

## WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

### CASUAL VACANCIES IN THE OFFICE OF PARISH OR TOWN COUNCILLOR

Notes for the Guidance of Parish and Town Council Clerks.  
By John Watling, Deputy Returning Officer and Head of Electoral Services

#### 1 Qualifications to be a Councillor

1.1 A person is qualified to be elected and to be a councillor if they are a British, Commonwealth, Irish or European Union citizen and on the relevant day (that is, the day of nomination or election) they are 18 or over.

1.2 In addition, the person must meet at least one of the following criteria:

(1) on the relevant day and thereafter they continue to be on the electoral register for the parish, or

(2) during the whole of the twelve months before that day they have owned or tenanted land or premises in the parish, or

(3) during the whole of the twelve months before that day their principal or only place of work has been in the parish, or

(4) during the whole of the twelve months before that day they have resided in the parish or within 4.8 kilometres (three miles) of it.

1.3 Except for qualification (1), these qualifications then continue for the full term of office, until the next ordinary elections. Certain people are disqualified from standing, and these include paid officers (including paid Clerks) of the council, bankrupts and those subject to recent sentences of imprisonment.

1.4 Notes:

1.4.1 The distance of 4.8 kilometres is measured in a straight line from the nearest point of the candidate's residence to the nearest point of the parish. If a **single parish** is warded, then the 4.8 kilometres refers to the parish, not the parish ward, ie it is possible for a candidate to live more than 4.8 kilometres from the parish ward as long as they are within 4.8kms of the parish boundary.

1.4.2 The legislation refers to "parish" not "parish council". Where a parish council consists of Joint or Grouped parishes, it is quite usual for whole parishes to form a ward of the Joint Parish Council. It is therefore important to note the qualifications refer to the civil parish, not the grouped council's whole area. This is very different from the situation above where a parish is internally warded.