



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

Co-option Policy

Date	Version	Author	Origin of change e.g. change in legislation	Changed by

This policy applies to Weston-super-Mare Town Council.

Date policy adopted	23 rd March 2026
Approved by	Town Council
Review cycle	Annually
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Introduction

1.1 Weston-super-Mare Town Council recognises the importance of ensuring that any casual vacancies on the Council are filled in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.

1.2 This policy sets out the process to be followed when the Council resolves to fill a casual vacancy by co-option, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 and associated legislation.

Purpose of Co-option

2.1 The co-option of a Town Councillor occurs when a casual vacancy has arisen and no poll (by-election) has been called.

2.2 This policy aims to ensure openness, equality of opportunity, and public confidence in the Council's decision-making.

Procedure for Co-option

3.1 Upon receipt of written confirmation from Electoral Services at North Somerset Council that the vacancy may be filled by co-option, the CEO/Town Clerk shall initiate the co-option process.

3.2 The vacancy shall be advertised for a minimum period of four weeks on the Council's website and notice boards and, where appropriate, in the local press.

3.3 All Councillors shall be notified that the co-option process has commenced.

3.4 Applicants shall be required to complete a Co-option Application Form and a Co-option Eligibility Form confirming that they meet the statutory requirements.

3.5 Copies of completed application forms shall be circulated to Councillors at least seven clear days prior to the Full Council meeting at which the co-option is to be considered.

3.6 Applicants shall be invited to attend the meeting and give a short presentation and answer questions from Councillors.

3.7 Discussion on applications shall take place in council session without intervention from applicants or members of the public.

Eligibility

4.1 Applicants must meet the statutory eligibility requirements to be a Town Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972.

4.2 Applicants must not be disqualified from holding office under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Voting Process

5.1 Voting shall be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

5.2 A successful candidate must receive an absolute majority of votes from those present and voting.

5.3 Where more than two candidates are nominated and no candidate achieves an absolute majority, the candidate with the fewest votes shall be eliminated and further rounds of voting held until an absolute majority is obtained.

5.4 Voting shall be by signed ballot. If requested, the CEO/Town Clerk shall record how each Councillor voted.

5.5 In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

5.6 Candidates may remain in the room during the vote. Following the vote, the Chair shall declare the successful candidate duly co-opted.

Review

6.1 This policy shall be reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes to legislation or best practice affecting the co-option process.