

Thame Town Council

Procedure for Applying to be a Co-opted Member

Step 1 – Confirm Eligibility

Confirm that you are eligible to be a member of the Council. The criteria set out in s.79 of the Local Government Act 1972 states:

- You **MUST** be a British subject, or a citizen of the Commonwealth or the European Union.
- You **MUST** be 18 years of age or over.
- You **MUST** meet **one** of the following:
 - A local government elector in the Parish of Thame.
 - Have during the whole of the 12 months preceding the date of the co-option occupied as owner or tenant any land or other premises in the Parish of Thame.
 - Have during the whole of the 12 months preceding the date of the co-option had your principal or only place of work in Thame.
 - Have during the whole of the 12 months preceding the date of the co-option resided in Thame (or within 3 miles).

If you are unclear about these criteria, please contact the Town Clerk for advice: telephone 01844 212833 or email info@thametowntowncouncil.gov.uk or call in to the Town Hall.

Step 2 – Confirm You Are Not Disqualified

Confirm that you are not disqualified to be a member of the council.

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

- are subject of a bankruptcy restriction order or interim order.
- have, within the previous five years, been convicted in the United Kingdom of any offence and have had a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of over three months without the option of a fine.
- work for the council you want to become a councillor for (but you can work for other local authorities, including the principal authorities that represent the same area).

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

Step 3 – Understand What’s Involved

- It is recommended that you read the content on the Town Council’s dedicated webpage: <https://www.thametowntowncouncil.gov.uk/become-a-town-councillor>.
- The publication, “Being a Good Councillor” 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 – Apply

Send a letter of application to the Town Clerk by **4pm on Tuesday 6 June 2023**. Applications will be considered at a Full Council meeting on Tuesday 13 June 2023.

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 the Council 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, and full training will be provided.

Competency	Demonstrated By
Relevant knowledge	Knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<p>A wide range of life skills and experience that reflects the local community. The Council is looking for councillors who can bring enthusiasm and commitment as well as some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in local matters. • Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community. • Good interpersonal skills. • Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly both orally 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 and analytical skills. • Ability and willingness to work with the council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities). • Ability and willingness to undertake relevant training.
Circumstances	<p>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.</p> <p>Flexible and committed to the Council</p> <p>Enthusiastic</p>

Step 5 – Next Steps

You will be invited to attend the Full Council meeting on 13 June 2023 at 6.30pm on a Tuesday in the Town Hall, Thame, at which your application will be considered. The Town Clerk will provide you with an agenda for the meeting on the Wednesday before.

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 will 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 – Successful Applicant

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.