

FELTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL CO-OPTION POLICY

Following the loss of a parish councillor (due to resignation, death, disqualification or failure to attend meetings for six months), a Casual Vacancy must be advertised. The Parish Council is required to notify the District Council of the casual vacancy and then advertise the vacancy to give electors the opportunity to request an election. If ten electors write to the District Council within fourteen working days requesting an election, then one is called. The Parish Clerk will advertise the process on notice boards, website and any other means in use by the council at the time. If an election is called the Parish Council will be required to pay the costs. If residents do not request a ballot within fourteen days of the vacancy notice being posted, the Parish Council is able to co-opt. In the event of the Parish Council being required to fill the vacancy by co-option, this process will be followed:

1. the Clerk will advertise the vacancy within the Parish (on the noticeboard and on the Parish Council website)
2. within 14 days of the date of the notice interested persons should register their interest with the Clerk and provide a short brief outlining why they feel they are a suitable person for the role of Parish Councillor.
3. notice of the intention to co-opt to the vacancy will be given in the agenda of the Parish Council.
4. at the relevant item on the Parish Council meeting agenda the Chairman will request those Councillors present to vote for the candidate(s) who have put themselves forward. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled. Voting will be by raised hands, or – if requested by more than half of councillors present - by submitting a signed vote on paper to the Clerk and will continue until one candidate has received an absolute majority of the votes cast. At that stage the successful candidate will be declared elected. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. In the event of a tie the Chair will have the casting vote. Voting will then take place on the remaining candidates and continues until one person receives an absolute majority (defined as more than half the votes cast). In the event of a tie the Chair has the casting vote. The successful candidate is then declared co-opted.
5. the successful candidate will be asked to sign the acceptance of office declaration and will take their place at the meeting. The Register of Interests form will be given to them, to return within three weeks.