

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – JULY 14TH 2026

Item 10 – To consider co-option to fill a casual vacancy for a councillor in the South Ward

BACKGROUND

Since February 2026, the Parish Council has been seeking to fill – by co-option – a casual vacancy in the South Ward following the resignation of Cllr. Richard Fowler.

As at June 30th 2026, the last advertised closing date for consideration, one eligible candidate had applied to fill the post:-

- Laura Kovacs

Details for the applicant will be supplied to all members before the meeting.

PROCESS

As detailed in our Co-Option Policy the process to be followed for candidates is:-

At the co-option meeting, candidates – if present - will each be given five minutes maximum to introduce themselves to the parish councillors (members); give information on their background and experience; and explain why they wish to become a member of the Parish Council. The process will be carried out in the public session and there will be no private discussions between members prior to a vote being taken. However, where the Parish Council is discussing the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes, this could be prejudicial, and the Parish Council should resolve to exclude the members of the press and public.

As soon as all candidates have finished giving their submissions, the Parish Council will proceed to a vote with each candidate being proposed and seconded by the councillors in attendance (as defined in the Standing Orders) and a vote by a show of hands (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 13).

A recorded vote may be requested under Standing Order 3(s) so as to show whether each councillor present and voting, gave his/her vote for or against that question.

In order for a candidate to be co-opted to the Parish Council, it will be necessary for them to obtain an absolute majority of votes cast (50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting).

If there are more than two candidates and there is no candidate with an overall majority in the first round of voting the candidate with the least number of votes will drop out of the process.

Further rounds of voting will then take place with the process repeated until a candidate has an absolute majority.

If a candidate is selected, the Clerk will notify the NFDC Electoral Services Team of the co-option of their details.

The co-opted parish councillor(s) will need to complete a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before attending their first Council meeting as a Councillor and complete a Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests form within 28 days of the co-option, which the Clerk will lodge with the Monitoring Officer at New Forest District Council

David Rigby

Clerk to Copythorne Parish Council

July 3rd 2026