Prospective Candidates and Agents Briefing

Worcestershire County Council Elections
4 May 2017
Topics

- Introductions
- Election timetable
- Qualifications
- Disqualifications
- Nominations
- Agents
- Postal votes
- Day of poll
- Counting of votes
- Candidates expenses
Introductions

Presentation delivered by:
Tracey Hurst (Bromsgrove and Redditch)
Matthew Box (Malvern Hills)

Other County Electoral Administrators also present today:
Darren Whitney (Bromsgrove and Redditch)
Diane Thomas (Worcester City)
Elaine Dicks (Wychavon)
Mike Saunders (Wyre Forest)
Purpose of the Briefing

To provide Prospective Candidates and their Agents with information about:

• the election process, up to and including polling day
• the verification and count
• post election responsibilities
Election Timetable

Important dates

• 4 April – 4pm
  ▪ Receipt of nominations
  ▪ Withdrawal of Candidates
  ▪ Appointment of Election Agents
• 26 April – Appointment of Poll and Count Agents
• 4 May – Day of Poll
• 5 May – Verification and Count of votes (10.00am)
• 9 June – Return of Candidates Expenses
Election Timetable (continued)

- Other dates of interest
  - 13 April – last date for registration
  - 18 April – last date to apply for a new or change an existing postal vote
  - 10 April (Week commencing) – Postal vote issue
  - 24 April – last date to apply for a proxy vote
Qualifications

- Candidates must satisfy the criteria on the day they are nominated and on polling day:
  - at least 18 years of age
  - British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen (with indefinite leave to remain), national of an E.U. member state

Also at least one of the following:
- Registered local government elector for local authority area
- Occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the local authority area during the whole 12 months preceding nomination
- Principal or only place of work (including unpaid) during last 12 months in local authority area
- Lived in the local authority area during the last 12 months
Disqualifications

• The full list of disqualifications included in nomination pack

• If candidates are in any doubt about whether they are disqualified, they must do everything they can to check that they are not disqualified before submitting their nomination papers

• The Deputy Returning Officers will not be able to confirm whether or not candidates are disqualified
Submitting nomination papers

• Nomination papers must be submitted **by hand** by 4pm 4 April
  • the nomination form
  • the consent to nomination

• Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm – 4 April
  • a certificate authorising the use of a party name/registered description on the ballot paper
  • a written request to use one of the party’s emblems on the ballot paper
Submitting nomination papers

- Make sure the nomination papers are filled in correctly as mistakes may invalidate your nomination.

- Don’t leave it until the last date we will be happy to carry out an informal check in advance.
Nomination form

• Include your FULL name & home address
• Optional: use commonly used names
• Description field – 3 options:
  • Leave blank
  • Independent
  • Party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the parties Nominating Officer
Nomination form

- Subscribers: 10 subscribers are required
- Must sign & print their names
- Check details of subscribers against electoral register
- Only ask subscribers to sign after completing the name, address and description fields on the form
Certificate of authorisation

- Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person appointed to act on their behalf)

- The certificate may:
  - allow the use of the party name or a particular description
Consent to nomination form

Must include:

• name and address
• which area standing in
• confirmation of qualification(s) that apply (at least 1, but select all that apply)
• date of birth & signature
• witness’ name, address and signature
• dated no more than one month in advance last date for submission of nominations (don’t get your months mixed up !)
Emblem request form

• Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper

• Emblem request form must be submitted by noon 4 April
Election agent

- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management

- Notification of appointment must reach the DRO by 4pm on 4 April - form is included in nomination pack

- You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed
Other agents

Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on your behalf.

Forms will be sent for you to enable you to notify the DRO
Electoral register / absent voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
  - earliest, on last date of publication of notice of election (27 March) if you, or others declared yourself a candidate
  - once you or others have declared yourself a candidate after this date / date you submit your nomination papers
- Make written request to the E.R.O. – forms are included in your nomination pack.
Access to electoral register / absent voting lists

- Only use data for permitted purposes!
  - to complete the nomination form
  - to help you campaign
  - to check that donations/loans are permissible
Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 6.30 am to 10pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
Verification and Counting of votes

- Receipt of ballot boxes at close of poll
- Local counts 10am on Friday 5 May
  - Candidates, election agents, counting agents and one other person appointed by the candidate (spouse or person in lieu of) are entitled to attend.
  - Limit to number of counting agents will depend on the final number of candidates
  - Entrance to counts will be by ticket only for security reasons
- Count HQ at County Hall
Spending issues
Candidate spending

• Defined as certain expenses ‘used for the purposes of the candidate’s election’ from the date they officially become a candidate
• Responsibility of **election agent**
• Limit on expenses:
  • £740 + 6 pence per elector in division on register
  • reduced for joint candidates
Candidates’ spending returns

• Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election – even if a Nil return
• Returns made public by Returning Officer
• Sample of returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission
• Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence
• No spending will be reimbursed
Contacts – Elections Offices

• Bromsgrove and Redditch
  • elections@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk  Tel: 01527 881421

• Malvern
  • elections@malvernhills.gov.uk  Tel: 01684 862212

• Worcester
  • electoralservices@worcester.gov.uk  Tel: 01905 722530

• Wychavon
  • elections@wychavon.gov.uk  Tel: 01386 565437

• Wyre Forest
  • electoral@wyreforestdc.gov.uk  Tel: 01562 732762
Contacts – Electoral Commission

• pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

• 0333 103 192
Questions
Thank you