

East Budleigh with Bicton Parish Council

How to apply to be a councillor

Adopted: February 2019

East Budleigh with Bicton Parish Council (EBBPC) has a full complement of 10 councillors.

How do councillor vacancies arise?

1. In an election year, which occurs every 4 years in May (e.g. 2019) all 10 vacant places on EBBPC are available to be filled by the standard election process. If more than 10 eligible candidates apply then the election is 'contested' and therefore the next stages of the election process follow. The whole election process is organised by East Devon District Council and initiated by the publication of a Notice of Election, inviting candidates to apply to stand for election. The Notice of Election is published on the parish notice boards and website.
2. If, in an election year process, fewer than 10 eligible candidates apply then effectively all candidates are 'co-opted' onto the Parish Council without further ado.
3. If a vacancy arises between elections due to resignation or other reasons, then an advertisement is placed on the parish notice boards and website. If a petition is received by EDDC with 10 or more elector's signatures, the vacancy must be filled by means of an election. If no petition is received then the vacancy may be filled by the co-option process described below.

Eligibility to become a councillor

Candidates must be over 18, be an eligible citizen and have a 'stake' in the parish. For fuller detailed explanation, please refer to the Electoral Commission document "Criteria for becoming a Councillor" which may be found on this website via the link:

http://www.eastbudleigh.org.uk/uploads/5/1/8/3/51830611/2017-10_can_you_stand_for_election.pdf

The co-option process

The Parish Clerk will advertise the vacancy for a co-opted councillor on the parish notice boards and on the website. Eligible candidates should write to the Clerk asking to be considered. Candidates should include in their submission details of how they qualify and are suitable to make a positive and enthusiastic contribution within the Council. As a minimum, candidates should state:

- What experience they have of meetings and committees?
- What experience they have of the working of local government?
- If they are involved in any groups in the village and if so, describe their role and experience.
- How they see their role as a Parish Councillor?
- How they would like to see the village develop?
- How they would react to occasional high-profile issues that can bring certain pressures.

The Council may consider meeting with eligible candidates prior to the next Council meeting. If so, details would be forwarded to candidates.

Immediately prior to the next Ordinary meeting, each Councillor will vote by secret ballot for one of the eligible candidates (or abstain). The envelopes will be opened and the result read out. If more than two candidates are being voted upon for one vacancy and there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the person with the least number of votes will be omitted and the sealed

envelope voting process repeated until a majority of votes are given for one person. If only one eligible candidate has applied there would be a straight secret ballot Member vote either for or abstain. In all cases, if the majority of Members present abstained on a final vote, then no candidate would be appointed. Should the process result in a tie, then the Chair would have the casting vote. If there is more than one vacancy then the process should be carried out for each sequentially.

All candidates will be notified of the outcome by the Clerk. The successful candidate (if any) will be invited for co-option onto EBBPC and the Clerk will provide full details.