

Mancetter Parish Council

Serving the People of Mancetter and Ridge Lane

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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| Organisation | Mancetter Parish Council |
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CO-OPTION POLICY 2026

INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out the procedure to ensure there is compliance with legislation and continuity of procedures in the co-option of members to Mancetter Parish Council. The co-option procedure is entirely managed by the Parish Council, and this policy will ensure that a fair and equitable process is carried out.

CO-OPTION

The co-option of a parish councillor occurs in two instances:

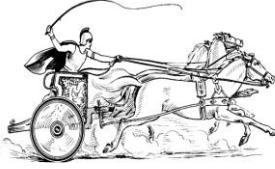
- 1) during the life of a Council when a seat become vacant due to resignation, death, disqualification or failure to remain qualified and no by-election has been called.
- 2) when a seat has been left vacant because no eligible candidate stood for election during an ordinary election held every 4 years for a new Council

CO-OPTION DURING THE COUNCIL TERM

A Councillor may resign at any time by written notice delivered to the Chair to the Parish Council (Local Government Act 1972 section 84). The resignation must be accepted: there is no procedure for withdrawing a notice of resignation once it is made. The resignation takes effect immediately upon receipt. Other causes of a vacancy include death, failure to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and failure to attend meetings for a period of six consecutive months without prior approval of the Parish Council.

Casual Vacancy

In the event of a vacancy occurring due to resignation, death, disqualification or failure to remain qualified, the Clerk will immediately inform the Elections Office at North Warwickshire Borough Council who will then supply the required Notice of Vacancy for publication to give residents the opportunity to call for a byelection. The notice will be



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displayed on noticeboards and the Parish Council website, as well as other locations as instructed by the Council.

The Notice of Vacancy will be displayed for the legally specified time period of 14 days (excluding weekends or bank holidays). If this notice does not initiate the 10 electors required by legislation to call for a by-election, the Parish Clerk is notified by North Warwickshire Borough Council that they must fill the position by co-option as soon as practicable.

All co-option vacancies will then be advertised within 21 days of being advised by North Warwickshire Borough Council that there has been no call for a by-election. All co-option publicity will include a closing date for applications (35 days after the date of notice) and the number of vacancies.

Ordinary vacancy

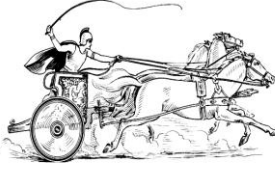
An ordinary vacancy occurs when there are insufficient candidates to fill all the seats on the Parish Council at the ordinary elections held every four years. Any candidates who were nominated are automatically elected to the Parish Council and any remaining vacancies are known as "ordinary vacancies". Provided there are enough parish councillors to constitute a quorum, the Parish Council is usually able to co-opt a volunteer to fill the vacancies. In some cases, North Warwickshire Borough Council may intervene and make an appointment or order an election to fill the vacancies.

If the vacancy occurs within six months of the next scheduled election for the Parish Council, there is no option to hold an election. The Parish Council may fill the vacancy by co-option.

COOPTION FOLLOWING AN ELECTION

Alternatively, following an election where there has been fewer nominations than seats. If enough Councillors were elected to form a quorum, then the Parish Council should fill any remaining vacant seats using the co-option route. Only under this circumstance is there no statutory requirement to give public notice of vacancies which remain unfilled after an ordinary election (Representation of the People Act 1985, Section 21 para 2). However, Mancetter Parish Council will always give public notice of all vacancies that arise under these circumstances to encourage transparency and to attract more applicants.

It is permissible for Parish Councillors (or any parishioner) to approach individuals to suggest that they might wish to consider putting their names forward for co-option.



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CONFIRMATION OF CO-OPTION

On receipt of written confirmation from the Electoral Services Office that no by-election has been claimed, the casual vacancy can be filled by means of co-option. The Clerk will:

- Advertise the vacancy for four weeks or such other period as the Parish Council may agree on the Parish Council notice boards and website.
- Advise North Warwickshire Bosworth Borough Council that the co-option policy has been instigated.

This procedure will also apply in the case of an ordinary vacancy where the Electoral Services Office has confirmed that there were insufficient nominations to fill all the seats but there are sufficient parish councillors elected to constitute a quorum.

ELIGIBILITY OF CANDIDATES

and at least one of the following apply:

- he/she is an elector for the Parish and continues to be an elector; or
- has resided in the Parish for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land in the Parish; or
- has had his/her principal or only place of work in the Parish for the past twelve months; or
- has lived within three miles of the Parish for the past twelve months.

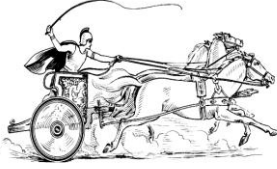
There are certain disqualifications for being a parish councillor, of which the main are (see s80 of the Local Government Act 1972):

- holding a paid office or employment under the Parish Council;
- bankruptcy;
- 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 preceding five years; or
- being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices.

APPLICATIONS

Candidates will be requested to:

- Attend at least one Parish Council meeting as observers;
- Submit information about themselves, by way of completing a short application form (a copy of the application form is attached as Appendix A);



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- Confirm their eligibility for the position of parish councillor within the statutory rules, (a copy of the eligibility form is attached as Appendix B).

Following receipt of applications, the next suitable Parish Council meeting will have an agenda item 'To receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy'. Eligible candidates will be invited to attend the meeting.

Copies of the eligible candidates' applications will be circulated to all parish councillors by the Clerk at least 3 clear days prior to the meeting of the full Parish Council, when the co-option will be considered.

All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and all parish councillors as strictly private and confidential.

AT THE CO-OPTION MEETING

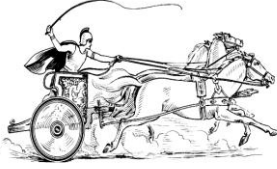
At the co-option meeting, candidates will be given five minutes maximum to introduce themselves to the parish councillors (members), give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a member of the Parish Council. The process will be carried out in the public session 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 9 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.



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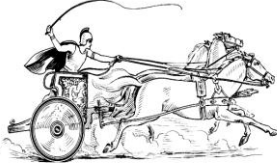
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If present, a candidate who is co-opted will sign at the co-option meeting a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, including an undertaking to abide by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct, and may take office thereafter. If not present, a co-opted candidate will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office either before or at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The Clerk will notify North Warwickshire Borough Council Electoral Services Office of the co-option of the new parish councillor.

The co-opted parish councillor will complete a Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests form which the Clerk will lodge with the Monitoring Officer at North Warwickshire Borough Council within 28 days of the co-option.

If insufficient candidates are co-opted, the process should continue, whereby the vacancies are again advertised.



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APPENDIX A

Information for Candidates

Thank you for your interest in applying for the role of Parish Councillor at Mancetter Parish Council.

There are no educational qualifications needed to become a parish councillor, however as the Parish Council is a statutory body, to stand validly nominated you must fulfil the following:

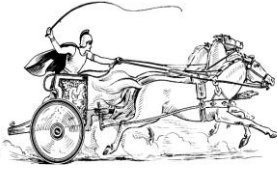
You must be:

- 18 years of age or over at the date of application;
- A Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of another Member State of the European Community; and
- A local government elector within the parish; or
- Have worked in the parish for the last 12 months; or
- Have lived in the parish, or within 3 miles of it, for the last 12 months; or
- Owned land/property in the parish area for the last 12 months.

You cannot stand if you hold a paid office or any other position of profit with this Parish Council or if you are disqualified from being elected by reason of any disqualification set out below. (see s80 of the Local Government Act 1972).

You cannot stand if you have been:

1. Surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more.
2. Disqualified by a court from holding public office.
3. Declared bankrupt at some point in my life.
4. Convicted of an offence where the sentence of imprisonment was more than 3 months (even if sentence suspended)
5. Found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws.



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APPENDIX B

MANCETTER PARISH COUNCIL CO-OPTION APPLICATION FORM

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Name: | |
| Address: | |
| Telephone Number: | |
| Email Address: | |
| Are you 18 or over? | |

QUALIFICATIONS

As outlined in the Local Government Act 1972 section 79, to qualify as Parish Councillor you must be:

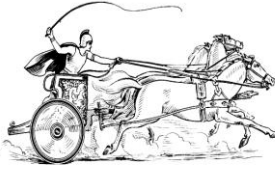
- At least 18 years old
- Be a British citizen, and eligible Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any member state of the European Union, and
- Meet at least one of the following four qualifications (please tick all that apply to you)

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| You are, and will continue to be, registered as a local government elector for the Parish area in which you wish to stand from the day of your application onwards. | |
| You have occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the Parish area during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your application. | |
| Your main or only place of work during the 12 months prior to the day of your application has been in the Parish area. | |
| You have lived in the Parish area or within three miles of it during the whole of the 12 months before the day of your application. | |

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Please review the disqualifications listed in the Supporting Information attached to this application pack. Actively submitting this form means that you meet the above qualifications and, having read the list of disqualifications, you confirm that you are suitably qualified to hold office as a Parish Councillor.

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| I confirm that, having read the list of the disqualifications outlined in the Supporting Information, I am suitably qualified to hold office as a Parish Councillor | |
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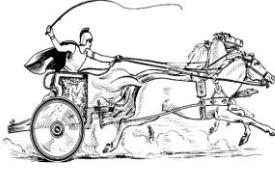
Background Information

Please provide some brief background details as to why you wish to become a Parish Councillor and what skills and experience you would be able to bring to the role.

By signing this form, you agree that:

1. You have read and understood the information within the Supporting Information document attached to this pack
2. If you are elected as a Parish Councillor, you will sign the Declaration of Office form, as well as your Register of Interests form within 28 days of being co-opted onto the Parish Council.
3. Understand that failure to attend Parish Council meetings for a continuous period of six months will result in your disqualification.
4. Use of Personal Information: The Parish Council will use the information provided on this form to assess your eligibility to be a parish councillor.

| | |
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| Signed: | |
| Dated: | |



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APPENDIX C

MANCETTER PARISH COUNCIL DISQUALIFICATION DECLARATION

Please note that under Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 a person is disqualified from being a parish councillor if he/she:

- a) Is employed by the parish council or holds paid office (other than Chair, Vice Chair or Deputy Chair under the parish council (including joint boards or committees);
- b) Is employed by an entity controlled by the parish council;
- c) Is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or an interim bankruptcy restrictions order or a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order; or
- d) Has within five years before the day of co-option, or since his/her co-option, 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
- e) Is otherwise disqualified under Part III of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices and offences relating to donations) or the Audit Commission Act 1998.

Declaration & Consent

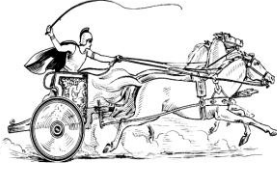
I hereby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of Mancetter Parish Councillor and I am not disqualified under s80 of the Local Government Act 1972 from being a parish councillor and that the information given on this form is true and correct.

I have read the section entitled "Use of Personal Information" and by signing this form I consent to the use and disclosure of my information included in this form.

| Signature | Print Name | Date |
|-----------|------------|------|
| | | |

If you have any further questions, please contact the Parish Clerk who will be happy to provide further information and support.

Manduessedum - Mancetter Village
(Place of War Chariots)



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Contact details:

Jo-Anne Ambrose
Proper Officer & Parish Clerk
Mancetter Parish Council

Postal correspondence only:

Mancetter Parish Council
PO Box 7,171
Nuneaton
Warwickshire
CV11 9QD

Email: parishclerk@mancetterparishcouncil.gov.uk

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Parish Councillor for Mancetter Parish Council.