

## **Applying to join Dursley Town Council as a co-opted member**

### **Step 1 – Confirm that you are eligible to be a member of the council.**

The criteria set out in Section 79(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to be elected to be a Councillor is:

- a qualifying citizen of the Commonwealth or a European Union citizen; and
- if on the day on which the candidate is nominated and, if there is a poll of the election, the candidate is 18 years of age or over.

and additionally:

- on that day, the candidate is and thereafter continues to be a local government elector for the area of the authority; or
- the candidate has during the whole of the twelve months preceding that day occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in that area, or
- the candidate's principal or only place of work during that twelve months has been in that area, or
- the candidate has during the whole twelve months resided in that area, or within 3 miles of it.

If you are unclear about how these criteria, please contact the Town Clerk for advice: telephone 01453 547758 or email [clerk@dursleytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@dursleytowncouncil.gov.uk) or call in to the Council office.

### **Step 2 – Confirm that you are not disqualified to be a member of the council**

The criteria set out in Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 say you cannot stand if you:

- Holds any paid office or employment to which he has been appointed by the Council or any committee or sub-committee of the Council, or by a paid officer or by any joint committee on which the council is represented; or
- Is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order (section 267(1) of the Enterprise Act 2002); or
- Has within five years before the day of election or since the election been convicted of any offence and has passed on them a sentence of imprisonment of at least three months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine, or
- Has been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices, or was responsible for incurring expenditure and the court orders his disqualification.

If you are unclear about these criteria, please contact the Town Clerk for advice.

Further advice on eligibility is available on the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) publication: Legal Topic Note – LTN 8 – Elections; published in January 2015.

### Step 3 – make sure you understand what is involved

It is recommended that you read the NALC publication, “Being a Good Councillor” which explains more about the role and the responsibilities of councillors – copies are available on request. If you have any questions you are welcome to raise them with the Town Clerk.

### Step 4 – send a letter of application to the Council

Once a casual vacancy has been advertised the Council is expected to fill it as soon as possible. Applications will be considered at the next available full Council meeting. To ensure that your application is included on the agenda it should be sent to the Town Clerk at least one week before the meeting (earlier if there are bank holidays).

In your letter you should explain how you are eligible (see step 1) and confirm that you are not disqualified (see step 2). Your letter should tell us why you are interested in applying and what you think you can bring to the role of Town Councillor. Some topics that you might like to consider are shown in the table below, but please note that you are not expected to be able to demonstrate all of these competencies.

COMPETENCY	DEMONSTRATED BY:
Relevant knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.</li> </ul>
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<p>We welcome people with a wide range of life skills and experience that reflects the local community. We are looking for councillors who can bring enthusiasm and commitment as well as some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in local matters.</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community.</li> <li>• Good interpersonal skills.</li> <li>• Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly both orally and in writing.</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.</li> <li>• Good reading and analytical skills.</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to work with the council’s partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities).</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training.</li> </ul>
Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Flexible and committed to the Council</li> <li>• Enthusiastic.</li> </ul>

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### **Step 5 – attend Town Council meeting**

You will be invited to attend the next full Town Council meeting at which your application will be considered. The Town Clerk will provide you with an agenda for the meeting, which will normally be held at 7pm on the first Tuesday of the month in the Community Room at Dursley Fire Station.

At the meeting you will be given the opportunity to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes to introduce yourself and explain why you want to join the council.

If there are more candidates than vacancies the co-option will be decided by a ballot of the members. Voting will be according to the statutory requirements, in that, a successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them at the first count receives a majority over the aggregate votes given to the rest, steps must be taken to strike off the candidate with the least number of votes and the remainder must then be put to the vote again; this process must, if necessary, be repeated until an absolute majority is obtained.

Councillors shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting has a second or casting vote.

### **Step 6 – joining the Town Council**

On successful co-option you will be invited to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office which completes the process for joining the council. Within 28 days of co-option you are also required to complete a Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests which will be provided by the Town Clerk.

If you unsuccessful you can request that your details be kept on file for up to 6 months should any new vacancies arise.