

## Report No. 4

### Report to Policy and Resources Committee 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015

#### Process for co-option of councillors

##### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To invite the committee to recommend to the Town Council a process for the co-option of councillors to vacant seats.

##### 2. Background

- 2.1 A vacancy for the office of Town Councillor with Malmesbury Town Council was created on the resignation of Councillor Killane.
- 2.2 The requisite notice was displayed by the Town Council inviting those residents who wished for there to be an election to notify the Returning Officer by the due date. The requirement is for ten electors to make such a request.
- 2.3 In the event that such a request is made then the Returning Officer makes arrangements for the election process to commence.
- 2.4 In the case of the current vacancy a request was not made by ten electors all of whose names appear on the electoral register and the Town Council must now take all reasonable steps to co-opt a suitably qualified individual to the vacant seat.
- 2.5 The last time it was necessary to co-opt members to the Town Council was in 2008.

##### 3. Proposal

- 3.1 Legislation relating to co-option concentrates on the method of voting, not the system for selection.
- 3.2 The system used in 2008 was for the Town Clerk to arrange for a statement to be placed on the noticeboards and the website inviting suitably qualified persons to make application by way of a short submission outlining why they wished to be a councillor and the skills they could bring to the role.
- 3.4 The submissions received were circulated to all councillors and the candidates interviewed individually at the end of a Town Council meeting, the interviews and subsequent voting not being part of the public section of the meeting.
- 3.5 The committee is requested to consider if the previous methodology is to be used and if so whether the interviews and voting should take place in public and make a recommendation to the Town Council at the next meeting.

##### 4. Financial implications and risks

- 4.1 Co-option does not carry any financial implications for the Town Council unless the selection is undertaken by use of an extraordinary meeting.
- 4.2 The Town Council has a duty to ensure the vacancy is filled without undue delay.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are requested to agree the method by which co-opted councillors are to be selected and make an appropriate recommendation to the Town Council

Jeff Penfold  
Town Clerk  
14<sup>th</sup> July 2015.