

Gamston with West Drayton and Eaton

Councillor Application Pack

Introduction

This pack contains information about Gamston with West Drayton and Eaton Parish Council for prospective Parish Councillors, including the job description, co-option application form and co-option eligibility form.

If you have any further questions about the Parish Council, do not hesitate to contact the Clerk or other Councillors.

What is a Parish Council?

Parish Councils are the first level of local government. They provide communities with a democratic voice and a structure for taking community action. They are the first point of contact for anyone concerned with a community issue.

They operate at a level below district councils, borough councils and unitary authorities.

A Parish Council is a separate legal, corporate entity. First created by the Local Government Act of 1894 in most rural areas, the current consolidated legislation is that of 1972.

A Parish Council also provides services for the local people. These will range from recreation grounds and play areas, to allotments, and nature reserves. Like any statutory body it can only do the things for which the law or any governing document gives a power.

The Parish Council has one particular asset that is extremely valuable — it has the ability to set a Precept (sum of money), which is collected from all residents through the Council Tax system. With the right to levy a form of taxation come some duties. In particular a duty to behave in an ethical manner according to a Code of Conduct (declaring interests and leaving the room when likely to be prejudiced) and a duty to have the annual accounts subjected to audit.

About Gamston with West Drayton and Eaton Parish Council

This Parish Council is in the county of Nottinghamshire and in the district of Bassetlaw The A638 and River Idle run through the five villages which make up the Parish Council.

Until the 1960s the A638 was the Great North Road and the Grade II listed Markham Moor Inn has stood alongside it for 350 years and was probably a coaching inn in the days when horse-drawn coaches used this route from London to York. West of Markham Moor the village of West Drayton runs alongside the A1. North of Markham Moor is the village of Rockley where, in the 19th century, 5 of the 13 cottages in Mill Lane were occupied by chair makers, two of whom stamped their names on the edge of the chair seats. The road then passes the new Gamston Primary School opened in 2005. In the village of Eaton the Hall originally part of the Duke of Newcastle's estate was used as a maternity hospital during WWII, became a teacher training college and is now a Muslim educational facility.

The Rivers Maun and Meden provide the only instance in England of two rivers merging, splitting and then joining together again. The second confluence is in West Drayton parish and shortly afterwards the river Poulter joins them to form the river Idle. This then flows north through Gamston and

Eaton, whose residents have created a mosaic depicting the village as part of a very attractive riverside garden, on its way to joining the Trent at East Stockwith.

Who we are:

The Parish Council is a corporate body with 8 seats. All decisions of the Council are taken by the majority vote during Council, or Committee meetings.

The Chairman is responsible for ensuring the business of the meeting is transacted in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in an efficient and timely manner. The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer/Responsible Financial Officer and carries out the statutory obligations of the Council. What we do The Parish Council undertakes a number of services on behalf of the Parish. It raises money to undertake projects via the Precept which is collected through local council tax by Bassetlaw District Council.

Below are further services that Gamston with West Drayton and Eaton Parish Council carries out for the benefit of residents of the Parish:

- Owns and maintains:

Gamston School Playground

- Provides and maintains:

Litter bins

Bus shelters

Benches

Notice boards

- Supports and provides regular reports to the Idle Times Magazine, which is delivered to every household in the Parish (except opt-outs) and provides an annual Bulletin report to every household.
- We work closely with the County Council's Highways Department to try and resolve highway issues
- Considers all planning applications relating to the Parish and make comments, as appropriate, to Bassetlaw District Council
- Provides grants to local organisations upon applications

Parish Council Meetings and Ordinary Parish Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at Gamson Village School and start at 7:00 pm.

Exceptions: There is usually no meeting in August or December.

The Parish Council is statutorily required to hold a Parish Meeting or Assembly every year, between 1 March and 1 June, to which all Parishioners are invited to attend. Extraordinary Parish Council Meetings may be called. All meetings are open to the public and are advertised with 3-days notice.

Training

Gamson with West Drayton and Eaton Parish Council is committed to ensuring that Councillors and staff are equipped to carry out the functions for which they are responsible and will provide all necessary training.

Policy & Strategy Documents

All of the Council's policy and strategy documents are publicly available on the Parish Council website as are the minutes and agendas of past meetings.

JOB DESCRIPTION: Parish Councillor

Job Title: Councillor

Responsible to: The Parish Council and its electors.

Responsible for: Effective leadership to foster the interests of their electors and Parish

Role Purpose to: Represent the views of Parishioners within and outside the Parish.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

1. To participate constructively in the government of Gamston with West Drayton and Eaton Parish
2. To participate fully in the formation and scrutiny of the Parish Council's policies, budgets, strategies and service delivery.
3. To ensure, with other councillors, that the Parish Council is properly managed.
4. To keep up to date with significant developments affecting the Parish Council at local, regional and national levels.
5. To promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the Parish taking account of the strategic effects on other communities and the Parish Council as a whole.
6. To effectively represent the interests of the Parish and deal with Parishioners' enquiries, representations and complaints.
7. To represent the whole electorate; listen, and then represent the views of the whole community when discussing council business and working with outside bodies
8. To take an active part in the Parish Council's arrangements and promote measures that contribute to the Parish Council's Vision.
9. To attend Parish Council meetings.
10. To prepare for meetings and being properly informed about the issues to be discussed.
11. To take part in meetings and form sound judgements based on what is best for the community and then abide by majority decisions.
12. To represent the Parish Council on outside bodies to which the Councillor is appointed
13. To maintain proper standards of behaviour as an elected representative of the people.
14. To fulfil the statutory and locally determined requirements of an elected member of a Local Authority and the Parish Council, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct and maintaining high ethical standards (including not disclosing confidential information and not using council resources for political purposes or for any other reason unless agreed by the Council).
15. To participate effectively as a member of any committee or working party to which the Councillor is appointed.
16. To contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal, to actively encourage the Parish to participate generally in the government of the area and to provide access to information where appropriate.

17. To uphold the Parish Council's Standing Orders and ethical standards (ensuring that the impartiality of council staff is not compromised)

Eligibility of Candidates

The Parish Council is able to consider any person to fill a vacancy provided that:

- he/she is 18 or over; and
- he/she is a British citizen, a qualifying Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of any other member state of the European Union;

and at least one of the following apply:

- he/she is an elector for the Parish and continues to be an elector; or
- has resided in the Parish for the past twelve months or rented/tenanted land in the Parish; or
- has had his/her principal or only place of work in the Parish for the past twelve months; or
- has lived within three miles of the Parish for the past twelve months.

There are certain disqualifications for being a parish councillor (see Sch. 80 of the Local Government Act 1972) of which the main are:

- holding a paid office or employment under the Parish Council;
- bankruptcy;
- having been sentenced to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of not less than three months, without the option of a fine during the preceding five years; or
- being disqualified under any enactment relating to corrupt or illegal electoral practices.

For further information about Eligibility for Parish Councillors, see Electoral Commission's

Candidate Guide – Parish and Community Elections (part 1/6) at:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-and-community-council-elections-england>

Applications

Candidates are required to:

- Submit information about themselves, by way of completing a short application form.
- Confirm their eligibility for the position of parish councillor within the statutory rules.

Following receipt of application form(s) and confirmation(s) of eligibility, the next suitable Parish Council meeting will have an agenda item 'To receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy'. Eligible candidates will be invited to attend the meeting.

Copies of the eligible candidates' application form(s) will be circulated to all parish councillors by the Clerk (or Chairman in the absence of the Clerk) at least 3 clear days prior to the meeting of the full Parish Council at which the co-option will be considered.

All such documents will be treated by the Clerk/Chairman and all Parish Councillors as strictly private and confidential.

At the Co-Option Meeting

Candidates will be given ten minutes maximum to introduce themselves to the parish councillors (members), give information on their background and experience and explain why they wish to become a member of the Parish Council.

The process will be carried out in the public session. There will be no private discussions between council members prior to a vote being taken.

As soon as all candidates have finished giving their submissions, the Parish Council will proceed to a vote with each candidate being proposed and seconded by the councillors in attendance and a vote by a show of hands (Local Government Act 1972 Sch. 12. Para 13).

In order for a candidate to be co-opted to the Parish Council, it will be necessary for them to obtain an absolute majority of votes cast (50% + 1 of the votes available at the meeting). If there are more than two candidates and there is no candidate with an overall majority in the first round of voting the candidate with the least number of votes will drop out of the process.

Further rounds of voting will then take place with the process repeated until a candidate has an absolute majority.

If present, a candidate who is co-opted will sign at the co-option meeting a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, including an undertaking to abide by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct, and may take office immediately thereafter. If not present, a co-opted candidate will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and undertaking to abide by the Parish Council's Code of Conduct and, upon signing, will take office either before or at the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The Clerk will notify Bassetlaw District Council Electoral Services Office of the co-option of the new parish councillor.

A co-opted Parish Councillor will also complete a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests form which the Clerk will lodge with the Monitoring Officer at Bassetlaw District Council within 28 days of the co-option.