



## Appendix A Folkestone Town Council's Co-Option Policy

### Application Form for the role of Town Councillor on Folkestone Town Council

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| <b>Name:</b>  |  |
| <b>Address:</b>   |  |
| <b>Postcode:</b>  |  |
| <b>Contact Tel No:</b>  |  |
| <b>Email:</b>   |  |
| It is a condition of being a Councillor that your phone number and email address (official email address will be supplied) be made public via notice boards and website.  |  |
| <b>LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR</b>  |  |
| <p><b><i>To qualify you must be able to answer 'yes' to <u>at least</u> one of the questions below:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union Country? Yes/No</li><li>2. Are you 18 or over? Yes/No</li></ol> <p><b><i>To qualify you must also be able to answer 'yes' to <u>at least</u> one of the questions below:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>3. Are you on the electoral register for Folkestone and Hythe? Yes/No</li><li>4. Have you lived either in Folkestone and Hythe or within 3 miles of its boundary, for at least a year? Yes/No</li><li>5. Have you been the owner or tenant of land in Folkestone and Hythe for at least a year? Yes/No</li><li>6. Have you had your only or main place of work in Folkestone and Hythe for at least a year? Yes/No</li></ol> |  |

## DISQUALIFICATIONS

***You must be able to answer 'no' to all the questions below to be eligible to serve as a Councillor:***

7. Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order? Yes/No
8. Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine? Yes/No

9. Please briefly outline why you are interested in being a Town Councillor:

10. Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business or trade union experience.

11. Are there any questions you would like to ask the Council?

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Signed:</b> |  |
| <b>Dated:</b>  |  |

# **Supporting notes for applicants**

## **1.0 Eligibility of Candidates**

- 1.1 The Town Council is able to consider any person to fill a vacancy provided that:
- He/she is 18 or over
  - He/she is a British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union;

and at least one of the following apply:

- He/she is an elector for the Town and continues to be an elector
  - Or has resided in the Town 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 Town for the past twelve months
  - Or has lived within three miles of the Town for the past twelve months.
- 1.2 There are certain disqualifications for being a town councillor, of which the main are (see s80 of the Local Government Act 1972):
- Holding a paid office or employment under the Town 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
  - Being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices.

## **2.0 Applications**

- 2.1 The Clerk will confirm eligibility to apply.
- 2.2 Any candidate found to be offering inducements will be disqualified.
- 2.3 Eligible candidates will be invited to attend a Full Council meeting and will be given five minutes maximum to introduce themselves to the town councillors (members), give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a member of the Town Council. The process will be carried out in the public session.
- 2.3 In the event of a candidate being unable to attend, their application will still be considered by members. In the event of a candidate being related to a councillor, then the councillor would be expected to declare an interest and request a dispensation to speak and vote.
- 2.4 Following the candidate presentations/addresses, members will proceed to a vote in the form of an anonymous ballot.
- 2.5 In order for a candidate to be co-opted to the Town 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.
- 2.6 If there is more than one vacancy then each vacancy must be filled by a separate vote or series of votes.
- 2.7 If present, a candidate who is co-opted will sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, including an undertaking to abide by the Town 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 Town Council.

2.8 The co-opted town councillor will complete a Register of Interests form within 28 days of co-option.