**Casual Vacancies - Winterborne Whitechurch Parish Council**

The Parish Council currently has 6 vacancies for councillors. 2 casual vacancies already existed and had been longstanding which can be filled by co-option to council when quorate.

One Councillor remains in post: **Cllr L Deeney**

The following is a summary of the options open to the electorate:

* Casual vacancies numbered 1-3 (former councillors Parker, Pringle and Turley) – Notice published on 30 September.  10 requests for an election needed by midnight on 20 October.  If insufficient requests are received, the vacancies will be filled by co-option (covered below).
* Casual vacancy number 4 (former councillor Gleaden) - Notice published on 14 October.  10 requests for an election needed by midnight on 3 November.  If insufficient requests are received, the vacancy will be filled by co-option (covered below).
* If an election is called, the earliest date that this can be held is 25 November and the latest date is 22 December.  It would seem sensible in this scenario to hold any election for vacancy number 4 at the same time but if aiming for the earliest date this would also necessitate the election being called by midnight 20 October.
* If an election is called, Dorset Council will not appoint temporary councillors and will await the outcome of the election.
* If an election is called and there are no candidates, or if no election is called we will look to move to the stage of co-option.  At the moment, the Parish Council is unable to act as there is only a single Councillor in place.  Therefore, Dorset Council will seek to appoint 2 temporary Parish Councillors (who will be sitting Dorset Councillors) in order to give the Parish Council a quorum so it can sit and co-opt members to the vacant seats.  The co-options will be effective until the next scheduled elections in May 2024.  No date for these temporary appointments is available currently as the Chief Executive will need to liaise with Dorset Council’s Political Group Leaders to agree who will be appointed to this temporary role.

If residents have already submitted a request for an election for either vacancies 1-3 or 4; there is currently no facility to withdraw those requests.