**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN BEING CO-OPTED**

General Guidance

Before completing the application form and personal statements application below, applicants are strongly advised to read the NALC guidance note on *“Being a Parish Councillor”* and the Meppershall Parish Council (MPC) members’ *“Code of Conduct”*. We also recommend that you attend at least one Parish Council meeting and contact the Clerk if you have any questions on your potential future role.

Eligibility

The application form asks you to confirm your eligibility to become a parish councillor. You must meet the criteria for eligibility set out in Section 79 of the 1972 Local Government Act, and not be disqualified under Section 80 of the same Act. What this means in practice is that on the day of the scheduled co-option meeting (which will be advised by the Parish Clerk) you must be at least 18 years old and be a citizen of the UK or a European Union country, or a qualifying Commonwealth citizen (who does not require leave to enter or remain in the UK), and:

1. be a local government elector for the area of the parish; or
2. during the whole of the twelve months preceding occupied land or other premises in the parish; or
3. have had your principal or only place of work during that twelve months in the parish; or
4. have during the whole of those twelve months resided either in the parish or within three miles of it.

In addition you must not be disqualified for any of these reasons:

1. holding a paid office or employment which is made or confirmed by the parish, or in a company under the control of the parish; or
2. being the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order; or
3. having within the past five years been convicted in the UK of an offence involving sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of three months or more, without the option of a fine.

Please note that the definitions above are abbreviated versions of the full legal statements of eligibility and disqualifications available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/79>;

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/section/80>

Skills areas which Meppershall Parish Council is currently seeking to reinforce

In completing the personal statements section of the application below, please note that at the current time the Parish Council is particularly seeking to strengthen itself in the following areas of skills/expertise:

* Professional experience in areas relating to Local Authority Planning; Land and Asset Management; Public Finance Management;
* Community safety; and
* Green Space / Environmental Management

Application and personal statements from potential new co-opted Parish Councillors.

1. Personal Details

Please complete this application form and provide full details of the following in support of your expression of interest in co-option to the Council. If you need any help completing this form please contact the Clerk.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Your Full Name: |  |
| Preferred Title: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Home Tel No.:  |  | Mobile Tel No.: |  |
| Email:  |  |
| Are you over 18? |  |
| How did you hear of this vacancy? |  |

1. Eligibility and Commitments

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| **Qualifications:** You **MUST** be able to answer **“Yes”** to at least one of the following four questions – please tick (✓) all that apply: |
| 1. I am registered as a Local Government Elector for the area of Meppershall Parish Council?
 | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| 2. During the while of the last 12 months I have resided in the Civil Parish of Meppershall, or within 3 miles (4.8 kilometres) of it? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| 1. During the whole of the last 12 months I have occupied as owner or tenant land or premises in the Civil Parish of Meppershall?
 | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| 1. During the whole of the last 12 months my main place of work has been within the Civil Parish of Meppershall?
 | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| I confirm that I have ticked at least one of the above **“Yes”** boxes” and I am eligible to become a Parish Councillor, under the provisions of Section 79 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. | Please tick (✓) 🞐 |

1. Eligibility and Commitments (Ctd)

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| **Disqualifications:** You **MUST** be able to answer **“No”** to **ALL** of the following six questions – please tick (✓) all that apply: |
| Do you now hold, or have you in the past 12 months held, any paid office or any other position of profit with Meppershall Parish Council? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| Have you ever been surcharged by the District Auditor for £500 or more? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| Have you ever been disqualified by a Court from holding Public Office? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| Have you ever been declared bankrupt? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| Have you ever been convicted of any offence where the sentence of imprisonment was more than 3 months (even if the sentence was suspended)? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| Have you ever been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices under Election Laws? | YES 🞐 NO 🞐 |
| I confirm that I have not ticked any of the above **“Yes”** boxes” and I am not disqualified under the provisions of Section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. | Please tick (✓) 🞐 |
| I understand and commit to maintaining the standards set out in the Meppershall Parish Council Code of Conduct and that my telephone and/or e-mail contacts will become public information if I become a Councillor | Please tick (✓) 🞐 |

1. Personal Statement

Please set out briefly under the headings below the qualities and attributes that you feel make you suitable to fill the role of Parish Councillor, including addressing the desirable criteria set out in each section:

* 1. Personal Attributes Criteria to address:
* Some knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community;
* Forward thinking;
* Able to bring relevant skills, expertise or local knowledge to the Council – ideally, a skills or expertise that matches the Council’s current priorities for strengthening its skillset, as indicated above.

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* 1. Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability Criteria to address:
* Having good interpersonal skills with the ability to listen constructively, contribute opinions and present reports/proposal succinctly and clearly at meetings;
* Being a good team player in terms of considering the views of others and accepting majority decisions, and able to work closely and maintain good working relationships with all members of the Council;
* Able and willing to represent the Council, and to lead a variety of projects, including working with the Council’s partners (E.g. local voluntary groups, other Parish Councils, Central Bedfordshire Council, other Councils and Unitary Authorities, Charities etc.);
* If applicable, please flag any experience you have of working within another public body, or other voluntary/community interest group. Similarly, please indicate your level of awareness of the legal status and key areas of Parish Council business. (NB Induction training in these issues will be provided.)

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* 1. Circumstances Criteria to address:
* Able and willing to attend meetings as per the Council’s current normal meetings schedule, and willing to consider attending ad hoc meetings of the Council and Working Groups and other duties at other times;
* Able to engage with the Council’s business via electronic communications;
* Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training.

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* 1. Additional Information Criteria to address:
* Please provide any further information you feel is relevant to assist the Council in considering why we should choose you including attendance of previous Parish Council meetings.

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| *(E.g. Please flag any circumstances that might necessitate adjustments)* |

1. Declaration and Consent

I agree by signing the consent box below that Meppershall Parish Council may process my personal information for the purpose of councillor co-option and that I have read and understood their Privacy Notice and that the information given on this form is true and correct:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Signed:** |  | **Dated:**  |  |

PLEASE RETURN THIS **COMPLETED** FORM ELECTRONICALLY TO THE CLERK VIA EMAIL TO: clerk@meppershall-pc.gov.uk

OR IN HARD COPY VIA POST TO:

THE PARISH CLERK, MEPPERSHALL PARISH COUNCIL C/O 30 CHERRY TREES, LOWER STONDON, SG16 6DT

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO ASSIST WITH COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM**

*(This is* ***NOT*** *part of the application form and is included to assist with the completion of the form only.)*

Person Specification

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **COMPETENCY**  | **ESSENTIAL**  | **DESIRABLE** |
| **Relevant knowledge,Education,ProfessionalQualifications &Training** | * Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.
 | * A levels/Degree level and or
* Specific work experience, Voluntary work experience, Vocational or academic training or professional qualification (e.g. accountant, teacher, surveyor, and architect) may be useful.
 |
| **Experience, Skills,Knowledge andAbility** | * Solid interest in local matters
* Ability and willingness to represent the Parish Council and its community
* Ability to communicate clearly both verbally and in writing
* Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff
* Good reading, analytic and problem solving skills
* Ability and willingness to work with the Parish Council’s partners (e.g. Parish Council sub groups, voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities)
* Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training as and when required
* Ability to work under pressure and make sound judgement
* Ability to research and report back on issues faced by the Parish Council
* Good standard of computer literacy with access to an email account
 | * + Knowledge of HR, procurement, contract management, financial control or risk management and compliance, public relations
* Experience of working in another public body or not for profit organisation
* Experience of working with voluntary and or local community/interest groups.
* Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish councils or local authorities.
* Experience of deliveringpresentations.
* Experience of working with the media.
* Experience in financial control/budgeting
* Experience of staff management
 |
| **Other requirements** | * 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.
* Flexible and Enthusiastic
 |  |

Form Completion and Language Usage

There are a variety of ways you can describe yourself and your strengths. Try using the following when completing the Personal Statements:

“I am …”

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 🔾 | Skilled at… | 🔾 | Excellent at… |
| 🔾 | A skilful… | 🔾 | Able to… |
| 🔾 | Competent in… | 🔾 | Very good at… |
| 🔾 | Extremely good at… | 🔾 | Talented at… |
| 🔾 | Familiar with… | 🔾 | Qualified to… |

The Council are looking for various qualities and characteristics in a potential new Councillor. The following are a list of words which may help you when describing yourself in the personal statements in the application form:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 🔾 | Able | 🔾 | Educated | 🔾 | Loyal |
| 🔾 | Accurate | 🔾 | Effective | 🔾 | Management skills |
| 🔾 | Adaptable | 🔾 | Efficient | 🔾 | Mature |
| 🔾 | Alert | 🔾 | Energetic | 🔾 | Methodical |
| 🔾 | Ambitious | 🔾 | Enjoy a Challenge | 🔾 | Objective |
| 🔾 | Analytical | 🔾 | Enthusiastic | 🔾 | Organised |
| 🔾 | Articulate | 🔾 | Fast learner | 🔾 | Patient |
| 🔾 | Assertive | 🔾 | Fast worker | 🔾 | Perceptive |
| 🔾 | Astute | 🔾 | Flexible | 🔾 | Persistent |
| 🔾 | Bright | 🔾 | Focused | 🔾 | Planning skills |
| 🔾 | Capable | 🔾 | Friendly | 🔾 | Polite |
| 🔾 | Calm | 🔾 | Good communicator | 🔾 | Positive |
| 🔾 | Confident | 🔾 | Gifted | 🔾 | Practical |
| 🔾 | Committed | 🔾 | Hardworking | 🔾 | Pro active |
| 🔾 | Common sense | 🔾 | Helpful | 🔾 | Punctual |
| 🔾 | Competent | 🔾 | Highly motivated | 🔾 | Rational |
| 🔾 | Computer literate | 🔾 | Honest | 🔾 | Reflective |
| 🔾 | Consistent | 🔾 | Imaginative | 🔾 | Reliable |
| 🔾 | Cooperative | 🔾 | Impressive | 🔾 | Resourceful |
| 🔾 | Cope under pressure | 🔾 | Insightful | 🔾 | Research skills |
| 🔾 | Creative | 🔾 | Interpersonal skills | 🔾 | Resilient |
| 🔾 | Decisive | 🔾 | Independent | 🔾 | Responsible |
| 🔾 | Dedicated | 🔾 | Innovative | 🔾 | Studious |
| 🔾 | Dependable | 🔾 | Initiative | 🔾 | Supportive |
| 🔾 | Desire to Succeed | 🔾 | Instinctive | 🔾 | Tactful |
| 🔾 | Determined | 🔾 | Intelligent | 🔾 | Team player |
| 🔾 | Diplomatic | 🔾 | Intuitive | 🔾 | Tenacious |
| 🔾 | Diverse | 🔾 | Keen | 🔾 | Thorough |
| 🔾 | Drive | 🔾 | Knowledgeable | 🔾 | Trustworthy |
| 🔾 | Dynamic | 🔾 | Leadership skills | 🔾 | Versatile |
|  |  |  |  | 🔾 | Willing |

MPC Structure

Meppershall Parish Council has the following employees:

1. The Parish Clerk
2. Caretaker
3. Green Space Officer

Meppershall Parish Council have the following committees:

1. Personnel Committee\*.

Its primary purpose is to oversee and manage Parish Council personnel matters and policies.  *(\* Terms of reference govern this committee)*

Meppershall Parish Council have the following Working Groups:

1. Environment and Leisure Working Group

Its purpose is to consider all environmental and leisure matters that relate to or impact upon the Parish Council

1. Finance Working Group

Its purpose is to have responsibility for the oversight of the Council’s financial affairs in accordance with legislative requirements, regulations and guidelines

1. Health and Safety/Risk Management Working Group

Its purpose is to oversee Council’s legal duty of care towards protecting the Health and Safety of its employees and others who may be affected by the Council’s activities and to oversee the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements.

1. Highways and Transport Working Group

Its purpose is to monitor highways, footpaths, bridle ways, cycle paths and street lighting within the parish and encourage parishioners to report issues with highways, footpaths and review transport issues affecting the Parish.

1. IT Working Group

Its purpose is to ensure that the Parish Council’s information technology capabilities are sufficiently monitored and reviewed to ensure the infrastructure of the Parish Council is capable of meeting its statutory duties and related demands.

1. Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group\*

Its purpose is to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for the village of Meppershall through representing the views of the community as a whole, looking forward to the next five to 10 years, giving residents, the Parish Council, Central Beds Council and other stakeholders’ clear guidance about mid- and long-term community priorities. *(\* Terms of reference govern this steering group)*

1. Planning and Housing Working Group

Its purpose is to act as a statutory consultee to the Local Planning Authority (Central Bedfordshire Council) for all planning applications that relate to the Parish area. The Planning Committee is constituted to prepare responses on behalf of the Council in respect of such applications.

1. Procedures and Legal Working Group

Its purpose is to consider matters relating to procedures documented by Council, their review and to prepare responses for Council on legal matters pertaining to the Parish Council’s areas of responsibility.