



**AMMANFORD TOWN COUNCIL  
CO-OPTION POLICY AND PROCEDURE (Revised)**

Version: 2 January 26<sup>th</sup> 2026  
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## **1 Introduction**

1.1 This policy sets out the procedure to ensure there is compliance with legislation and continuity of procedures in the co-option of members to Ammanford Town Council.

1.2 The co-option procedure is entirely managed by the Council, and this policy will ensure that a fair, transparent and efficient process is carried out. It complies with relevant statutory requirements and aims to uphold the highest standards of governance.

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

1. When an ordinary vacancy has arisen on a Town Council after an ordinary election has been held.
2. When a casual vacancy has arisen on a Town Council and no poll (by-election) has been called.

1.4 The Council is composed of four wards: Iscennen, Myddynfych, Pantyffynnon and Wernddu.

## **2 Ordinary Vacancy**

2.1 An ordinary vacancy occurs when there are insufficient candidates to fill all the seats on a Town Council at the ordinary elections held every five years. Any candidates who were nominated are automatically elected to the Town Council and any remaining vacancies are known as “ordinary vacancies”. Provided there are enough councillors to constitute a quorum, the Town Council is able to co-opt a volunteer to fill the vacancies.

## **3 Casual Vacancy**

3.1 A casual vacancy occurs when:

- A councillor fails to make their 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 the council or its committees, or as a representative of the council on an outside body, without approval.

3.2 The Town Council must notify the Returning Officer at Carmarthenshire County Council of a casual vacancy, who will publish a public notice of vacancy.

3.3 Local government electors for the ward have fourteen working days from the date of publication of the vacancy notice by the Returning Officer to submit a written request for an election to be held. The Returning Officer will advise the Clerk of the deadline date.

3.4 If more than one candidate is nominated following a request for an election, a by-election will be held. If only one candidate is nominated, they are duly elected without a ballot.

3.5 If no valid request for an election is received within the prescribed period, the Town Council may fill the vacancy by co-option.

#### **4 Confirmation of Co-option**

4.1 On receipt of written confirmation from the Returning Officer that no by-election has been requested, the casual vacancy may be filled by means of co-option.

4.2 The Clerk will:

- Publish a notice of vacancy in accordance with section 116 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 for a minimum of fourteen days, or such longer period as the Council may determine, on the Town Council noticeboards, website, and any other appropriate communication channels.
- Advise the Returning Officer that the co-option procedure has been commenced.

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

## **5 Eligibility of Candidates**

5.1 A person is eligible to be considered for co-option if they:

- are at least 18 years of age; and
- are a British citizen, an Irish citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or a qualifying foreign citizen with lawful immigration status;

and meet at least one of the following qualifications:

- they are and will continue to be a local government elector for the area; or
- they have during the whole of the preceding twelve months occupied land or premises in the area as owner or tenant; or
- their principal or only place of work during the preceding twelve months has been in the area; or
- they have during the whole of the preceding twelve months resided in the area or within three miles of it.

5.2 A person is disqualified from being a councillor if they:

- hold a paid office or employment under the Town Council;
- are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order;
- have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (including suspended sentences) without the option of a fine during the preceding five years;
- are disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices.

## **6 Applications**

6.1 Candidates will be requested to submit an Expression of Interest not exceeding two sides of A4 paper.

6.2 Following the closing date, the next suitable Full Council meeting will include an agenda item: 'To receive written expressions of interest for the office of Town Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the vacancy'.

6.3 Eligible candidates will be invited to attend the meeting.

6.4 Copies of the eligible candidates' expressions of interest will be circulated to all town councillors by the Clerk at least three clear days prior to the meeting.

6.5 All personal data will be treated in accordance with data protection legislation, and appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, while recognising that the co-option process itself is conducted in public.

## **7 Co-option**

7.1 At the Full Council meeting, candidates will be given the option to introduce themselves, provide information on their background and experience, and explain why they wish to become a member of Ammanford Town Council (maximum three minutes per candidate).

7.2 Members may ask questions of candidates before voting. If a candidate is unable to attend, their application may still be considered.

7.3 The process will be carried out in public session. There must be no discussion between members once voting has commenced.

7.4 Any member with an interest in an application must declare that interest in accordance with the Model Code of Conduct for Community and Town Councils in Wales and, where required, withdraw from the meeting.

7.5 Voting will be by show of hands unless a recorded vote is requested. A candidate must obtain an absolute majority of votes cast. If no candidate achieves an absolute majority, the candidate with the fewest votes will be eliminated and further rounds held. In the event of a tied vote, the Mayor has a casting vote.

7.6 If present, a candidate who is co-opted will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and may take office immediately. If not present, the declaration must be signed before or at the next meeting.

7.7 The Clerk will notify the Returning Officer of the co-option.

7.8 The co-opted councillor will complete a Register of Interests form.

7.9 If insufficient candidates are appointed, the process will be repeated and vacancies re-advertised.

## **8 Legislative Framework**

This policy is framed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the Model Code of Conduct (Wales), and associated regulations as applicable in Wales.