

CAMBOURNE TOWN COUNCIL

District of South Cambridgeshire

Council Meeting 18th January 2022

COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The Chairman has received a notification from Cllr Peter Hedges that he has tendered his resignation from Cambourne Town Council. The Town Clerk has spoken to Andrew Francis, Electoral Services Manager at South Cambs District Council and he has confirmed that as the resignation falls within the six months period preceding the whole Council Election for Cambourne Town Council on the 5th May 2022 that no election will be called to fill the vacancy.

The Chairman and Clerk have passed on their thanks to Peter Hedges for his work for the Town during his term as a Councillor.

The Council can co-opt onto the Council to fill the vacancy. The Town Clerk recommends that due to the timing of the process it is not practical to carry out this process. If a Councillor was co-opted, they would only fill the position for 1-2 months.

It is

RECOMMENDED that the resignation be accepted, and the vacancy be filled when the whole Council election is carried out.

Cambourne Town Council has also received the following information.

Dear Parish Clerks (and/or Chairs/Councillors/Candidates)

You will no doubt be aware that 5 May 2022 sees the next scheduled elections for all Parish and Town Councils in South Cambridgeshire (with the exceptions of Willingham and Longstanton).

As we go into the new year I thought it would be helpful to send a note to all clerks breaking down the key information they (and candidates) may need to know. This email may be shared widely – it is in no way confidential.

About the Returning Officer and the Elections Office

The Returning Officer (RO) for the Parish and Town Council elections is Liz Watts. Liz is the Chief Executive of South Cambridgeshire District Council, but she undertakes the role of RO independently from her role with the Council. The day-to-day running of the election is the responsibility of Andrew Francis who is the Elections Manager for the Council, and is appointed by Liz as Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) for the elections on 5 May. If you have any questions or need any support please email the elections team at elections@scambs.gov.uk. Please be aware, the team cannot and will not give advice as to qualification of candidates or as to any other legal matter.

Guidance for Candidates

The Electoral Commission publish significant guidance notes for anyone who is considering standing as a parish or town council candidate. You can find the guidance documents here:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/parish-council-elections-england>. Please note that this guidance is still being updated for 2022, so keep an eye out for any changes. It is recommended that all candidates read this guidance, especially the parts relating to qualification and conduct.

Formal Notices

At key points during the election period several notices will need to be displayed within your parish. We will email clerks the relevant notices and ask that you kindly print and display them on the dates we request. The first notice is the Notice of Election which we will send to you in February or early March. This notice will need to be displayed on 28 March and signifies the start of the election period. Further notices will follow after the close of nominations and in the run up to polling day.

The Pre-election period

All parish clerks, councillors and candidates should familiarise themselves with the restrictions on local authority publicity that will apply from 28 March. You can find some guidance from the LGA here: <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/short-guide-publicity-during-pre-election-period>. This is targeted at principal councils but much of it will apply to parishes.

Nomination Forms

Nomination papers can be downloaded from the Electoral Commission website through the link provided above. The Returning Officer is able to provide printed copies, but in the interests of sustainability, these will only be supplied on request. Nomination papers must be completed in hard copy (not digitally).

Nomination Period

Nominations must be delivered **by hand** to the Returning Officer at SCDC (Cambourne Business Park, CB23 6EA). They may be delivered at any time between 8.30am and 5.30pm on any working day between 28 March and 5 April. In accordance with the statutory timetable, the RO will stop taking nominations at 4.00pm on 5 April. Nomination papers must not be posted – we will return them if they are. However, they may be delivered by a “trusted person”. Where appropriate this could mean that a parish clerk can bring in nominations for a number of candidates in one go. It would help us for nomination papers to be delivered in bulk in this way to minimise the number of people attending the offices at one time. You may email us using the address above to make an appointment. However, even if you have an appointment, it may sometimes be the case that you have to wait a short while to see someone. All nomination papers will be informally checked before you submit them, allowing opportunity for errors to be rectified. For this reason we recommend you do not leave it to the last minute to submit your papers. If you need support with how to complete a nomination paper, please refer to EC guidance or send us an email.

Candidate Expenditure

Spending on campaigning at elections is limited by law. Full guidance can be viewed on the EC website. The RO will require all candidates (even at uncontested elections) to submit a declaration of their expenditure – even if it is a nil return.

Paying for elections

Parish and Town Councils are responsible for paying for the full cost of their election. It is likely that any parish election on 5 May will be shared with an election for a district councillor, thus reducing the cost burden. Parish clerks should refer to the letter sent by our accountancy team last October for more information.

Regards

The South Cambs Elections Office

Jo Cox | Electoral Services Officer