



2023 COUNCIL ELECTIONS NOMINATIONS PACK

This pack contains all the information you need to stand for election to the Co-op Members' Council in 2023. To stand for Council, you will need to complete the [online nomination form](#).

You may wish to refer to the following documents when completing this form and ensure you have a photograph ready to upload.

- [Council Member Person Specification \(PDF, 6 pages, 132kb\)](#)
- [Council Election Regulations \(PDF, 28 pages, 903kb\)](#)
- [Co-op Group Rules \(PDF, 87 pages, 1 MB\)](#)
- [Council Member Code of Conduct \(PDF, 21 pages, 221kb\)](#)
- [Membership Regulations \(PDF, 6 pages\)](#)
- [Canvassing Code of Practice \(PDF, 5 pages\)](#)

INDEX

1	Council Member skills and experience
2A	Council seats available in 2023
2B	Standing for Council as a colleague
3	Points requirement
4	Completing your nomination form
5	Time commitment
6	Council Meeting dates and induction
7	Fees and expenses
8	Nomination and elections timeline

SECTION 1 - COUNCIL MEMBER PERSON SPECIFICATION

To help you work out whether standing for Council is the right step for you, we've put together a person specification for the role of Council Members, which outlines core characteristics, knowledge and experience as well as some of our ways of working and essential skills and

requirements needed for this role. This document can be viewed as Appendix 1 at the bottom of this document.

SECTION 2A

COUNCIL SEATS & AVAILABLE SEATS BY CONSTITUENCY IN 2023

77 of the Council's seats are allocated geographically and are divided into 13 geographical constituencies. The table below shows the number of seats in each constituency and how many vacancies are available in the 2023 Council Elections.

Constituency	Number of seats in constituency	Vacancies
Cymru/Wales	5	1
East Midlands	6	2
East of England	5	2
Isle of Man	1	0
London	6	2
North East	3	1
North West	8	3
Northern Ireland	2	1
Scotland	10	3
South East	10	3
South West	9	4
West Midlands	4	1
Yorkshire and the Humber	8	3

SECTION 2B –

INFORMATION FOR COLLEAGUES INTERESTED IN STANDING FOR ELECTION

Colleague Council Members play a vital role in helping our Members' Council understand and represent the views and experiences of colleagues from around Co-op and to represent Members in your constituency.

Up to 21 Co-op Colleague Members can be on our Members' Council. Each constituency has a cap on the total number of colleague seats. Due to how the terms of office are allocated for colleague seats, not all Council Constituencies will have seats available for colleagues each year.

For 2023, we have colleague seats available across the following constituencies:

- East of England
- London
- North East
- North West
- Northern Ireland

- Scotland
- South East
- Yorkshire and the Humber

Email councilelections@coop.co.uk to check which constituency you would be standing in as a colleague.

SECTION 3 - POINTS REQUIREMENT TO STAND FOR COUNCIL

To stand for election to the Members' Council, you'll need to have:

- Been a Co-op Member for three years prior to applying
- Earned at least 500 trading points in 2022 by spending across any of the following businesses in the Co-op Group (Co-op Food, Co-op Insurance, Co-op Funeralcare and Co-op Legal Services).

SECTION 4 - ONLINE NOMINATION FORM

All candidates must complete an online nomination form in order to stand for Council. You can create a login for your form and then return to it as many times as you wish before you submit.

Please read the following notes carefully, which summarise the core sections of the form before you begin your nomination.

ONLINE TEST

As part of the nominations process, we require candidates to complete a short, online test to demonstrate their knowledge of Co-op. This is a multiple-choice test, which will require you to do some online research and reading.

PERSONAL INFORMATION & SCREENING

Due to the high standards of integrity we set for our Council Members who represent our Co-op and the levels of confidential and commercial information which Council Members may access, prospective candidates are required to provide personal information including your previous addresses, nationality and any details of criminal, civil proceedings or disciplinary actions.

All candidates are screened via a third-party partner and the personal information that you provide is used to assist with this screening process.

Candidates will be subject to any or all of the following checks:

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

COMPLETING YOUR NOMINATION FORM

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

- Your Co-op Membership Number
- A recent (no older than 12 months) passport style, colour photograph, that you can upload to your application.

Candidates are required to submit a summary address (up to 75 words) – this will be available in both printed and online election materials. Candidates may also provide additional information (up to 500 words), using structured questions provided to share more information with voters in support of your nomination. This is optional and 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.

FURTHER INFORMATION REQUESTS TO SUPPORT YOUR NOMINATION

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 Elections 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.

SECTION 5 - TIME COMMITMENT

Currently, our Members' Council meets in-person in Manchester six times a year to fulfil its roles and get the latest updates from around our Co-op, with options to join remotely. Council Members are expected to attend these meetings and complete training sessions on a range of co-operative topics and skills as well. For anyone looking to get more involved, we hold annual elections for our Council Committees, where Council Members hear about business plans in more detail and help shape key pieces of work.

SECTION 6 - 2023 COUNCIL MEETINGS & INDUCTION

Council Meetings will take place on the following dates in 2023, both in-person and online. Successful candidates will be expected to attend the AGM in May. There will also be a Council Meeting that weekend.

- Saturday 20 May (AGM)
- May Council Meeting (TBC)
- July (mandatory induction for new Council Members)
- Council Meeting - Saturday 8 July
- Council Meeting - Saturday 23 September
- Council Meeting - Saturday 2 December

SECTION 7 - COUNCIL MEMBER FEES

Council Members are paid **£3,000 a year** to be a voice for Co-op Members and champion a better way of doing things at the heart of our business.

Your travel costs and expenses are covered, and we can help with childcare and carer allowances too.

SECTION 8 - 2023 NOMINATION & ELECTIONS TIMELINE

- Nominations open Wednesday, 11 January 2023
- Nominations close Midday, Thursday, 23 February
- Ballot papers distributed from w/c 17 April
- Closing date for voting midday, Monday 15 May
- Candidates notified of results by Thursday 18 May

If you have any questions about the nominations and election process, email the team at councilelections@coop.co.uk.

APPENDIX - 1 COUNCIL MEMBER PERSON SPECIFICATION

The following person specification highlights the skills, experience and behaviours that will enable the Council to effectively carry out the roles outlined above.

The Council needs to draw on a wide breadth of skills and knowledge - we understand that not all prospective candidates will be able to demonstrate every requirement outlined in this person specification.

You can demonstrate and develop the skills and experiences outlined in this specification through many different situations outside of paid employment – e.g. life skills, caring roles, unpaid and voluntary work etc. We understand that prospective Council Members will possess other useful skills not detailed in this specification that would improve the effectiveness of the Council. Our nomination process and your election address will enable you to share these skills with members.

Co-op commitment

1. You'll be a regular consumer of the Co-op's products and services, and passionate about Co-op Values and Principles and representing members' views.
2. You'll be an ambassador and positive role model for the Co-op - committed to protecting its status as a bona fide co-operative society owned and controlled by its members.
3. You'll have a genuine interest in the Co-op's businesses, services and products, and how our membership and governance model puts business ethics and community at the heart of our Co-op.

Personal characteristics

1. Integrity demonstrated through self-responsibility, you're trustworthy and act in the best interests of the Co-op at all times.
2. Co-operative and able to work collaboratively, either as part of a small working group or large team.
3. Sound judgement demonstrated by an ability to make considered independent decisions.
4. A willingness to ask questions, challenge constructively and assertively and seek support and advice when required.
5. Articulate with strong communication skills.
6. Organised - well prepared for meetings and other activities
7. Ability to prioritise and to "see the bigger picture"
8. A commitment to equal opportunities, diversity and inclusion.
9. Influential and diplomatic, with experience of making a positive impact
10. A commitment to ongoing personal development

Core knowledge

1. Co-operative knowledge. An understanding of the Co-op democratic structure and the role of the Council. An understanding of the Co-op's relationship with the wider co-operative movement.
2. Business knowledge. Good understanding of the Co-op businesses and services and the wider retail sector.

3. Financial knowledge. Understanding of basic statutory and management accounts. Further development if you're elected to the Council*. The strategies and performance of Co-op businesses, and how financial information can be used to monitor performance and guide decisions.
4. The Co-op membership and community offer and our sustainability model.
5. Governing documents of the Society that define how our Co-op is run.
6. The heritage of the Co-op and the development of a global co-op economy.

*Supported through a structured training programme

Our way of working - some essential skills & requirements to get the most out of this role

1. As a UK wide body, the Council uses digital and remote channels for information sharing and communication. This includes use of conference calls, online meetings and a secure information area for accessing key documents. The Council also encourages members to engage via social media with members. To be able to fully participate, you'll need to be computer literate with the ability and commitment to participate digitally
2. You'll be willing to play an active role in sub-committees and smaller working groups that meet remotely and be committed to training and development activity that takes place outside of Council Meetings.
3. You'll need to find time to prepare, travel to and participate in Council Meetings including weekends and evenings at least 4 times a year.
4. You'll be willing to get involved with local member events and community activity. You'll work closely with Member Pioneers in your local community, gathering their feedback on local issues and sharing Co-op information relevant to their community / member role.