

Calne Without Parish Council

17th May 2021

Agenda Item 13

Co-option for West, Sandy Lane, Middle and East Wards

1 Introduction

Calne Without Parish Council has 5 Wards with the following numbers of Councillors:

Ward	No. of Councillors
West Ward	6
Pewsham Ward	1
Sandy Lane	1
Middle Ward	4
East Ward	3

Following the election on 6th May 2021 Wiltshire's Returning officer has indicated that the following vacancies are to be filled through the process of co-option.

Ward	No. of vacancies
West Ward	2
Sandy Lane	1
Middle Ward	3
East Ward	2

2 Co-option process

The Council's Standing Orders set out its process for co-option following an election

8 Councillor appointments

- a When a Councillor vacancy occurs, it must first be advertised by Wiltshire Council. A by-election will be held, if within fourteen working days a poll is claimed by ten electors. If a poll is not claimed, the vacancy may be filled by co-option.

A meeting of the Council will be called immediately it becomes known that a poll has not been demanded and the Council will decide how to organise the advertising and process to fill the vacancy through co-option.

Any vacancy to be completed by Council co-option, will be advertised for not less than 2 weeks:

- at least once, in one or more local papers
- prominently in the parish council website
- on all council notice boards
- by any other appropriate means, agreed by council

All applicants shall be invited to meet councillors and give a short presentation on why they would like to be a councillor and what benefits they can bring to the community. Council will

review and agree the acceptability of proposed applicants and by majority decision select a new Councillor. The co-opted person will complete the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and serve for the remainder of the term of the Councillor replaced.

- b Where more than two persons have applied for a position to be filled by the council through co-option and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

There is no statutory requirement to give public notice of local council vacancies which remain unfilled after an ordinary election (s.21(2) Representation of the People Act 1985). The Parish Council, where such an instance does occur, will give public notice of vacancies which arise in these circumstances to encourage transparency and to attract more applicants. The co-option procedure will be as described in this document.

As the election has received significant coverage in the media and the Council already has some candidates come forward the Council may wish to consider if the cost of an advert in the local newspaper (estimated at £102 to £180) is required.

3 Application Form and Applicant information

An application form is attached at Appendix 1 and an example of applicant information is attached at Appendix 2

These will require modification to indicate the number of vacancies, any desired qualities that the Council would be particularly interested in recruiting and if the Council will in the first instance be looking for those from of with identifiable connect or knowledge of the Ward for which they wish to be considered.

4 Timing and Co-option meeting

The Council will need to decide the amount of time that it will spend advertising the co-option vacancies, by which means it will advertise, and the date of a Council meeting that the co-option candidates will be considered. The next Council meetings are set for 14th June and 12th July. The Council has the option to call an Extraordinary meeting to consider co-option if required.

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Council advertises the Co-option vacancies as set out in Standing Orders for not less than 2 weeks, the advert to be in the Gazette and Herald, Derry Hill INSPIRE and Villages Parish Magazines, Website and noticeboards.**
- 2. The Council requests candidates identify the Ward(s) for which they wish to be considered and fill in the application form (as drafted) and return it to the Chairman and/or Clerk for circulation to all Councillors.**

- 3. That the Council consider if it wishes to indicate to candidates that in the first instance those from or that can show a clear connection and good knowledge of the ward for which they are applying are encouraged to stand for co-option. If so this to be added to the applicant information.**
- 4. That the Council consider if it wishes to indicate that candidates able to demonstrate any particular skills or experience are to be particularly encouraged to stand for co-option. If so this information to be added to the applicant information.**

Appendix 1

CALNE WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

Co-option Application Form

Full Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email address	

PLEASE ANSWER THE YES/NO QUESTIONS CAREFULLY AS THEY SET OUT THE LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A PARISH COUNCILLOR

	Please put a cross in the correct box	
	YES	NO
Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?		
Are you 18 or over?		

You only need one of the following four qualifications but please say Yes to all that apply

	Please put a cross in the correct box	
	YES	NO
Are you on the electoral register for the parish?		
Have you lived either in the parish, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?		
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the parish for at least a year?		
Have you had your only or main place of work in the parish for at least a year?		

DISQUALIFICATIONS

	Please put a cross in the correct box	
	YES	NO
Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?		
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?		
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?		

Please tell us your reasons for wishing to become a Parish Councillor.

Continue on an extra sheet if required.

Are there any local issues that you are particularly interested in that you believe could be of benefit to the community?

What qualities, skills, experience and knowledge do you have that you can contribute to the Parish Council? (Include knowledge or skills gained working or volunteering or through hobbies and other interests)

When is your preferred time for attending meetings?

Day	Evening	Either
-----	---------	--------

(Unfortunately, under present legislation the Parish Council is not permitted to contribute to the cost of councillors' childcare or care of dependants.)

Are there any factors, other than exceptional circumstances, that might prevent you from regularly attending the Parish Meetings?

What are your hobbies/interests?

Lastly are there any questions you would like to ask us?

As a councillor representing your community you will help keep it a great place to live and work. You will be supported in your role and will be expected to undertake training. You should be comfortable working electronically. You should have a positive outlook and a can-do attitude and be willing to work as part of a team.

Signed

Date

Please return to:

Clerk, Calne Without Parish Council

Email: clerk@calnewwithout-pc.gov.uk

Or Chairman

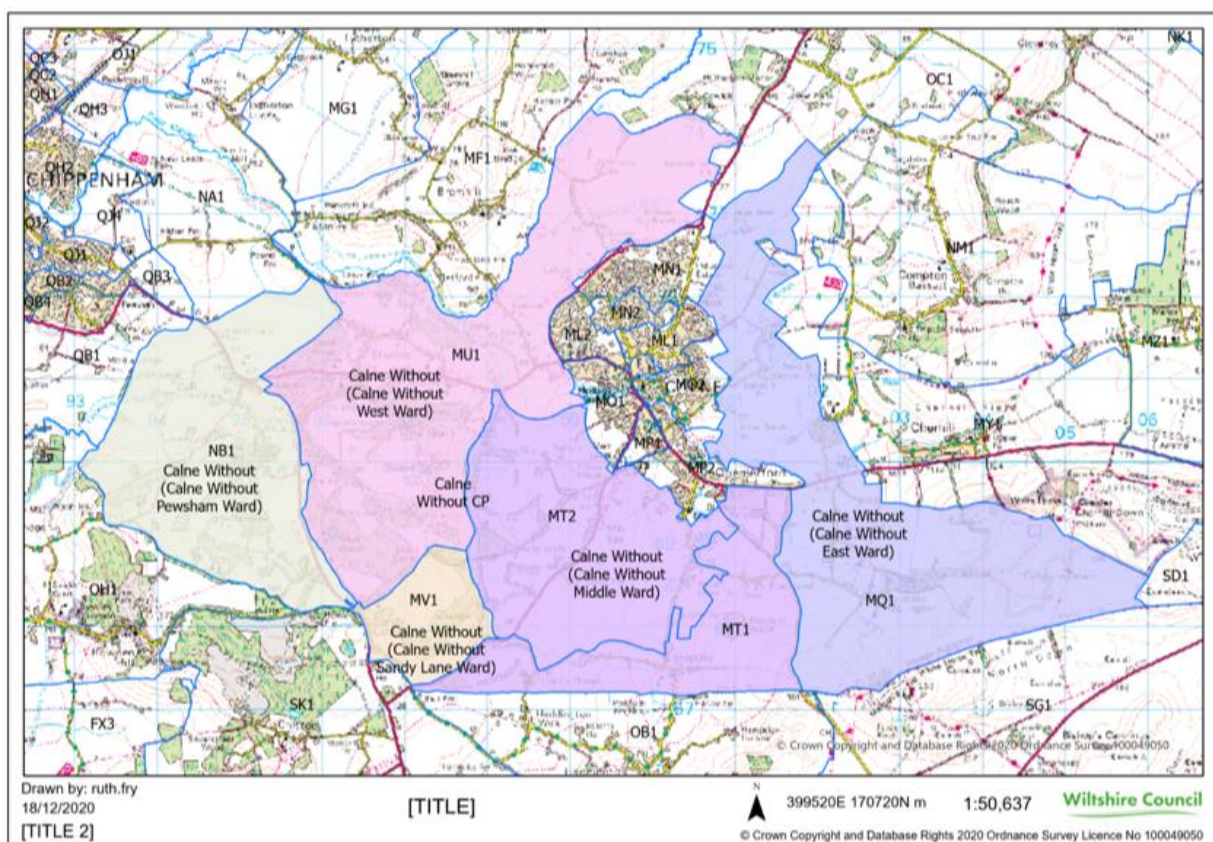
Name, email and address to be added

Appendix 2

CALNE WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL VACANCY

Vacancies for Parish Councillors exist in the West, Sandy Lane, Middle and East Wards of the Parish Council which are to be filled through a process known as Co-option.

The Parish Council has 15 Councillors and covers a large area which circles Calne Town and includes Old Derry Hill, part of Ratford, High Penn, Lower Compton, Calstone, Blacklands, Stockley, Mile Elm, Sandy Lane, Derry Hill and Studley in North Wiltshire.



What is a Councillor?

Councillors are elected or co-opted to represent an individual geographical unit on the council, known as a ward, Calne Without Parish has 5 wards which together make up the entire parish. They are generally elected by the public every four years, but there is a co-option space available on the Parish Council at the moment as Lord Lansdowne has retired from the Parish Council and an election has not been requested.

What do Councillors do?

Councillors have three main components to their work.

1. Decision making - Through meetings and attending committees with other elected members, councillors decide which activities to support, where money should be spent, what services should be delivered and what policies should be implemented.
2. Monitoring - Councillors make sure that their decisions lead to efficient and effective services by keeping an eye on how well things are working.
3. Getting involved locally - As local representatives, councillors have responsibilities towards their constituents and local organisations.

These responsibilities and duties often depend on what the councillor wants to achieve and how much time is available, and may include:

- Going to meetings of local organisations.
- Going to meetings of bodies affecting the wider community (The Calne Area Board)
- Taking up issues on behalf of members of the public

How much time does it take up?

Quite often councillors say that their duties occupy them for about an hour a week. Obviously, there are some councillors who spend more time than this – and some less, but in the main, being a parish councillor is an enjoyable way of contributing to your community and helping to make it a better place to live and work.

What the Parish Council does

Town and Parish Councils are the first layer of local government. They are elected local authorities, which aim to engage local people and respond to their needs, through representation as community advocates or by providing services, for example; providing litter bins, cutting verges or promoting tourism in the local area.

Calne Without Parish Council

What we do:

- acts as a community representative on Calne Area Board,
- responds to local planning applications and highway schemes,
- is notified and consulted on issues that will affect the Parish Area,
- takes an active role in the Neighbourhood Plan,
- can provide and manage local amenities such as play equipment and bus shelters

Decisions are made at the public Parish Council meetings which are held 10 out of 12 months of the year. The Parish Council has 2 sub Committees, Human Resources and Finance.

The Council also has a number of more informal working groups. The Council uses working groups to take forward projects and investigate issues whether it's a traffic problem a scheme to provide planters or to manage volunteers to improve footpaths. The working groups do not make decisions.

The Parish Council's operation, controlled by legislation, is guided by a set of rules set out in its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Code of Conduct. The Council publishes its accounts regularly and details of the annual audit process and the periods for public scrutiny are all published and available on this website.

The Council would normally meet at the Lansdowne Hall in Derry Hill but due to the current Covid-19 restrictions all Council business is being carried out using the virtual meeting platform, Zoom. The Parish Council meets on the second Monday of the month at 7.30pm, other meetings are arranged to suit the commitments of Councillors attending them.

To be a Parish Councillor you must be

- Be a UK or Commonwealth citizen; or be a citizen of the Republic of Ireland; or be a citizen of another Member State of the European Union.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Be an elector of the local council, or in the past 12 months occupied land or other premises in the area the local council serves (as owner or tenant) or work in the area local council serves (as your principal or only place of work), or live within three miles of the local council boundary.
- Local councils welcome and are committed to the inclusion and recognition of all regardless of race, culture, ability, ethnicity or gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, marital status, religious affiliation, and socioeconomic status.

You must also not be disqualified. You cannot stand for Parish Council if:

- a. You are employed by the parish/community council or hold a paid office under the parish/community council (including joint boards or committees). For further information, see paragraph 1.22.
- b. You are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order. For more information, see paragraph 1.27
- c. You have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including a suspended sentence), without the option of a fine, during the five years before polling day.
- d. You have been disqualified under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (which covers corrupt or illegal electoral practices and offences relating to donations). The disqualification for an illegal practice begins from the date the person has been reported guilty by an election court or convicted and lasts for three years. The disqualification for a corrupt practice begins from the date a person has been reported guilty by an election court or convicted and lasts for five years.

For more information about disqualifications please visit the [electoral commission website](#)

How to apply

As a councillor representing your community you will help keep it a great place to live and work. You will be supported in your role and will be expected to undertake training. You

should be comfortable working electronically. You should have a positive outlook and a can-do attitude and be willing to work as part of a team.

To apply please fill in the attached application and return to the Clerk or Chairman by *date to be added*

You should also be available *date to be added* for the meeting at which the co-option will be considered.

If you would like to know more about the Parish Council and how it works then please contact any of the existing Councillors for in formal chat. Contact details are available on the Council website.