

Beckington Parish Council

The 2019 Elections - Agenda Item: 65

- Elections will take place on Thursday 2nd May 2019
- Three possible outcomes after the elections: (Well four really!)
 - More than 7 people put themselves forward for election = you will have a full-blown election, with ballot slips, crosses in boxes and a count. All nominees will be on the same ballot slip, so parishioners can put an 'X' in up to 7 boxes.
 - 7 people are nominated = No vote and all 7 are returned as unopposed – This is still the same as being elected.
 - Less than 7 people are nominated = Once the new council is in place it will need to co-opt residents onto the council to achieve a membership of 7
 - Doomsday possibility – 3 members or less – District Council appoint some district Councils onto the council using emergency powers.

What does it mean for the Council?

- Routine business as normal
 - Agendas from last year show very little business conducted in February and March. Meetings maybe cancelled if you have very little business to conduct.
- Large / controversial projects to be put forward to the next council
 - Any large spend of money or the taking of important decisions will be put off until after May.
- Removal of county / district councillors reports from the agenda and possibly the chance for the public to speak before the meeting.
 - The council should not allow itself to become a soapbox.
- The Parish Council is not required to run the election, the whole process of the election is managed by MDC
 - MDC will invoice BPC after the election for the cost (between £200 and £1,500)
- Purdah –
 - Starts officially on March 21st but measures above will be in place from here on in.
 - All communication from the clerk will be member neutral = Member will not publicly receive personal credit for work they have carried out.
 - Annual Parish meeting to be held before the purdah period proper starts.

What does it mean for the clerk?

- As the clerk (or any employee of a council as a public body) is in effect a civil servant the Clerk is completely neutral with regards to the elections.
 - The clerk has a duty to promote the elections and this will be done via the network mag, the council website and the Facebook page.
 - The clerk will offer an equal amount of help to current members and members of the public that wish to stand for election.
 - The Clerk is the only constant – staying in post throughout the whole process.

What does it mean for the Members?

- If current Members of the Council wish to remain a Member of the Council, then you will need to stand for election.
- Nomination forms can be obtained from MDC
 - It is possible you will have to pick up the nomination pack in person – this is not known yet.
 - It is definite that you will have to deliver the completed nomination pack back in person – it is completely the candidates' responsibility to return their own nomination form.
 - You will need to be nominated by 2 residents of the parish, who must be on the electoral register.
- Your membership of this council expires a few days after the election, in this case on Saturday 4th may – after that time and until a new council is formed the council will have no councillors, just a Clerk.
- By law I must call a meeting of the new council within 2 weeks of the election so that the new council can be formed. I give notice now that the date I will call that meeting on will be Tuesday 14th of May – this being the normal meeting night for the parish council anyway.
- Successful candidates must return their election expenses form even if you incurred no expense – failure to do so could see you removed from office.