered for co-option as a member of the council for Breachwood Green / Kings Walden Ward

Full name (inc. title):

Name you wish to be known by:

Address (inc. postcode): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code:

Telephone number: Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*If appointed, some of the personal data shown will be stored on computer systems which are registered under The Data Protection Act 1998. Your name and address will be published on the council's web site.*

- I consent / do not consent to my **home** telephone number being published on the council web site.
- I consent / do not consent to my **mobile** telephone number being published on the council web site.
- I consent / do not consent to my **email** being published on the council web site (a council email address can be provided with auto forward to your personal account).

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**

Please also sign the following declaration to indicate that you have read and understood the regulations.

**I declare that I am not disqualified from serving as a Member of Kings Walden Parish Council and that:**

- I am aged 18 or over at the date of this election or appointment;
- I am a UK or commonwealth citizen / a citizen of the Republic of Ireland / a citizen of another Member state of the European Union;
- I am an elector of the parish, or;
- I have for the whole of the previous 12 months occupied (as owner or tenant) land or other premises in the parish, or:  
during the previous 12 months have worked in the parish (as your principal or only place of work), or:  
for the whole of the previous 12 months lived in the parish or within three miles of the parish boundary.



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**Please provide some brief background details as to why you wish to become a Parish Councillor. Please let us know what skills or experience you would be able to bring to the Parish Council.** (This information will possibly become public knowledge) Additional pages may be attached.

**All applicants are asked to note that:**

1. It may be some time before you hear whether you have been selected to fill a vacancy;
2. It is not possible to guarantee that you will be appointed;
3. A Parish Councillor who, without the consent of the Parish Council has failed to attend full Parish Council meetings for a continuous period of six months (from the date of the first meeting missed), shall be disqualified.;
4. All Parish Councillors are required to sign the Acceptance of Office and the Code of Conduct and complete a declaration of Pecuniary Interest.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_