



You are hereby summoned to attend an
Extra-ordinary meeting of the Queen's Park Community Council
to be held at the Beethoven Centre, Third Avenue, W10 4JL
on **Wednesday 15 November 2023** commencing at **18:00pm**.

Shuwanna Aaron, Director

9 November 2023

AGENDA

035-23/24	Apologies for absence – to receive and approve any apologies for absence.
036-23/24	Declarations of interest – to note any Declarations of Interest or Dispensations granted in respect of any item on the Agenda.
037-23/24	Minutes of the previous meeting – to consider for approval the minutes of the Council Meeting held 18 th October 2023 for confirmation and signing as a correct record.
038-23/24	Public session – to receive any questions, representations or petitions from members of the Public. <i>(Members of the Public may speak for up to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chairman).</i>
039-23/24	Co-opting - to co-opt a new member to the casual vacancy for a Community Councillor.
040-23/24	Declarations of acceptance of Office – to receive the co-opted Councillor's signed declaration of acceptance of office.

Report To:	Council		
Title:	Co-option to the casual Vacancy		
Purpose:	To Approve		
Author:	Shuwanna Aaron		
Date of Meeting	8/11/2023	Agenda Item	

1. Summary

This report sets out the process for filling a casual vacancy.

2. Recommendations

That the Council takes each of the following recommendations in turn:

- (1) confirms the process set out in Section 4
- (2) undertakes the process set out in Section 4
- (3) confirms the appointment of a new councillor as set out in Section 5.

3. Background

- 3.1 Owing to persistent absence a member of the Council was automatically disqualified as a Councillor in line with in accordance with Local Government Act 1972, section 85(1) and (2).
- 3.2 A Notice of casual vacancy was published on 21 September giving the electorate 14 clear days during which to call for a bi-election. This period lapsed on 23:59 11th October 2023.
- 3.3 On 16th October a notice was given to the public that the Council would co-opt a new member and invited residents to put themselves forward to be co-opted.
- 3.4 Three applications were received by the closing date of 3pm, 8th March 2023 and those candidates have been invited tonight to participate in the process set out in Section 4 below. Copies of their applications are included as an appendix to this report.

4. Process

- 4.1 To take part in the selection a Councillor must be in the meeting at this point, and remain until the vote is taken.
- 4.2 The Proper Officer will toss a coin to see which candidate speaks first.
- 4.3 Each candidate will speak for three minutes, then take questions from Councillors for three minutes.
- 4.4 The Candidates will be asked to leave the room to allow Councillors to discuss.
- 4.5 Each Councillor will cast their vote privately by writing the name of their approved candidate on the provided piece of paper, which will then be passed to the Proper Officer to inform the meeting which candidate has been selected.
- 4.6 In the event of a tie in the initial vote the Chair shall use a casting vote to select the successful candidate.

5. Confirmation of Councillor

- 5.1 On completion of the process in Section 4 the Council will vote openly to confirm the co-option of the successful candidate as a new Councillor for the period until May 2026.
- 5.2 The new Councillor will confirm acceptance of Office by signing the declaration of acceptance of Office.
- 5.3 The Proper Officer will then issue a declaration of interests form to be completed by the co-opted Councillor.

Appendix: Applications

Applicant 1: Non-residents works in Queen's Park.

Please describe your connection to Queen's Park, Westminster.

My family and I live, work and study in Westminster and have done so for over thirty years. I have worked as a student supervisor in a local secondary school (QK) as well as serving as a Parent Governor.

The clients I support As a Volunteer Befriender at Family Lives in areas of social welfare, education and other personal issues across the Tri-Borough, are made up of residents from the Queen's Park area.

Please describe why you wish to become a member of the Queen's Park Community Council.

I really do not see any point in sitting in an armchair, moaning and groaning about improving our community, without constructively complaining about things that clearly need to be changed for the better. I feel becoming a community Councillor will provide the ideal opportunity to actively share in doing something about resident's concerns, helping make the community better for us who live in it. I am prepared to undertake initial training, attend Council and Committee Meetings, read the Papers and be ready to participate in discussions affecting the Community in order for necessary decisions to be implemented.

Please confirm you have read and understood the role of Councillors and the role of the Council?

Yes

Applicant 2: Resident

Please describe your connection to Queen's Park, Westminster.

I have been a resident of Westminster, for over three decades and lived in a few different wards. I spent the early years of my life in Victoria and Churchill Gardens ward and then later moved to Ebury Bridge, Church Street, and Westbourne Park. I am currently a resident of the Queens Park ward. I have established good connections in these areas, and have knowledge, and experience of these wards through professional networking and voluntary work.

Please describe why you wish to become a member of the Queen's Park Community Council.

I am excited to put forth my candidacy for the role of local Councillor in the Queen's Park Community Council (QPCC) with a vision to enhance the well-being and inclusivity of our local communities. My extensive residency spanning over three decades in Westminster, encompassing various wards such as Victoria, Churchill Gardens, Ebury Bridge, Church Street, and Westbourne Park, has provided me with a deep-rooted understanding of our diverse and vibrant community. Additionally, through my professional networking and voluntary work I've also developed strong ties with local community organisations that will be pivotal in addressing local concerns.

One of the unique aspects of my background is my identity as a Bangladeshi (Sylheti), Muslim, female, and single parent. These characteristics enable me to connect with and represent a significant portion of our residents who share similar identities. Given the demographic makeup of QPCC, with a substantial percentage of Arabic-speaking, Muslim, and South Asian heritage residents, I am committed to tackling existing inequalities, particularly among Bangladeshi

females who often experience deprivation in areas such as literacy and health. Diversity in the QPCC members is crucial to bridging gaps and boosting engagement in services.

Growing up in Westminster, I've personally experienced some of the challenges and deprivation faced by young people. Over the years, I've witnessed positive changes in the community, but there's still work to be done. Mental health is a growing concern for our residents.

As a mental health professional, I have held various roles over a decade, for example, Mental Health Practitioner, Mental health advocate, Psychotherapist, and Bilingual Counsellor for different client groups and settings.

Mental health is a universal concern that affects individuals regardless of their backgrounds, but it's essential to recognize that South Asian immigrant women often face cultural stigmas and fear of judgment within their community, hindering them from seeking help.

My professional expertise equips me to offer valuable insights into the impact of mental health issues, preventive measures, and support for those struggling with mental health concerns. I understand that mental health concerns can have cascading effects on various aspects of life, including relationships, social isolation, and employment.

If elected, I propose a series of initiatives to enhance the work of QPCC, including mental health awareness workshops, English language and employability skills support, cooking sessions, women-only exercise opportunities, and more.

Please confirm you have read and understood the role of Councillors and the role of the Council?

Yes

Applicant 3: Resident

Please describe your connection to Queen's Park, Westminster.

I have been a resident of Queen's Park for 58 years and the Chair of the Friends of Queen's Park Gardens volunteer group. I'm also a member of the Queen's Park Safer Neighbourhood Ward panel.

Please describe why you wish to become a member of the Queen's Park Community Council.

I have been a resident of Queen's Park for my entire life and have been an activity member of the community. I am a member of the Friends of Queen's Park Gardens (FQPG) gardening group since 2012 and have been the Chair for the last four years and a member of the Queen's Park Safer Neighbourhoods Ward Panel since 2016. In June 2017, I proposed a project to the Council to run the first Citizen Science Air Pollution Study, monitoring Air Quality throughout the ward and when selected as a Queen's Park Community Councillor (QPCC), between 2018 and 2022, continued to run air quality measurement studies. To date, we have conducted nine studies.

During my term as Community Councillor, I was committed to projecting Queen's Park Community Council in the best possible light and meeting the requirements of an active member of the Council. Being a member of the council has also given me the opportunity to

work with John McArdle the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) in meeting QPCC's audit requirements performing a monthly bank reconciliation check. A task which has afforded me the opportunity to work with the London Bat Group as a treasurer.

I'm an active member of the community clean-up campaign running in Queen's Park Gardens as this fit well with being the Chair of FQPG and running weekly sessions.

I also provide monthly statistics to Council charting the Anti-Social Behaviour and also Violence and Sexual Offence incidents within Queen's Park. These reports are both published on QPCC'S website and emailed to relevant Ward Councillors.

An interesting fact, during my term as a Councillor I missed just one out of over fifty council meetings due to COVID, and have continued to regularly attend Council meetings as a resident.

Please confirm you have read and understood the role of Councillors and the role of the Council?

Yes