



TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL

CO-OPTION POLICY

RENEWAL DATE: - June 2027

RENEWAL DATE: - June 2029

Reviewing Body: - Finance and Operations Committee

TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL

MODEL CO-OPTION PROCEDURE FOR THE FILLING OF CASUAL VACANCIES

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the procedure to ensure there is compliance with legislation and continuity of procedures to fill vacancies on Torpoint Town Council. The Co-option procedure ensure that a fair and equitable process is carried out.

Co-option to fill a vacancy will take place where a casual vacancy occurs on the council and no poll (by-election) has been called.

1) Casual Vacancies

- a) A casual vacancy occurs when :
- A councillor fails to make his declaration of acceptance of office at the proper time.
 - A councillor resigns.
 - A councillor dies.
 - A councillor becomes disqualified.
 - A councillor fails for six (6) months to attend meetings of a council committee or subcommittee or to attend as a representative of a meeting of an outside body.
 - Seat/s remain vacant after an election cycle.
- b) The Parish Council will notify Cornwall Council of a Casual Vacancy and publish the formal notice giving electors the opportunity to request an election. If ten (10) or more electors request for an election to be held, then Cornwall Council will proceed to organise for one to be held in the parish/parish ward.
- c) If Cornwall Council receives less than ten (10) requests for an election it will notify Torpoint Town Council that it is able to fill the vacancy by co-option.

2) Advertising Casual Vacancies for Co-option

- a) Where Cornwall Council advises that the vacancy can be filled by co-option the council will seek and encourage applications from those who meet the qualifying criteria and are eligible to stand as a councillor.
- b) The vacancy will be advertised for a period of at least two (2) weeks on the Council's website, noticeboards and local publications with details of :
- Details of how to apply for an application pack
 - The closing date for applications
 - A contact point for further information

3) Eligibility of Candidates

- a) The Council can consider any person to fill a vacancy provided that they
- are an elector for the parish; or
 - have resided in the parish for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land or other premises in the parish; or
 - had their principal place of work in the parish; or
 - have lived within three miles (direct) of the parish boundary.
- b) There are certain disqualifications for election, including :
- holding a paid office under the local authority.

- 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 five years preceding the election; and
- being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal practices.
- Being a serving member of the armed forces.

c) Candidates found to be offering inducements of any kind will be disqualified.

4) Co-option Procedure

- a) Candidates will be required to submit a statement by email giving background information on who they are and why they would like to be a Councillor. The statement should not exceed 300 words.
- b) The Clerk will notify all candidates of the date, time and venue for the meeting where co-option will be considered and will provide a copy of the full agenda pack for the meeting.
- c) Statements received will be circulated to Councillors in advance of the relevant Full Council meeting at which the co-option is to take place. This will form an agenda item.
- d) Candidates will be asked to attend the relevant Full Council meeting and invited to say something about themselves. Councillors will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. A maximum of 5 minutes per candidate will be allotted (including potential questioning).

5) Voting

- a) The vote will be taken by written ballot
- b) Each vacancy will be taken in turn and the successful candidate must achieve an overall majority in order to be appointed to a vacancy. Where more than two candidates are standing for the vacancy, and no overall majority is obtained, then the lowest polling candidate will drop out and a new vote taken with the remaining candidates. This process will continue until a one candidate has an overall majority.
- c) Where there are two candidates and no clear majority can be achieved, the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- d) Members will have the option to vote for 'none' if they feel that there is a strong case for not appointing an eligible candidate.

6) Other Matters

If no candidates come forward for a vacancy, or otherwise the vacancy is not filled, this process will be reactivated six months after the initial deadline for responses, or at such a time as requested by a prospective candidate.



Could You Be a Town Councillor?

Friday 27th June 2025

Following the resignation of [redacted] a casual vacancy exists for a Councillor, for the West Ward, to serve on Torpoint Town Council.

In accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1985 s21 (2) b), the Town Council has been instructed by Cornwall Council to fill the vacant seat by co-option at its meeting to be held on Thursday 17th July 2025 at 7:00pm in the Committee Room, the Council Chambers. Applicants will be invited to meet with members' from 6:30pm.

To be a Town Councillor you must:

Be at least 18 years old who is legally qualified to hold such office, and who is willing to serve, provided he or she satisfies at least one of the following qualification categories:

- (a) Is registered as a local government elector for the parish;*
- (b) Has during the whole of the preceding twelve months occupied as owner or tenant, any land or premises in the parish;*
- (c) His/her principal or only place of work during the preceding twelve months has been in the parish;*
- (d) Had during the whole of the preceding twelve months resided in the parish or within 4.8 km thereof.*

For further information about the role of a town Councillor, the co-option process and how to apply, contact:

Camilla Southworth Town Clerk & RFO
1-3 Buller Road,
Torpoint,
PL11 2LD

Tel: 01752 814165

Email: admin@torpointtowncouncil.gov.uk

Closing date for applications: midday 10th July 2025

APPENDIX 2 – APPLICATION FORM



Application for Co-option

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Town Councillor. Please provide the below information to assist in making their decision.

Full Name / Title	
Home Address	
Telephone	
Email Address	
About You Please provide with some background information about yourself and your reasons for wanting to become a local councillor (Up to 300 words)	
I..... hereby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of councillor on Torpoint Town Council, and the information given on this form is true and accurate record.	
Signature	

Please return your completed application to:

Camilla Southworth Town Clerk & RFO
1-3 Buller Road, Torpoint, PL11 2LD
Tel: 01752 814165 Email: admin@torpointtowncouncil.gov.uk

Closing Date for applications: [insert date]

CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR PERSON SPECIFICATION

As a local councillor you will work with other members and officers to make decisions on behalf of your community, supporting local groups and delivering local services. The Council has produced the following person specification as a guide to anyone seek co-option to the council.

COMPETENCY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community. • Forward Thinking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can bring a new skill, expertise, or key local knowledge to .
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to listen constructively • A good team player • Ability to pick up and run with a variety of projects Solid Interest in local matters. • Ability and willingness to represent and their community. • Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute to debate at meetings whilst willing to see others' views and accept majority decisions. • Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly. • Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff. • Ability and willingness to work with partners (e.g., voluntary groups, other parish Councils, principal authority, charities). • Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of working or being a member in a local authority or other public body. • Experience of working with voluntary and or local community / interest groups. • Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish Councils or local authorities. • Experience of delivering presentations
Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability and willingness to attend meetings of (or meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) at any time and events in the evening and at weekends. 	