

Combined authority mayoral elections in England

Guidance for candidates and agents

Part 2a of 6 – Standing as an independent candidate

February 2019 (updated January 2020)

This document applies to combined authority mayoral elections in England. It does not apply to any other mayoral election or to district, borough, county, county borough or unitary authority elections, parish or community council elections, or elections to the Greater London Authority. Our guidance and resources for other elections can be accessed from our website at:

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-those-we-regulate/candidates-and-agents> <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent>

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Essential information

This section of the document contains our guidance on standing as an independent candidate at a combined authority mayoral election in England.

Supplementary information, which may only be relevant to some candidates, is provided at the back of this document. You can also view this supplementary guidance by clicking on the links within this document or by clicking on the chapter heading on the contents page.

In this document, we use 'you' to refer to the candidate. We use 'must' when we refer to a specific requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be minimum good practice, but which are not legal or regulatory requirements.

Deadlines mentioned in this document are generic and we have published a [generic election timetable on our website](#). If an election is called, you will be able to obtain a copy of the specific timetable for that election from the Combined Authority Returning Officer.

We are here to help, so please contact your local Commission team if you have any questions. See our [Overview document](#) for contact details.

This document does not cover [local authority mayoral elections](#) or elections for the [Mayor of London](#). You can access guidance for those elections through our website.

Data protection legislation applies to the processing of all personal data.

Please contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for further information about how the current data protection legislation

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Completing your nomination papers

1.1 Legislation removing the requirement for candidates to have their home address published on the ballot paper, statement of persons nominated and notice of poll applies to Combined Authority Mayoral elections.

1.2 To become nominated as a candidate at a combined authority mayoral election, you need to submit a completed set of nomination papers to the place fixed by the Combined Authority Returning Officer (CARO) by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. This deadline is set out in law and cannot be changed for any reason.

1.3 You can submit nomination papers between 10am to 4pm on any working day, starting from the day after the notice of election is published. The notice of election will set out the times and place for delivery.

1.4 There are three nomination papers that you must submit for your nomination to be valid

- the nomination form
- a home address form
- your consent to nomination

1.5 You can obtain nomination papers from the CARO. Alternatively, the Commission has produced a set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Greater Manchester\)](#) that you can use. If you are standing in Greater Manchester, where the combined authority mayor will also take on the functions of a Police and Crime Commissioner, the Commission has also produced a set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Greater Manchester](#).

1.6 If you, your agent or someone you trust are unable to complete the nomination form, the CARO can help by preparing the form for your signature.

Alongside your nomination papers, you must also lodge a deposit of £5,000¹ with the CARO. See paragraph 1.33 for further details.

The notice of election must be published by not later than twenty-five working days before the poll.

The CARO can hold your nomination paper invalid if the particulars of your nomination are not as required by law.

The CARO can also reject your nomination if they conclude that it is clearly a sham, for example, if an obviously fictitious name or address are provided.

1.7 The CARO may also be able to offer informal checks of your completed nomination papers before you submit them. You should find out from the CARO whether they plan to offer informal checks.

1.8 Note that any information you provide on your nomination papers must be true to the best of your knowledge. It is an offence to provide a false statement on your nomination papers. Providing a false statement could invalidate your election, and is also punishable by an unlimited fine and/or imprisonment.

The nomination form

1.9 The nomination form must be completed in English. The form must contain:

- **Your full name.** This means your surname and other names in full. Using initials only could lead to your nomination form being rejected. Also, do not use prefixes such as Mr, Mrs, Dr or Cllr as part of your name. The same applies to suffixes. However, if you have a title, you can use this as your full name. For example, if your actual name is Joseph Smith but your hereditary title is Joseph Avon, you can use the name Joseph Avon as your full name.
- **Signatures of 100 electors registered in the combined authority area** (these are known as subscribers), with at least ten subscribers from each constituent council. Where a county council is a constituent council, but only part of the county council area is contained within the combined authority area, the subscribers must be registered in that part of the county council area that is contained within the combined authority area. The CARO can confirm the position for any county councils in the combined authority area for which you are standing for election as mayor.

If there are ten or fewer relevant constituent councils, you will still require 100 signatures. The CARO can confirm

Your name and any description should be written on the nomination form **before** you ask subscribers to sign the form.

You may make a request in writing to the CARO for the total number of local government electors on the registers on the last day for publication of the notice of election. The CARO must provide this information as soon as practicable, together with the total number of constituent councils in the combined authority area. You will need this information for the purposes of calculating your spending limit.

Data protection legislation applies to the processing of all personal data.

Please contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for further information about how the current data protection

To find out how to obtain the electoral register, see: [Part 4: The Campaign](#).

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the number of constituent councils in the combined authority.

Your subscribers must appear on the relevant local government electoral register **in force on the 25th working day before the poll**. For more information on subscribers, see paragraph **1.99**.

1.10 The following is optional:

- **A commonly used name** – if you commonly use a name that is different from any forename or surname that you have and you wish this to appear on the ballot paper, you need to state this on the nomination form. More details are provided in paragraph **1.91**.
- **A description** – if you want the word ‘Independent’ to appear on the ballot paper underneath your name, you need to state this on the nomination form. No other descriptions are allowed for candidates who are not standing on behalf of a registered political party. Alternatively, you may choose not to have a description at all by leaving this part of the form blank.

1.11 The nomination form is included in the Commission’s set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Greater Manchester\)](#). If you are standing in Greater Manchester, where the combined authority mayor will also take on the functions of a Police and Crime Commissioner, the nomination form is also included in the set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Greater Manchester](#).

Home address form

1.12 The home address form must state:

- your full name (see paragraph **1.9**)
- your home address in full
- your qualifying address, or, where you have declared on your consent to nomination that you meet more than one qualification, your qualifying addresses

For details on descriptions that candidates standing on behalf of a registered party can use, see [Part 2b: Standing as a party candidate](#).

For information on how to register a political party, see our website at www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance/resources-for-those-we-regulate/register-a-new-party.

Information on qualifications and disqualifications is provided in [Part 1a: Can you stand for election?](#), or, if you are standing in Greater Manchester where the combined authority mayor will take on the function of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in [Part 1b: Can you stand for election in Greater Manchester?](#)

- which of the qualifications your qualifying address or addresses relate to
- the full name and the home address in full of the witness to your consent to nomination from.

1.13 Your home address:

- must be completed in full
- must not contain abbreviations
- must be your current home address
- must not be a business address (unless you run a business from your home)

1.14 You may choose for your home address not to be published on the statement of persons nominated or the ballot papers.

1.15 In this case the home address form must contain, as well as your full name and home address:

- a statement, signed by you, which states that you require your home address not to be made public
- the name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (if your home address is in the UK)
- if you live outside the UK, the name of the country in which your home address is situated

Meaning of qualifying address and relevant area

1.16 Qualifying address means:

- where you have selected option (a) on the consent to nomination, the address in full where you are registered as a local government elector
- where you have selected option (b) on the consent to nomination, a description and the address of that land or premises which you have occupied as owner or tenant
- where you have selected option (c) on the consent to nomination, the address of your place of work

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- where you have selected option (d) on the consent to nomination, the address or addresses in full of where you have resided

1.17 Relevant area means:

- **For home addresses in England:**
 - if the address is within a district for which there is a district council, that district;
 - if the address is within a county in which there are no districts with councils, that county;
 - if the address is within a London borough, that London borough;
 - if the address is within the City of London (including the Inner and Middle Temples), the City of London; and
 - if the address is within the Isles of Scilly, the Isles of Scilly
- **For home addresses in Wales:**
 - if the address is within a county, that county;
 - if the address is within a county borough, that county borough
- **For home addresses in Scotland:**
 - the local government area in which the address is situated
- **For home addresses in Northern Ireland:**
 - the local government district in which the address is situated

Consent to nomination

1.18 You must also formally consent to your nomination in writing. The content of the consent to nomination form is fixed by law and the entire form must be returned in order for your nomination to be valid. On the form you will be asked to state that you are qualified and not disqualified from standing. You must also state your date of birth.

Information on qualifications and disqualifications is provided in [Part 1a: Can you stand for election?](#), or, if you are standing in Greater Manchester where the combined authority mayor will take on the function of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in [Part 1b: Can you stand for election in Greater Manchester?](#)

1.19 You must meet at least one of the qualifications to stand for election, as explained in [Part 1a: Can you stand for election? for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Manchester\)](#) or [Part 1b: Can you stand for election? for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Manchester](#). On the consent to nomination form you should state as many of the qualifications as apply.

1.20 You are not allowed to sign the consent form earlier than one calendar month before the deadline for submitting your nomination papers. Your signature must be witnessed; and the witness must attest the form. The witness's full name and home address in full must be provided on the home address form. There are no restrictions on who can be a witness to the consent to nomination.

1.21 The consent to nomination is included in the Commission's set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Greater Manchester\)](#) and, if you are standing in Greater Manchester, in the set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Greater Manchester](#).

Submitting your nomination papers

1.22 All nomination papers, including the nomination form, the home address form and consent to nomination, must be delivered by hand to the place specified on the notice of election by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. For details on submitting the required deposit, see paragraph **1.33** below.

1.23 It is your responsibility to ensure that your nomination papers are delivered in the correct manner and by the required deadline.

1.24 There are no restrictions on who can deliver your nomination papers, but we recommend that you, your agent or

If you are your own election agent, you can appoint one other person to attend the delivery of nomination papers and make objections.

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someone you trust delivers them, so you can be sure they are delivered to the CARO in time.

How must nomination papers be submitted?

1.25 The nomination form, home address form and the consent to nomination must be submitted by hand and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means.

1.26 The **original version** of each completed paper must be submitted. A consent to nomination form which has been sent as an attachment to an email to be printed out, for example, would make it a 'copy document' and not the original document.

When must nomination papers be submitted?

1.27 You should submit your nomination papers as early as possible to give the CARO an opportunity to conduct an informal check and to give you sufficient time to submit new nomination papers should your first set contain any errors.

1.28 The notice of election will be published no later than 25 working days before the poll. The CARO will confirm the exact details of when and where nomination papers can be delivered on the notice of election. In most cases, the notice of election will be published on the combined authority website and/or the websites of the local authorities included in the combined authority area.

1.29 You can submit nomination papers between the hours of 10am and 4pm on any day after the publication of the notice of election until 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll.

1.30 You should contact the CARO as soon as possible to find out what arrangements are in place for submitting nomination papers.

Notice of valid nomination

1.31 After you have submitted your nomination papers you will be sent a notice by the CARO to let you know whether or not your nomination is valid.

1.32 If, after you have submitted your nomination papers you change your mind and no longer want to stand for election, you can withdraw, provided you do so by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. For more details on withdrawing, see paragraph **1.38**.

The deposit

1.33 For your nomination to be valid, the sum of £5,000 must be deposited with the CARO by the deadline for nominations, by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. The deposit can be made using:

- cash (British pounds only)
- a UK banker's draft

1.34 The CARO may also accept a deposit made by a building society cheque, a debit or credit card or an electronic transfer. However, they may refuse to do so. If you are considering paying the deposit in one of these ways, you should discuss with the CARO at the earliest opportunity whether the payment method is acceptable.

1.35 If the CARO allows the deposit to be paid by credit or debit card, there may be a fee charged by the bank or credit card company for the transaction, in which case you will be required to pay any additional fees as well as the £5,000 deposit.

1.36 Unless the person making the deposit is your agent and you have notified the CARO of their appointment, the person making the deposit must at the time they make it give their name and address to the CARO.

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1.37 The deposit will be returned if you poll more than 5% of the total number of valid first preference votes cast in the combined authority area. Those candidates who have polled less than, or equal to, 5% of the total number of valid first preference votes cast will lose their deposit.

Withdrawing

1.38 You may withdraw as a candidate by signing and submitting a withdrawal notice, which must be witnessed by one other person. There are no restrictions on who may submit the notice, but it must be delivered by hand. Your witness must also sign the notice. [A notice of withdrawal](#) can be obtained from the CARO or downloaded from our website.

1.39 If you are outside the UK and want to withdraw, your proposer can sign the withdrawal notice on your behalf and the withdrawal must be accompanied by a written declaration signed by your proposer confirming your absence. If you are outside the UK and stand nominated by more than one nomination form, you should speak to the CARO if you wish to withdraw as special rules apply in this instance.

1.40 The withdrawal notice must be submitted to the CARO at the place for delivery of nomination papers by the deadline for withdrawals, by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. After the withdrawal deadline it is not possible to withdraw from the election, and your name will appear on the ballot paper. If the election is uncontested, you will be declared elected.

1.41 If you withdraw as a candidate, your deposit will be returned.

Inspecting other candidates' nomination papers

1.42 Only certain people are entitled to attend the delivery of nomination papers and to inspect and make any objections to

If you have submitted more than one nomination form, only the proposer and seconder from the nomination form you have selected will be entitled to attend. If none has been selected, it will be the proposer and seconder of the first submitted nomination form who will have that entitlement.

the validity of a nomination form or a home address form. After your nomination papers and deposit have been delivered and you stand validly nominated, the following can inspect and make objections to a nomination form or a home address form:

- you
- your election agent
- your proposer or seconder

1.43 Nomination papers and home address forms cannot be inspected by anybody else at any time.

1.44 In addition to those included in the list above, Electoral Commission representatives and one other person chosen by each validly nominated candidate may also be present at the delivery of nomination papers, but may not inspect them nor make any objections.

1.45 Except for the purpose of delivering nomination papers, no other person, except the CARO and their staff, may attend the delivery of nomination papers.

Objections to nominations

1.46 Objections to the validity of any nomination form or any home address form can be made on the nineteenth working day before the poll).

1.47 The time within which an objection can be made depends on when the nomination papers and home address forms are delivered.

If you are your own election agent, you can appoint one other person to attend the delivery of nomination papers and make objections.

Timetable for objections

Nominations delivered up to 4pm on the twentieth working day before the poll

1.48 Objections to any nomination form or home address form delivered up to and including 4pm on the twentieth working day before the poll must be made **between 10 am and 12 noon on the nineteenth working day before the poll.**

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Nominations delivered after 4pm on the twentieth working day before the poll

1.49 Objections to any nomination form or any home address form delivered after 4pm on the twentieth working day before the poll must be made between **10am and 5pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll**. Any objection must be made at or immediately after the time of the delivery of the nomination.

Decisions on objections

1.50 The CARO will consider any objections made, but is entitled to hold a nomination invalid only on the following grounds:

- that the particulars of the candidate or subscribers on the nomination form are not as required by law
- that the nomination form is not subscribed as required
- that the home address form does not comply with the requirements as to the details to be provided on it

1.51 The CARO's decision that a nomination is valid is final and cannot be challenged during the election. The decision can only be challenged after an election through an election petition (see [Part 6 – After the declaration of result](#) for further information on election petitions).

What happens after the close of nominations?

1.52 The CARO will publish a statement of persons nominated for the combined authority area by no later than 4pm on the eighteenth working day before the poll. The statement will include:

- the full or commonly used names, as the case may be, of all candidates validly nominated
- the names of candidates who no longer stand nominated, if any (i.e. invalid and withdrawn candidates and those who have died), with the reason why they are no longer standing
- the home address of each candidate or, if they have requested not to make their home address public, the name of the relevant area in which their home address is situated (or the country if their home address is situated outside the UK)
- each candidate's description (if any)

Will the election be contested or uncontested?

1.53 After the close of nominations, the CARO will establish whether or not there is a need to hold a poll. If there is more than one candidate standing validly nominated after the deadline for withdrawals, there will be a poll.

1.54 If there are two candidates standing, the combined authority mayor will be elected under first-past-the-post. If there are more than two candidates, the combined authority mayor will be elected under the supplementary vote system. Further information on the voting system can be found in our [Overview document](#).

1.55 If, however, after the deadline for withdrawals there is only one candidate standing, the CARO will declare that candidate elected.

Appointing your election agent and other agents

1.56 The election agent is the person responsible for the proper management of your election campaign and, in

If elected at an uncontested election, candidates must still make a declaration as to their election spending.

See [Part 3: Spending and donations](#) for further details.

Further information on taking up office is included in [Part 6: After the declaration of result](#).

For more information about candidate spending see: [Part 3: Spending and donations](#)

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particular, for its financial management. You must have an election agent. If you do not appoint an agent, you will become your own agent by default.

1.57 Once appointed, payments for election expenses can only be made by or through the election agent.

1.58 You can also appoint other agents to observe the following electoral processes, which both you and your election agent are also entitled to observe:

- the opening of postal votes
- the poll
- the verification and count

1.59 Additionally, you, your election agent and one other person appointed by you will be entitled to attend the CARO's calculation of the result.

Who can be an election agent?

1.60 There are no particular qualifications needed to be an election agent and you can be your own agent if you wish.

1.61 However, the following people are not allowed to be election agents:

- the CARO or a local Returning Officer, or a member of their staff (including any clerks appointed specifically for the election)
- a deputy or clerk of the CARO or a local Returning Officer, or a member of their staff
- an officer of a local authority whose services have been placed at the disposal of the CARO or a local Returning Officer
- a partner or clerk of any of the above

Appointing an election agent

1.62 Because of the responsibilities attached to the role of an election agent you should consider carefully who you appoint

It is helpful also to provide a contact telephone number and email address for your election agent so that the CARO or a local Returning Officer can easily contact them.

and make sure that they understand their obligations. You can be your own agent if you wish.

1.63 You, or someone on your behalf, must declare in writing the name, address and office address of your election agent to the CARO by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll. If you are not acting as your own agent, the declaration must be signed by the agent to show their acceptance of the appointment.

1.64 The CARO may provide a declaration form, or you could use the form included in the Commission's set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Greater Manchester\)](#) or, if you are standing in Greater Manchester, in the set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Greater Manchester](#). If you do not appoint someone as your agent by the deadline, you will automatically become your own agent.

1.65 Your agent must have an office address to which any legal notices can be delivered and therefore must be a physical address – PO boxes or similar mailboxes cannot be used.

1.66 Your agent's office address must be within the combined authority area in which you are standing for election as mayor. The agent's office address will often be their home address, but it could be an office set up for the election.

1.67 If you act as your own election agent, unless you provide an office address, your home address as provided on the home address form will be published on the notice of election agents. If that address is outside the combined authority area, the office address is deemed to be the address of your proposer (i.e. the first subscriber on your nomination form).

1.68 This is the case even where you have chosen to withhold your home address from the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper

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Revoking an election agent's appointment

1.69 You can revoke the appointment of your election agent at any time, including after polling day, and a new appointment can be made in the same manner as outlined above. If you revoke your election agent's appointment and do not appoint anyone else, you will be deemed to be your own election agent.

1.70 If you are acting as your own agent you can revoke your own appointment and appoint someone else as your agent.

1.71 Once an agent has accepted their appointment, they cannot resign and must fulfil the duties required of them unless you revoke their appointment.

Sub-agents

1.72 Your election agent may appoint sub-agents to act on their behalf. Election agents may appoint sub-agents for particular parts of the combined authority area, as long as those parts do not overlap. The agent can determine the parts into which they wish to sub-divide the combined authority area.

1.73 A sub-agent can do anything that the election agent is entitled to do within the area to which they are appointed.

1.74 However, they may only attend proceedings taking place in the area to which they have been appointed if they are acting **in place of** the election agent. While the election agent is present, they may not attend.

1.75 The election agent should ensure that any sub-agent is aware of the election and spending rules, as anything done by a sub-agent will be treated as if it had been done by the election agent.

1.76 The election agent must notify the CARO in writing of the name and address of any sub-agent and the area in which they may act by the fifth working day before the day of the poll. The CARO will provide a form you can use. Alternatively, you can use the form included in the Commission's set of [nomination](#)

For further information on election spending, see [Part 3: Spending and donations](#).

[papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Greater Manchester\)](#) or, if you are standing in Greater Manchester, in the set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Greater Manchester](#).

1.77 The office of the sub-agent must be in the area within which they are appointed to act.

1.78 The election agent can revoke the appointment of a sub-agent at any time and appoint someone else in their place. If another sub-agent is appointed, the election agent must declare in writing the name, address, office address and area of appointment of the new sub-agent to the CARO.

1.79 Once a sub-agent has accepted their appointment, they cannot resign and must fulfil the duties required of them unless the election agent revokes their appointment.

Appointing postal voting, polling and counting agents

1.80 You or your election agent may also appoint agents to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count.

1.81 Anyone, apart from those listed in paragraph **1.61**, can be appointed as a postal vote, polling or counting agent. You and your election agent can also automatically act as one of those agents without the need of an official appointment. Sub-agents may also attend, but only instead of the election agent.

1.82 The number of agents who may be appointed to any particular polling station is limited to four, or such greater number as the local Returning Officer decides to allow. If more than that number are appointed, the local Returning Officer will draw lots to determine those people who may attend. Only one polling agent for each candidate can be present in a polling station at any time, but a polling agent can be appointed to attend multiple polling stations. The rights of you, your election agent and any sub-agents to attend remain unaffected by this.

1.83 Each local Returning Officer will tell you the maximum number of postal voting and counting agents you can appoint. All candidates will be allowed to appoint exactly the same number. At the count, unless there are special circumstances, the number of counting agents allowed for each candidate will not be less than the number obtained by dividing the number of counting assistants (i.e. those staff employed on the counting) by the number of candidates. For each of the local counts, one counting agent for each candidate may be designated as a person authorised to request a re-count. The designation must be made at the same time as their appointment as a counting agent.

1.84 The request to appoint these agents must be made in writing to the relevant local Returning Officer by you or your election agent. It must contain the names and addresses of the people being appointed. A separate appointment must be made for each local count, even if all local counts are held in a central location. The local Returning Officer will provide forms you can use for this, or you can find [postal voting](#), [polling and counting agent](#) appointment forms on the Commission's website.

1.85 The deadline for appointing these agents will depend on the process they are to attend. Polling and counting agents must be appointed by not later than the fifth working day before the poll. However, appointment forms for postal voting agents only need to be submitted to the relevant local Returning Officer by the time fixed for the opening of postal votes they want to attend. The local Returning Officer will give you at least 48 hours' notice before the scheduled start of each postal vote opening session.

1.86 If an agent dies or becomes incapable of acting, you may appoint another agent in their place by submitting the relevant appointment form to the relevant local Returning Officer. Any new appointment in these circumstances must be made without delay.

1.87 More information on what agents can and cannot do and what they can expect to see at postal vote opening sessions,

polling stations and the count, can be found in [Part 5: Your right to attend key electoral events](#).

Death of a candidate

1.88 If the CARO is notified of a candidate's death during the election campaign or even on polling day itself (but before the declaration of the result), the poll will be cancelled. The CARO will in that case order a new election to fill the vacancy.

1.89 Should a fellow candidate die during the campaign, the CARO will provide you with further guidance.

1.90 If an already elected candidate dies after the declaration of the result, a by-election would be needed to fill the vacancy.

Supplementary information

Commonly used name(s)

1.91 If you commonly use a different name from your actual name, you can ask for your commonly used name(s) to be used instead of your actual name. For example, you may be known by your abbreviated name 'Andy', rather than your full first name 'Andrew'. In that case, you can write 'Andy' into the commonly used forename box on the nomination paper if you would rather that name appear on the ballot paper.

1.92 However, you cannot use your first name as a commonly used name so that only your first name and surname appear on a ballot paper, thus excluding your middle name. The legislation makes it clear that a commonly used name is one which is different from any other forename or surname. This means that a forename in its original format cannot be used as a commonly used name. If you wish to use a commonly used forename and/or surname then these must be different from your full name as it appears on the nomination form. For example, in the case of Andrew John Smith, he could not use Andrew Smith as his commonly used name, although he would be able to use Andy Smith (if Andy was the name by which he is commonly known).

1.93 You can request to use a commonly used forename, surname or both.

1.94 You may also use initials as part of your commonly used name if you are commonly known by them.

1.95 Any commonly used name(s) would then appear on:

- the statement of persons nominated and the notice of poll, and
- the ballot papers

1.96 The CARO will disallow commonly used names that are likely to mislead or confuse electors, or are obscene or offensive. If the name(s) are not permissible, the CARO will write to you stating the reason for rejection. In those cases, your actual name will be used instead.

1.97 If either the commonly used forename or surname box on the nomination paper is left blank, then your actual forename or surname, depending on which commonly used name box has been left blank, will be used.

1.98 It is an offence to give a false statement on your nomination paper. Therefore if you choose to provide a commonly used name, you must ensure that it is a forename or surname which you commonly use.

A constituent council means a district council which is a constituent council, or in the case of an area for which there is no district council, the county council.

Signatures of subscribers

1.99 Each nomination form needs to be signed (subscribed) by 100 electors with at least ten subscribers from each constituent council in the combined authority area.

1.100 If there are ten or fewer than ten constituent councils, you will require 100 signatures. The CARO can confirm the number of constituent councils in the combined authority.

1.101 Your subscribers must be of voting age by polling day and appear on the local government register for a constituent council **in force on the last day for the publication of the notice of election (i.e. on the 25th working day before the poll)**. You need to bear this in mind when identifying your subscribers and deciding when to submit your nomination.

1.102 The first two electors will sign and print their names as proposer and seconder, and the rest as assenters.

1.103 The elector number of each subscriber as it appears on the electoral register, including the distinctive numbers or letters of the polling district, must be entered on the nomination form, as well as the name of the local authority in which they are registered. The distinctive numbers/letters of the polling district can usually be found at the front of the register. The Electoral Registration Officer for each local authority will be able to advise you how their register is laid out.

1.104 You will be entitled to a free copy of the electoral register for each constituent council that is within the combined authority area in which you are standing. You should use the registers to ensure that your nomination form is properly subscribed. You must ensure that you keep the electoral register secure and, once you have finished with it, ensure that it is securely destroyed.

1.105 Only the first 100 subscribers on any nomination form can be considered. If more subscribers are included, any subsequent names will not be considered at all. If one of the first 100 subscribers is invalid, irrespective of whether more subscribers have been added to the nomination form, the CARO must hold the nomination invalid.

There may be some electors on the register who have registered anonymously because of risks to their safety.

Anonymous registered electors may not subscribe nomination forms.

Anonymous electors are shown on the register with just their poll number and the letter 'N' (rather than with their name and address).

Data protection legislation will apply to the processing of all personal data.

Please contact the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) for further information about how the current data protection legislation affects you.

1.106 Nomination forms should not be altered once they are subscribed. All of your details should be completed before you invite anyone to subscribe your nomination.

1.107 Once the CARO has formally accepted a nomination form, signatures cannot be withdrawn.

1.108 When collecting subscriber information, you should point out what the information will be used for, how personal data will be processed and kept secure. The lawful basis to collect the information on this form is that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest and exercise of official authority as set out in Representation of the People Act 1983 and associated regulations. You should also explain that the information will be shared with the Combined Area Returning Officer. For further information on data protection and processing you should refer to the Combined Area Returning Officer's privacy notice on their website.