

# Guidance for Applying to be a Co-opted Member

Please read this guidance before completing an Application Form. If you are unclear about any of the information in this guidance, please contact the Town Council for advice: telephone 01844 212833 or email [info@thametowntowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@thametowntowncouncil.gov.uk) or call in to the Town Hall.

## Confirm Eligibility

Confirm that you are eligible to be a member of the Council. The criteria set out in Section 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 the Parish of Thame.
  - Have during the whole of the 12 months preceding the date of the co-option resided in the Parish of Thame (or within 3 miles).

## Confirm You Are Not Disqualified

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

The criteria set out in Section 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).

## Understand What's Involved

- It is recommended that you read the content on the Town Council's dedicated webpage for Becoming a Councillor: <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.

## Apply

Please complete and return the application form (available on our website or from the Town Hall) to [info@thametowntowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@thametowntowncouncil.gov.uk) or by post to Thame Town Council, Town Hall, High Street, Thame, OX9 3DP, by **5pm on Monday 22 April 2024**. Applications will be considered at a Full Council meeting on Tuesday 30 April 2024.

In your application form you should confirm that you are eligible and not disqualified. Your application should tell the Council why you are interested in applying and what you think you can bring to the role of Town Councillor. Please read the Role Description and Person Specification (available on our [website](#) or from the Town Hall) to help you complete this section, but please note that you are not expected to be able to demonstrate all of these competencies, and full training will be provided.

## Next Steps

All applicants will be invited to attend the Full Council meeting on **Tuesday 30 April 2024 at 6.30pm** 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 Wednesday 24 April 2024.

At the meeting you will be given the opportunity to speak for a maximum of 5 minutes (depending on the number of applicants) to introduce yourself and explain why you want to join the council.

If there are 2 or more candidates, 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.

The successful applicant is encouraged to observe the remainder of the Town Council meeting on 30 April 2024.

## 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.

Please ensure you are available to attend the Annual Meeting of the Council on Tuesday 14 May 2024.

You will also be invited to attend induction training during the first two weeks of May 2024 (date tbc), to explain how the council and its meetings work, receive your councillor laptop, and answer any questions you may have.