



The
Electoral
Commission

Welcome!

Stubbington by-election on 9 November 2017

Candidate and Election Agent Briefing Session

Thursday 5 October 2017

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 Sept
Close of nominations	13 Oct, 4pm
Notification of appointment of election agents	13 Oct, 4pm
Publication of statement of persons nominated	Not later than 16 Oct, 4pm
Deadline for applications to register to vote	24 Oct, 11:59pm
Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications	25 Oct, 5pm
Publication of notice of poll/situation of polling stations	1 Nov

**Election
timetable
(cont'd)**

Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	1 Nov, 5pm
Appointment of counting and polling agents	2 Nov
Polling day	9 Nov, 7am to 10pm
Deadline to apply to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or if unexpectedly called away because of employment or service	5pm – polling day
Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends	5pm – polling day
Alterations to register to correct clerical error	9pm – polling day
Return of election expenses	+ 35 days from result (14 or 15 Dec – depending on when result 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 13 October
 - the nomination form
 - the consent to nomination
- Party candidates will also need to submit by 4pm on 13 October
 - 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. But you cannot use your first name as a commonly used name to exclude your middle name.

- 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 13 October**

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 13 October
- 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 13 October. 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 2 November.
 - 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 5 October 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 ERO – forms are available from the office / 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

Voter Registration

- As a candidate you are uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote.
- You should encourage people to register as soon as possible.
- The deadline for applying for the election is 24 October.
- Individuals can apply to register online at **www.gov.uk/register-to-vote**. 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
 - date of birth and address
- People who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance number can still register, but they may need to provide further information. If so, they will be contacted by the ERO.

Absent voting

- If you are encouraging people who don't have a postal (or proxy) vote to apply for one, make sure you explain that they will only qualify for one in time for the elections if they are (or will be) 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 24 October
 - Postal and Postal-Proxy vote application deadline 5pm 25 October
 - Proxy vote application deadline 5pm 1 November

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:
 - Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law.
 - Include the ERO's address for the return of forms.
 - 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 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

- 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 10 pm can apply for a ballot paper
- Postal votes – can be handed into polling stations within Stubbington 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 in the Council Chamber (Civic Offices)
- 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 agent you may appoint.

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 [insert date]
 - 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

Contacts

Contacts

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

Questions...?

Please ensure you take your candidate's pack with you.

Thank you