

Morley Town Council Co-Option Policy

Policy Title: Co-Option Policy

Date Initially Adopted by FGP&S

Policy Version: 01

Date Policy Adopted: 05 March 2025

Review Period: Annual [To be reviewed annually at the Annual Council meeting in May]

Disposal Date [Period]: Not applicable

Document History

Version	Description of Changes	Date Adopted
01	Date first adopted	05.03.2025

Morley Town Council Co-Option Policy

This policy outlines the procedure to be followed by Morley Town Council when a casual vacancy arises by virtue of the Councillors resignation, disqualification, or death.

The Electoral Services Department at the Principal Authority will be informed of the vacancy as soon as practicable after it arises.

Morley Town Council will follow the relevant legislation to allow ten electors to claim a by-election. Assuming there is no call for a by-election the Council will fill the vacancy by co-option using the following procedure:

1. A notice will be erected in a conspicuous place in the Town inviting people interested in being a Councillor to email the Town clerk to request an application form.
 2. The notice advertising the vacancy will contain a closing date for receipt of applications.
 3. Upon receipt, the Council will check (as far as reasonably possible) that candidates are eligible in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, section 79. To be eligible, the candidate must:
 - be 18 years old or over; and
 - is an elector for the Town; or
 - has resided in the Town for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land in the Town; or
 - had his/her principal place of work in the Town; or
 - has lived within three miles (direct) of the Town.and not disqualified from being a Councillor by virtue of section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022, or a Criminal Conviction, Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.
 4. Following receipt of applications, the next suitable Council meeting will have an agenda item 'To receive written applications for the office of Town Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy'.
 5. The Council will request all those submitting an application to attend a Town Council meeting and provide a short 5-minute presentation as to their suitability as a Town Councillor, prior to resolving to co-opt the most suitable candidate.
- NOTE:** Morley Town Council needs to be aware of the need for confidentiality in part of the co-option process. In the opinion of YLCA the part where candidates speak to the meeting is not prejudicial to the public interest, however where the Council is discussing the merits of candidates and inevitably their personal attributes etc, this could be prejudicial and so for this part of the process, we advise the Council to exclude members of the press and public (Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960). The Councillors must vote in the normal way, i.e. proposer, seconder, and vote by show of hands.
6. Decisions of a local Council are normally made on a simple majority vote. The only occasion where this differs is in the co-option process. Where the Council has more than two applicants for one vacancy it will ensure that the successful applicant receives an absolute majority of the votes cast. The difference is that the person elected receives more votes than the others added together. A Proposer and a seconder are required.
 7. Where there is one candidate for one seat or any situation where the number of candidates is equal to the seats available, the Council must appoint the candidates as long as they are qualified to hold public office under Section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972 and are not disqualified as summarised at point 3. A Proposer and a Secunder are required.
 8. The successful candidate will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office before they can act as a Town Councillor.
 9. The clerk will provide the new Councillor with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct.
 10. The clerk will provide the new Councillor with the Council's Councillor induction pack.

Morley Town Council Co-Option Application Form

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Town Councillor. Please complete the application below to assist the Council in making their decision.

Full Name & Title	
Home Address	
Home Telephone	
Mobile Telephone	
Email Address	
About You Please provide the Council with some background information about yourself	

Reasons for Applying

Please provide the council with your reasons for wanting to become a Town Councillor. The Town Council recommends you refer to the person specification to complete this section.

Signature:

Please return this completed form, together with the completed

Co-option Eligibility Form to:

Email: town.clerk@morley.gov.uk

Post to : The Town Clerk, Morley Town Council, Town Hall, Queen Street, Morley LS27 9DY

Please mark your envelope 'Private and Confidential'

Your application will be considered at the next suitable Town Council meeting.

Morley Town Council is duty-bound to treat this information as strictly confidential.

Morley Town Council Co-Option Eligibility Form

Section One: Please tick which applies to you: To be eligible for co-option as a Morley Town Councillor you must be a British subject or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union; and on the 'relevant date' (i.e. the day on which you are nominated or if there is a poll the day of the election) 18 years of age or over; and additionally able to meet one of the following qualifications set out below.

- a) I am registered as a local government elector for the Town; or ☐
- b) I have, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the date of my co-option, occupied as owner or tenant, land or other premises in the Town; or ☐
- c) My principal or only place of work during those twelve months has been in the Town; or ☐
- d) I have during the whole of twelve months resided in the Town or within 3 miles of it ☐

from being elected as a Local Councillor or being a member of a Local Council if he/she:

- a) Holds any paid office or employment of the local council (other than the office of Chairman) or of a joint committee on which the Council is represented; or
- b) Is a person who has been adjudged bankrupt or has made a composition or arrangement with his/her creditors (but see below); or
- c) Has within five years before the day of the election, or since his/her election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and has been sentenced to imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for not less than three months without the option of a fine; or
- d) Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 for corrupt or illegal practices.

This disqualification for bankruptcy ceases in the following circumstances:-

I. If the bankruptcy is annulled on the grounds that either the person ought not to have been adjudged bankrupt or that his/her debts have been fully discharged;

II. If the person is discharged with a certificate that the bankruptcy was caused by misfortune without misconduct on his/her part;

III. If the person is discharged without such a certificate.

In i and ii above, the disqualification ceases on the date of the annulment and discharge respectively.

In III., it ceases on the expiry of five years from the date of discharge.

Declaration: I hereby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of Morley Town Councillor, and the information given on this form is true and accurate record.

Signature..... Date.....

Morley Town Council will treat this information as strictly confidential.

Morley Town Council Councillor Person Specification

Name of Local Council:	Morley Town Council	
Description of Office:	Town Councillor	
COMPETENCY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Relevant knowledge, Education, and Professional Qualifications & Training	• Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community. • Other requirements to be specified (this may or may not be applicable).	• A levels/Degree level and or • Vocation or professional qualification (e.g. accountant, teacher, policeman) may be specified.
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	• Solid interest in local matters. • Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community. • Good interpersonal skills. • Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly both orally and in writing. • Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff. • Good reading and analytic skills. • Ability and willingness to work with the council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other Town councils, principal authority, charities). • Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training. • Ability to work under pressure.	• Experience of working or being a member in a local authority or other public body. • Experience working with voluntary and or local community/ interest groups. • Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to Town councils or local authorities. • Good standard of computer literacy. • Experience in delivering presentations. • Experience of working with the media. • Experience in financial control/ budgeting. • HR experience.
Circumstances	• Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the council (or the meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) in the evening and events in the evening and at weekends. • Flexible and committed to the Council • Enthusiastic.	

MORLEY TOWN COUNCIL

NOTICE OF CO-OPTION TO FILL CASUAL VACANCY

1 People interested in being a Councillor to email/write to the Town Clerk to request an application form.

2. The closing date for receipt of applications is 24th APRIL 2025

3. Candidates must be eligible in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, section 79.

To be eligible, the candidate must:

- be 18 years old or over; and**
- is an elector for the Town; or**
- has resided in the Town for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land in the Town; or**
- had his/her principal place of work in the Town; or**
- has lived within three miles (direct) of the Town.**

and not disqualified from being a Councillor by virtue of section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and Local Government (Disqualification) Act 2022, or a Criminal Conviction, Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011.

4. Following receipt of applications, the next suitable Council meeting will have an agenda item

'To receive written applications for the office of Town Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy'.

5. The Council will request all those submitting an application to attend a Town Council meeting and provide a short 5-minute presentation as to their suitability as a Town Councillor, prior to resolving to co-opt the most suitable candidate.

Email: town.clerk@morley.gov.uk

**Post to : The Town Clerk,
Morley Town Council,
Town Hall,
Queen Street,
Morley LS27 9DY**

Please mark your envelope 'Private and Confidential'