

Loughton Town Council

Procedure to fill a casual vacancy occurring on the Town Council

- 1 If a casual vacancy should arise on the Council due to
 - a) a member's failure to make his/her Declaration of Acceptance of Office within the proper time;
 - b) resignation; or
 - c) death,

then the Town Clerk will normally start the proceedings to fill the vacancy without further recourse to a meeting of the Town Council or a committee.

2 If a casual vacancy arises for any other reason e.g. disqualification due to six months' absence from meetings or other reason for disqualification, then the Town Clerk on behalf of the authority shall declare the office vacant and start the proceedings to fill the vacancy without further recourse to a meeting of the Town Council or a committee.

3 If a casual vacancy arises within six months of the day when the councillor whose office is declared vacant would ordinarily have retired then no by-election may be demanded. As the council is permitted either to advertise the vacancy for co-option or to leave the office vacant until the date of the next ordinary election, the Council will be asked at its next suitable meeting which option it wishes to pursue.

4 Except in the circumstances described in (3) above, notice of the vacancy will be issued by the Town Council in consultation with the Electoral Services section of Epping Forest District Council; notices will normally be placed on the council's noticeboards in the ward where the vacancy has arisen and on the council's web site.

5 If a by-election is called, Electoral Services will inform the Town Council and will then make all the necessary arrangements for the by-election. Poll cards for the by-election will be issued by Electoral Services; poll cards are optional and the town council will incur a cost for issuing them.

6 If no by-election is called, Electoral Services will inform the Town Council and the Town Council can co-opt a new member. Normally the Town Clerk will invoke the procedure to do this immediately without recourse to a meeting of the Council or committee.

7 Applications for co-option will be considered at the next suitable meeting of the Council.

8 Casual vacancies will be advertised on the council's noticeboards and through any other medium which the Council or the Town Clerk consider suitable.

9 Applicants for co-option will be asked to submit information about themselves and must confirm their eligibility for the position of councillor within the statutory rules. They will be invited to give a presentation of up to two minutes to the Council meeting at which the co-option will be considered.

10 At the meeting there will be no further discussion following the presentations. The Council shall vote upon the applicant(s). The Council will suspend Standing Order 10.1 (first sentence) and agree to conduct the vote by signed ballot. Ballot papers will be distributed and the Council will proceed immediately to a vote. The Council reserves the right not to make a co-option.

11 Voting will be according to the statutory requirements i.e. by a clear majority of those present and voting.

12 The successful applicant will execute the Declaration of Acceptance of Office within the specified time limit after the decision has been made and will thereafter receive summonses to meetings of the council and may act as a member of the council.