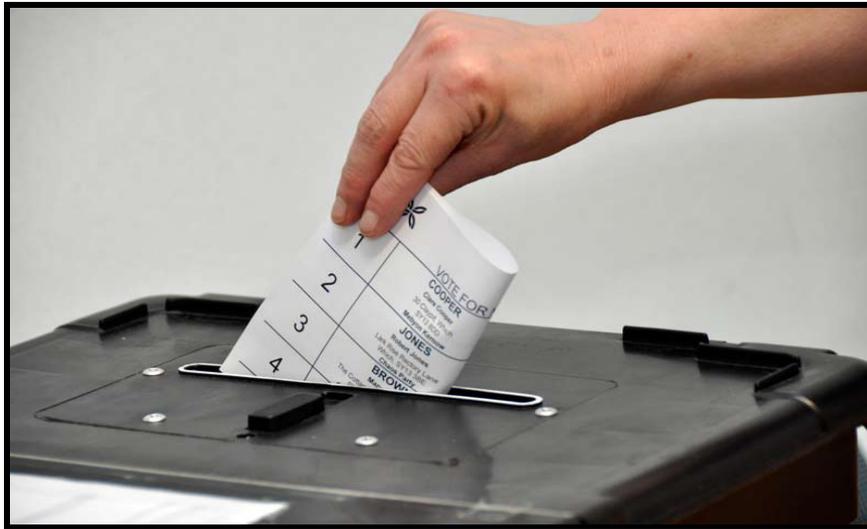




# ***GUIDE TO PROCEDURES FOR TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS***



## ***PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS***

[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)

Updated January 2015

# PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

## Introduction to Election Procedures

The election process for all elections is set out in law, so candidates must ensure that they are familiar with the requirements set out in these guidance notes. The notes are however provided as general guidance only, with queries on any specific issues, should be directed to the Electoral Commission.

The 1983 and 1985 Representation of the People Acts, together with the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 2006, and more recently, the Representation of the People Act 2000 & the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 made several changes to the way Parish elections are conducted. The most important of these changes relate to the computation of the election timetable, combined elections, the extension of absent voting, poll cards and the co-option of members.

The Returning Officer appointed by Coventry City Council is of course responsible for the conduct of, and arrangements for Parish Council elections. However, the Parish Council and its Clerk have an important role to play, especially in giving advice to prospective candidates prior to the four-yearly ordinary elections and in the preliminary arrangements for the filling of casual vacancies, including by-elections.

### COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL'S WEBSITE

If a by-election is called, information about every vacancy – including Notice of Election, Statement of Persons Nominated, Notice of Poll and Declaration of Results – will be published on Coventry City Council's website:

[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)

on its "Vacancies and By-Elections" webpage

These notes should be a useful, but not exhaustive, reference if you are involved with Parish Council elections. However, if you need any more information on local matters, please contact the **Elections Office** on **024 7683 3036**.

For guidance on legal issues, candidates should obtain their own independent legal advice, and may contact the **Electoral Commission** – [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk) or Tel. **0300 0683 390**.

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# **ORDINARY PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

## **A1. Term of Office**

Parish Councillors hold office for a period of four years (or if elected part way through the cycle, for the remainder of that period only) and retire on the fourth day after the ordinary day of election. The newly elected Councillors take office (provided they have made declarations of acceptance of office) on the day on which their predecessors retire (Local Government Act, 1972, Section 16(3)). The Chair of a Parish Council continues in office until their successor becomes entitled to act as such.

## **A2. Combination of Elections**

The Representation of the People Act 1983, Section 36 allows for the ordinary elections of Coventry City Councillors to be combined with the ordinary elections of Parish Councillors, if they are held on the same day.

If a Parliamentary General Election is called for the same day as the scheduled ordinary elections Coventry City Council and Parish Councillors, the law now provides for the polls to be combined and the Parish polling day to take place on the same day.

## **A3. The Election Timetable**

We will provide Candidates and Parish Clerks with a timetable for each election or by-election. Key dates will also be shown on Coventry City Council's website.

Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a Bank Holiday are disregarded when the timetable is being calculated before polling day. They are however, included in the calculation of proceedings following polling day. For example, the last day for the delivery of candidates' returns of election expenses, which is calculated as 28 calendar days after the day of election.

## **A4. Absent Voting – Postal and Proxy Applications**

- New postal vote applications or applications to change a postal vote to a proxy vote (or vice-versa), or to have a postal ballot paper sent to a different address, or to cancel a postal must be made in writing to the Electoral Registration Officer at the Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR by **5pm on the eleventh day before Polling Day**.
- New or amended proxy applications must be made by **5pm on the sixth day before Polling Day**.
- Application forms for postal votes and proxy appointments can be downloaded from our website or from [www.aboutmyvote.com](http://www.aboutmyvote.com).

## **A5. Annual Meeting**

A Parish Council must hold an annual meeting each year on any day in May they choose.

**Except** in the year when ordinary elections are held for all Councillors, when the annual meeting must be held on, or within fourteen days after, the day the new Councillors take office (i.e. the fourth day after the day of the election (usually a Monday)).

# **FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCIES**

Casual vacancies will be filled either by election or co-option. Below is a step-by-step guide to assist both Candidates and Parish Clerks.

## **B1. The Vacancy**

Firstly, the Parish Council must advertise the vacancy. This should be done by displaying a notice, similar to the notice in Appendix 1. The notices should be displayed in places that are as conspicuous as possible within the parish and a copy of the Notice sent **immediately** to the Returning Officer, Coventry City Council, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR. The Parish Council may also advertise the vacancy in any other manner they wish. **(Clerks must inform the Elections Office at Coventry City Council of any vacancies by e-mail to electoral.services@coventry.gov.uk)**

It is important to complete the Notice correctly, paying particular attention to the dates on the Notice and must be displayed for 14 days from the date of the Notice. The 14 days must not include weekends and bank holidays.

## **B2. Filling the Vacancy by Election**

During the 14 days of the notice being displayed, ten electors from within the Parish or Ward of the Parish can call for an election to be held. To do this they will need to make their request in writing to *The Returning Officer, Coventry City Council, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR*. A sample election request form is in Appendix 2 and copies can be downloaded from Coventry City Council's website.

In the event of this happening, the Parish Clerk will be notified. The Returning Officer will decide on the date of the election, which must fall within 60 working days from the date of the Notice.

In the case of a casual vacancy occurring within six months before the day on which that Councillor would regularly have retired, an election is not held. The Parish Council may co-opt a person to fill the vacancy and any vacancy not so filled shall be filled at the next ordinary election.

## **B3. Official Poll Cards**

Where the poll at a Parish election is not combined with another type of election, the Parish Council may, not later than noon on the nineteenth day before election day, request in writing, the Returning Officer to issue poll cards for that election.

Where a Parish election is combined with a Coventry City Council election, the poll cards will be issued for the City Council election but refer to the Parish election taking place on the same day.

## **B4. Filling the Vacancy by Co-option**

If an election is not requested, the Parish Clerk will be notified that the Parish Council must co-opt a member to fill the vacancy as soon as practicable. The name and address of the person co-opted should be sent to the Returning Officer.

If the number of casual vacancies leaves the Parish Council without a quorum, Coventry City Council may order an election to be held and in the meantime may by order appoint people to fill all or any of the vacancies until other Councillors are elected and take up office.

## **B5. Co-Option, Best Practice**

- (i) Advertise the casual vacancies within the parish and local press.
- (ii) Set a date by which prospective candidates must write into the Chairman or Clerk to the Parish Council expressing their interests in these casual vacancies.
- (iii) Notice of the Election (co-option) should be given in the agenda for the meeting of the Parish Council.
- (iv) When the item is reached, the Chairman should call for nominations, which should be duly proposed and seconded.
- (v) Candidates can be either interviewed or their letter of interest read out to a Parish Council meeting.
- (vi) The prospective candidates must fulfil the same criteria requirements as those for qualifications for candidature for an election.
- (vii) When all the nominations have been received a vote should be taken. It is usual for the candidates' names to be put in alphabetical order. (Voting in council on casual vacancies is recommended).
- (viii) A successful candidate should have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting.
- (ix) It follows that if there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them at the first count receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps should be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes and the remainder should then be put to the vote again; this process should, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.
- (x) If there is more than one vacancy and the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies, all the vacancies may be filled by a single composite resolution, but if the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies, each vacancy should be filled by a separate vote or series of votes.
- (xi) After the vote has been taken, the Chairman should declare the candidate who received the highest number of votes duly elected.

- (xii) The person elected must make a declaration of acceptance of office before, or at, the first meeting of the Parish Council following his election in the presence of a member of the Parish Council or the Proper Officer of the Parish Council.

**Note:** There is nothing preventing Councillors from approaching persons asking them to offer themselves for co-option or even advertising for co-optee applicants. Applications might also be invited to provide a written “application” or invited to speak to the council prior to any voting. If such arrangements are to be applied, they should be carefully drafted and provided to applicants. It is imperative that all applicants are treated alike in order that the arrangements are seen as fair. Applicants under such arrangements should be discouraged from any personal lobbying.

## **B6. Insufficient Nominations**

Where an election has been requested to fill a casual vacancy and there are an equal number of candidates to seats available, that person(s) is elected unopposed, and takes up office immediately after the close of withdrawals. This is because the successful candidate(s) may still exercise their right to withdraw, should they so wish.

## **B7. Term of Office**

A person elected or co-opted to fill a casual vacancy holds office until the person in whose place they are elected or appointed would regularly have retired.

# **ELECTION AND NOMINATION PROCEDURES**

Whether standing at ordinary scheduled elections or by-elections, the nomination procedures are the same and the following guidance is aimed to assist candidates, both at nomination stage and beyond.

## **C1. Nomination Procedures**

It is important that nomination papers are completed correctly. Whilst it is often the case that the Parish Clerk will arrange to distribute and oversee the completion of nomination papers (particularly so at scheduled elections), it is the responsibility of each Candidate and not the Clerk, to ensure that their papers are delivered to the Returning Officer before the deadline specified within the statutory election timetable.

You or a person you trust should deliver your nomination papers to the office of the Returning Officer before the deadline for receipt of nominations.

If you deliver your ballot papers in person, it is advisable to wait for them to be checked by the Elections Team before you leave. This is because if we discover an error, you will be able to take your paper away with you to correct it and re-submit it before the closing date and time.

**Please note that nomination papers cannot be submitted until the date of publication of the Notice of Election, nor can they be submitted electronically.**

Any papers which are incomplete, incorrect or received after the close of nominations cannot be accepted as valid.

Please take a few moments to familiarise yourself with the following guidance before you complete your nomination paper:-

### **About Yourself:**

Each candidate must be nominated on a separate **nomination paper** in the prescribed form, the notes to which should be read carefully.

The nomination paper must give:-

- the **full names** (surname first) and **home address** of the candidate and
- may, if desired, give his or her **description**, which must not exceed six words in length and are predominantly for use when the seat is being contested by members of a political party, or when candidates are "Independent".

Please note that your **description** is what will appear on the printed ballot paper. If you therefore write your description as "Farmer - Blue Eyes, Black Hair", this is what will be printed below your name when the ballot papers are produced.

A candidate may not use a description which is likely to lead voters to associate him or her with a Political Party unless that description is authorized by a Certificate signed by or on behalf of the Party's Registered Nominating Officer, which must also be received by the Returning Officer not later than the latest time for the delivery of nomination papers.

If a candidate wishes to use a party's emblem to appear against his or her name on the ballot paper, this must also be requested before the closing time for delivery of nominations.

**Guidance on the use of Commonly Used Names:**

Great care should be taken when a candidate completes his or her nomination paper if they decide to use a commonly used name. The commonly used name boxes on the nomination paper are for when you are normally known by a name other than your full name and therefore wish for this to be used on the ballot paper. Below are some examples of how your name would appear on the ballot paper depending on which name box you complete.

| Candidate's Actual Name | Candidate's Actual Forename | Commonly used Surname         | Commonly used Forename        | Appear on Ballot Papers as ... |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     |                               |                               | BANKS<br>Rebecca Banks         |
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     | Banks                         | Becky                         | BANKS<br>Becky Banks           |
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     | Banksy                        | Becky                         | BANKSY<br>Becky Banksy         |
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     | Banksy                        |                               | BANKSY<br>Rebecca Banksy       |
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     |                               | Becky                         | BANKS<br>Becky Banks           |
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     | ---<br>(or "None to be Used") | Becky                         | BECKY                          |
| Banks                   | Rebecca                     | Banksy                        | ---<br>(or "None to be Used") | BANKSY                         |

**Signing Nominations:**

The nomination paper must be subscribed by a:-

- (i) Proposer and
- (ii) Secunder

The Proposer and Secunder must be local government electors of the Parish, or if the Parish is divided into wards, the correct ward, and their electoral numbers must be given on the nomination paper.

Proposers/Seconders cannot sign more nomination papers than the number of vacancies to be filled. Whilst the Electoral Team can provide electoral numbers, they cannot formally validate a nomination paper immediately, as another candidate may have already submitted a paper bearing a similar Proposer/Secunder.

It is good practice for the Parish Council Clerk not to sign nomination papers or advocate the election of any particular candidate. Strict impartiality will avoid any possible accusation of bias.

### **Consent to Nomination:**

A submitted Nomination Paper is **NOT** valid unless the candidate's **Consent to Nomination**, given in writing on or within one month before the last day for delivery of nomination papers, is delivered at the place and within the time appointed for the delivery of nomination papers. The consent must contain a statement declaring that, with reference to the day of nomination the candidate is, and on the day of election will be, qualified to be elected (giving particulars of his or her qualification) and must be attested by a witness. Any person may act as a witness to the candidate's signature. The consent to nomination must also include the candidate's date of birth.

### **Qualifications for Candidature:**

To be qualified to be elected a member of a Parish Council, a person must be 18 years of age or over at the date of his or her nomination, and a Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, or a citizen of another Member State of the European Community, and either:-

- (i) on that day he/she is and thereafter he/she continues to be a local government elector for the area of the parish; or
- (ii) he/she has during the whole of the twelve months preceding that day occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the parish; or
- (iii) his/her principal or only place of work during that twelve months has been in that area; or
- (iv) he/she has during the whole of those twelve months resided either in the parish or within 4.8 kilometres of it.

Candidates must disclose this information on their Consent to Nomination and are advised to complete as many of the relevant qualifications as apply.

### **Disqualifications for Candidature:**

There are certain disqualifications for election, of which the main (see S.80 of the Local Government Act 1972) are:-

- (a) holding a paid office under the authority;
- (b) bankruptcy;
- (c) having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of not less than three months, without the option of a fine during the five years preceding the election; and
- (d) being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices.

### **Campaigning and Expenditure:**

Election campaigning can be carried out as soon as a person declares himself/herself to be a candidate. It is in the interests of each candidate to undertake their own

publicity campaign, so that potential voters know who they are voting for. All election publicity must carry the correct imprints. Full guidance can be obtained from the Electoral Commission.

Candidates are subject to limits on what they spend during the regulated period in advance of an election. The limit for the local government elections is £600, plus 5p per local government elector in the ward. A record (and receipts) for any expenses incurred should be kept, as towards the end of the election process, each candidate must, by law, complete and return their Election Expenses. It is a public document which is available for public inspection.

Candidates sometimes believe that they can claim back their campaign expenditure. **No reimbursement of expenses can be made by Coventry City Council to candidates.**

### **Election Imprints for Publicity Material:**

IMPORTANT: Please either contact the Electoral Commission for advice and/or refer to the guidance notes (Appendix 3)

## **C2. Statement of Persons Nominated**

As soon as practicable after the closing date for receipt of nominations and not later than 12 noon on the seventeenth day before election day, the Returning Officer is required to publish a **Statement of Persons who stand nominated** and of the reasons why any other persons nominated no longer stand nominated.

A copy of this statement will be sent to the Parish Clerk for display locally, and a copy will be sent to the relevant Parish Chairman for information. A copy of the notice will be published on Coventry City Council's website, so you may wish to log on to see who the other candidates are (if any). Please remember to press "Refresh" on your browser bar to ensure that you have the most up-to-date information available.

## **C3. Withdrawal of Candidature**

A candidate may withdraw his or her candidature if, by the time the nomination period closes, he or she delivers to the place fixed for the delivery of nomination papers a **Notice of Withdrawal** signed by him or her, and attested by one witness.

A candidate who is validly nominated for more than one ward of the same Parish **must** withdraw their candidature in all those wards except one by that deadline, otherwise they shall be deemed to have withdrawn from **all** those wards.

It is only at the expiry of the deadline for withdrawals that we will know whether or not there will be a poll.

## **C4. Appointment of Polling and Counting Agents**

Whilst it is not usual for a parish council election, a candidate may, if they wish, appoint polling agents to detect personation at a polling station and counting agents to

observe at the count. A polling agent is **not** the same as a 'teller' (a candidate's helper who takes the numbers of electors leaving the polling station), who has no official standing and is **not** allowed to enter the polling station except to vote.

## **C5. Uncontested Elections**

If the number of people remaining validly nominated after any withdrawals does not exceed the number of Councillors to be elected, such people will be declared to be elected as soon as possible after the latest time for the delivery of withdrawals. The Returning Officer will give notice of their names to the Parish Clerk or Chairman and to the public.

Even if there is just one candidate, he/she is not elected unopposed until the after the withdrawal date and time, as he/she may exercise his/her right to withdraw their candidature up until that deadline.

People elected in these circumstances at scheduled elections do not take up office until four days after the day of election. In the case of a by-election however, an unopposed candidate will take office immediately after they have been declared to be elected (which is after the latest time for delivery of the close of withdrawals). Refer to "Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 - (Rule 50 (2))".

Please note that at scheduled elections, if there are not enough candidates to fill all the vacancies, the Representation of the People Act 1985, Section 21 allows the elected members, provided there is a quorum (i.e. – one third of the whole number of members with a minimum of three) to co-opt members to fill the remaining vacancies.

If the Parish Council fails to exercise their power to co-opt within seven weeks (35 days computed as under paragraph 3) or if there is no quorum, Coventry City Council may order a fresh election to properly constitute the Parish Council.

## **C6. Contested Elections – Declaration of Result – The Count**

When the result of the poll is known, the Returning Officer or the appointed Deputy will:-

- (a) declare to be elected, the candidate(s) to whom more votes have been given than to the other candidates, up to the number of Councillors to be elected.
- (b) give notice of the name of each candidate elected to the Parish Clerk and relevant Chairman
- (c) give public notice of the name of each candidate and of the total number of votes given for each (whether elected or not) together with the number of rejected ballot papers

Candidates are encouraged to attend the counting of the votes, to oversee proceedings. Forms to advise the Returning Officer of Candidates' attendance, together with their partner/spouse and Counting Agents, are included in the Nomination Pack.

## C7. Election Expenses

At the end of the election period, even if no poll has taken place, each Candidate (whether successful or not) **MUST BY LAW** submit a Statement of Election Expenses/Declaration to show the expenses (if any) incurred as part of their election campaign.

These documents must be made available for public inspection and failure to return one (even if it is a 'Nil Return') is a reported **electoral offence**.

## C8. Register of Electors supplied to Candidates

Candidates at by-elections are supplied with a Register of Electors as part of their Nomination Pack. Any Candidate who is unsuccessful or decides not to stand for election **must** return their Register to the Returning Officer after the election period. Ideally, they should arrange to do this when they return their election expenses.

## C9. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

A person elected to the office of a Parish Councillor shall:-

- (a) in the case of the Chair, at the meeting at which they are elected; or
- (b) in the case of a Councillor, before or at the first meeting of the Parish Council after their election; or
- (c) in either case if the Council at that meeting allows, before or at a later meeting fixed by the Council

make in the presence of a member of the Council or of the proper officer of the Council a **Declaration of Acceptance of Office** (see Appendix 4).

Failure to do so will mean their office will become vacant (Local Government Act 1972, Section 83).

## CASUAL VACANCIES – CANDIDATES’ CHECKLIST

The various stages of the election process can prove to be daunting if you have not stood as a candidate before. Even though we have provided you with a timetable as part of your nomination pack, you may find it useful if use the Checklist below to ensure that you have done everything that is required, in chronological order, including submitting your record of election expenses right at the end of the election process.

Also, please remember to refer to Coventry City Council’s website to view the notices published throughout the election timetable – eg. Notice of Election, Statement of Persons Nominated, Notice of Poll and Election Results.

|  | <b>Tick when complete (or as required)</b> |
|--|--|
| <b>Nomination Paper and Consent to Nomination:</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the nomination paper been completed with Forename and Surname?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If required, has the Commonly Used Name section been completed? (See Section C1).</li> </ul>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a Description being used, if so, is it less than six words?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the Candidate’s Address, Title and Contact Information been completed?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If using a Political Party Description and Emblem, have the necessary consents been completed, countersigned by the Registered Nominating Officer or Authorised Person, and been submitted by the close of the nomination period?</li> </ul>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the Proposer and Secunder signed the Nomination Paper?</li> </ul>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the Consent to Nomination been fully completed with               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) all the qualification sections that apply;</li> <li>(b) the candidate’s signature;</li> <li>(c) the candidate’s date of birth;</li> <li>(d) the name, address and signature of a witness; and</li> <li>(e) has it been completed within the correct time period (See Section C1)?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you used the special Returning Officer Label to alert staff to the closing date for receipt of nominations?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will the nomination paper be received by the deadline for receipt of nominations – either via the postal system or by personal delivery?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <b>Withdrawal of Candidature</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If withdrawing from the contest after submitting your nomination paper, have you completed the necessary form and had it witnessed, and submitted it by the due deadline?</li> </ul>  |  |

| <b>Appointment of Agents</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If required, complete and return the forms for the appointment of polling agents, counting agents and postal vote opening agents and submit them to the Returning Officer by the due deadline.</li> <li>• Note: Candidates, their partner/spouse and Counting Agents are welcome to attend the counting of votes, but should submit the necessary paperwork to the Returning Officer in advance, using the forms provided in their Nomination Pack.</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Declaration and Return of Candidates Election Expenses</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>LEGAL REQUIREMENT:</u><br/>Have the “Declaration by Candidates” and “Return of Election Expenses” forms been submitted to the Returning Officer by the due deadline – even if it is a “Nil” return? (See Section C7).</li> </ul>  |  |
| <b>Register of Electors</b>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For unsuccessful candidates, has the Register of Electors been returned to Coventry City Council’s Returning Officer?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <b>Declaration of Acceptance of Office and Members Interests</b>  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For successful candidates, has the Declaration of Acceptance of Office been signed and witnessed?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For successful candidates, has a Declaration of Members Interests Form been completed and submitted to Coventry City Council’s Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after taking up office?</li> </ul>  |  |

**INSERT: Name of Parish/Town Council and/or its Coat of Arms or Logo**

**NOTICE UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1972 (Section 87(2))**

**VACANCY FOR A COUNCILLOR  
PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN**

that a casual vacancy has occurred in the office of Councillor for the ***[INSERT NAME OF WARD OF (if applicable)]*** Parish/Town of ***[INSERT NAME OF COUNCIL]*** following the **resignation/disqualification/death** on ***[INSERT DATE]*** of Councillor ***[INSERT NAME]***.

Rule 5(2) of The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules, 2006 now applies.

The rule allows **TEN ELECTORS** for the parish [ward] in which the casual vacancy has arisen to request the Returning Officer to hold an election to fill the vacancy.\* That request must be made within **FOURTEEN DAYS**, calculated in accordance with the rules,\*\* of the date of this notice. The fourteen-day period ends on ***[INSERT DATE]***.

**What if a request to hold an election is not received during the permitted time?**

Rule 5(5) of the above Rules will apply. The Parish Council must, as soon as practicable after the expiry of the fourteen-day period, co-opt a person to fill the vacancy.

The Returning Officer's address is:

**Electoral Services, Coventry City Council,  
Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR**

The telephone number for further guidance is 024 7683 3036.

**This notice is dated *[INSERT DATE]***

***[INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS OF PARISH/TOWN CLERK]***

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\* There is no form of words for this request, which might simply be a letter headed with such words as "We the undersigned being electors for the [Ward of] ... Parish, call for an election to fill the vacancy arising from the [death][resignation] of ...". A template entitled "Request for an Election" is available to download from Coventry City Council's website – [www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk) - under "Current Council Vacancies". It is helpful if the ten signatures are accompanied by printed names and addresses.

\*\* In calculating the notice period, day one is the day following the date of this notice; a Saturday, Sunday, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a Bank Holiday or day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall be disregarded, and the period closes at midnight on the fourteenth day after the date of this notice. Rule 5(2) of The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules, 2006 now applies.

**To: The Returning Officer, Coventry City Council – Elections Office,  
Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR.**

Dear Martin Reeves,

**REQUEST FOR A BY-ELECTION**

We are ten Local Government electors for the Parish/Town of

..... (..... Ward).

We request that an election be held to fill the casual vacancy in the office of Parish Councillor caused by:-

.....

as published in the Notice of Vacancy dated .....

|           | <b>PRINT NAME</b> | <b>SIGNATURE</b> | <b>ADDRESS</b> | <i>FOR OFFICE USE</i> |
|-----------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>2</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>3</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>4</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>5</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>6</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>7</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>8</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>9</b>  |                   |                  |                |                       |
| <b>10</b> |                   |                  |                |                       |

Dated .....

## **ELECTION IMPRINTS**

**Please refer to this section BEFORE producing your election material, as it is an electoral offence if your campaign material does not comply with the statutory regulations. For further guidance, please contact the Electoral Commission.**

### **You must:**

- Use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- Comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners – you should ask the relevant local authority for advice.
- Make sure that outdoor posters are removed promptly after the election – you must do this within two weeks.

### **You should:**

- Consider how to make your campaign accessible to people who are visually impaired, have learning difficulties or low literacy skills, or whose first language isn't English or, in Wales, Welsh. You may want to make contact with disability groups in your local area for advice.

### **You must not:**

- Produce material that looks like the poll cards sent to voters by the Returning Officer.
- Pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).

## **USING IMPRINTS**

### What is an imprint?

An imprint must, by law, be added to campaign material to show who is responsible for its production. It helps to ensure that the campaign is transparent.

### What do you need to include?

On printed material, such as leaflets and posters, you must include the name and address of:

- the printer
- the promoter
- any person on behalf of whom the material is being published (and who is not the promoter)

The promoter is the person who has authorised the material to be printed. If the promoter is acting on behalf of a group or organisation, the group or organisation's name and address must also be included.

You can use either home or office addresses.

If you are putting an advert in a newspaper, your advert does not need to include the printer's details.

### Example of an Imprint

A standard imprint for independent candidates should look like this:

Printed by [printer's name and address].

Promoted by [agent's name] of [agent's address], on behalf of [candidate's name] of [candidate's address].

If the candidate is also the promoter of the material, the 'on behalf of' part of the imprint is not required.

In all cases, you must make sure that the imprint lists all the promoters and organisations involved.

### Where do you put the Imprint?

If your material is single-sided – such as a window poster – you must put the imprint on the face of the document. If it is multi-sided, you must put it on the first or last page.

### Websites and other Electronic Material

You should also put an imprint on electronic material, such as websites and emails. The imprint should include the name and address of the promoter and the organisation on whose behalf it has been produced.

**This Section to be completed by the  
Newly Elected/Appointed/Co-Opted Parish/Town Councillor**

**DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

having been elected to the office of Parish/Town Councillor

For the Parish/Town of: \_\_\_\_\_

declare that I take that office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfil the duties of it according to the best of my judgement and ability.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**This Section to be completed the Witness  
So Authorised by the Parish/Town Council**

This Declaration was made and signed before me:

\_\_\_\_\_

Proper Officer of the Council of the Parish/Town of @

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_

Member of the Council of the Parish/Town of @

**AND**

\_\_\_\_\_

Member of the Council of the Parish/Town of @

Date of Co-Option: \_\_\_\_\_

*[This Copy to be retained by the Parish/Town Clerk]*