



FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL CO-OPTION POLICY

Date: 2 July 2025

Introduction

Following an advertised vacancy on the Parish Council if a request for an election is not received by Uttlesford District Council (UDC) by the date on the Notice of Vacancy, the Democratic Services Department will advise the Parish Council that it may co-opt to fill the vacancy. Co-option is the process by which Parish Council's appoint a new Councillor to fill a casual vacancy. The Co-option will appear as an agenda item within a monthly Parish Council meeting.

Felsted Parish Council manages the process of co-option itself and strives to demonstrate that it is fair and equitable by following the procedure set out below:

Procedure

1. Following permission from UDC to co-opt the Council will invite interested candidates to write to the Clerk expressing their interest by a specified date.
2. Prior to the Full Council meeting where possible three Councillors will be appointed to form a panel to interview candidates. The letters received by the clerk will be circulated to the panel prior to the interviews.
3. Following the interviews the panel will summarise their findings in a report. This will be pre-circulated to the Parish Council prior to the Council meeting in which the vacancy will be considered.
4. At the Parish Council Meeting The Chairman will then request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is more than one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. One candidate needs to receive an absolute majority of votes.
5. The Chairman will then place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and a vote will proceed. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.
6. Voting will be in accordance with Standing Orders and by the filling in of a voting slip.
7. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. A fresh vote will then taken place between the remaining candidates. 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.
8. The successful candidate is then declared co-opted to the Parish Council and will be asked

to join the meeting.

9. The successful candidate is a councillor in their own right and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process.

Adopted at the Council meeting held on: 2 July 2025
Minute Reference: 25/176

Next Review Due: July 2028