

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The
Electoral
Commission

Welcome

Candidate & Election Agent Briefing
Tuesday 27 March 2018

Fareham Borough Council
Local Government Elections
Thursday 3 May 2018

Topics

- **who's who**
- **key dates of the election timetable**
- **qualifications**
- **disqualifications**
- **nominations**
- **agents**
- **postal votes**
- **the poll**
- **counting of votes**
- **candidate spending**
- **contacts**

Who's who

- **The Returning Officer is the person responsible for running the elections. The Returning Officer is Peter Grimwood.**
- **The Electoral Registration Officer is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is Peter Grimwood.**
- **Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Returning Officer is Leigh Usher.**
- **Electoral Services Manager is Jane Hardy.**
- **Contact details are provided later.**

**Election
timetable**

Publication of Notice of Election and Nominations commence	27 March
Close of nominations	6 April, 4pm
Notification of appointment of election agents	6 April, 4pm
Publication of statement of persons nominated	Not later than 9 April, 4pm
Deadline for applications to register to vote	17 April, 11:59pm
Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications	18 April, 5pm
Publication of notice of poll/situation of polling stations	Not later than 25 April

**Election
timetable
(cont'd)**

Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	25 April, 5pm
Appointment of counting and polling agents	26 April
Polling day	3 May, 7am to 10pm
Deadline to apply to vote by emergency proxy (medical emergency or employment/service, conditions apply)	5pm – polling day
Replacement postal votes end	5pm – polling day
Alterations to register to correct clerical error	9pm – polling day
Return of election expenses	+ 35 days from result (7 or 8 June – depending on when results declared)

- **Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated and on polling day:**
 - be at least 18 years of age
 - be a British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or national of an EU member state.

Qualifications

- **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

A person cannot be a candidate if they:

- **are employed by the local authority or hold a paid office under the authority (including joint boards or committees).**

Candidates may be ‘employed by the local authority’ if they work at certain schools, fire services, police or health services

- **are subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order (or interim restrictions order) in England or Wales**
- **have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (inc. suspended sentence) without option of a fine, during the 5 years before polling day**
- **are serving a disqualification due to being found guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court**
- **hold a politically restricted post**

Disqualifications

Submitting nomination papers

- **Two documents must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm on 6 April**
 - the nomination form
 - the consent to nomination
- **Party candidates will also need to submit by 4pm on 6 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 (optional)

Submitting nomination papers

- **Take care when completing your nomination papers, as mistakes may invalidate your nomination**
- **Complete nomination papers early and arrange for us to provide an informal check**
- **The nomination form and consent to nomination must be delivered by hand and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means.**

Nomination form

- **Include your full name & home address**

- **Optional: use commonly used name box if commonly known by a name other than actual name and wish to use it instead.**

- **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 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.**

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

Certificate of authorisation

- **Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person authorised to act on their behalf)**
- **The certificate may:**
 - **allow the use of the party name or a particular description**
 - **allow candidate to choose whether to use the party name or any of the descriptions registered with the Electoral Commission**
- **Must be submitted by 4pm on 6 April**

Emblem request form

- **Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper**
- **Emblem request form must be submitted by 4pm on 6 April**
- **Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required**

Election agent

- **Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management.**
- **Notification of appointment must reach the RO by 4pm on 6 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:**
 - **You must give notice in writing of any people appointed as polling and counting agents by 26 April.**
 - **The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session.**

Access to
electoral
register/
absent
voting lists

- **Access by candidates – once you officially become a candidate:**
 - earliest, on 27 March if you or others have already declared you as a candidate
 - once you or others have declared you a candidate after this date but before 4pm on 6 April
- **Make written request to the ERO – register request forms are available from the office**

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

Voter Registration

- As a candidate you are uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote (if they are not already registered).
- You should encourage people to register as soon as possible.
- The deadline for applying for the election is 17 April.
- Individuals can apply to register online at www.gov.uk/register tovote. It only takes a few minutes.

Registration

- **When discussing registering to vote with individuals, you will need to make them aware that they will need to provide:**
 - **their National Insurance number**
 - **their date of birth**
- **People who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance number can still register, but they may need to provide further information such as a copy of their passport. If so, they will be contacted by the ERO.**

Absent voting

- If you are encouraging people who don't have a postal/proxy vote to apply for one, make sure you explain that they will only qualify if they are registered in time to vote at the elections. They will also need to apply for their absent vote by the relevant deadlines.
 - Register to vote deadline: 17 April (11:59pm)
 - Postal and Postal-Proxy vote application deadline: 18 April (5pm)
 - Proxy vote application deadline: 25 April (5pm)

Campaigning dos and don'ts

- Do use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- Do comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners.
- Do make sure outdoor posters are removed 2 weeks after the election.
- Do not produce material that looks like a poll card.
- Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).

Code of conduct for campaigners

- Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, but their activities should not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.
- Electoral registration and absent vote applications:
 - Absent vote application forms can be obtained from the Elections office or www.yourvotematters.co.uk
 - Ensure unaltered applications are sent to ERO within two working days.
 - Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.
 - Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
 - Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.

Code of conduct for campaigners

- **Postal ballot packs:**
 - Never touch a postal ballot paper
 - Never observe electors completing their postal vote
 - Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot pack from voters
- **Campaigning outside polling stations:**
 - You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including public spaces, vehicles etc outside polling places
 - Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter
 - Never mislead or intimidate voters

Electoral Offences!

- If you have complaints or allegations of electoral fraud, you should be prepared to give the police a statement and substantiate any allegations.
- EC report on allegations during 2017:
 - 1 conviction out of 346 cases reported to the police
 - 8 cautions
 - 50% of reports are campaign related and none were resolved by police

Electoral Offences!

- **Code for Crown Prosecutors - Considerations**
- The principal purpose of the relevant legislation is to maintain the integrity and probity of the electoral process. Proceedings for major infringements will normally be in the public interest.
- Proceedings for other infringements may not be in the public interest in situations where:
 - the offence is of a "technical" nature which does not infringe the spirit of the legislation;,
 - the offence was committed as a result of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding;
 - the offence could not have influenced the result of the election process; or
 - the offender has remedied any breach of the law.
- All cases involving election offences must be referred by the Police to the Special Crime and Counter-Terrorism Division (SCCTD).

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 7am to 10pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
 - for queries relating to election finance issues, contact the Electoral Commission (*contact details shown later*)

Polling day

- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10pm can apply for a ballot paper
- Postal votes – can be handed into polling stations within relevant ward or delivered to the elections office until 10pm
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in a postal vote can do so after 10pm

Counting of votes

- **The count will be held at Ferneham Hall**
- **Count centre will open to candidates and agents from 9:45pm**
- **Candidates (plus 1, pre-arranged guest each), election agents and counting agents are entitled to attend.**
- **Limits to counting agents: counting agent numbers are based on how many candidates there are – at the close of nominations we will circulate the maximum number of counting agents you may appoint (it is usually 2)**

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The
Electoral
Commission

Spending issues

Candidate spending

- Defined as certain expenses 'used for the purposes of the candidate's election' during the regulated period.
- Responsibility of election agent (defaults back to candidate if no election agent appointed).

Limit on expenses:

- £740 + 6 pence per elector in ward on register in force on 27 March
 - reduced for joint candidates
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)

Candidates' spending returns

- **Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election**
- **Returns made public by Returning Officer**
- **Sample of returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission**
- **Failure to submit a spending return is a criminal offence enforceable by police**
- **No spending will be reimbursed**

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The
Electoral
Commission

Contacts

Contacts

- **Elections office: 01329 824588 or elections@fareham.gov.uk**
- www.fareham.gov.uk/elections
- www.yourvotematters.co.uk
- **Highways department: 0300 555 1375 or roads@hants.gov.uk**
- **Electoral Commission: 0333 103 1928**

FAREHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The
Electoral
Commission

Questions...?

Please ensure you take your candidate's pack with you.
Electoral registers and absent voters lists are also available
on request after this presentation.

Thank you