

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC)

Housing Engagement Board (HEB)

Elected Tenant Representative (ETR) Co-option Policy

To ensure that a fair process is undertaken and that all ETR's are elected only by fellow tenants / leaseholders, the following procedures will take place:

When a vacancy arises

- 1) A vacancy that arises for an ETR during the term of office shall, providing there is at least six months remaining of that term at the date that the vacancy occurs, be filled by means of this Co-option policy.
If there is less than six months remaining of the term, then the vacancy will remain unfilled until the next election.
- 2) Following the vacancy arising, SCDC will inform all ETR's that the co-option process has been instigated.
- 3) As soon as practicable, SCDC will advertise the vacancy for a period of four weeks, as widely as possible, to include where possible the Council's website, social media, council magazines, press releases and any other available media.
- 4) Tenants / leaseholders from anywhere in the district shall be invited to apply, but it will be made clear that priority for co-option will be given to candidates who are resident in the same area as the vacancy and also priority will be given to leaseholder applicants if there are no leaseholders currently on the HEB and to tenants if there is already a leaseholder on the HEB.
- 5) Candidates will be invited to submit an application form and personal statement, in the same manner as for the normal tenant representative elections.

Receipt of applications

- 6) Following the receipt of applications, the following will apply:
If there are no qualified applications received by the published deadline, then the vacancy will be re-advertised for a further four weeks, providing that on the date of the published deadline there is still at least six months remaining of the vacant term of office.

If there are qualified application / s from the area covered by the vacant seat:

- a) If there is only one qualified application from the area covered by the vacant seat, then that applicant will be declared duly elected.
- b) If there is more than one qualified application from the area covered by the vacant seat, then there will be a vote at a special meeting of ETR's to determine the successful candidate, unless there is only one leaseholder applicant where there is currently no leaseholder member of the HEB, or only one tenant applicant where there is already a leaseholder on the HEB, in which case that candidate will be declared duly elected.

If there are only qualified application / s from areas **not** covered by the vacant seat:

- c) If there is only one qualified application from an area not covered by the vacant seat, then that applicant will be declared duly elected.
- d) If there is more than one qualified application from an area not covered by the vacant seat, then there will be a vote at a special meeting of ETR's to determine the successful candidate unless there is only one leaseholder applicant where there is currently no leaseholder member of the HEB, or only one tenant applicant where there is already a leaseholder member of the HEB, in which case that candidate will be declared duly elected.

Special meeting of ETR's

- 7) If a special meeting of the ETR'S is required, this will be held as soon as practicable after the deadline for nominations, with officers endeavouring to find a date and time when the maximum number of ETR's can attend.
- 8) If there is currently no Leaseholder member of the HEB, then only leaseholder applications will be considered. If there is currently a leaseholder member of the HEB then only tenant applications will be considered.
- 9) Copies of all relevant applications and candidate statements will be circulated to all ETR's at least five working days before the special meeting.
- 10) Applicants shall not be required to attend the meeting, but shall be invited to do so with at least five working days' notice, to give a short presentation on why they feel that they should be co-opted on to the HEB.
- 11) SCDC shall provide a clerk for the meeting who shall produce minutes of the decisions taken.
- 12) The quorum for the meeting shall be three ETR's, the meeting shall be open to the public and applicants may attend the whole of the meeting. Only ETR's may vote.

- 13) The ETR's present at the meeting shall elect a chair for the meeting from among their number.
- 14) The chair shall invite each applicant in turn to make a presentation lasting no longer than three minutes, followed by an opportunity for the ETR's present to ask questions of the candidate.
- 15) When this process is concluded, the ETR's can discuss the applications, without interruption from candidates or others.
- 16) When discussion is concluded, voting by the ETR's will take place by secret ballot, administered by the clerk to the meeting.
- 17) The successful candidate must achieve a majority vote of those ETR's present and voting, so if there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and none of them at the first count has an overall majority, then the candidate with the fewest votes should be eliminated and the remainder put to the vote again. This process should be repeated as necessary until one candidate has an overall majority.
- 18) If, after exhausting the above process, the last two candidates are tied on the same number of votes, then the successful candidate will be chosen by lot, conducted by the clerk to the meeting.
- 19) After voting is concluded, the Chair will declare the successful candidate duly elected to the HEB.