

## **MEMBERS' COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021 - GUIDANCE NOTES**

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## **SECTION 1 - ABOUT THE MEMBERS' COUNCIL**

The Members' Council is the democratically elected body that represents Co-op members across the UK. It is made up of 100 of our most dedicated members and its responsibilities include upholding our Values and Principles and holding the Group Board to account for the commercial performance of the business.

The Council has geographic constituencies to ensure that the voices of members from right across the UK are heard. 85 Council Members represent Individual Members and 15 represent the Independent Co-operative Societies who are part-owners of the Co-op.

Of the 85 seats allocated to Individual Members, 76 seats are allocated to Individual members from geographic constituencies.

A further eight seats are allocated as follows:

- 7 seats are allocated to address shortfalls in diversity (including colleague representation)
- 1 seat is allocated to a representative from the Co-op Young Members' Group.

Elections to the Members' Council are conducted under the Single Transferable Vote system, with successful candidates elected for a three-year term, unless in the case of a casual vacancy.

## SECTION 2 - FURTHER INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Council meetings will take place on the following dates in 2021 via videoconference, until further notice and Covid-19 guidance on face to face meetings.

**Successful candidates will be expected to attend the AGM and Members' Council Meeting in May which will be broadcast online.**

- Saturday 15 (AGM) and Sunday 16 May (Council – 10am – 12noon)
- Thursday, 1 July and 2 July (induction for new Council Members)
- Saturday, 3 July (10am – 12noon)
- Saturday 25 September (10am – 12noon)
- Saturday 4 December (10am – 12noon)

An induction day that all new Council members are required to attend will take place on Thursday, 1 July and 2 July, virtually, until more guidance is available regarding Covid-19

Council members will receive an annual fee of £3,000. Council members will also be entitled to claim expenses incurred in relation to their role, in accordance with the Expenses Policy.

If you'd like to have a chat with a member of the team about any aspect of the Council, please email us at [councilelections@coop.co.uk](mailto:councilelections@coop.co.uk) with your preferred contact details and we'll be in touch within 2 working days.

### 2021 Council Election Key Dates

Nominations open	Tuesday 12 January
Nominations close	Midday, Friday 12 February
Ballot papers distributed	from Friday 16 April
Closing date for voting	midday, Monday 10 May
Candidates notified of results	by Thursday 13 May

### **SECTION 3 - COMPLETING YOUR NOMINATION FORM**

To complete your online nomination form, you'll need:

- your Membership number
- A recent (no older than 12 months) passport style photograph that you can upload to your application.
- Your election address should comprise:
  - o A summary address (up to 75 words) – this will be available in both printed and online election materials
  - o Additional Information (up to 500 words) – available for viewing online only.
- If for any reason your election address exceeds the maximum word count, the sentence that ends prior to the word limit will be treated as the final sentence
- Every effort will be made to correct obvious spelling and grammatical errors, but no other changes will be made to the information you supply
- The Returning Officer reserves the right to contact prospective candidates if their election address is regarded as defamatory or damaging to the Co-op in any way.
- You may submit your election statement, or part of your election statement in a language other than English. Your overall statement must not exceed the word count. If you do submit your statement, or part of your statement, in another language and a translation into English is not provided within the word count it must be provided separately as we reserve the right to verify submissions. Only your candidate's statement, as submitted and within the word count, will be published. Additional translations which are provided for verification purposes, and are above the word count, will not be published.
- All candidates will be allocated the same amount of space in the candidates' materials. As a result, it cannot be guaranteed that the formatting of an election address (such as bullet points) will appear in the candidates' booklet.
- If you fail to submit an election address we will insert the phrase 'not submitted' in the election materials

Candidates will be subject to the following checks:

- Credit check
- Media check
- Identity verification
- Verification of any professional qualifications or memberships claimed
- Directorship Check

The Council Secretary is entitled to request further information from or concerning any candidate if not fully satisfied through the self-nomination form and initial screening results that

all eligibility requirements have been met. Further information may include (but is not limited to) interview of a candidate and third party references and data.

If the Council Secretary is not satisfied that the eligibility requirements have been met as at the date on which the ballot is determined, he/she is entitled to determine that the candidate shall not go forward on to the ballot or proceed in the Council election process. The candidate will be informed of the decision and given reasons in writing.

All information supplied by candidates will be treated in the strictest confidence. The Co-op will use the services of a trusted third party to support the screening process.