

BRENCHLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Procedure for Co-option of Councillors

1. The following applies even if there is only one candidate for one vacancy, as there is a requirement for the candidate to secure an absolute majority of votes. ⁱ
2. Applications received are circulated to Councillors ahead of the meeting at which the co-option is to take place.
3. At the meeting candidates are invited to make a statement additional to their application, and Councillors will have the opportunity to ask questions of the candidates. Each candidate will be allocated a maximum of three minutes.
4. To consider the candidates, the Council will move to closed session, without the public (and the candidates) present.
5. At the closed session, the Chairman will request the Councillors present to nominate any of the candidates. Candidates will require a proposer and seconder to progress to the voting stage. If there is only one vacancy, a Councillor may only nominate or second one candidate. One candidate must receive an absolute majority of votes.
6. The Chairman will then place the names of those nominated into alphabetical order and proceed to vote. Councillors will have one vote per vacancy to be filled.
7. Voting will be in accordance with Standing Orders, by a show of hands, and will continue until one candidate has received an absolute majority of those Councillors present. At this stage, the successful candidate will be declared co-opted.
8. Should no single candidate receive a majority on the first vote, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. Voting will then take place for the remaining candidates until one person receives an absolute majority.
9. The Council will then return to open session, and successful candidate will be declared co-opted to the Council, and will be invited to join the meeting.
10. The successful candidate is a Councillor in their own right, and is no different to any other member; co-option is a legitimate form of election as part of the election process recognized in law.
11. The Council is not obliged to consider the claims of candidates who were unsuccessful at a previous election.

ⁱ Local Government Act 1972, Sch.12, para.39