

Part C - Administering the poll

Local government elections in England
and Wales: guidance for Returning
Officers

December 2016 (updated February 2019)

In this guidance we use 'must' when we refer to a specific legal requirement. We use 'should' for items we consider to be recommended practice, but which are not legal requirements.

Translations and other formats

All of our guidance and resources for these polls are also available in Welsh. For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version please contact the Electoral Commission:

Tel: 020 7271 0500

Email: publications@electoralcommission.org.uk

Updates to this document

Updated	Description of change
April 2017	Updated to reflect that we have produced a separate guide for Returning Officers in Wales on producing bilingual ballot papers (paragraph 4.56).
April 2017	Updated to include references to amendment regulations affecting the prescribed forms and notices in order to help Returning Officers and electoral administrators more easily access what they need to be able to produce them (Legal reference endnotes 289, 291, 303, 318, 319 and 339).
November 2017	Updated to add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administration deadline for changes to the register of political parties ahead of the May 2018 polls (box under paragraph 2.80). • Text on “obviously fictitious” names in relation to determining nomination forms (paragraph 2.112). • Text on inspection of nomination papers from the ‘Retention and inspection of election documents’ resource (paragraph 2.128) and to explain the reason for the retention of nomination papers (paragraph 2.129). • Practical advice for polling station staff where personation is suspected (paragraphs 5.37 and 5.38).
July 2018	Updated to take account of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018
January 2019	Updated to reflect legislation (for principal area and parish elections in England) on candidates’ home address forms and their implications for the statement of persons nominated and ballot papers
February 2019	Updated to reflect legislation (for mayoral elections in England) on candidates’ home address forms and their implications for the statement of persons nominated and ballot papers

Contents

1	Engaging with political parties, candidates and agents	1
	Briefings	2
	Providing information on the election processes	3
	Nomination packs	4
	Guidance on spending limits	6
	Providing information on accessing the electoral register	7
	Access needs for candidates	8
2	The nominations process	9
	Forms for nomination	9
	Informal checks	10
	Delivery of nomination papers	11
	Time of delivery	11
	Place of delivery	12
	Who can deliver nomination papers?	12
	How must nomination papers be submitted?	12
	What to do if nomination papers are received by post	13
	Delivering multiple nomination forms	14
	Requirements of nomination	15
	Nomination form	15
	Candidate's names	15
	Commonly used names	15
	Home address	17
	Subscribers	18
	Use of party names, party descriptions and party emblems	20
	Additions, alterations, removals and changes to party names, party descriptions and party emblems on the register of political parties	21
	What descriptions may be used?	22
	Requests for a party emblem	23
	Home address form (for elections in England only)	24
	Meaning of qualifying address and relevant area	25
	Candidate's consent to nomination	26
	Determining nomination and home address forms	30
	What to do after your formal determination	32
	Correction of minor errors	32
	Errors in elector numbers	32

Errors of spelling in details of candidates	33
Errors in a home address	33
Inspection of nomination papers.....	33
Inspection of home address forms.....	33
Withdrawal of a candidate	34
After the close of nominations	35
Nomination in more than one electoral area	35
Uncontested elections	36
Death of a candidate	36
Proof of death received before the withdrawal deadline	36
Proof of death received after the withdrawal deadline and before polls open.....	37
Proof of death received after polls have opened and before the declaration of result	37
New election	38
3 Agents at the election	40
The election agent.....	40
Other agents.....	42
The opening of postal votes.....	44
The poll.....	44
The count.....	45
4 Production of notices, poll cards and ballot papers	47
Production and publication of notices.....	47
Translation and formats of notices.....	48
Notice of election.....	48
Statement of persons nominated.....	50
Notice of poll.....	52
Notice of the situation of polling stations	53
Production of poll cards.....	54
Poll card delivery	57
Delivery by hand	58
Delivery by post.....	58
Production of ballot papers.....	59
Ballot paper colour.....	59
The 'official mark'	60
Ballot paper numbers and the unique identifying mark.....	60
Candidate details.....	61
Form of the reverse of the ballot paper.....	61

Printing of ballot papers	61
Ballot paper security	64
5 Polling station voting	65
Setting up polling stations	65
Polling station equipment and materials.....	66
Allocation of ballot papers.....	68
Polling station registers and absent voting lists	70
Corresponding number lists	71
Packets for postal ballot papers delivered to polling stations	71
Polling station log	72
Polling station notices.....	73
Use of English or Welsh in polling stations.....	73
'Selfies' in polling stations	74
Provision of information on the number of ballot papers issued	74
Close of poll.....	75

1 Engaging with political parties, candidates and agents

1.1 As local government Returning Officer (local government RO) you are responsible for all aspects of the nominations process at local government elections in your area.¹

Combined authority mayoral elections

As local RO, you are responsible for the conduct of the poll for that part of the combined authority mayoral election that falls within your local authority area².

The CARO is responsible for the nominations process at the combined authority mayoral election³.



More detailed information on the roles and responsibilities of the Returning Officer is contained in [Part A – Roles and responsibilities](#).

1.2 Your project plan should include details on how you will engage with political parties, candidates and agents and how you will manage the nomination process.

1.3 There may be a significant number of new or less experienced candidates, agents and political parties who are unfamiliar with the practices and processes of standing for election and who will need your support to be able to participate effectively. It is therefore important that you engage candidates, agents and parties as much as possible so that they receive all the information they need in order to stand for election and they can have confidence that the processes are well-managed.

1.4 For example, it is vital that all candidates know what they need to do in order to stand for election, what the spending limits are, how they can obtain the electoral register and what the restrictions are on the use of the register, including data protection considerations. One difficulty faced by Returning Officers is that those intending to stand for election do not always make contact with the elections staff before submitting their nomination papers. You will therefore need to consider how you are going to raise awareness and promote the availability of information and briefings to all candidates and agents before they complete and submit their nomination papers.



To be able to meet the outcome set out in [performance standard 2](#) you should ensure that information on the election process and spending is easily available for candidates and agents, including through ensuring they are issued with written guidance.

To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to have in place written guidance to be issued to candidates.

Combined authority mayoral election

You should also liaise with the CARO to determine what information on local processes they will require for sharing with candidates and agents at the combined authority mayoral election and to agree how this information should be disseminated.

Briefings

1.5 You should ensure that candidates and election agents are offered a briefing session on the processes specific to the election they are standing in, including local arrangements. The briefings should allow for the fact that there may be people who have little or no knowledge of election rules and procedures or who have not involved themselves in elections for some time.

1.6 All briefing sessions should highlight the importance of following the election rules.

1.7 In particular, you should provide a briefing on the nomination process including: deadlines, submission rules, the use of commonly used names, the completion of nomination papers, and the use of party names, descriptions and emblems. You should also cover what standards of behaviour you expect from supporters in the area of the polling place on polling day.



The [College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice](#) have produced guidance on [Maintaining order and preventing undue influence outside polling stations](#). This document is designed to help the police think about how best to approach the issue of policing polling stations and offers some practical steps to help them reduce the likelihood of problems arising and deal with any that occur. Although it is aimed at the single point of contact (SPOC) it may also be of use to you, particularly in communicating to candidates and agents the standards of behaviour expected from supporters in the area of the polling place. It should be read in conjunction with section 3 of the [Code of conduct for campaigners: electoral registration, postal voting, proxy voting and polling stations](#).

1.8 While you should invite all potential candidates to a briefing session ahead of or at the start of the nominations period, you may choose to hold an additional briefing session after the candidates standing for election have been confirmed after the close of nominations.

Combined authority mayoral elections

You should liaise with the CARO to agree what, if any, local briefings should be provided and what any such briefings should cover, which may include information on your local arrangements, such as postal vote issues and openings, polling and the verification and count.

1.9 Your briefing session(s) should also highlight any security arrangements that have been put in place in consultation with the police. You may wish to invite your police single point of contact (SPOC) to attend any briefing sessions, or to provide written material that you can provide to candidates and agents.

1.10 A [template presentation for candidates and agents at local elections](#) that you can use is available for download from the Commission's website. We have also produced a [template presentation for candidates and agents at a combined authority mayoral election](#) which is designed for use by CAROs.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 2](#) you will need to ensure that information on the election process and election spending is easily available for candidates and agents.

To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to arrange briefing sessions and produce briefing resources.

Providing information on the election processes

1.11 You should ensure that all candidates and election agents are issued with written guidance on the election processes, including local arrangements. The information should be provided in good time to enable candidates and agents to act on it.

Combined authority mayoral elections

You should liaise with the CARO to ensure that candidates at the combined authority mayoral election have access to information on processes that you will be carrying out locally, such as the opening of postal votes and the count.

1.12 The purpose of providing written guidance is so that candidates and agents have access to authoritative and comprehensive guidance for reference at any time to ensure that they have all the information they need to take part in an election. It need not always be the case that such written guidance must be produced in hard copy – in some instances it may be appropriate to provide candidates and agents with a link to where they can find the relevant information online – but it is important in each case to ensure that candidates and agents can easily access the information they need and to do whatever is necessary to facilitate this.

1.13 As part of your plans for engaging with candidates and agents and supporting their participation in the elections, you will need to determine how information about local arrangements will be provided to them.

1.14 Local arrangements will include information on the dates, times and venues for the key election processes, including:

- postal vote issues and openings
- polling
- the verification and count

1.15 Whatever method you will be using for disseminating the information, you should ensure that candidates and agents can easily access all the information they need in order to be able to participate in the election they wish to stand in.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 2](#) you will need to ensure that information on the election process is easily available for candidates and agents.

To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to provide candidates and agents with written information.

Nomination packs

1.16 You should prepare a nomination pack for any person who expresses an interest in standing for election.



We have produced a set of nomination papers for [principal area elections in England](#), [principal area elections in Wales](#), [parish council elections in England](#), [community council elections in Wales](#) and [local authority mayoral elections](#) that contain all the forms needed for nomination.

We have also produced a set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections \(excluding Greater Manchester\)](#) and another set of [nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections in Greater Manchester](#), where the combined authority mayor will also take on the functions of a Police and Crime Commissioner.

1.17 The nomination pack should contain:

- a nomination form
- a home address form – for elections in England only
- a consent to nomination form
- a form for the candidate (or someone on their behalf) to give notice of appointment of an election agent (not required for parish and community council elections, where there is no provision for the appointment of election agents)
- forms for giving notice of appointment of polling agents, postal voting agents and counting agents

- a certificate of authorisation to allow a candidate to stand on behalf of a registered political party
- a form for a candidate standing on behalf of a registered party to request the use of an emblem
- written guidance for candidates and agents covering key aspects of the electoral process, including the qualifications and disqualifications for election, the nominations process, campaigning dos and don'ts, accessing electoral proceedings and what happens after the declaration of the result
- details of any local arrangements, such as the arrangements for the opening of postal votes, the poll and the count
- a copy of the [Code of conduct for campaigners in Great Britain](#) which sets out what is, and is not, considered acceptable behaviour at polling stations and in the community
- details of how to obtain a copy of the electoral register and the lists of absent voters, and forms to make such requests with information on where to send these requests to. You should highlight that the information contained in the electoral register and absent voting lists may only be used in accordance with the Representation of the People Regulations 2001 and in accordance with data protection legislation.
- information on the spending limit for candidates at the election and [guidance for candidates and agents on spending and donations](#)
- a form for a candidate to withdraw from the contest if they decide to do so after they have been validly nominated
- any other relevant information

Local authority mayoral elections

In addition to the content set out above, the nomination pack should include a full explanation of how the required £500 deposit may be paid. If you have decided to allow candidates to pay the deposit by card or electronic transfer of funds, you should also include information for making such payments.

You should also provide an explanation of the mayoral booklet and how candidates may get their election address included in this booklet sent to all electors. This should include detail of:

- what the election address booklet is
- what the requirements, restrictions and deadlines are
- the costs of having an address included in the booklet and how these may be paid.

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO is responsible for administering the nomination process at the combined authority mayoral election, and should provide nomination packs to any person who expresses an interest in standing. Guidance for CAROs on the nominations process at the combined authority mayoral election can be found in chapter 3 of our [Guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers on the delivery of key processes.](#)



[Guidance for candidates and agents at local government principal area elections](#), [parish and community council elections](#), [local authority mayoral elections](#) and [combined authority mayoral elections](#) can be found on our website.

Guidance on spending limits

1.18 Candidates are required by law to follow certain rules regarding how much they can spend, who they can accept donations from, and what they must report after the election.

1.19 You should ensure that candidates and election agents have access to information on calculating the spending limit⁴ (including the electorate figure), spending returns and declarations in order to enable them to meet reporting requirements.

1.20 If you are not also the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) you should liaise with the relevant ERO so that you are able to provide candidates at the local government election with an accurate electorate figure that will allow them to calculate their spending limit. It is important that candidates are provided with the correct figures so they know how much they can spend. The figure candidates need is the total number of electors on the local government register for the relevant electoral area on the last day for the publication of the notice of election (i.e. on the twenty-fifth working day before the poll)⁵, excluding any attainers who will not be 18 years of age on or before polling day.



The Commission has produced guidance for candidates and agents on [spending and donations at principal area elections](#) and [local authority mayoral elections](#), which you can use to provide candidates and agents with information on spending returns and declarations in order to enable them to meet their reporting requirements. It has also produced a guidance note for parish and community council elections alongside the [candidate spending return and declaration](#).

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO should provide information on election spending to candidates and agents at the combined authority mayoral election. The Commission has produced [guidance for candidates and agents on spending and donations at a combined authority mayoral election](#).

To support candidates and agents in calculating the spending limit, the CARO must provide, on written request, information on the total number of constituent councils together with the total number of local government electors on the registers across the combined authority area – excluding any attainers who will not be 18 years of age on or before polling day – on the last day for the publication of the notice of election (i.e. on the twenty-fifth working day before the poll)⁶. You should liaise with the CARO to agree the timing and mechanism for supplying this information.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 2](#) you will need to ensure that information on election spending is easily available for candidates and agents.

To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to provide candidates and agents with written information.

Providing information on accessing the electoral register

1.21 The ERO is required to supply Returning Officers with such copies of the electoral register as are required for the different aspects of the election⁷. If you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to agree how this will be managed in practice.

1.22 You should receive copies soon after the publication of that register. You should also receive any further amendments that may be made to the register including through the election notices of alteration published by the ERO⁸.

1.23 On making a written request to the ERO, candidates are entitled to a free copy of the full register for the electoral area in which they are standing⁹.

1.24 The ERO for each local authority area is responsible for receiving requests and supplying a copy of the register and lists of absent voters to candidates¹⁰.

Combined authority mayoral elections

A candidate at a combined authority mayoral election can make a written request for a copy of the registers and lists¹¹. They can request a copy of the full registers and lists of absent voters for the whole of the combined authority area they are standing in¹². While the legal responsibility for receiving requests and supplying registers to candidates rests with the ERO for each local authority area¹³, the CARO may decide to coordinate requests from candidates for the supply of registers. The CARO will liaise with the respective EROs within the combined authority area to agree the approach.



Detailed information on access and supply of the full electoral register and absent voters lists to candidates, registered political parties (who can request a copy at any time) and others can be found in [Part 4: Maintaining the register throughout the year of](#) our guidance for EROs.

The Commission has produced [template electoral register](#) and [absent voter list](#) request forms that candidates can use.

Access needs for candidates

1.25 You should bear in mind that candidates and agents may have specific access needs, and so may need any information or guidance produced in a large-print or other format, such as Braille or audio, or in a language other than English or, in Wales, English or Welsh.

2 The nominations process

2.1 This chapter provides guidance on the administration of the nominations process at the local government elections that you are responsible for as local government RO.

Legislation removing the requirement for candidates to have their home address published on the statement of persons nominated and ballot papers has now been made and will apply for all elections held in England on or after 2 May 2019.

If you have a by-election in England before 2 May 2019, please contact your local Commission office for guidance.

Combined authority mayoral elections

This guidance does not cover the nominations process at a combined authority mayoral election. Guidance for CAROs on the nominations process at the combined authority mayoral election can be found in chapter 3 of our [Guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers on the delivery of key processes](#).

2.2 Questions of eligibility or disqualification are for the candidate only and you should not give advice on such matters. The candidate should be directed to the Commission's guidance for candidates and agents in the first instance. Should they have any further concerns, they should be advised to seek their own legal advice.

Forms for nomination

2.3 A candidate is deemed to be validly nominated only if you have, by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll, received the following completed forms:

- the nomination form
- a home address form - for elections in England only
- a consent to nomination form¹⁴

2.4 To stand on behalf of a registered political party, the party must be registered on the Commission's register of political parties at <http://search.electoralcommission.org.uk> and be listed as allowed to field candidates in England or Wales (as appropriate).¹⁵ The candidate will also need to submit:

- a certificate of authorisation, authorising the use of the party name or a registered description on the ballot paper.¹⁶ The party name or

description authorised by the certificate must match the party name or description given on the nomination form or the whole nomination will be invalid¹⁷.

- a written request to use one of the party's registered emblems¹⁸ (if desired)

2.5 Candidates do not have to use the nomination form that you have produced and supplied, as long as their nomination form is as prescribed¹⁹.

2.6 The consent to nomination form can be a form to 'like effect', but must include all of the signatures and information required by law²⁰. In England, the consent must include a copy of Sections 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 (as amended)²¹. In Wales, the consent must include a copy of Sections 80 and 81 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and Sections 78A and 79 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended)²².

2.7 Under Section 199B(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, nomination papers can only be produced in English or, in Wales, English and/or Welsh, and not in any alternative languages or formats. However, you must prepare nomination papers for signature if someone requests²³.



We have produced a set of nomination papers for [principal area elections in England](#), [principal area elections in Wales](#), [parish council elections in England](#), [community council elections in Wales](#) and [local authority mayoral elections](#) that contain all the forms needed to stand for election. We have also produced a checklist to assist you with processing nomination forms at [principal area elections](#), [parish and community council elections](#) and [local authority mayoral elections](#).

[Nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections](#) are also available on our website, as well as a [checklist for CAROs](#) to assist them with the processing of nominations.

Our set of nomination papers have been updated to include enhanced data protection messaging and you should ensure that you are using the most up to date version.

Informal checks

2.8 You should ensure that candidates have the opportunity to have their nomination papers informally checked prior to their formal submission.

2.9 All candidates should be given an equal opportunity to access an informal check. Informal checks are designed to assist candidates with participating effectively in the electoral process so that, if possible, any errors

made by them or their agent in completing the paperwork do not deny electors the opportunity to vote for them. You should account for a potentially high number of candidates and consider how you are going to manage this process, for example by putting in place an appointment system.

2.10 When conducting an informal check it should be made clear that the nomination papers are being looked at informally. At the conclusion of the informal check, you should offer to return the nomination papers if an issue has been identified. If no issues have been identified, you should offer to accept them formally.



To meet the outcome set out in [performance standard 2](#) you will need to ensure that candidates have the opportunity to have their nomination papers informally checked prior to submission.

To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to have in place arrangements for candidates to have their nomination papers informally checked prior to formal submission.

Delivery of nomination papers

Time of delivery

2.11 It is your decision as local government RO as to when to accept nominations for the local government elections following the publication of the notice of election. You must state on the notice of election the times at which you will allow nominations to be delivered²⁴. You can start to accept nominations on the same day that the notice of election is published, allowing candidates more time to submit their nomination papers, or you can start accepting nominations on the day following the publication of the notice.

2.12 The deadline for nominations is 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll²⁵. This deadline cannot be moved or extended for any reason. Delivery is determined as being when the nomination papers are delivered, by hand where this is required, at the place specified in the notice of election. A certificate of authorisation or emblem request must be received by you during the period for delivery of nominations.

2.13 No appointment is required to deliver nomination papers. However, you should consider how you are going to manage the potential volume of nominations that you will receive. This could include offering appointments for informal checks and the formal delivery of the nomination papers.

2.14 It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that their nomination papers are delivered in the correct manner and by the required deadline. If a completed set of nomination papers has not been delivered by that time, the nomination has not been made, which means that you cannot rule the nomination valid or invalid²⁶.

Local authority mayoral elections

In order for a mayoral election nomination to be valid, candidates must also deposit the sum of £500 by the deadline for nominations, which is 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll)²⁷.

Place of delivery

2.15 Nomination papers must be delivered to the location specified by you on the notice of election²⁸. The location you choose must be at the relevant council offices²⁹.

2.16 The location for the delivery of nomination papers given on the notice of election should be exact, and include any room name or number. This will avoid any doubt should nominations be delivered close to the deadline.



Parish and community council elections

At parish and community council elections, the location to which nomination papers must be delivered is not prescribed and is for you to determine.

2.17 You should provide clear signage from the entrance of the building to the room set aside for delivery. This route, or an appropriately signposted alternative, should be fully accessible.

2.18 You or an appointed deputy should be present throughout the period for nominations and only you and your staff should deal with nominations. You should give details to other local authority staff, such as reception staff, of what to do if a person tries to deliver nomination papers to them, making it clear that they should not handle nomination papers and should not offer to deliver them but should instead direct them to you.

Who can deliver nomination papers?

2.19 There are no restrictions on who can deliver nomination papers.³⁰ However, you should advise candidates that they, their agent, or someone they trust delivers them, so they can be sure they are delivered to you in time.

How must nomination papers be submitted?

2.20 The nomination form, the home address form (for elections in England only), and consent to nomination must be delivered by hand³¹ and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means. Where a document is required to be delivered by hand, this can include delivery by a courier.

2.21 Certificates of authorisation and emblem request forms may be delivered by hand or by post, but cannot be submitted by fax, email or other electronic means³².

2.22 The **original version** of each completed document must be submitted³³. A certificate of authorisation, for example, which has been sent as an attachment to an e-mail to be printed out would be a 'copy document' and not the original document. A certificate requires a method of authentication to make it a certificate. This will, in practice in most cases, take the form of a signature to attest the truth of the facts stated. It could, however, also take the form of a seal. Whatever method of authentication is used, the document you receive must be the original document and not a copy document³⁴.

2.23 You should take steps to communicate the requirements relating to delivery of nomination papers to all prospective candidates and agents, and ensure that these requirements are highlighted in any local briefings or guidance you produce.



Parish and community council elections

At parish and community council elections you could consider liaising with the clerk who may be able to help communicate the requirements for the delivery of nominations to prospective candidates and to provide assistance with the delivery of nomination papers, if needed.

2.24 Once a nomination paper has been formally delivered, no changes can be subsequently made to it (subject to your power to correct minor errors³⁵). At the point of formal submission you should therefore endorse the paper with the date and time of delivery, so that you have a record of when each paper was formally submitted. If a candidate later decides that they want to make changes they should withdraw their candidature and then submit new nomination papers within the statutory timeframe. There is no provision to allow a subscriber to withdraw their signature from a nomination paper once it has been delivered.

What to do if nomination papers are received by post

2.25 Any nomination forms, home address forms (for elections in England only), or consents to nomination received by post have not been 'delivered' in accordance with the rules³⁶. The candidate is therefore not deemed to stand nominated and no decision can be taken as to whether the papers are valid³⁷.

2.26 You should have processes in place for monitoring postal deliveries to the place designated for the delivery of nomination forms, home address forms (for elections in England only) and consent to nomination forms so that any papers received can be identified quickly and action taken to try to contact the candidate.

2.27 You should try to contact the candidate using the details on the nomination form or home address form and advise them that the nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination cannot be accepted by post and that they (or someone on their behalf) needs to attend the place designated for the receipt of nomination forms, within the times specified on

the notice of election, to 'deliver' the nomination form and consent to nomination by hand in accordance with the rules. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that this is done by the deadline for the receipt of nominations. You and your staff are not permitted to deliver the forms for the candidate.

2.28 The candidate does not need to produce 'new' nomination papers or obtain new subscribers and you should retain any nomination papers you receive by post to enable them to be collected and delivered to you by hand.

2.29 The certificate of authorisation (if applicable) and emblem request (if applicable) may be sent by post, although they may equally be delivered with the nomination form and consent to nomination. You should have processes in place for monitoring postal deliveries to the place designated for the delivery of nomination forms and consent to nomination forms so that any certificates of authorisation and emblem requests received that way can be identified quickly. Further information on the certificate of authorisation and emblem requests is contained in paragraphs **2.69** to **2.95**.

Delivering multiple nomination forms

2.30 There is no limit to the number of nomination forms that may be delivered for the same candidate. If a candidate is validly nominated by more than one form, the candidate should choose which one of the valid nomination forms (the 'selected' nomination form) should be used for the details to be added to the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper. If the candidate cannot or does not do this, then you must choose which one of the forms will be used³⁸.

2.31 If more than one nomination form is delivered and one of the nomination forms is invalid, that form is excluded from the forms that can be chosen by the candidate or yourself. As long as at least one nomination form is valid, the candidate can be validly nominated.

2.32 When an elector subscribes any delivered nomination form, even if it is not the selected nomination form, it will count towards the maximum number of nomination forms they may subscribe³⁹.

Local authority mayoral elections

There is no restriction on the number of nominations that an elector can subscribe. An elector can subscribe to any number of nomination forms for any number of candidates.

Requirements of nomination

2.33 This section contains an explanation on what must be included on the nomination papers submitted by or on behalf of the candidate. It is designed to assist you in reviewing and ultimately determining the validity of nomination papers.

2.34 Unlike mayoral elections, no deposits are required to be paid at principal area and parish or community council elections.

2.35 You should remind any person delivering the nomination papers that it is a criminal offence to provide a false statement on nomination papers⁴⁰. If the nomination form includes a commonly used name, you should highlight that the offence also applies if a candidate has given a commonly used name that they do not actually commonly use⁴¹. You may warn candidates that the penalty for a false statement is an unlimited fine and/or up to one year's imprisonment⁴².

Nomination form

Candidate's names

2.36 The candidate's full names must be listed on the nomination form, with their surname given first followed by all of their other names in full⁴³.

2.37 The prescribed nomination form contains no space for prefixes or suffixes.

2.38 Candidates should be advised not to use prefixes such as Mr, Mrs, Dr or Cllr, or suffixes in the field of the nomination form asking for their full name. If a prefix or suffix is included as part of the actual name the nomination form would not be invalid as a result, but the prefix or suffix should not be transferred to the statement of persons nominated. If a candidate has submitted a nomination form with a prefix or suffix as part of their actual name, you should inform the candidate and their agent that it will not appear on the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll or the ballot paper, but that their nomination as a candidate has not been affected.

2.39 However, if a candidate has a title, they can use this as their full name. For example, if the candidate's actual name is Joseph Smith, but their hereditary title is Joseph Avon, they can use the name Joseph Avon as their full name.

Commonly used names

2.40 Where a candidate commonly uses a different name from their actual name, they can ask for their commonly used name(s) to be used instead of their actual name⁴⁴.

2.41 A candidate can request to use a commonly used forename, surname or both. For example, they may be known by their abbreviated name 'Andy', rather than their full first name 'Andrew'. In that case, they can write 'Andy'

into the commonly used forename box on the nomination form if they would rather that name appear on the ballot paper.

2.42 A candidate may also use initials as part of their commonly used name if they are commonly known by them.

2.43 However, a candidate cannot use their first name as a commonly used name so that only their first name and surname appear on a ballot paper, thus excluding their middle name. The legislation makes it clear that a commonly used name is one which is different from any other forename or surname⁴⁵. This means that a forename in its original format cannot be used as a commonly used name. If a candidate wishes to use a commonly used forename and/or surname then these must be different from their actual 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).

2.44 It is not for you to decide whether the commonly used name is a 'name' that the candidate commonly uses or whether it meets the legal requirement to be different from any other name they may have. The law requires you to take whatever has been entered in the commonly used name box at face value and to accept it as the candidate's commonly used name.

2.45 The only grounds you have in law for rejecting a commonly used name is that you consider that:

- its use may be likely to mislead or confuse electors, or
- it is obscene or offensive⁴⁶

2.46 If at an informal check stage, you are presented with a nomination form that has been completed in such a way that it appears to you that the commonly used name given is not different from any other forename or surname that the candidate has, you should draw the candidate's attention to the legal definition of a commonly used name and highlight that it is an offence to knowingly make a false statement on the nomination form. You should also point out that if a nomination form is not completed in accordance with the law, the candidate will run the risk of challenge if they are elected⁴⁷.

2.47 It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that they have completed their nomination form in accordance with the law and to be satisfied that the given commonly used name is a name that they genuinely commonly use.

2.48 In the course of providing informal advice, you may wish to draw the candidate's attention to Parts 2a or 2b of our guidance for candidates and agents on commonly used names at [local government principal area elections in England](#), [local government principal area elections in Wales](#), [local authority mayoral elections](#), or [parish elections in England or community council elections in Wales](#) (as appropriate).

2.49 The table below contains a number of worked examples of various combinations of commonly used names and how this would affect the appearance of the candidate's name on the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll and the ballot paper:

Candidate's actual surname	Candidate's other actual names in full	Commonly used forenames	Commonly used surname	Name to go on statement of persons nominated and notice of poll	Name to go on ballot papers
Elector	Ann	Elsie	Voter	Voter, Elsie	VOTER, Elsie
Elector	Ann	[Blank]	Voter	Voter, Ann	VOTER, Ann
Elector	Ann	Elsie	[Blank]	Elector, Elsie	ELECTOR, Elsie

2.50 If either the commonly used forenames or commonly used surname box is left blank, then the candidate's actual forenames or surname, depending on which commonly used name box has been left blank, will go on the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll and on the ballot paper.

2.51 You should advise the candidate that the use of commonly used names applies only to the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll and the ballot paper. The candidate's actual name should appear on any documents that are required to show the candidate's name, such as the imprint and the candidate's spending returns.

2.52 If you refuse the use of a commonly used name, the validity of the nomination form remains unaffected⁴⁸. Instead, the effect is that the candidate's actual name will appear on the statement of persons nominated, the notice of poll and the ballot paper⁴⁹. This should be made clear to candidates and agents and you must write to the candidate setting out the reasons for refusing to allow the use of the commonly used name⁵⁰.

Home address

2.53 Candidates at elections in England are not required to provide their home address on the nomination paper. This information is instead provided on a separate home address form (**see paragraph 2.96 for further information**).



In Wales, candidates are required to provide their home address on the nomination form

The home address:

- must be completed in full
- must not contain abbreviations

- must be their current home address
- must not be a business address (unless the candidate runs a business from their home)

If any detail of the home address is wrong or omitted, the nomination is not automatically invalid if the description of the place is such as to be commonly understood.

Subscribers

2.54 Nomination forms must include an indication of support for the candidate from 10 electors registered on the local government register in the ward⁵¹. These are known as subscribers – the first two are the proposer and seconder, while eight other electors are the assenters to the nomination⁵².



Parish and community council elections

At parish and community council elections, only two such electors are required to subscribe the nomination form⁵³.

Local authority mayoral elections

At local authority mayoral elections, 30 registered electors from the local authority area (i.e. the county, district or borough) are required to subscribe the nomination form⁵⁴.

2.55 Each subscriber is required by law to sign the nomination form in the appropriate place⁵⁵. Their name must be printed and their elector number must be included in the spaces provided alongside their signature, along with the polling district's identifying letters⁵⁶.

2.56 You must reject a nomination if the nomination form is not subscribed as required⁵⁷. It is essential that the correct version of the register is used for checking that the subscribers are valid. Subscribers must appear on the local government register that is in force on the last day for publication of notice of election⁵⁸.

2.57 An elector may not subscribe more nomination forms than there are vacancies in the ward⁵⁹. However, a subscriber may subscribe a nomination form for an additional candidate if the candidate whose nomination form they originally signed has died or withdrawn before the nomination form for the second candidate is delivered⁶⁰.

2.58 Also, electors are not permitted to subscribe additional nomination forms for candidates standing in an election in any other ward in the same principal area⁶¹.

2.59 If subscribers sign more nominations than there are vacancies or more nomination forms for other elections in any other ward in the same principal area, their signature will only be valid on the first papers delivered to you (up

to the permitted number)⁶² – subject to the exception set out in paragraph 2.67.

2.60 Where multiple nominations have been delivered by a candidate, if an elector subscribes any delivered nomination form, even if it is not the selected nomination form, it will count towards the maximum number that they may subscribe.



Parish and community council elections

At parish and community council elections an elector may not subscribe more nominations than there are vacancies in the parish or community (if it is unwarded) or the ward (if the parish or community is warded)⁶³. An elector may subscribe both a parish or community and a principal area nomination form.

Local authority mayoral elections

There is no restriction on the number of nominations that an elector can subscribe: an elector can subscribe any number of nomination forms for any number of candidates. The first 30 subscribers on a nomination form must, however, be 30 different electors⁶⁴.

Combined authority mayoral elections

Although the CARO is responsible for the nomination process at the combined authority mayoral election, if you are the ERO for a local authority area that is part of the combined authority, you should liaise with the CARO to agree a mechanism for the subscriber checks. If the checks will be carried out centrally by the CARO, you should ensure that they are supplied with the relevant electoral register promptly to enable them to conduct the required checks.

2.61 You should have a robust system in place to ensure that no elector subscribes more nomination forms than they are entitled to. Both a hard copy of the register and the electoral management system should be used in order to minimise the risk of missing a subscriber who has subscribed more forms than they are allowed, with the hard copy of the register physically marked when nominations are formally submitted.

2.62 Once a nomination form has been formally submitted, even if it is later deemed invalid, the signatures of the subscribers will still count towards the maximum number of forms that the subscriber may sign.

2.63 If an elector is later removed from the register or dies before the election (or indeed even before the nomination is delivered), their signature remains valid and the nomination is not affected.

2.64 A person who is shown on the register as being under 18 years old at the time of nomination can only subscribe a nomination form if they will be 18 years old on or before polling day⁶⁵.

2.65 As you must accept the nomination form at face value, you must accept that the signature made on the nomination form is that of the person listed on the register under the relevant elector number, even if the signature suggests another name. You may draw the attention of the person delivering the form to the issue if you are concerned, but you must take the elector number and the signature at face value⁶⁶. If after having raised the issue you still have any concerns, you should raise these with your SPOC.

2.66 At a principal area election, only the first 10 subscribers on any nomination form can be considered⁶⁷. If more subscribers are included, any subsequent names must not be considered at all⁶⁸. If one of the first 10 subscribers is invalid, irrespective of whether more subscribers have been added to the nomination form, the nomination form must be held invalid⁶⁹.



Parish and community council elections

At a parish or community council election, only the first two subscribers can be considered⁷⁰.

Local authority mayoral elections

At a mayoral election, only the first 30 subscribers can be considered⁷¹.

2.67 Occasionally a mistake is made with the subscribers on a nomination form, and one or more of the names may be crossed out on the form. If the signature, printed name and elector number for a subscriber are clearly crossed out, you should ignore it and treat it as if that row did not appear at all. If asked, you should advise that any crossings out should be clear and, ideally, initialled. You should not cross out any entry. If the entry that has been crossed out was that of a proposer or seconder, then the new proposer or seconder must be indicated. Where an entry has been crossed out, the required number of subscribers excluding that entry must still be valid for the nomination to be valid.

2.68 Signatures on nomination forms, once given, cannot be withdrawn by subscribers. If a subscriber contacts you to say that they wish to withdraw their subscription, you should inform them that this is not permitted by law and that the subscription remains valid.

Use of party names, party descriptions and party emblems

2.69 In all cases, to be able to use a party's identifiers (i.e.name, description and emblem) the party must be registered on the [Commission's register of political parties](#) and be listed as allowed to field candidates in England or Wales⁷².

2.70 Political parties can register up to 12 descriptions⁷³ and the Welsh translations of those descriptions.

2.71 You must check that the party name or description as given on the nomination form is registered on the [Commission's register of political parties](#) and matches it exactly⁷⁴. If it does not, you must reject that nomination⁷⁵. Even if a registered party is well known, it is vital to check the register of political parties for the exact details of the party as registered with the Commission.

2.72 In Wales, a candidate may use either the English version, Welsh version or both versions of either the party name or a description as long as they are registered with the Commission. Translations of party names are listed on the website under 'alternative name' and translations of descriptions are listed to the right of the description under 'translation(s)'. If a translation of a party name is not listed, or a translation is not recorded against a description, then a translation is not registered and cannot be used.

2.73 For the purposes of maintaining a clear audit trail and in case of any future challenges, you should print a copy of the relevant part of the [Commission's register of political parties](#) showing the descriptions and party name at the time of your determination.

2.74 Political parties can also register up to 3 emblems⁷⁶.

2.75 A Zip file of emblem images will be available on our website. However while the Zip file is a tool that can be used by your printer to prepare ballot papers, it is the information on the [Commission's register of political parties](#) that should be used for confirming which emblem to print on the ballot papers.

Additions, alterations, removals and changes to party names, party descriptions and party emblems on the register of political parties

2.76 The legislation provides that the removal or substitution of any registered descriptions may take effect up to and including the day before the actual date of publication of the notice of election for any particular election (note that this is not the last day for publication of the notice of election but the actual day of publication)⁷⁷. After that point, any changes or deletions to any party descriptions do not apply for that election⁷⁸.

2.77 For example, if you decide to publish your notice of election before the last day that the notice must be published by law, it is possible that a nomination may be submitted which bears a registered party description that no longer appears on the register of political parties. If the deletion of the description has taken effect after you have published your notice of election but before the last day for publication of notice of election, the deletion does not apply to your election and the 'old' description is still valid. In any such circumstances you can check with your [local Commission office](#) whether or not the submitted party description applies for your election.

2.78 You should also note that political parties may change their registered party name and emblems, and add any new description if they previously had registered fewer than 12 descriptions, at any time until the close of nominations.⁷⁹

2.79 Where a candidate attempts to submit a nomination form bearing a description that has yet to be registered, you should advise the candidate not to formally submit it, but to take it back and submit it once the description has been successfully registered.

2.80 If a candidate formally submits their nomination form with a description that is not yet registered, you must determine the nomination invalid on the basis that, when the determination is made, the description provided does not match any registered with the Commission⁸⁰. You may wish to contact the Commission for confirmation that a description is not yet registered before making your determination. You can do this by contacting your [local Commission office](#).



For up-to-date information about political parties, registered descriptions and registered emblems, you should check the register of political parties on the Commission's website at <http://search.electoralcommission.org.uk>. If you have any queries, you should contact your [local Commission office](#).

What descriptions may be used?

2.81 The legislation is precise about the use of descriptions. A candidate may only use one of the following descriptions:

- the word 'Independent' or, in Wales, 'Independent' and/or 'Annibynno'
- the registered party name of a registered political party
- one of the descriptions the party has registered with the Commission⁸¹



Parish and community council elections

For parish and community council elections, any candidate can choose to use a description. Any description used must not exceed six words in length⁸². Descriptions used at parish or community council elections do not have to be registered with the Commission. However, any description must not lead electors to associate it with a registered political party unless the description has been registered by that party and its use has been duly authorised⁸³.

Candidates may use acronyms or abbreviations as part of their description. It is for you as Returning Officer to determine how you will count these.

2.82 If a candidate wishes to use a party name or description, this must be authorised by the party's Nominating Officer (or a person authorised to act on their behalf)⁸⁴. If the description on the nomination form matches one contained on our register of political parties or is a registered party name, a certificate of authorisation, signed by or on behalf of the party's Nominating Officer, must be submitted by the deadline for the delivery of nomination papers⁸⁵.

2.83 Candidates standing on behalf of more than one registered party may use a joint description which is registered with the Commission⁸⁶. If a candidate is standing on behalf of more than one political party the candidate

must submit a certificate of authorisation issued by each of the parties' Nominating Officers (or persons authorised to act on their behalf) by the deadline for the delivery of nomination papers⁸⁷.

2.84 Joint descriptions are listed on the [Commission's register of political parties](#) on the registration page for the relevant parties within the descriptions section, and in each case the description will be followed by the words '(Joint Description with the xx party)'. An example would be 'The Square and Circle Party Candidate (Joint Description with the Circle Party)', which would be listed on the Square Party page. Please note that the words in brackets are for explanatory purposes only and do not form part of the description.

2.85 You can check who the Nominating Officer for a particular party is by referring to the [Commission's register of political parties](#). However, as long as the person who has issued the certificate claims that they have been authorised to do so by the registered Nominating Officer, the certificate should be taken at face value.

2.86 In practice, candidates standing on behalf of a political party may sometimes provide, alongside their nomination papers, a document showing the delegation of powers to authorise the use of a party name or description to someone else (sometimes referred to as the 'Local Nominating Officer certificate' or 'Deputy Nominating Officer certificate' by the parties).

2.87 There is no need for this document to be submitted as part of a nomination. It is not a nomination paper and is, therefore, not required. As such, if it is supplied, it can be supplied as a copy.

2.88 A Nominating Officer may stand as a candidate. If this happens, the candidate, as Nominating Officer, may authorise their own description. A person authorised by the Nominating Officer to issue a certificate of authorisation may also be a candidate and issue a certificate for their own nomination.

2.89 A certificate of authorisation can allow the candidate to:

- use the exact party name as registered with the Commission
- use one of the party's registered descriptions, or
- choose the party name or one of the party's registered descriptions

Requests for a party emblem

2.90 If requested, the candidate of a registered party can choose to have a registered emblem of the party they are representing displayed on the ballot paper⁸⁸. To qualify, a candidate must have been authorised to use a party name or description other than 'Independent', or 'Annibynol' in Wales⁸⁹.

2.91 Candidates standing on behalf of more than one registered party who use a joint description may choose to use a registered emblem of one of the parties that have authorised the use of the description⁹⁰. There is no provision for joint emblems to be registered with the Commission.

2.92 The candidate, not the election agent or the Nominating Officer, must make the request in writing to you not later than the deadline for delivery of nominations⁹¹.

2.93 If the party has more than one registered emblem, the candidate should specify which one they want to use⁹². If the candidate does not specify one, or the registered party changes or removes the emblem from the register of political parties after the nomination papers have been submitted but before the close of nominations, you should try to contact the candidate and ask them to select one. You should also tell them that if they do not select a particular emblem before the close of nominations, you will not be able to print an emblem against their name on the ballot paper.

2.94 The candidate may provide a high-resolution copy of the emblem for use in the printing of ballot papers, or may request that you download the emblem from the Commission's website. You must ensure that whatever copy is used is in the same form as the registered emblem.

2.95 The maximum size of an emblem on the ballot paper is set by the directions for printing. When adding a party emblem to a ballot paper, the shape of the emblem should not be altered. You must ensure that the emblem is in the same form as the registered emblem – for example, do not stretch emblems into square shapes if they are not registered as square images on our website, as this would have the effect of altering their appearance.

Home address form (for elections in England only)

2.96 Candidates in England are also required to complete a home address form, which must be delivered by hand, with the nomination paper, by the close of nominations. The form is not prescribed but the information that needs to be provided is set out in law. On the home address form the candidate must state:

- their full name (see paragraph **2.36**)
- their home address in full
- their qualifying address, or, where they have declared on their consent to nomination that they meet more than one qualification, their qualifying addresses
- which of the qualifications their qualifying address or addresses relate to
- the full name and the home address in full of the witness to the consent to nomination form

2.97 The candidate's home address:

- must be completed in full
- must not contain abbreviations
- must be their current home address
- must not be a business address (unless the candidate runs a business from their home)

2.98 If any detail of the home address is wrong or omitted, the nomination is not automatically invalid if the description of the place is such as to be commonly understood (see also paragraph **2.123** below).

2.99 A candidate may choose for their home address not to be published on the statement of persons nominated or the ballot paper.

2.100 In this case the home address form must contain, as well as the full name and home address: ⁹³

- a statement, signed by the candidate, which states that they require their home address not to be made public
- if their home address is in the UK, the name of the relevant area in which their home address is situated
- if their home address is outside of the UK, the name of the country in which their home address is situated

Meaning of qualifying address and relevant area

2.101 Qualifying address means:

- where a candidate has selected option (a) on the consent to nomination, the address in full where they are registered as a local government elector
- where they have selected option (b) on the consent to nomination, the description and the address of that land or premises which they have occupied as owner or tenant
- where they have selected option (c) on the consent to nomination, the address of their place of work
- where they have selected option (d) on the consent to nomination, the address or addresses in full of where they have resided.

2.102 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.

2.103 The Commission has produced a home address form as part of its [set of nomination papers for principal area elections in England](#) and its [set of nomination papers for parish elections](#) and [local authority mayoral elections](#). [Nomination papers for candidates at combined authority mayoral elections](#) are also available on our website.

Candidate's consent to nomination

2.104 Candidates must also formally consent to their nomination and their consent must be delivered by the deadline for delivery of nomination papers⁹⁴. The consent to nomination form is prescribed and must contain the required legal references as described in paragraph **2.6** above⁹⁵. It must be delivered by hand and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means⁹⁶.

2.105 The candidate's consent must include their date of birth and a statement that they are not disqualified from election and that they meet one or more of the qualifications for standing⁹⁷.

2.106 For elections in Wales only, candidates must also provide the details of the address or addresses relating to the qualification(s) that apply.

2.107 The consent form must be signed and dated by the candidate and the date must be on or within one month before the last day for the delivery of nomination papers⁹⁸. The consent must also be witnessed by another person⁹⁹.

2.108 The witness must provide their name on the consent form.¹⁰⁰ At elections in Wales the witness must also provide their address. For elections in England, the witness's address must be provided on the home address form¹⁰¹.

2.109 There are no restrictions on who can be a witness to the consent to nomination.

Local authority mayoral elections

Deposit

In order for a local authority mayoral election nomination to be valid, candidates must also deposit the sum of £500 with the Returning Officer at the place and within the time for delivery of nomination papers¹⁰². The deposit can be made using:

- legal tender
- a banker's draft
- with your consent, in any other manner¹⁰³

You may refuse to accept a banker's draft if you do not know whether the drawer carries on business as a banker in the United Kingdom¹⁰⁴.

You should accept building society cheques and banker's payments if they carry out business in the United Kingdom. You should also accept banker's payments which are orders issued by a bank, guaranteeing payment to the recipient.

You may accept a deposit made by a debit or credit card or an electronic funds transfer¹⁰⁵. However, you may refuse to do so. Any arrangements for the payment of the deposit by electronic means must be included on the notice of election¹⁰⁶.

Any person may make the deposit for a candidate but if the person making the deposit is not the candidate they must give you their name and address, unless the person is the candidate's agent and their name and address have previously been declared to you¹⁰⁷.

Deposits must be returned to the person who made the deposit or, if they have died, their personal representative, in the following circumstances:

- the candidate withdraws before the deadline for withdrawals
- you reject a candidate's nomination and they are not shown as validly nominated on the statement of persons nominated
- the candidate dies and proof of death has been given to you before you conclude the first count¹⁰⁸

After the election, the deposit must be returned to the person who made it if the candidate receives more than 5% of the valid first preference votes¹⁰⁹.

The election address booklet

At a mayoral election, you are required by law to produce a booklet that includes election addresses from candidates at the election and to cause it to be delivered to each person entitled to vote at the mayoral election¹¹⁰.

You must only include an election address in the booklet if it is a statement prepared on behalf of a candidate by their election agent that complies with certain legal requirements¹¹¹.

An election address must:

- only contain matter relating to the election¹¹²
- contain a statement to the effect that the address has been prepared by the candidate's election agent
- the name and address of the election agent¹¹³
- the name and the home address of each candidate or, if they have requested not to make their home address public, the relevant electoral area as given on the home address form¹¹⁴
- be printed on no more than two sides of A5 paper¹¹⁵
- if the address exceeds one side of A5, be accompanied by a second version of the address that must not exceed one side of A5 paper¹¹⁶

- comply with any typographical layout, margin and colour use requirements that you determine¹¹⁷
- comply with any other requirements with a view to facilitate the reproduction of the address as a page or pages of the election booklet as you determine¹¹⁸
- if the address is to contain a photograph of the candidate, be accompanied by two identical copies of that photograph of which one must be signed on the back by the candidate¹¹⁹
- if the address is to contain anything else as part of that address, as many copies of it as you may reasonably require in connection with the reproduction of the address¹²⁰
- be submitted to you by the last time allowed to deliver nomination papers for the election¹²¹

An election address must not:

- contain any advertising material other than material promoting the candidate as a candidate at the election¹²²
- contain any other material appearing to be included with a view to commercial gain¹²³
- contain any material referring to any other candidate¹²⁴
- contain a representation of an emblem of a registered political party registered with the Commission unless the address was prepared on behalf of that party's authorised candidate (the candidate's nomination was accompanied by the nomination deadline by a valid certificate of authorisation)¹²⁵
- contain a party description or joint description registered with the Commission unless the candidate's address was prepared on behalf of that party or those parties jointly (the candidate's nomination was accompanied by the nomination deadline by a valid certificate of authorisation or certificates of authorisation for joint candidates)¹²⁶

An election address may (as long as it meets the above requirements):

- be formatted as the candidate wishes including using any combination of words, pictures and artwork¹²⁷
- include a picture of the candidate¹²⁸

If the total number of candidates from whom election addresses have been accepted by you by the last time for delivery of nomination papers for the election exceeds 15, the version of the address that is contained on one side of A5 must be used for all candidates¹²⁹.

You must consider whether all of the above requirements have been complied with. If any requirement has not been complied with you must not include that election address in the booklet¹³⁰.

You must produce a booklet with the election addresses of all candidates who have submitted a valid election address to you by the last time for the delivery of nomination papers¹³¹. The order of the addresses in the booklet must, by

law, be decided by you by drawing lots¹³². Lots must be drawn as soon as reasonably practicable after the last time for the delivery of nomination papers¹³³.

You may require candidates to contribute to the printing of the booklet¹³⁴. The amount of the payment that you require is to be decided by you and you should be clear how that payment is to be made. The amount must be:

- reasonable
- the same for each candidate
- based on a contribution made by candidates towards the expenses incurred in printing the booklet (and not include any amount relating to the postage or delivery of the booklet)¹³⁵

You should decline to include any candidate's election address where the payment has not been made as you require.

You may include in the booklet, along with the candidate's election addresses, your own statement¹³⁶.

Your statement may include:

- an explanation of the purpose of the booklet
- an alphabetical list of all candidates at the election (whether or not they are in the booklet)
- the date of the election and the deadlines for registration and absent voting applications
- any other information that you determine¹³⁷

You must include a statement stating that it is published by you and giving your name and address and that of your printer¹³⁸.

You must notify every election agent of a candidate who has provided an election address and where you have accepted it for inclusion in the booklet of the time and place where they may check the election addresses in the booklet and submit typographical corrections to the proof of the booklet before it is printed¹³⁹.

You may, if any candidate and their agent do not review the proof, make your own correction of typographical errors in an election address if you think it is appropriate¹⁴⁰. You should attempt to contact the candidate or agent to clarify your corrections but it is not a legal requirement to do so¹⁴¹.

You must print the booklet and place each copy in an envelope¹⁴². You must then cause one copy to be delivered to each elector on the electoral register who is eligible to vote at the election¹⁴³. The postage or delivery costs must be paid by the local authority (either directly or by reclaim/invoice)¹⁴⁴.

You should keep a record of the costs of printing the booklet separately from all other costs. If the payments made by the candidates exceed the total cost

of printing, the balance must be divided equally between the candidates and returned to them¹⁴⁵.

Candidates who withdraw before the deadline for withdrawals must have all of the payment they have made returned to them and should not be included in the booklet¹⁴⁶.

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO is responsible for administering the nomination process at a combined authority mayoral election. Guidance for CAROs on the nominations process can be found in chapter 3 of our [Guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers on the delivery of key processes](#).

Determining nomination and home address forms

2.110 A candidate who delivers completed nomination papers by the required deadline will be deemed nominated unless you decide that the nomination form is invalid or, where required, the home address form hasn't been completed correctly (or the candidate dies or withdraws)¹⁴⁷.

2.111 There is case law which makes clear that Returning Officers must not undertake any investigation or research into any candidate and that their duty does not go beyond seeing that a nomination form is correct on its face¹⁴⁸. As RO, you should not, for example, investigate whether a name given on a nomination form is genuine. You will also need to disregard any personal knowledge you may already have of the candidate. Any determinations need to be made on the basis of the form itself.

2.112 In very limited circumstances, there is an exception, also based on case law, to the principle of accepting nomination papers at face value. You may come across a situation where the candidate's nomination is clearly a sham - for example, if a candidate has given an obviously fictitious name or address such as 'Mickey Mouse of Disney Land'. In such a case the nomination form must be held to be invalid on the grounds that the candidate's particulars are not as required by law¹⁴⁹. In addition, the case law also provides that candidates who give descriptions that are obscene, racist or an incitement to crime deliver particulars that are "not as required by law". This is because they contravene the law and/or will inevitably involve the Returning Officer in a breach of the law. When considering the name, the primary consideration should be whether the "name" that has been provided on the nomination form appears to be "obviously fictitious" on the face of the paper. If the "name" does not appear to be a genuine name and instead appears to be a statement or slogan, for example, you may consider that it is "obviously fictitious". Any conclusion would be supported by considering the wider context. For example, does the name appear to be a political slogan made in response to topical political events, rather than the genuine name of a real person? A court would likely in those circumstances conclude that such

names are “obviously fictitious” and that the nomination form should be rejected.

2.113 In addition, the case law also provides that candidates who give descriptions that are obscene, racist or an incitement to crime deliver particulars that are “not as required by law”. This is because they contravene the law and/or will inevitably involve the Returning Officer in a breach of the law.

2.114 You must determine the validity of a nomination form and, in England, the home address form, as soon as is practicable after formal delivery¹⁵⁰. The sooner you carry out the formal determination, the greater the chance of those candidates who have made a mistake and whose nomination has been rejected being able to submit new papers before the close of nominations.

2.115 By law, the only grounds you have for determining that a nomination form is invalid are:

- that the particulars of the candidate or the persons subscribing the nomination form are not as required by law, or
- that the form is not subscribed as required¹⁵¹

2.116 The description given on the nomination form is part of ‘the particulars of the candidate’. Therefore, if the party does not appear on the Commission’s register of political parties as a party that can contest elections in England or in Wales, or the party name or description used on the nomination form does not exactly match the party name or description as registered with the Commission, the nomination form must be rejected¹⁵². Equally, if the use of the party name or description has not been authorised by the delivery of a certificate of authorisation signed by or on behalf of the party’s Nominating Officer, or if it explicitly authorises a specific name or description and this does not match the party name/description on the nomination form, the nomination form must be held invalid¹⁵³.

2.117 If the nomination form does not comply with the description rules outlined above, you must give a decision to that effect as soon as practicable after the delivery of the nomination form and in any event within 24 hours after the deadline for the delivery of nominations¹⁵⁴.

2.118 If a nomination form is determined to be invalid, you must state that fact on the nomination form, write the reasons for rejection and sign it¹⁵⁵. If a nomination form is ruled invalid, it is important to take steps to contact the candidate and agent as soon as possible so that they may have the opportunity wherever possible to submit another set of nomination papers before the close of nominations.

2.119 You must send notice of your decision that nomination papers are **valid or invalid** to the candidate at their home address.¹⁵⁶ This should be done as soon as practicable after your decision has been made.

2.120 In England, the home address form must be completed in full or you must determine that the home address form does not comply with legal requirements and is not valid.¹⁵⁷ For more information about the requirements see **paragraph 2.96**

2.121 If you have not received the nomination form, the home address form (in England) and consent to nomination by the deadline for the submission of nomination papers (i.e. by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll), the candidate has not been validly nominated. There is then no need to make a formal determination, and their name should not appear on the statement of persons nominated or the ballot paper.

Local authority mayoral elections

If the required £500 deposit has not been received by you by the deadline to submit nomination papers, the candidate has not been validly nominated¹⁵⁸. There is then no need to make a formal determination, and their name should not appear on the statement of persons nominated or the ballot paper.



We have produced a checklist which sets out what you will need to consider and specific things to look out for when determining a nomination at [principal area elections](#), [parish and community council elections](#) and [local authority mayoral elections](#).

What to do after your formal determination

2.122 Once you have made a decision that a nomination paper or home address form is valid, it cannot be challenged during the election, although it may be challenged after the election by way of an election petition¹⁵⁹.

Correction of minor errors

2.123 You are permitted by law to correct minor errors made on a nomination form or a home address form (where required) at any time before you publish the statement of persons nominated¹⁶⁰. This includes the correction of errors in relation to a person's elector number and obvious errors of spelling of a candidate's details¹⁶¹. You should attempt to contact the candidate or agent before making any minor error amendment.

2.124 You must have regard to the Commission's guidance on the correction of minor errors¹⁶².

Errors in elector numbers

2.125 Where an elector number has been entered incorrectly, you may amend it if you are satisfied that an error has been made. However, where the elector number has been omitted altogether, this does not amount to an error, and the nomination form should be rejected on the basis that the number has not been supplied and so the particulars are not as required¹⁶³.

Errors of spelling in details of candidates

2.126 Dealing with the 'obvious' errors of spelling may be more difficult, as what is obvious to one person may not be so to another. Care should be taken in exercising this power.

Errors in a home address

2.127 Where a home address is not absolutely correct there may not be a need to make a correction. By law, errors in a home address do not affect the validity of a nomination as long as the address can be commonly understood.¹⁶⁴

Inspection of nomination papers

2.128 You should keep the nomination papers secure. By law, you must allow public inspection, and copies to be taken, of the nomination papers (excluding the home address form at elections in England) during office hours on any working day from the close of nominations up to and including the day before polling day¹⁶⁵. The nomination papers available for inspection should include the nomination form, consent to nomination, any agent appointment form, and any emblem request application.

2.129 After that point, the nomination papers are not open to public inspection. You should securely store them for one year after the election due to the time limit for prosecution in case of an election petition. Your document retention policy should set out your approach to the retention of nomination papers.

2.130 There is no right of objection to a nomination at a local election.

Combined authority mayoral elections

At combined authority mayoral elections, certain people can object to the validity of a nomination form on the nineteenth working day before the poll. For further information, see chapter 3 of our [Guidance for Combined Authority Returning Officers on the delivery of key processes](#).

Inspection of home address forms

2.131 You should keep the home address forms secure. During office hours on any working day from the close of nominations up to and including the day before polling day, you must only allow the forms to be inspected by those who are entitled to do so.¹⁶⁶ These people are:

- any candidate standing in the same electoral area
- the election agent of any candidate standing in the same electoral area (or, if the candidate is acting as their own agent, any person nominated by them)
- the proposer or seconder of any person standing nominated as a candidate in the same electoral area

2.132 Home address forms should be inspected under supervision. Taking extracts of the home address forms, or copies of them, is not permitted.¹⁶⁷

2.133 Once the inspection period has passed, the home address forms are not open to inspection.

2.134 Home address forms must be kept securely stored for a period of 35 working days after the result has been declared. They must be securely destroyed on the next working day after the 35-day period. However, if an election petition relating to the election is presented within the 35 working days, the home address forms must be kept securely until the conclusion of the petition proceedings (including any appeal from such proceedings). They must then be securely destroyed as soon as is practicable following the conclusion of the proceedings or appeal.

Combined authority mayoral elections

At combined authority mayoral elections, home address forms must be securely destroyed on the next calendar day after the 35-day period. However, if an election petition relating to the election is presented within the 35 calendar days, the home address forms must be kept securely until the conclusion of the petition proceedings (including any appeal from such proceedings). They must then be securely destroyed on the next working day following the conclusion of the proceedings or appeal.

Withdrawal of a candidate

2.135 It is possible for a validly nominated candidate to withdraw their candidature. For this to be effective, the notice of withdrawal signed by the candidate and attested by one witness must be delivered to you by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll¹⁶⁸.

2.136 The notice must be delivered by hand to the place for the delivery of nomination papers¹⁶⁹. There are no restrictions on who can deliver a notice of withdrawal.



The withdrawal notice is not prescribed in legislation. We have produced a template withdrawal notice that you could give to candidates at [principal area elections](#), [parish and community elections](#), or [local authority mayoral elections](#) as appropriate.

2.137 If the candidate is not in the UK, a withdrawal will be effective if a notice of withdrawal, signed by the proposer and accompanied by a written declaration that the candidate is abroad (also signed by the proposer), is delivered to you by the deadline for withdrawals¹⁷⁰. If the candidate was nominated by more than one nomination form, each proposer must sign the notice and declaration¹⁷¹. If any of the proposers are outside the UK they do not need to sign the notice, but the notice must, by law, include a statement that they are also outside the UK¹⁷².

2.138 The details of any candidates who by the close of withdrawals remain validly nominated must be printed on the ballot papers. If a candidate has not withdrawn by the deadline, their name must go forward to the ballot paper¹⁷³.

Local authority mayoral elections

You must return the deposit of any candidate who has withdrawn their candidature or whose nomination you have rejected¹⁷⁴. The deposit must be returned to the person who made it as soon as practicable after the statement of persons nominated has been published¹⁷⁵

For guidance on returning deposits to validly nominated mayoral candidates after an election, see [Part F – After the declaration of results](#).

After the close of nominations

2.139 After the close of nominations you must publish a statement of persons nominated and a notice of poll¹⁷⁶. For details on what these notices should contain see Chapter 4.

Nomination in more than one electoral area

2.140 A candidate may submit nomination papers for more than one ward of the same local government area. However, they must have withdrawn from all those wards except one before the deadline for withdrawals.¹⁷⁷ If they do not withdraw from all but one ward, they will be deemed to have withdrawn from all of the wards¹⁷⁸.



Parish and community council elections

A candidate may stand and be elected to both a parish or community council and a principal area council for the same or a different area.

Local authority mayoral elections

A candidate may stand in and be elected as local authority mayor for any number of different local authorities.

Combined authority mayoral elections

A person cannot sit as both a combined authority mayor and a local councillor of a constituent council. If they are already an elected councillor and are subsequently elected as mayor, their office as councillor will become vacant.

Being a combined authority mayor is normally a disqualification to standing for election as a councillor in a constituent council. The only exception to this is where the combined authority mayoral election falls on the same day as the constituent council election. In this case, if someone stands as a candidate in both contests and is elected to both offices, their election as councillor will be disregarded and the office of councillor will be deemed to be vacant.

Uncontested elections

2.141 If the local government election in any electoral area is uncontested, you must, as soon as practicable after the latest time for the delivery of notices of withdrawals of candidature, declare the remaining validly nominated candidate(s) elected¹⁷⁹. You must give their names to the Proper Officer of the council for which the election is held, and give public notice of the name of each elected person¹⁸⁰. No poll is necessary.



Parish and community council elections

At a parish or community council election, you are required to give notice of the name of each person elected to the proper officer of the parish council and also to the proper officer of the council of the district in which the parish is situated¹⁸¹.

Death of a candidate

2.142 In the event of a candidate dying during the election period, the procedure to be followed at local government elections depends on the time when you receive proof of the death of the candidate. It is the time when you receive proof of the candidate's death that is the relevant factor, not the actual time of death.

Proof of death received before the withdrawal deadline

2.143 Should you receive proof of a candidate's death after accepting their nomination as valid, but before the deadline for the withdrawal of nominations,

you should wait until that deadline has passed. In this case, the candidate is deemed not to be standing for election¹⁸². If the number of validly nominated candidates, excluding the deceased, is more than the number of people to be elected, the poll must be countermanded and a new election must be held¹⁸³. If the number of validly nominated candidates, excluding the deceased, is the same as or fewer than the number of people to be elected, then all are deemed elected and you must order a new election for any remaining vacancies¹⁸⁴.



Parish and community council elections

Where there are not enough validly nominated candidates at the ordinary election of a parish or community council, those candidates who are validly nominated are elected¹⁸⁵.

If the parish or community council is quorate, i.e. at least three and at least one-third of the total seats on the council are filled, the elected councillors may co-opt councillors to fill the remaining seats¹⁸⁶.

If, however, after a period of 35 working days from the date that would have been the polling day if the election had been contested, the council has not filled all the vacancies by co-option, the relevant principal area council (i.e. a district or unitary council in England or a county or county borough council in Wales) may:

- by order make direct appointments of people as parish or community councillors
- do anything necessary or expedient for the proper holding of the parish or community council meeting and properly constituting the council
- direct that a new election is held to fill the remaining vacancies, and fix the date of that election¹⁸⁷

The principal area council must not exercise this power within 35 working days of the ordinary date of election and may allow a parish or community council a period longer than 35 working days to fill vacancies by co-option if it wishes¹⁸⁸.

Proof of death received after the withdrawal deadline and before polls open

2.144 If proof of the death of a validly nominated candidate at a contested election is received before the opening of the poll, the notice of poll is countermanded and the poll does not take place. A new election must be held¹⁸⁹.

Proof of death received after polls have opened and before the declaration of result

2.145 If proof of the death of a validly nominated candidate at a contested election is received after the opening of the poll but before the declaration of result, the poll is abandoned and a new election must be held¹⁹⁰. However, in this case, because the poll will have started, the documentation (i.e. issued and un-issued ballot papers, etc.) must be returned to you and sealed up in the normal way¹⁹¹.

2.146 Any postal votes received back must also be sealed in packets and any envelopes not opened at the time of the notification of the death must be sealed in packets unopened¹⁹².

Local authority mayoral election

If proof of a candidate's death has been given to you before the conclusion of the first count, the deposit must be returned as soon as practicable to the person who made it or their personal representative¹⁹³.

New election

2.147 Where a new election is required after the countermanding or abandonment of a poll due to a candidate's death, you must select a new day for the poll, and this must fall within 35 working days of the day fixed for the first poll¹⁹⁴. New nominations can be made, but candidates already validly nominated at the original poll do not have to be nominated a second time¹⁹⁵. Candidates validly nominated prior to the countermanding or abandonment of the poll may not withdraw as their period for withdrawals has expired.

Combined authority mayoral elections

Death of a combined authority mayoral candidate

In the event of the death of a candidate during the election period, the procedure to be followed at a combined authority mayoral election depends on the time when the CARO receives proof of the death of the candidate. It is the time when the CARO receives proof of the candidate's death that is the relevant factor, not the actual time of death.

Proof of death received before polls open

If proof of the death of a validly nominated candidate at a contested election is received during the election campaign, even on polling day itself before polls open, the CARO must countermand notice of the poll and the poll does not take place¹⁹⁶. The CARO must hold a new election¹⁹⁷.

Proof of death received after polls have opened and before the declaration of result

If proof of the death of a validly nominated candidate at a contested election is received after the opening of the poll but before the declaration of result, the CARO must direct that the poll is abandoned and a new election must be held¹⁹⁸. However, in this case, because the poll will have started, the

documentation (i.e. issued and un-issued ballot papers, etc.) must be returned to you and sealed up in the normal way¹⁹⁹.

Any postal votes received back must also be sealed in packets and any envelopes not opened at the time of the notification of the death must be sealed in packets unopened²⁰⁰.

New election

The CARO will set the date of the new election.

3 Agents at the election

The election agent

3.1 Each candidate must have an election agent, and notice of the appointment must be delivered to you by the latest time for delivery of notices of withdrawal, which is 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll²⁰¹. We have produced a form for the notification of the appointment of election agents as part of the set of nomination papers we have produced.

3.2 A candidate may appoint themselves as their election agent. Also, if no agent is appointed by the deadline for withdrawals, the candidate is deemed to be their own election agent²⁰².

3.3 A candidate is also deemed to be their own agent if they revoke their agent's appointment, or the agent dies, and a replacement is not appointed on the day of the death or on the following day²⁰³.

3.4 If a candidate is acting as their own election agent, irrespective of whether they became an agent as a result of not appointing one or because they had given you written notice of their own appointment, they can also revoke their own appointment and appoint a new agent²⁰⁴. They must notify you in writing of any such changes²⁰⁵.



Parish and community council elections

There is no provision for the appointment of election agents at parish or community council elections²⁰⁶.

Combined authority mayoral elections

Upon notification of an election agent's name and address (which is required by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll), the CARO must publish a notice setting out those details and the name of the candidate as soon as possible²⁰⁷. The CARO should provide you, as local RO, with a copy of the notice and you should publish that within your local authority area. The CARO must update the notice if any agent's appointment is revoked, or an agent dies, with the new agent's details published on a revised version²⁰⁸. The CARO should provide you with a copy of any updated notice, which you should then publish in your local authority area.

Sub-agents

Election agents may also appoint sub-agents to act on their behalf in any part of the combined authority area²⁰⁹. Notification of any sub-agent appointment must be made to the CARO by the fifth working day before the poll²¹⁰.

Upon notification of a sub-agent's name and address, the CARO must publish a notice setting out those details, the name of the candidate, and the part of the combined authority area within which the sub-agent is appointed to act, as soon as possible²¹¹. The CARO should provide you, as local RO, with a copy of the notice and you should publish that within your area. The CARO must update the notice if any sub-agent's appointment is revoked, or a sub-agent dies, with the new agent's details published on a revised version²¹². The CARO should provide you with a copy of any updated notice, which you should then publish in your area.

3.5 The election agent must have an office, and the notice of appointment must set out the office address to which all claims, notices, legal process and other documents may be sent²¹³. The office address must be an address to which any legal notices can be delivered and therefore must be a physical address – PO boxes or similar mailboxes cannot be used.

3.6 The location of the office must be:

- within the local government area, or
- in a UK Parliamentary constituency or one of the constituencies that are partially or wholly included in the local government area, or
- in an adjoining Welsh county or county borough, or
- in an adjoining London borough, or
- in an adjoining district²¹⁴

3.7 The election agent's office address will often be the same as their home address, but it might be that of the local political party office or an office especially set up for the election.

3.8 In England, if where a candidate acts as their own election agent, unless they provide an office address, their home address as provided on the home address form will be published on the notice of election agents. If that address is outside the relevant area, the office address is deemed to be the address of their proposer (i.e. the first subscriber on your nomination form).

3.9 This is the case even where they have chosen to withhold their home address from the statement of persons nominated and ballot papers.



In Wales, where a candidate acts as their own election agent, the office address is deemed to be the address on the statement of persons nominated. i.e. the address provided on the nomination form.

If that address is outside the relevant qualifying area as defined in the bullet points above, the office address is deemed to be the address of the proposer given on the statement of persons nominated.²¹⁵

If the candidate gives you written notification of their appointment as their own election agent, they must give an office address within the qualifying area as defined in the bullet points above.²¹⁶

3.10 Upon notification of an election agent's name and address, you must publish a notice setting out those details and the name of the candidate as soon as possible.²¹⁷ The notice must be updated if any agent's appointment is revoked, or an agent dies, with the new agent's details published on the revised version.²¹⁸

3.11 Your privacy notice should make clear that you are required under electoral legislation to publish an election agent's name and address information in the notice of election agents. You will also need to consider whether it is appropriate or necessary for the notice to remain published, on your website or elsewhere, beyond the expiry of the petition period for that election.

3.12 The notice serves a specific purpose, i.e. advising who will be a candidate's election agent, so once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, they serve no further purpose. Therefore, you should either remove the notice, or remove the personal data contained in the notice, once the petition deadline for the election has passed.



[Our resource](#) on the EU General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 covers the requirements of a privacy notice and document retention considerations.

Other agents

3.13 Candidates can appoint agents to observe the opening of postal votes, the poll and the verification and count²¹⁹. The election agent can also appoint agents to observe the postal vote openings at principal area elections. You are responsible for receiving the notifications of appointment of these agents and must ensure that all appointed agents are given a copy of the relevant secrecy requirements for the [opening of postal votes](#), [the poll](#) and [the count](#)²²⁰.

Local authority and combined authority mayoral elections

At local authority and combined authority mayoral elections, in addition to the candidate, the election agent can also appoint agents to observe the opening of postal votes, the poll and the verification and count.



For further details on the role of these agents, see Part 5: ‘Your right to attend key electoral events’ of our guidance for candidates and agents at [local government principal area elections](#), [parish and community council elections](#), at [local authority mayoral elections](#), and at [combined authority mayoral elections](#).

Mayoral referendums

All references to candidates and agents in this section (‘Other agents’) should be read as petition organisers and counting and polling observers appointed for the purposes of the referendum²²¹. In addition to the count, counting observers at a mayoral referendum may also attend the opening of postal votes²²².

At a mayoral referendum, as Counting Officer you may appoint polling observers and you are under a legal duty to appoint counting observers²²³. To assist you in your duty to appoint counting observers, the petition organiser may nominate observers for you to appoint and you must not reject such nominations without good cause²²⁴.

Polling and counting observers must be nominated in writing by the fifth working day before the poll²²⁵. The written notice must contain the name and address of each nominee²²⁶.

Neighbourhood planning referendums

All references to candidates and agents in this section (‘Other agents’) should be read as counting and polling observers appointed for the purposes of the referendum²²⁷. In addition to the count, counting observers at a neighbourhood planning referendum may also attend the opening of postal votes²²⁸.

At a neighbourhood planning referendum, as Counting Officer you are under a legal duty to appoint counting observers²²⁹ and must give them written notice of the time and place of the count²³⁰. There is no specified minimum number that you must appoint. You may also appoint polling observers for the purpose of detecting personation²³¹. There are no restrictions on how many polling observers can be allocated to a polling station.

It is your decision as to who to appoint as polling and counting observers, but to help you make these appointments, you could attempt to make contact with relevant campaign organisers from both sides (if known) and ask them to put forward observers. This will help to ensure that campaigners are present at key proceedings and can satisfy themselves that the referendum has been transparent and well run. You should aim to ensure an equal balance in the number of polling and counting observers appointed from each side of the campaign.

You should appoint polling and counting observers in writing, and include in the written appointment the following information as a minimum:

- the name of the referendum area
- the name and address (including postcode) of the observer
- the campaign or organisation the observer is associated with (if applicable)

Where a mayoral or neighbourhood planning referendum is combined with another poll

Where the Counting Officer does not take on the combined functions at combined polls, the Counting Officer must give written notice of the appointment of any polling observers to the relevant Returning Officer by the fifth working day before the poll²³². The notice must state the names and addresses of the persons appointed²³³. The Counting Officer must also give written notice of the appointment of counting observers to the relevant Returning Officer as soon as practicable after they have been appointed²³⁴.

The opening of postal votes

3.14 Postal voting agents are permitted by law to observe the opening of the postal voters' ballot box, the opening of returned postal votes and the checking of signatures and dates of birth provided on returned postal voting statements²³⁵. You must be given written notice of the name and address of any postal voting agents before the start of any particular session that the agents are seeking to attend²³⁶. The Commission has developed a [form for the notification of appointment of postal voting agents](#).

3.15 You must give candidates at least 48 hours' notice of the time and place of any postal vote opening session and the number of agents a candidate may appoint to attend each opening²³⁷.

Mayoral and neighbourhood planning referendums

At a mayoral or neighbourhood planning referendum, you must give counting observers appointed for the purpose of observing postal vote openings at least 48 hours' notice of the time and place of any postal vote opening session²³⁸.

The poll

3.16 Polling agents are entitled by law to access polling stations for the purpose of detecting personation²³⁹. They can also observe the procedures to be followed inside a polling station.

3.17 You must be notified in writing of any polling agents that have been appointed by not later than five working days before the poll for their appointment to be in force for the poll²⁴⁰. The Commission has developed a [form for the notification of appointment of polling agents](#).

3.18 A polling agent can be appointed to a particular polling station or stations, or to all polling stations within the relevant electoral area. The same polling agents may be appointed to attend more than one polling station.

3.19 The total number that may attend at any particular polling station is four or such greater number that you decide to allow²⁴¹. The limit applies to each individual polling station, even where there are multiple polling stations in the same building or room. If you decide to allow more than four polling agents to attend a polling station, you must give notice of that higher number²⁴². This notice should be published on your website and a copy provided to the candidates and their election agents. You can decide to fix different maximum numbers for different polling stations and, if you decide to do so, you should make this clear on the notice you publish.

3.20 If all the candidates together appoint more than the maximum number of polling agents who can attend any polling station you must decide which polling agents may attend by drawing lots for each polling station²⁴³. Those who are not selected by the lot are not appointed as polling agents for that particular polling station²⁴⁴.

3.21 Only one polling agent for each candidate may be admitted to a polling station at any particular time²⁴⁵.

Neighbourhood planning referendum

At a stand-alone neighbourhood planning referendum there are no limits in law to the number of polling observers that may be appointed to attend any particular polling station. However, where the poll at a neighbourhood planning referendum has been combined with the poll at another election or referendum, the total number of polling observers or polling agents that are permitted to attend at any particular polling station is limited to four, or such greater number as the relevant Returning Officer or Counting Officer may determine²⁴⁶. If the number of such polling observers or agents is greater than that number, the relevant Returning Officer or Counting Officer must, by law, determine which observers/agents are entitled to attend by drawing lots²⁴⁷.

The count

3.22 Counting agents can be appointed to observe the verification and counting processes²⁴⁸.

3.23 You must be notified in writing of the appointment of counting agents by not later than five working days before the poll for their appointment to be in force for the verification and count²⁴⁹. The Commission has developed a [form for the notification of appointment of counting agents](#).

3.24 You must give counting agents who have been appointed notice in writing of the time and place at which the verification and count will begin²⁵⁰.

Local authority and combined authority mayoral elections

You are also legally required to give counting agents who have been appointed notice of the time and place at which the count of the second preference votes will begin if required²⁵¹.

At the combined authority mayoral election only, one of the counting agents for each candidate can be designated to be able to request a recount at the conclusion of the count or any recount. Such designations must be made at the time that the counting agent appointment is notified to you.

3.25 You are permitted by law to limit the number of counting agents²⁵². The number that may be appointed by each candidate must be the same and, unless there are special circumstances, must not be less than the number obtained by dividing the number of counting assistants (i.e. those staff counting the ballot papers) by the number of candidates²⁵³.

3.26 When determining the maximum number of counting agents, each candidate should, as far as possible, be permitted to appoint sufficient numbers of counting agents to enable full and proper scrutiny of the verification and count processes. You should, however, consider any health and safety implications, including fire regulations for the verification and count venue, when deciding on maximum numbers of counting agents.

Combination

When determining the maximum number of counting agents that can attend where polls are combined, you should bear in mind that the counting agents for all polls being verified are entitled to attend the verification of all polls.



For details on who can attend the verification and count, see [Part E: Verifying and counting the votes](#).

4 Production of notices, poll cards and ballot papers

Production and publication of notices

4.1 When you are required to publish notices, you should post them in a conspicuous place within the electoral area. This should include local authority offices, noticeboards, libraries and other public buildings. The notice may also be given in such other manner as you think fit²⁵⁴.

4.2 In order to ensure that voters can receive the information they need, in an accessible format and within time for them to cast their vote, you should ensure that information on the polls, including the notices of election and notices of poll, are easily accessible to voters, such as through the local authority website.

4.3 If you are making information available on your website you should ensure it is accessible to all voters. For example, if you are providing information in PDF format, you should be aware that if certain steps are not followed when creating PDFs they may not be compatible with screen readers and other assistive technologies. The UK Government has produced [a guide to producing accessible PDFs](#) you can refer to. You could also speak to your authority's equalities officer for advice.

4.4 In accordance with data protection legislation, you will need to consider whether it is appropriate or necessary for the notices to remain published, on your website or elsewhere, beyond the expiry of the petition period for that election. Where the notices serve specific purposes, i.e. advising who will be a candidate at the election, once the election is over, and the opportunity to question that election has passed, they serve no further purpose. Therefore, you should either remove the notices, or remove the personal data contained in the notices, once the petition deadline for the election has passed.

4.5 Data protection legislation does permit personal data to be stored for longer periods if the data will be processed solely for archiving purposes in the public interest, or for scientific, historical, or statistical purposes and subject to the implementation of appropriate safeguards. For notices of election results, for example, you should retain these on your website as they are for public interest and historical and statistical purposes.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure that information on the polls, including the notice of election and notice of poll, is easily accessible to voters, such as through the local authority website. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to ensure that information on the polls can be easily accessed through the local authority website.



See [Part B – ‘Planning and organisation’](#) for more general guidance on communicating information to electors.

4.6 You should have robust proof-checking processes in place to ensure that there are no errors on the notices you are required to publish. Having robust proof checking processes in place could help detect any errors and avoid any potential data breaches before they occur.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure that you have robust processes in place for ensuring that there are no errors on the notice(s) of election. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to have in place processes for the proof-checking of the notice(s).

Translation and formats of notices

4.7 You must, where you consider it appropriate to do so, ensure that notices are translated or provided in another format²⁵⁵. You may produce them:

- in Braille
- in languages other than English (or, in Wales, English and Welsh)
- using graphical representations
- in audio format²⁵⁶
- using any other means of making information accessible

4.8 The nomination form and the ballot papers cannot be produced in any other language or format²⁵⁷. However, both the enlarged hand-held and display copies of the ballot paper(s) must have the instructions for voters printed at the top of the paper(s), and these words may be translated into languages other than English or, in Wales, English and Welsh²⁵⁸.

Notice of election



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure that you have robust processes in place for ensuring that there are no errors on the notice(s) of election. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to have in place processes for the proof-checking of the notice(s).

4.9 You must publish the notice of election by not later than 25 working days before the poll²⁵⁹. A separate notice can be produced for each ward, or a combined notice can be produced including all of the wards in the local authority area with elections.

4.10 The notice of election must include the following:

- the place and times at which nomination papers can be delivered, and at which nomination papers may be obtained
- the date of the poll if the election is contested
- the date by which applications for absent votes (including emergency proxies) and any cancellations or changes to absent voting arrangements must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the election²⁶⁰

4.11 The notice of election should also include the date by which applications for registration must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the election.

4.12 The address given for the delivery of nomination papers should be exact, and include any room number. This will avoid any doubt should nominations be delivered close to the deadline. All reception staff at offices of the building and other connected buildings should be informed that they should not take receipt of nomination papers.

4.13 The Commission has developed a template [notice of election](#) which you can use.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure that you have robust processes in place for ensuring that there are no errors on the notice(s) of election. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to have in place processes for the proof-checking of the notice(s).

Local authority mayoral elections

The notice must also state any arrangements which apply for the payment of the deposit by electronic means²⁶¹. The Commission has made available a template [notice of election for local authority mayoral elections](#) that you can use.

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO must publish the notice of election for the combined authority mayoral election by not later than twenty-five working days before the poll²⁶². The CARO should prepare and send you a copy of the notice of election, which you should publish locally in the local authority area so that electors in your part of the combined authority area can easily access it.

Mayoral referendums

The Commission has produced a [template notice of referendum for mayoral referendums](#). The notice must, by law, state:

- the date of the poll
- the date by which applications to vote by post or proxy (including emergency proxies), and any cancellations or changes to absent voting arrangements must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the referendum²⁶³

The notice should also include the date by which applications for registration must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the referendum.

Neighbourhood planning referendums

At a neighbourhood planning referendum, the notice of referendum must be published not later than the twenty-fifth working day before the poll

The notice must, by law, state:

- the date of the poll
- the date by which applications to vote by post or proxy (including emergency proxies), and any cancellations or changes to absent voting arrangements must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the referendum²⁶⁴

The notice should also include the date by which applications for registration must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the referendum.

Statement of persons nominated

4.14 You must publish a statement of persons nominated for each ward by not later than 4pm, eighteen working days before the poll²⁶⁵.

4.15 The statement of persons nominated must include the following for all candidates who have been validly nominated, as well as those who have withdrawn or whose nomination you have rejected²⁶⁶:

- name
- address or, in England, 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)
- description (if any)
- In the case of those who no longer stand nominated, the reason why they no longer stand nominated.

4.16 Your privacy notice should make clear that you are required under electoral legislation to publish a candidate's name and address information in the statement of persons nominated.



[Our resource](#) on the EU General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 covers the requirements of a privacy notice.

4.17 The names of the candidates on the statement must be listed in alphabetical order of their surname²⁶⁷; this is also how they will appear on the ballot paper²⁶⁸. Where there are two or more candidates with the same surname, the alphabetical order of the other names will decide which candidate is listed first²⁶⁹.

4.18 In England, if, by the close of nominations, more than one validly nominated candidate has asked for their home address not to be published, and if they are from the same relevant area of the UK, or otherwise from the same country, you must consider if two or more of them have the same or so similar a name that they are likely to cause confusion²⁷⁰. If you consider that this is the case, you may add such details from their home address or nomination form as you consider appropriate to reduce the likelihood of confusion.

4.19 Before you make a decision on which details should be included, you must consult the candidate(s) affected, if it is practicable to do so. You must in any event give notice in writing to the affected candidate(s) informing them of the additional information that will be published.²⁷¹

4.20 If a person has requested the use of a commonly used name on their nomination paper, the commonly used name must be shown on the statement instead of the actual name²⁷². Where a candidate has requested the use of a commonly used surname, the candidate's alphabetical position on the statement of persons nominated and on the ballot paper must be made by reference to their commonly used surname.

4.21 If, however, you have rejected the use of any commonly used name as you think it may be likely to mislead or confuse electors, or is obscene or offensive, the actual name must, by law, be published on the statement of persons nominated instead of the commonly used name²⁷³.

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO must publish the statement of persons nominated for the combined authority area by 4pm on the eighteenth working day before the poll²⁷⁴. The CARO should prepare and send to you a copy of the statement of persons nominated as soon as it has been published, which you should publish in the local authority area as soon as practicable after receiving it so that electors in your part of the combined authority area can easily access it.

Notice of poll

4.22 If there are more candidates than there are vacancies and there is to be a contest, you must publish a notice of poll for each ward by not later than the sixth working day before polling day²⁷⁵. The notice of poll must state:

- the date and hours of the poll
- the number of councillors to be elected in the ward
- the particulars of the candidates standing validly nominated
- the names of the subscribers²⁷⁶

4.23 Legislation requires the particulars of the candidates on the notice of poll to be the same as on the statement of persons nominated. As such, if a candidate in England chooses to have their home address withheld from the statement of persons nominated and the ballot papers, the home address must not be included on the notice of poll either.²⁷⁷

4.24 Your privacy notice should make clear that you are required under electoral legislation to publish a candidate's name and address information, and the names of subscribers, in the notice of poll.



[Our resource](#) on the EU General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 covers the requirements of a privacy notice.

4.25 You should give a copy of the notice of poll to all candidates and election agents as soon as practicable after its publication. You should also be prepared to give copies to any accredited observers on request.

Mayoral referendums

At a mayoral referendum, the notice of poll must include:

- the date and hours of the poll
- the question to be asked in the referendum²⁷⁸

If any campaigners have contacted you or are known to you, you should supply them with a copy of the notice of poll and situation of polling stations for their reference. You should also supply these to any polling observers who have been appointed.

Combined authority mayoral elections

If the combined authority mayoral election is contested, the CARO is required to publish a notice of poll for the combined authority area by not later than the sixth working day before poll²⁷⁹. The CARO should provide you with a copy of the notice which you should publish locally in your local authority area so that electors in your part of the combined authority area can easily access it.

Neighbourhood planning referendums

At a neighbourhood planning referendum the notice of poll must include:

- the date and hours of the poll
- the question to be asked in the referendum²⁸⁰

If any campaigners have contacted you or are known to you, you should supply them with a copy of the notice of poll and situation of polling stations for their reference. You should also supply these to any polling observers who have been appointed.

Notice of the situation of polling stations

4.26 You must, not later than the publication of the notice of poll, prepare and publish a notice setting out:

- the situation of each polling station in the area
- the description of voters entitled to vote there²⁸¹

Combined authority mayoral elections

At combined authority mayoral elections, it is you as local RO who is responsible for publishing the notice of situation of polling stations for your area²⁸².

Combination

Where two or more polls are combined, the Returning Officer or Counting Officer taking on the combined functions is responsible for publishing the notice of situation of polling stations.

The notice must also:

- state that the poll is to be taken together with the poll at the other election(s) or referendum(s)²⁸³
- specify the relevant local authority in which the other election is held or, in the case of a referendum, the voting area²⁸⁴
- where the poll is combined with the poll at an election to fill a casual vacancy, include the electoral area for which the election is held²⁸⁵
- in the case of combination with a combined authority mayoral election, the notice should also specify the name of the combined authority
- where any of the polls are to be taken together in part of the local government area only, specify that part²⁸⁶

4.27 You should have robust proof-checking processes in place to ensure that there are no errors on the notice of situation of polling stations.

4.28 You must give a copy of the relevant notice of situation of polling stations and descriptions of voters entitled to vote there to all election agents as soon as practicable after giving the notice, and you should also give a copy of the relevant notice to all candidates²⁸⁷. You should also be prepared to make these notices available to any accredited observers on request.

4.29 The Commission has developed a [template notice of poll and situation of polling stations](#) which you can use.

Combined authority mayoral elections

As local RO, you are responsible for publishing the notice of situation of polling stations. The Commission has developed a template [notice of situation of polling stations for the combined authority mayoral election](#) which you can use.

You should liaise with the CARO on how the provision of the notice of situation of polling stations to candidates, agents and observers should be managed in practice, including whether the notices for all constituent councils will be disseminated centrally by the CARO.

Production of poll cards

4.30 As local government RO you are responsible for sending electors and their proxies an official poll card²⁸⁸. Poll cards must follow the prescribed form²⁸⁹.

Combination

If you and the Returning or Counting Officer for the other relevant election or referendum agree, you can issue combined poll cards for all polls²⁹⁰.

Poll cards must follow the prescribed form²⁹¹ but you can make any necessary adaptations when combining them.²⁹²

You must ensure that all of the elements specified in the relevant election rules and shown on the front and the back of the poll cards in the appendix to the election rules are included.²⁹³

Where combined poll cards are issued, information about all relevant electoral events should be provided. If there are only some wards in your area with a particular combination of polls, you should make arrangements to ensure that electors are sent poll cards containing the information about the particular combination of polls in their ward.

4.31 You will need to dispatch your poll card data to your printers.

4.32 If you are outsourcing the production of poll cards, you should ensure that your software is able to produce a data file that your printers can use to produce the materials to the specification required. At an early stage in discussions with suppliers you should address in what format you will supply the data and in what format they will send you any proofs, and this should be included in your specification and contract.

4.33 If you send registration data to a contractor to produce poll cards for the election, you are using a processor. As a data controller, data protection legislation imposes a legal obligation when using a processor to formalise the working relationship in a contract which sets out:

- the subject matter, nature and purpose of the processing;
- the obligations and rights of the data controller;
- duration of the processing; and
- the types of personal data and categories of data subjects.

4.34 In addition, the contract must set out specific obligations on the processor, including that they:

- comply with your instructions
- are subject to a duty of confidentiality
- keep personal data secure and notify you of any breach
- maintain written records of the processing activities they carry out for you
- only use a sub-processor with your consent
- submit to audits and inspections and provide you with whatever information you need to ensure compliance with data protection requirements
- delete or return all personal data to you as requested at the end of the contract.

4.35 You should ensure your agreement/contract specifically confirms that:

- electoral registration data held by the processor should be destroyed as soon as possible after polling day.
- information from the full electoral register cannot be disclosed at any time, confirming that they will not disclose data to any unauthorised party; and
- after the election, they will return any discs and paper records provided to them and securely destroy any other electronic or paper copies of the data in line with the Information Commissioner's guidelines.

4.36 You should also conduct a test-run by submitting sample data to the printers in advance of 'live' data being submitted. This will also enable pre-proofs to be developed, so that it is clear which part of the data should go where on the poll card.

4.37 You should also liaise with your Royal Mail contact (or other commercial delivery firm) at an early stage to ensure that you have appropriate licences in place and that the poll card meets specific delivery requirements.

4.38 Regardless of whether you have outsourced the production of poll cards you remain responsible for ensuring that they are produced in accordance with the legislation. You should therefore ensure that you have arrangements in place which enable you to quality-assure the whole process.

4.39 In order to ensure that voters receive the information they need you should have in place a process for checking live proofs of poll cards, including those for absent voters, as well as arrangements to check the actual stationery being produced, which will highlight if any of the signed-off proofs have been inadvertently altered. Random spot checks within polling districts could also be carried out so that a representative cross-section can be checked.

4.40 We have produced a [proof checking factsheet](#) which you can use to help you quality assure the whole process. Having robust proof checking processes in place could help detect any errors and avoid any potential data breaches before they occur.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure you have robust processes in place for ensuring that there are no errors on poll cards. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered you will need to have in place processes for the proof-checking of poll cards.

4.41 EROs must publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll²⁹⁴. These notices support the prompt dispatch of poll cards to those electors who have applied to register close to the registration deadline.

4.42 The first interim notice of alteration must be published on the day of the deadline for nominations, which is the nineteenth working day before the poll²⁹⁵. The second interim notice must be published between the eighteenth and sixth working day before the poll (inclusive)²⁹⁶. If you are not also the ERO, you should liaise with them to ensure that the timing of the publication of the second interim notice can support the production of your second wave of poll cards.

4.43 An update of the registration data resulting from each of the notices of alteration should be sent to your printers as soon as practicable to enable the production of poll cards for new electors.



Further information on interim notices is included in [Part 4 – Maintaining the register throughout the year](#) of the Commission's guidance for EROs.



Further details on the management of contractors and suppliers can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#). We have also produced a [contract development checklist](#) to support you in your work with contractors/suppliers.

Poll card delivery

4.44 You must send out poll cards as soon as practicable after the publication of the notice of election²⁹⁷. Where poll cards are combined, they can only be issued once the notice of election for all elections has been published.



Parish and community council elections

The requirement to send poll cards does not apply to parish or community council elections. The parish or community council can, however, request that you issue poll cards²⁹⁸. Any such request must, by law, be made not later than 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll²⁹⁹. You should liaise with the clerk at an early stage to obtain early confirmation of the parish or community council's decision on the issue of poll cards to allow you to finalise the design of any poll cards or combined poll cards you may be issuing and issue these soon after the publication of notice of election.

It is not unusual for a parish or community council election to be uncontested. While not printing poll cards where you might expect certain seats to be uncontested and candidates elected unopposed is a potential means of saving costs, poll cards tell people about the elections and may encourage their involvement and can often prompt them to update their registration details. If the parish or community council election is likely to be uncontested you could, for example, include a line on the poll card that alerts the elector to a parish election in their area should the election be contested.

It is important in all cases to get poll cards to electors as early as possible and it is therefore for you as Returning Officer to make an assessment of the optimum distribution date for poll cards in each electoral area. In any cases where this does not take place until after nominations have closed, you should consider how you will mitigate the risk of poll cards only being received by electors close to, or potentially after, the registration deadline.

4.45 In order to ensure that voters receive the information they need and within time for them to cast their vote you should ensure that poll cards can be received by voters as soon as possible, so that they have the maximum amount of time to change their registration details or apply for an absent vote.

4.46 You will need to make an assessment of the optimum distribution date for poll cards and should focus on when poll cards can be expected to be received by electors.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure that poll cards can be received by voters as soon as possible so that they have the maximum amount of time to act on the information. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered, you will need to set out information on the method for delivery of poll cards, including an estimation of when poll cards will be delivered.

4.47 Poll cards may be delivered by hand or by post³⁰⁰.

Delivery by hand

4.48 If you decide to deliver poll cards by hand you should plan for how this will work in practice. You should appoint sufficient staff to ensure that poll cards can be received by voters as soon as possible to maximise the time they have to change their registration details or apply for an absent vote. You should clearly set out in your instructions the last day by which you would expect all poll cards to have been delivered.

4.49 You should ensure that staff are aware of data protection considerations, and should consider requiring staff to confirm in writing at the point of recruitment, that they will abide by your data protection policy.

4.50 You should also have in place a mechanism for monitoring delivery, with a view to ensuring that poll cards have been delivered across the whole of the local authority area and to agreed timeframes. This may include requiring delivery staff to fill in log sheets and having supervisors carry out spot-checks.

Delivery by post

4.51 You may use Royal Mail or any other commercial delivery firm for the delivery of poll cards. If you are delivering poll cards by post, you should liaise with your postal services provider to agree timescales for delivery and obtain any proof of postage that the firm provides.

4.52 You should also have in place a mechanism for monitoring the delivery of poll cards, with a view to ensuring that they have been delivered across the whole of the local authority area and to agreed timeframes. If possible, you should have arrangements in place to track deliveries in order to assist with responding to any enquiries from electors.

4.53 Your contingency planning should address how you would issue any poll cards in the event that Royal Mail or the commercial delivery firm you have contracted are unable to deliver the poll cards, for example, due to industrial action.

4.54 A poll card must be sent to the elector's qualifying address or, in the case of a proxy, to the proxy's address as shown in the list of proxies³⁰¹.

4.55 An anonymous elector's poll card must be sent in a covering envelope to the elector's qualifying address or, where a different address has been specified on their registration application, the poll card must be sent to that other address³⁰².

Production of ballot papers

4.56 The form of the ballot papers is prescribed in the relevant election rules and you must follow this precisely³⁰³. We have produced a separate [guide for Returning Officers in Wales on producing bilingual ballot papers](#).

4.57 Ballot papers for postal voters and for polling station use for each election must be the same in form, except that the official mark may be different if desired³⁰⁴.

Combined authority mayoral elections

As local Returning Officer you are responsible for printing the combined authority mayoral ballot papers for your constituent council area, unless the CARO directs that they will take on this responsibility³⁰⁵.

4.58 Although the final content of the ballot papers cannot be confirmed until nominations have closed, you will need to have clarity about the following elements of the ballot papers at an early stage:

- colour of the ballot papers
- the 'official mark'
- ballot paper numbers
- unique identifying mark

Ballot paper colour

4.59 The colour of the ballot paper is not prescribed. In deciding on the ballot paper colours you should take into account accessibility issues relating to colour and contrast. Section 6 of the Commission's [Making your mark](#) good practice design guidance contains advice on choosing ballot paper colours.

4.60 Tendered ballot papers must be a different colour to the ordinary ballot papers³⁰⁶.

Combination

Where polls are combined, the colour of the ballot papers for each poll must be different³⁰⁷.

Combined authority mayoral elections

While the colour of the ballot paper at a combined authority mayoral election is not prescribed, the CARO may advise or direct you to use a particular colour for the combined authority mayoral election ballot paper³⁰⁸.

The 'official mark'

4.61 An appropriate security mark – the 'official mark' – must be added to the ballot paper³⁰⁹. The mark should be distinctive and does not have to be a perforation added at the time of issue of the ballot paper, although stamping instruments may still be used to create a perforating official mark. It could be a printed emblem or mark or a special printing device such as a watermark. It should be capable of being seen on the front of the ballot paper so that it can be seen without having to turn the ballot paper over.

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO may advise or direct you to use a particular official mark, or require that it contain specific features³¹⁰.

4.62 The official mark can be the same for all ballot papers at an election or different official marks can be used for different purposes at the same election³¹¹. For example one for postal votes and another for polling station ballot papers. The official mark used on the ballot papers cannot be re-used for five years at an election to the same local government area³¹².

Combined authority mayoral elections

The official mark used on the ballot papers cannot be re-used for five years at an election to the same combined authority area³¹³.

Neighbourhood planning referendums

Ballot papers at a neighbourhood planning referendum must also include an official mark, but there are no restrictions in law on re-using the same official mark at subsequent referendums³¹⁴.

Ballot paper numbers and the unique identifying mark

4.63 Ballot paper numbers should run consecutively, but do not have to start at '1'.

4.64 The unique identifying mark can be letters and numbers and could be a repeat of the ballot paper number with the addition of a prefix or a suffix. Also, a unique identifying mark can be, but does not have to be, a barcode. It is not the same as the official mark.

4.65 The unique identifying mark:

- should be unique for each ballot paper
- can be re-used at the next poll
- must be printed on the back of the ballot paper³¹⁵

Combined authority mayoral elections

The CARO may advise or direct you on the form of the unique identifying mark³¹⁶.

Candidate details

4.66 For each election, candidates must appear on the ballot paper in the order that they are listed on the statement of persons nominated and their names and relevant details must be printed in accordance with the relevant directions for printing³¹⁷.

Combined authority mayoral election

The CARO will be able to confirm the candidate details which are to appear on the ballot paper for the combined authority mayoral election after the close of nominations, i.e. after 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll.

4.67 In all cases, you should use the maximum possible sizes of font. To ensure consistency, the same font size should be used for each candidate for each equivalent line.

4.68 You may be provided with a high-resolution copy of the emblem for use in the printing of ballot papers, or you may need to download the emblem from the Commission's website. You should ensure that whatever copy is used is in the same form as the registered emblem.

4.69 The maximum size of an emblem on the ballot paper is two centimetres square³¹⁸. When adding a party emblem to a ballot paper, the shape of the emblem should not be altered. You should ensure that the emblem is in the same form as the registered emblem – for example, do not stretch emblems into square shapes if they are not registered as square images on our website, as this would have the effect of altering their appearance.

Form of the reverse of the ballot paper

4.70 The form of the reverse of the ballot paper is prescribed and you must ensure that the required information is included on the ballot paper reverse in the specified format³¹⁹. There is no provision to put any hatching or other marks on the back of the ballot paper.

Printing of ballot papers

4.71 The ballot papers must, by law, be printed in accordance with the directions for printing in the appendix to the relevant election rules³²⁰. You should ensure that you check with your print supplier at an early stage to establish the maximum size of ballot papers that they can print and, if necessary, have contingency arrangements in place in the event that larger ballot papers are required.

Combined authority mayoral elections

At a combined authority mayoral election, the CARO may reserve for themselves the printing of the combined authority mayoral ballot papers by issuing a direction to that effect³²¹. They will liaise with you and give you notice if they intend to do this.

Local authority and combined authority mayoral elections

You must ensure the ballot paper is in the form in the appendix of the relevant election rules³²². Different rules apply for the ballot paper design for polls with two candidates and polls with three or more candidates³²³.

The printing of ballot papers should commence as soon as possible after the deadline for withdrawals has passed and final proofs have been signed off and, in relation to combined authority mayoral elections, should be carried out in accordance with any advice or direction issued by the CARO.

4.72 If you send data to a contractor to produce ballot papers for the election, you are using a processor. As a data controller, data protection legislation imposes a legal obligation when using a processor to formalise the working relationship in a contract which sets out:

- the subject matter, nature and purpose of the processing;
- the obligations and rights of the data controller;
- duration of the processing; and
- the types of personal data and categories of data subjects.

4.73 In addition, the contract must set out specific obligations on the processor, including that they:

- comply with your instructions
- are subject to a duty of confidentiality
- keep personal data secure and notify you of any breach
- maintain written records of the processing activities they carry out for you
- only use a sub-processor with your consent
- submit to audits and inspections and provide you with whatever information you need to ensure compliance with data protection requirements
- delete or return all personal data to you as requested at the end of the contract.

4.74 You should have robust proof-checking processes in place, as well as arrangements to check the ballot papers while being printed. This will highlight if any of the signed-off proofs have been inadvertently altered. This could include, for example, ensuring that proofs are checked twice by at least two people.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure you have robust processes in place for ensuring that there are no errors on the ballot papers. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered, you will need to have in place a process for proof-checking ballot papers, as well as arrangements to check the ballot papers whilst being printed, which will highlight if any of the signed-off proofs have been inadvertently altered.

4.75 When proof-checking ballot papers, you should check that:

- every candidate is included on the ballot paper with their particulars shown as required by law
- every detail on the ballot paper is spelt correctly
- every emblem that has been validly requested has been included beside the correct candidate and matches the party's entry in the Commission's register
- all candidate descriptions have been printed against the correct candidate
- the voting instructions at the top of the ballot paper match the legislative requirements
- the ballot papers have been cut to the correct size
- the official mark has been included

4.76 Once you have received the printed ballot papers, you should carry out a final check before any ballot papers are issued either at a postal vote issuing session or supplied to a polling station. This should be done by checking at least the first and last ballot paper in every book and by checking that the ballot paper numbers in each book or packet run sequentially.



General guidance on the management of contractors and suppliers and on monitoring their work can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#). We have also produced a [contract development checklist](#) to support you in your work with contractors/suppliers.

We have also produced a [proof checking factsheet](#) which you can use to help you quality assure the whole process.

4.77 Careful consideration needs to be given to the number of ballot papers that will need to be printed to allow you to allocate a sufficient number of ballot papers to polling stations and issue postal ballot packs. You should, as a minimum, base your print-run on 100% turnout of eligible electors. There are significant risks attached to printing ballot papers based on lower turnout levels. For example, if you start running out of ballot papers on polling day it will be more difficult at that stage to print additional ballot papers and send these to the affected polling stations in a timely manner.

4.78 If you decide for any reason not to print, as a minimum, ballot papers based on 100% turnout of eligible electorate, you should carefully assess the risks.

4.79 As part of your risk assessment you should consider:

- the particular context of these polls
- any particular local circumstances
- projected turnout – taking into account the potential for late engagement and interest in the elections. As a minimum you should assume that the turnout will be not less than the turnout at the last equivalent polls
- any local or national issues which may affect turnout
- whether having a stock of additional ballot papers ready for rapid delivery to polling stations is preferable, in terms of your ability to respond to additional demand, and more cost effective than printing ballot papers on polling day

4.80 You should also take steps to ensure that additional ballot papers can be printed at short notice if required and decide how polling station staff would be briefed should this situation occur.

4.81 Guidance on the allocation of ballot papers to polling stations can be found in Chapter 5.

Ballot paper security

4.82 Once the official mark is printed on your ballot papers, they are effectively 'live'. Regardless of whether you have outsourced your printing or are printing in-house, in order to ensure that voters can have confidence in the process, you should ensure the security of ballot papers during production and storage. Your security arrangements should prevent unauthorised access to or use of the ballot papers during all stages of the production process and storage between printing and the poll.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to maintain the secure storage of ballot papers at all times. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered, you will need to have in place arrangements for securely storing ballot papers that prevent unauthorised access to or use of the ballot papers during all stages of the production process and storage between printing and the poll.

5 Polling station voting

5.1 We have produced a [polling station handbook](#) which covers in detail the voting procedures and what to expect on polling day.

5.2 The guidance contained in the polling station handbook has not been reproduced here. Instead, this part of our guidance focuses on the preparations you will need to make in advance of polling day.

Local authority mayoral elections

An [insert for the polling station handbook](#) is available to make it relevant to local authority mayoral elections.

Combined authority mayoral elections

We have produced a [polling station handbook for standalone combined authority mayoral elections](#), as well as one for where the poll at a [combined authority mayoral election is combined with the poll at another local government election](#).

Setting up polling stations



Guidance on the identification of suitable polling stations can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#).

5.3 You should take all necessary steps to ensure that polling stations are laid out with the voter in mind. In particular, the needs of voters with a range of disabilities should be taken into account. The positioning of all of the required furniture and equipment, as well as where all of the notices should be displayed, should also be considered, along with the placement of signage within the polling station and external signage.

5.4 You should develop plans for the layout of each of your polling stations which can be used to assist those setting up the polling stations. You should consider voter throughput and flow, including how the voter will move through the voting process from entering to exiting the polling station.

5.5 Whoever is in charge of setting up polling stations should be instructed on how to do so and what the layout should be capable of achieving.

5.6 If polling station staff are not expected to set up polling stations, they should be instructed to check that the polling station has been set up properly, and should have reference to any layout plans you have produced and the polling station set-up checklist in the Commission's polling station handbook when doing so. The polling station handbook also covers the positioning of

equipment and display of notices, and provides examples of layouts for both a room where there is one polling station and a room where there is more than one polling station.



To be able to achieve the outcome set out in [performance standard 1](#), you will need to ensure access needs are taken into account when planning for and setting up polling stations and that polling station staff are trained to set-up polling stations in such a way that takes account of voter needs. To demonstrate that the outcome can be delivered, you will need to have made an assessment regarding access needs, identifying any problems and actions taken to remedy these, and provide guidance/training to polling station staff.



Further guidance on training polling station staff can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#).

5.7 Polling station inspector visits can be used to check polling station set-up and to ensure that all notices remain properly displayed throughout polling day.



Further details on the role of polling station inspectors can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#).

We have also produced a [checklist for polling station inspectors](#) that they can use when undertaking their visits.

Polling station equipment and materials

5.8 You must provide polling stations with certain materials:

- Ballot box(es).
- Ballot papers (including tendered ballot papers).
- Materials to enable voters to mark their ballot papers (in practice, pencils or pens - you may wish to provide a string to attach pencils/pens to the polling booths).
- Relevant part of the register.
- Lists of absent voters – lists of postal voters, proxy voters and postal proxies.
- Form to record the details of electors who have been issued ballot papers after the correction of a clerical error (which may be appended to the polling station register).
- Corresponding number list.
- Large-print version of the ballot paper(s) for display inside the polling station.

- Enlarged hand-held sample copy of the ballot paper(s) to give to electors to take to a polling booth with them for reference.
- Voting device for use by blind or partially sighted voters. This must allow the ballot paper to be attached and detached without damaging the ballot paper. It should also hold the ballot paper firmly in place and allow the voter to identify the space on the ballot paper on which to mark their vote against their preferred candidate(s).
- Ballot paper accounts.
- Declaration by companions of voters with disabilities.
- List of tendered votes.
- List of votes marked by the Presiding Officer.
- Statement of number of votes marked by the Presiding Officer
- List of voters with disabilities assisted by companions.
- Guidance for voters ('How to vote at these elections') notice (for display both inside and outside the polling station).
- Instructions for voters notice (to be displayed inside the polling booth)
- Polling screens.
- Packets, with seals, in which to place the items to be returned to you, such as postal ballot papers returned to the polling station, and for packaging the election documentation at the close of poll.³²⁴

Local authority mayoral elections

Although there is no specific requirement in law for an 'instructions for voters' notice to be displayed inside each polling booth at a local authority mayoral election, you should still provide such a notice and instruct polling station staff to display a copy of it in every polling booth.

5.9 In addition, you should provide:

- a copy of the requirements as to secrecy
- envelopes, with seals, in which to place any ballot papers that have been issued but which the elector has not placed in the ballot box
- form or list to record electors marked as postal voters but who claim not to have applied for one
- notepaper for use by polling station staff
- stationery items as required, e.g. paper clips, drawing pins, adhesive tack, adhesive tape
- plastic sacks for returning stationery and equipment to the verification venue
- envelopes for making up assorted packets

5.10 You should check that all polling station equipment is fit for purpose and that you have a sufficient quantity, particularly in the event of a high turnout.

Combination

You will need to consider whether to use a single ballot box for the combined polls or separate ballot boxes for each poll. If using a single ballot box for the combined polls you will need to consider providing additional boxes to Presiding Officers as one box may not be sufficient should there be a high turnout. All ballot boxes provided for use in polling stations must be sealed by polling station staff at the start of the poll³²⁵.



For further guidance on the use of a single ballot box or separate ballot boxes at combined polls, see our [verification and count resource](#).

5.11 You should have prepared your polling station equipment and materials in good time before polling day, for either delivery to polling stations or collection by Presiding Officers.

5.12 As part of your evaluation of the suitability of your polling stations you will already have considered accessibility issues both inside and outside of each of your polling stations. You should ensure that any additional equipment you have identified as required to make the polling station accessible is delivered and set up in good time for the opening of the poll.

5.13 Where a polling station has an induction loop installed, it should be used wherever possible to support the accessibility of the electoral process to voters with hearing loss. Polling station staff would need to be trained on how to use these at the briefing session.

5.14 You must provide a copy of the [secrecy requirements](#) for polling station staff³²⁶.

Mayoral referendums

We have also published polling station [secrecy requirements for mayoral referendums](#).

Allocation of ballot papers

5.15 You must provide each polling station with such number of ballot papers as, in your opinion, may be necessary³²⁷. If you are not allocating ballot papers for 100% of electors entitled to vote in person at the polling stations careful consideration needs to be given to the number that will be required in each case.

5.16 As part of your consideration, you should consider expected turnout levels. You should assume that the turnout will be not less than the turnout at the last equivalent poll, and you should take into account the potential for late

engagement and interest in the election, and any local or national issues which may affect turnout.

5.17 If you decide for any reason not to allocate ballot papers to polling stations based on 100% turnout of eligible electorate, you should have plans in place to ensure that additional ballot papers can be provided to any polling station that may require them in a timely manner and give clear advice to Presiding Officers about how to complete the ballot paper accounts to take account of the additional allocation.

5.18 When allocating ballot papers to polling stations, ensure that the numbers on the ballot papers allocated to each polling station run consecutively in order to avoid any problems with completing the corresponding number list or ballot paper account. Further guidance on the printing of ballot papers is provided in **Chapter 4 – Production of notices, poll cards and ballot papers**.

5.19 Tendered ballot papers must also be supplied to Presiding Officers³²⁸. Tendered ballot papers should be supplied to polling stations in a sealed envelope with instructions stating that the envelope should not be opened and the ballot papers within it issued only in prescribed circumstances, and a brief description of those circumstances should also be provided. This can help to avoid tendered ballot papers being issued in error.

5.20 You should take all necessary steps to ensure that all polling station staff understand that there are limited circumstances in which tendered ballot papers can be issued, and are made aware of what these circumstances are and what processes they will be required to follow for issuing them. The circumstances under which tendered ballot papers can be issued and the processes for doing so are covered in the Commission's [polling station handbook](#).

Local authority and combined authority mayoral elections

An [insert for the polling station handbook](#) is available to make the polling station handbook relevant to local authority mayoral elections.

We have produced a [polling station handbook for standalone combined authority mayoral elections](#), as well as one for where the poll at a [combined authority mayoral election is combined with the poll at another local government election](#)



Further guidance on training polling station staff can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#).

Polling station registers and absent voting lists

5.21 You must provide each Presiding Officer with the appropriate part of the register for their polling station and appropriate absent voting lists³²⁹. Polling station staff should have been trained on the various franchise markers that will appear on the register. Polling station staff should be aware of the importance of the security of voters' personal details on the electoral register and absent voting lists.

5.22 Polling station registers can be printed once the final election notice of alteration has been published, five working days before polling day. You should ensure that all printed polling station registers are checked to ensure that they are complete, reflect any recent additions or deletions to the register, and that the appropriate franchise markers are in place. You should also instruct your Presiding Officers to check that they have been provided with the correct register for their polling station and that it includes the expected number of electors allocated to their polling station.

5.23 Procedures should be put in place to deal with any necessary amendments to polling station registers and proxy lists after they have been printed resulting from alterations as a result of correcting clerical errors or court decisions on registration appeals and the granting of emergency proxy applications.

5.24 Whether such determinations are made before polling day or on polling day itself, you should have in place a method for communicating the relevant information to Presiding Officers, which may be done orally or in writing.

5.25 Where a clerical error has been rectified and the relevant elector arrives at the polling station and applies for their ballot paper(s), the Presiding Officer must issue the ballot paper(s) in the usual manner³³⁰. The Presiding Officer must also make a written record of the elector to whom the ballot paper(s) have been issued following an alteration to the register due to a clerical error³³¹. This record should include the elector's name and elector number. To assist Presiding Officers, you should attach an additional sheet to the polling station registers to allow them to record any such amendments.

5.26 Similar processes should also be developed to communicate additions to the list of proxy voters as a result of emergency proxy applications.

5.27 Where a person makes a complaint to polling station staff that suggests that they should be on the electoral register, the Presiding Officer should communicate that representation to the ERO as soon as is practicable. For this to work effectively there will need to be suitable communication systems in place between Presiding Officers and the ERO.

Corresponding number lists

5.28 The corresponding number lists are prescribed documents that can be found in the appendix to the election rules, though forms 'to like effect' can be used³³².

5.29 There are two types of corresponding number list: one list, which is the list to be used at postal vote issuing sessions, contains the number and unique identifying mark of every ballot paper produced, as well as the elector numbers of postal voters; and another list, which is the one to be used in polling stations, contains the ballot paper numbers and a column to add the elector numbers of voters to whom those ballot papers are issued³³³.

Combination

Where two or more polls are combined, you must prepare and provide a combined corresponding number list for each polling station³³⁴. You will need to give consideration as to how you will produce the combined corresponding number lists for use at combined polls in practice. One possible solution could be to use a separate sheet of paper for each poll, but which are then joined together in some way (for example, by staple) at the end of the process.

If the issue of postal votes has been combined, a combined corresponding number list must also be used at the issue of postal votes³³⁵.



Further details on the issue of postal votes can be found in [Part D: Absent Voting](#).

Packets for postal ballot papers delivered to polling stations

5.30 Postal voters can return their postal vote by hand to any polling station in their electoral area³³⁶.



For a definition of 'electoral area' in each case, see [Part A – Roles and responsibilities](#).

Combined authority mayoral elections

Postal voters can return their postal vote by hand to any polling station in the area for which the local RO acts.

Combination

Where the issue of postal ballot papers has been combined, postal votes may only be returned to that part of the electoral area that is common to all of the combined polls in respect of which postal ballot papers have been issued³³⁷.

5.31 Polling station staff should be appropriately briefed to identify which postal votes can be returned to their polling station.



Further details on the training of polling station staff can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#).

5.32 You should provide polling stations with packets for received postal votes. The number and style of packets should, as a minimum, be based on returns at the last equivalent polls, taking into account the potential for late engagement and interest in the election, and any local or national issues which may affect turnout. Records of all such packets should be kept so that each one can be accounted for. The packets should be clearly labelled as containing postal votes. The labels should include the name of the polling station and polling station identifier. You should ensure that the packets are capable of being securely sealed. Polling agents are entitled to attach their seal to sealed packets before they are removed from the polling station and must therefore be permitted to do so³³⁸.

5.33 You should emphasise to Presiding Officers the importance of maintaining the security of postal votes returned to polling stations by instructing them to immediately place any returned postal votes in the packets provided and to ensure that the packets are stored securely throughout the day.

5.34 You should arrange for postal votes to be collected from polling stations throughout the day as this will help to reduce the number that will have to be dealt with after the close of poll. Polling station inspectors can perform this duty. You should ensure that processes are in place to maintain a clear audit trail and to ensure the security of collected postal vote packets while in transit.

Polling station log

5.35 You should prepare a polling station log for polling station staff to use to record any problems or anomalies. Where a voter is unable to vote for any administrative reason, their name and address should be recorded in the log.

5.36 Polling station staff should also be advised to use this log to record anything that may help to explain any apparent issues with the ballot paper accounts at the verification – for example, if a voter has been seen leaving the polling station with a ballot paper. You should consider instructing Presiding Officers to keep the log and ballot paper accounts together when delivering the ballot papers to the count.

5.37 You should also instruct polling station staff to record in the polling station log, any instances where they are required to ask the prescribed questions as a result of suspected personation. This should be done once the person in question has left the polling station. They should record as much information as possible, for example, any distinguishing characteristics, which may help any future investigation. Appendix 7 of the [polling station handbook](#) sets out the procedure for dealing with personation, which involves asking the prescribed questions.

5.38 If you are concerned that personation may have taken place at a polling station you should contact your SPOC and you can also contact your [local Commission team](#) for additional support.

Polling station notices

5.39 You are required to produce the 'Guidance for voters' notice and the 'Instructions for voters' notice³³⁹. The contents and display of the 'Guidance for voters' notice and the 'Instructions for voters' notice are prescribed in legislation³⁴⁰.

Combination

You will need to ensure that the notices you provide for each polling station include the relevant instructions for all polls that electors at that polling station are voting in.

5.40 The 'Guidance for voters' notice is required by law to be printed in conspicuous characters and exhibited inside and outside of the polling station³⁴¹. The 'Instructions for voters' notice is required by law to be exhibited in every polling booth³⁴².

Local authority mayoral elections

Although there is no specific requirement in law for an 'instructions for voters' notice to be displayed inside each polling booth at a local authority mayoral election, you should still provide such a notice and instruct polling station staff to display a copy of it in every polling booth.

Use of English or Welsh in polling stations

5.41 You should ensure that when you brief polling station staff, you make clear that, in polling stations, only English (or in Wales, English or Welsh) should be used when assisting or giving instructions to electors. This will ensure transparency in proceedings, and will enable any observers or polling agents present in the polling station to monitor the voting process.

5.42 Some voters may need assistance in another language because of their limited English (or English or Welsh) language skills. You should therefore carefully consider what support you are able to provide to voters in your area who may have limited English (or English or Welsh) language skills, in particular by providing translations of the polling station notices. In some exceptional cases the translated notices may not be sufficient or appropriate. For example, a voter may have low levels of literacy or may have a question that falls outside of what is covered by the notices. In those circumstances, if polling station staff are able to provide information in a language spoken by the voter, assistance in a language other than English or Welsh may then be provided. Where assistance is given in another language, polling station staff should explain to other staff and any polling agents or observers present what question has been asked and the response given.

‘Selfies’ in polling stations

5.43 The law relating to obtaining information in polling stations and disclosing such information is complex. Given the risk that someone taking a photo inside a polling station may be in breach of the law³⁴³, whether intentionally or not, our advice is that you should not allow photos to be taken inside polling stations.

5.44 You should ensure that all polling station staff are aware of this guidance. You might also want to consider displaying a notice inside polling stations to make clear that photography of any kind (including photos taken on mobile phones) is not permitted. You may also want to consider whether you will allow the use of mobile phones at polling stations and whether to have signs explicitly prohibiting the use of mobile phones inside polling stations.

Provision of information on the number of ballot papers issued

5.45 An election agent or polling agent might ask polling station staff for information on the number of ballot papers issued. It is for you to decide whether to release this information. A request for the number of ballot papers that have been issued can only be made by those who are entitled to be inside the polling station. If you decide to provide this information, you must be careful not to release any information that may risk breaching the secrecy of the ballot.



For the referendum on the UK’s membership of the European Union, we produced a [summary sheet](#) on providing information on the number of ballot papers issued in the polling station, which you may find helpful.

Close of poll

5.46 Voters who at 10pm are in their polling station or in a queue outside their polling station for the purpose of voting may apply for ballot paper(s)³⁴⁴.

5.47 Good planning and flexible staffing should minimise the risk of there being queues at polling stations. As part of your planning you should consider where queues may arise and ensure that you have arrangements in place to be able to respond in the event of queues developing. You should ensure that polling station staff are monitoring turnout throughout the day and providing progress reports to polling station inspectors, and that you are kept informed if there is any intelligence that indicates a risk of there being a queue at close of poll at any polling station. However, you still need to be prepared to deal with any queues should they arise. You should also consider involving your police SPOC in planning arrangements to deal with possible queues at the close of poll, so they can assist you with queue management if necessary.



Further guidance on staffing arrangements at polling stations and relevant training of staff so they can carry out each other's roles in as far as the law permits can be found in [Part B – Planning and organisation](#).

5.48 The Commission's relevant polling station handbook sets out in detail the processes to be followed at the close of poll, including how to deal with voters held in a queue at 10pm.

¹ Rules 4 to 13, Schedule 2, Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (Principal Areas Rules 2006); rules 4 to 13, Schedule 2, Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (Parishes and Communities Rules 2006); rules 6 to 15, Schedule 1, Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 (Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007).

² Article 5, Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017

³ Rules 6 to 15, Schedule 1, 2017 Order (Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017).

⁴ Representation of the People Act 1983 s 76(2)(b) (RPA 1983) and Art 35 SI 2012/1917

⁵ Section 76, RPA 1983 s76.

⁶ Rule 5(5) and (6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

⁷ Regulation 98, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001).

⁸ RPA 1983 s13AB Regulation 98, RPR 2001 and sections 13AB and 13B, Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983).

⁹ Regulations 102 and 108, RPR 2001.

¹⁰ Regulations 102 and 61, RPR 2001.

¹¹ Regulations 102, 108 and 61, RPR 2001 (as applied by article 3(3)(e), 2017 Order).

¹² Regulations 108 and 61, RPR 2001 (as applied by article 3(3)(e), 2017 Order).

¹³ Regulation 102, RPR 2001.

¹⁴ Rules 1, 4, 7 and 8, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 1, 4, 7 and 8, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 3, 6, 9 and 11, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.

¹⁵ Rule 5(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.

-
- ¹⁶ Rule 5(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷ Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁸ Rule 16(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁹ Rule 4(1) and 6(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 4(1) and 6(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 6(2) and 8(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁰ Rule 7(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²¹ Rule 7(b)(i), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7(b)(i), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9(b)(i), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²² Rule 7(b)(ii), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7(b)(ii), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9(b)(ii), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²³ Rule 6(4)(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 6(4)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 8(4)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁴ Rule 3(1)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 3(1)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 5(1)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁵ Rule 1, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 1, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 3, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁶ Rule 8(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁷ Rule 10, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁸ Rule 3(1) Rules 4(1) and 7(d), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 4(1) and 7(d), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 6(2) and 9(d), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁹ Rule 4(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006 and rule 6(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³⁰ Rules 4(1) and 7(d), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 4(1) and 7(d), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 6(2) and 9(d), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³¹ Rule 4(1) Rules 4(1) and 7(d), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 4(1) and 7(d), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 6(2) and 9(d), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³² Rules 5 and 16 Rules 5(1) and 16(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 5(1) and 16(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 7(1) and 18(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³³ Rules 5(1) and 16(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 5(1) and 16(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 7(1) and 18(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³⁴ Rules 5(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 5(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 7(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³⁵ Rule 10, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 10, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 14, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³⁶ Rules 4(1) and 7(d), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 4(1) and 7(d), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 6(2) and 9(d), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007 Rule 2(5) The Local Elections (Principle Area) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018, Rule 2(5) The Local Elections (Parish and Communities) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018.
- ³⁷ Rule 8(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³⁸ Rule 9(7), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(7), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(7), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ³⁹ Rule 6(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006 and rule 6(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ⁴⁰ Section 65A, RPA 1983.
- ⁴¹ Section 65A(1)(a), RPA 1983.
- ⁴² RPA 1983 s65A and s168 and Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 s85 Sections 65A and 168(1), RPA 1983.
- ⁴³ Rule 4(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 4(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 6(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.

-
- ⁴⁴ Rule 4(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 4(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 6(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁴⁵ Rule 4(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 4(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 6(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁴⁶ Rule 9(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁴⁷ Rule 8(8), Principal Areas Rules 2006
- ⁴⁸ Rule 8(2) Rule 8(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁴⁹ Rules 9(4),16(2)(a) and 21(1)(c), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 9(4),16(2)(a) and 21(1)(c), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 12(4), 18(3)(a) and 23(1)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵⁰ Rule 9(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵¹ Rule 6(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁵² Rule 6(1)), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁵³ Rule 6(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ⁵⁴ Rule 8(1)), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵⁵ Rule 6, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 6, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 8, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵⁶ The prescribed nomination forms in the three sets of rules and rule 6(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 6(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 8(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵⁷ Rule 8(2)(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵⁸ Rule 6(7), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 6(7), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 8(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁵⁹ Rule 6(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁶⁰ Rule 6(5)), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁶¹ Rule 6(5)), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁶² Rule 6(6)), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁶³ Rule 6(5)), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ⁶⁴ Rule 8, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁶⁵ Rule 6(7) Rule 6(7)(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 6(7)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 8(5)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁶⁶ The principle that Returning Officers should take nomination papers at face value is found in cases such as *Greenway Stanley v Paterson* [1977] 2 All ER 663; *R v An Election Court ex parte Sheppard* [1975] 1 WLR 1319.
- ⁶⁷ Rule 6(1) and (2), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁶⁸ Rule 6(1) and (2), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁶⁹ Rule 6(21) and 8(2)(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006.
- ⁷⁰ Rule 6(1) and (2)), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ⁷¹ Rule 8(1) and (2)), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁷² Rule 5 Rule 5(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁷³ PPERA s28A Section 28A, Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000).
- ⁷⁴ Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁷⁵ Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁷⁶ Section 29, PPERA s292000.
- ⁷⁷ Section 30(6A), PPERA 2000.
- ⁷⁸ Section 30(6A), PPERA 2000 s30(6A).
- ⁷⁹ Section 30, PPERA 2000 s30 and SI 2006/3304 Sch 3 Rule 5.
- ⁸⁰ Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.

-
- ⁸¹ Rules 4(4) and 5(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006 and rules 6(5) and 7(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁸² Rule 4(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ⁸³ Rule 5(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ⁸⁴ Rule 5(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁸⁵ Rule 5(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁸⁶ Rule 5(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁸⁷ Rule 5(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 5(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 7(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁸⁸ Rule 16(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁸⁹ Rule 16(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹⁰ Rule 16(3A), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(3A), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(4A), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹¹ Rule 16(3), (3A) and (4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(3), (3A) and (4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(4), (4A) and (5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹² Rule 16(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹³ Rule 2 (6) The Local Elections (Principle Area) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018, Rule 2 (6) The Local Elections (Parish and Communities) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018
- ⁹⁴ Rule 7, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹⁵ Rule 7, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹⁶ Rule 7(d), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7(d), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9(d), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹⁷ The prescribed consent to nomination forms, which are prescribed under rule 7, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹⁸ The prescribed consent to nomination forms and rule 7(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ⁹⁹ Rule 7(c), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 7(c), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 9(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁰ The prescribed forms.
- ¹⁰¹ Rule 4(5), Principal Area Rules 2006
- ¹⁰² Rule 10(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰³ Rule 10(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁴ Rule 10(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁵ Rule 10(2)(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁶ Rule 5(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁷ Rule 10(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁸ Rule 55(1) and (4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁰⁹ Rule 55(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹¹⁰ Regulation 6, Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 (2007 Regulations).
- ¹¹¹ Paragraphs 2 to 4, Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
- ¹¹² Paragraph 3(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
- ¹¹³ Paragraph 3(6), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
- ¹¹⁴ rule 6(7)(b), Sch1, Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007
- ¹¹⁵ Paragraph 4(2), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
- ¹¹⁶ Paragraph 4(2), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.

-
- ¹¹⁷ Paragraph 4(3)(a), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹¹⁸ Paragraph 4(3)(b), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹¹⁹ Paragraph 4(4)(a), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁰ Paragraph 4(4)(b), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²¹ Paragraph 5(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²² Paragraph 3(2)(a), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²³ Paragraph 3(2)(b), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁴ Paragraph 3(2)(c), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁵ Paragraph 3(3) and (5), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁶ Paragraph 3(4) and (5), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁷ Paragraph 4(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁸ Paragraph 4(4)(a), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹²⁹ Paragraph 4(2)(b), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁰ Paragraph 5(2)(a), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³¹ Paragraph 5(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³² Paragraph 6(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³³ Paragraph 6(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁴ Paragraph 8(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁵ Regulation 6(2) and paragraph 6(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁶ Paragraph 6(2), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁷ Paragraph 6(2), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁸ Paragraph 6(3), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹³⁹ Paragraph 6(5), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴⁰ Paragraph 6(6)(a), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴¹ Paragraph 6(6)(b), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴² Paragraph 7(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴³ Regulation 6(1)(b) and paragraph 6(1), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴⁴ Regulation 6(2), 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴⁵ Paragraph 8(4), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴⁶ Paragraph 8(3), Schedule 4, 2007 Regulations.
¹⁴⁷ Rule 8(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁴⁸ *Greenway Stanley v Paterson* [1977] 2 All ER 663; *R v An Election Court ex parte Sheppard* [1975] 1 WLR 1319.
¹⁴⁹ *Sanders v Chichester* (1995) 139 SJLB 15
¹⁵⁰ Rule 8(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵¹ Rule 8(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵² Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵³ Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵⁴ Rule 8(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵⁵ Rule 8(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵⁶ Rule 8(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007
¹⁵⁷ Rule 8(2)(aa) The Local Elections (Principal Area) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018, Rule 8 (2)(aa) (4) The Local Elections (Parish and Communities) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018
¹⁵⁸ Rule 10(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
¹⁵⁹ Rule 8(7) and (8), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(7) and (8), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(7) and (8), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.

-
- ¹⁶⁰ Rule 10(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 10(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 14(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁶¹ Rule 10(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 10(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 14(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁶² Rule 10(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 10(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 14(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁶³ Rule 8(2)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(2)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(2)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁶⁴ Section 50, RPA 1983
- ¹⁶⁵ Rule 11, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 11, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 13, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁶⁶ Rule 11A, Principal Areas Rules 2006, Rule 11A, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006
- ¹⁶⁷ Rule 11A(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006, Rule 11A(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006
- ¹⁶⁸ Rules 1 and 13(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 1 and 13(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 3 and 15(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁶⁹ Rules 1 and 13(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 1 and 13(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 3 and 15(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷⁰ Rules 1 and 13(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 1 and 13(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 3 and 15(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷¹ Rules 1 and 13(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 1 and 13(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 3 and 15(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷² Rules 1 and 13(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 1 and 13(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 3 and 15(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷³ Rules 9 and 16, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 9 and 16, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 12 and 18, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷⁴ Rule 55(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷⁵ Rule 55(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷⁶ Rules 9 and 21, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 9 and 21, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 12 and 23, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁷⁷ Rule 12, Principal Areas Rules 2006 and rule 12, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ¹⁷⁸ Rule 12, Principal Areas Rules 2006 and rule 12, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ¹⁷⁹ Rule 14(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 14(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 16(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁸⁰ Rule 50(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 50(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 54(3) and (4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁸¹ Rule 50(2)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006
- ¹⁸² Rule 8(1)(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 8(1)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 11(1)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁸³ Rule 55(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 55(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 60(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁸⁴ Rule 14(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 14(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 16(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; section 39(1) RPA 1983.
- ¹⁸⁵ Rule 14(2)), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.
- ¹⁸⁶ RPA 1985 s21 Section 21(2)(a), Representation of the People Act 1985 (RPA 1985).
- ¹⁸⁷ Section 21(2)(b), RPA 1985 and section 39(4), RPA 1983.
- ¹⁸⁸ Section 21(2), RPA 1985.
- ¹⁸⁹ Rule 55(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 55(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 60(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁹⁰ Rule 55(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 55(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 60(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁹¹ Rule 55, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 55, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 60, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁹² Rule 55(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 55(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 60(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁹³ Rule 55(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ¹⁹⁴ Section 39(1), RPA 1983.

-
- ¹⁹⁵ Section 39(5)(b), RPA 1983.
- ¹⁹⁶ Rule 65(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ¹⁹⁷ Rule 65(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017 and section 39, RPA 1983.
- ¹⁹⁸ Rule 65(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017 and section 39, RPA 1983.
- ¹⁹⁹ Rule 65, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁰⁰ Rule 65(5), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁰¹ Section 67(1), RPA 1983 s67(1).
- ²⁰² Section 70(1), RPA 1983 s70.
- ²⁰³ Section 70(2) and (3), RPA 1983.
- ²⁰⁴ Section 67(3) and (4), RPA 1983.
- ²⁰⁵ Section 67(4), RPA 1983 s67 and s70.
- ²⁰⁶ Section 71(a), RPA 1983 s71.
- ²⁰⁷ Section 67(6), RPA 1983 (as applied by article 3(3)(a), 2017 Order).
- ²⁰⁸ Section 67(6), RPA 1983.
- ²⁰⁹ Section 68(1), RPA 1983 (as amended by paragraph 1(18)(a), Schedule 2, 2017 Order).
- ²¹⁰ Section 68(3), RPA 1983 (as amended by paragraph 1(18)(b), Schedule 2, 2017 Order).
- ²¹¹ Section 68(3), RPA 1983.
- ²¹² Section 68(4), RPA 1983.
- ²¹³ Section 69(1), RPA 1983.
- ²¹⁴ Section 69(2)(b), RPA 1983.
- ²¹⁵ Section 70(4)(b), RPA 1983 s70(4).
- ²¹⁶ Section 69(1), RPA 1983 s69.
- ²¹⁷ Section 67(6), RPA 1983.
- ²¹⁸ Section 67(6), RPA 1983 s67.
- ²¹⁹ Regulation 69(1), RPR 2001 and rule 27(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²²⁰ RPA 1983 s66 Regulation 70, RPR 2001; rule 28(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 28(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 30(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 30(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²²¹ Rule 18, Schedule 3, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2012 (Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012).
- ²²² Regulation 68, RPR 2001 (as applied and modified by Schedule 4, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2012).
- ²²³ Rule 18(1) and (2), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012.
- ²²⁴ Rule 18(3) and (5), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012.
- ²²⁵ Rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012.
- ²²⁶ Rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012.
- ²²⁷ Rule 19, Schedule 3, Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules).
- ²²⁸ Regulation 68, RPR 2001 (as applied and modified by Schedule 4, Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012).
- ²²⁹ Rule 19(2), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules.
- ²³⁰ Rule 36(1), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules.
- ²³¹ Rule 19(1), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules.
- ²³² Rule 19(2) and (3), Schedule 5, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) Regulations 2012 (Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012) and rule 19(2) and (3), Schedule 5, Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012).
- ²³³ Rule 19(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012 and rule 19(3), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²³⁴ Rule 18(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012 and rule 19(6), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²³⁵ Regulation 68(d), RPR 2001.
- ²³⁶ Regulation 69(2), RPR 2001.
- ²³⁷ Regulation 80, RPR 2001.

-
- ²³⁸ Regulation 80, RPR 2001 (as applied and modified by Schedule 4, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums)(England) Regulations 2012 and Schedule 4, Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012).
- ²³⁹ Rule 30(1)(d), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 30(1)(d), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 32(1)(d), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 32(1)(d), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴⁰ Rule 27(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(7), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(9), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴¹ Rule 27(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(5), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴² Rule 27(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(5), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴³ Rule 27(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴⁴ Rule 27(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴⁵ Rule 30(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 30(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 32(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 32(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴⁶ Rule 19(4), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²⁴⁷ Rule 19(4), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²⁴⁸ Rule 27(1)(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(1)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(1)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(1)(b), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁴⁹ Rule 27(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(7), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(9), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁵⁰ Rule 44(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 44(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 46(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rules 46(2) and 49(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁵¹ Rule 46(1)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁵² Rule 27(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(7), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁵³ Rule 27(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 29(5), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 29(7), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁵⁴ Section 200(1A), RPA 1983 s200(1A) .
- ²⁵⁵ Section 199B(2), RPA 1983 s199B(2).
- ²⁵⁶ Section 199B(2), RPA 1983.
- ²⁵⁷ Section 199B(4)(b), RPA 1983.
- ²⁵⁸ Section 199B(5) and (6), RPA 1983.
- ²⁵⁹ Rule 1, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 1, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 3, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁶⁰ Rule 3, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 3, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 5, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁶¹ Rule 5(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁶² Rule 3, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁶³ Rule 5, Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012.
- ²⁶⁴ Rule 5, Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules.
- ²⁶⁵ Rule 1, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 1, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 3, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.

-
- ²⁶⁶ Rule 9, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 13, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁶⁷ Rule 9(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 13(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁶⁸ Rule 16(5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 18(7), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁶⁹ Rule 9(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 13(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁷⁰ Rule 8(2)(aa) The Local Elections (Principal Area) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018, Rule 8 (2)(aa) (4) The Local Elections (Parish and Communities) (England and Wales Amendment) (England) Rules 2018
- ²⁷¹ Rule 6A(c) Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 6A(c), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006
- ²⁷² Rule 9(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 13(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁷³ Rule 9(4), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9(4), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 12(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 13(4), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁷⁴ Rule 3, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁷⁵ Rule 1, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 1, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 3, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007.
- ²⁷⁶ Rule 21(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 21(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 23(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 23(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁷⁷ Rule 21, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 21, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006
- ²⁷⁸ Rule 12(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2012.
- ²⁷⁹ Rule 3, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁸⁰ Rule 13(1), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules.
- ²⁸¹ Rule 21(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 21(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 23(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 23(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁸² Rule 23(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁸³ Rule 23(4)(a), Schedule 3, Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007 (Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007); rule 12(4)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012; rule 13(4)(a), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²⁸⁴ Rule 23(4)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007; rule 12(4)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012; rule 13(4)(b), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²⁸⁵ Rule 23(4)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007; rule 12(4)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012; rule 13(4)(b), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²⁸⁶ Rule 23(4)(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007; rule 12(4)(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012; rule 13(4)(c), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.
- ²⁸⁷ Rule 21(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 21(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 23(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 23(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁸⁸ Rule 25(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.
- ²⁸⁹ Rule 25(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017; read together with the appendix to each set of rules. The latest versions of the poll cards at principal area elections can be found in The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014 and,

in Wales, should be read alongside The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2014. At parish and community council elections, the latest versions of the poll cards can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014 and, in Wales, should be read alongside The Local Elections (Communities) (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2014. The latest versions of the poll cards at mayoral elections can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

²⁹⁰ Rule 27(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007; rule 16(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Combination Rules 2012; rule 17(6), Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Combination Rules 2012.

²⁹¹ Rule 25(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017; read together with the appendix to each set of rules. The latest versions of the poll cards at principal area elections can be found in The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014 and, in Wales, should be read alongside The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2014. At parish and community council elections, the latest versions of the poll cards can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014 and, in Wales, should be read alongside The Local Elections (Communities) (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2014. The latest versions of the poll cards at mayoral elections can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

²⁹² Rule 25(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017; read together with the appendix to each set of rules.

²⁹³ Rule 25(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017; read together with the prescribed forms in the appendix to each set of rules.

²⁹⁴ Sections 13AB and 13B, RPA 1983.

²⁹⁵ Section 13AB(5), RPA 1983.

²⁹⁶ Section 13AB(6), RPA 1983.

²⁹⁷ Rule 25(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 27(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

²⁹⁸ Rule 25(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.

²⁹⁹ Rule 25(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006.

³⁰⁰ Rule 25(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 25(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 27(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁰¹ Rule 25(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 25(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 27(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 27(2), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁰² Section 9B(8), RPA 1983 and rule 25(4) sch 2 Principle Area Rules 2006, rule 25(5) sch 2 Parish and Communities Rules 2006, rule 27(4) sch 1 Mayoral Election Rules 2007, rule 27(4) sch 1 Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017

³⁰³ Rule 16(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 18(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017. The latest version of the principal area ballot paper can be found in the Appendix to The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Rules 2018. The latest version of the front of the parish ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Rules 2018 . The latest version of the front of the community ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2015 (the reverse is included in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales)(Amendment) Rules 2014)The latest version of the mayoral ballot paper can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014. For details on how to produce bilingual ballot papers in Wales, see our [Ballot paper guidance for Wales](#).

³⁰⁴ Rules 16(2) and 18(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 16(2) and 18(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 18(3) and 20(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rules 18(3) and 20(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁰⁵ Article 6(2), Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017 and rule 18, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁰⁶ Rule 39(1)(a), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 39(1)(a), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 41(1)(a), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 41(1)(a), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁰⁷ Rule 19 Sch 1 RPA 1983 as amended by paragraph 4, Sch 2 of the Combination of Polls Rules 2004, Rule 16(2)(d) Sch 3 Principal Areas Rules, Rule 16(2)(d) Sch 3 Parishes and Communities Rules 2006, Rule 18(3)(d) Sch 3 Mayoral Elections Rules 2007, Rule 18(3)(d) Sch 3 Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017 .

³⁰⁸ Article 6(2), 2017 Order.

³⁰⁹ Rule 18(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 18(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 20(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 20(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³¹⁰ Article 6(2), 2017 Order.

³¹¹ Rule 18(3), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 18(3), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 20(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 20(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³¹² Rule 18(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 18(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 20(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 20(2), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³¹³ Rule 18(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 18(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 20(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 20(2), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³¹⁴ Rule 9, Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Rules.

³¹⁵ Rule 16(2)(c), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(2)(c), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(3)(c), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 18(3)(c), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³¹⁶ Article 6(2), 2017 Order.

³¹⁷ Rule 16(2) and (5), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 16(2) and (5), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 18(3) and (6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 18(3) and (7), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³¹⁸ Directions as to Printing the Ballot Paper, Appendix to Principal Areas Rules 2006, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007 and Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017. The latest version of the principal area ballot paper can be found in the Appendix to The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2015 (the reverse is included in The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales)(Amendment) Rules 2014). The latest version of the parish/community ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2015 (the reverse is included in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales)(Amendment) Rules 2014). The latest version of the mayoral ballot paper can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014. For details on how to produce bilingual ballot papers in Wales, see our [Ballot paper guidance for Wales](#).

³¹⁹ Prescribed Ballot Paper, Appendix to Principal Areas Rules 2006, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007 and Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017. The latest version of the principal area ballot paper can be found in the Appendix to The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Rules 2018. The latest version of the front of the parish ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Rules 2018. The latest version of the front of the community ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2015 (the reverse is included in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014) The latest version of the mayoral ballot paper can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales)

(Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019. For details on how to produce bilingual ballot papers in Wales, see our [Ballot paper guidance for Wales](#).

³²⁰ Prescribed Ballot Paper, Appendix to Principal Areas Rules 2006, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007 and Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017. The latest version of the principal area ballot paper can be found in the Appendix to The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Rules 2018. The latest version of the front of the parish ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Rules 2018. The latest version of the front of the community ballot paper can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2015 (the reverse is included in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014). The latest version of the mayoral ballot paper can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2019. For details on how to produce bilingual ballot papers in Wales, see our [Ballot paper guidance for Wales](#).

³²¹ Article 6(2), 2017 Order.

³²² Rule 18(3), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 18(3), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²³ Forms 3 and 4, Appendix to Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007 and Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²⁴ Rules 23(4) and 26, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 23(4) and 26, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 25(4) and 28, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rules 25(4) and 28, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²⁵ Rule 32, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 32, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 34, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 34, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²⁶ Rule 28(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 28(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 30(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 30(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²⁷ Rule 26(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 28(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²⁸ Rule 26(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 28(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³²⁹ Rule 26(3)(b) and (c), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(3)(b) and (c), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(3)(b) and (c), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 28(3)(b) and (c), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³⁰ Rule 35(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 35(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 37(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 37(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³¹ Rules 35(1) (as modified by rule 35(3)) and 41, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rules 35(1) (as modified by rule 35(3)) and 41, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rules 37(1) (as modified by rule 37(3)) and 43, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rules 37(1) (as modified by rule 37(3)) and 43, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³² Rule 17(2), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 17(2), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 19(2), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 19(2), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³³ Prescribed corresponding number list forms in Appendix to each set of rules; rule 17, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 17, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 19, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 19, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³⁴ Prescribed corresponding number list forms in Appendix to each set of rules; rule 17, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 17, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 19, Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 19, Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³⁵ Prescribed corresponding number list forms in Appendix to each set of combination rules; rule 17, Schedule 3, Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (Principal Areas Combination Rules 2006); rule 17, Schedule 3, Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 (Parishes and Communities Combination

Rules 2006); rule 19, Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007; rule 19, Schedule 3, Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017 (Combined Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2017).

³³⁶ Rule 45(3)(a) and (4)(b), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 45(3)(a) and (4)(b), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 47(4)(a) and (5)(b), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 47(2)(a) and (3)(b), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³⁷ Rule 45(6)(a), (7)(b) and (8), Principal Areas Combination Rules 2006; rule 45(5)(a), (6)(b) and (7), Parishes and Communities Combination Rules 2006; rule 47(7)(a), (8)(b) and (9), Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007; rule 50(5)(a), (6)(b) and (8), Combined Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2017.

³³⁸ Rule 43(1), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 43(1), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 45(1), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 45(1), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³³⁹ Rule 26(6) and (8), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(6) and (8), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 28(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017. The latest version of the 'Guidance for voters' notice and the 'Instructions for voters' notice at principal area elections can be found in The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014 (in Wales, to be read alongside The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2014). The latest version of the 'Guidance for voters' notice and 'Instructions for voters' notice at parish and community council elections can be found in The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Rules 2014 (in Wales, to be read alongside The Local Elections (Communities) (Welsh Forms) (Amendment) Order 2014). The latest version of the 'Guidance for voters' notice at mayoral elections can be found in The Local Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

³⁴⁰ Rule 26(6) and (8), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(6) and (8), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 28(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁴¹ Rule 26(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 28(6)(a), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁴² Rule 26(8), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 26(8), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 28(6)(b), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.

³⁴³ Section 66, RPA 1983.

³⁴⁴ Rule 35(6), Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 35(6), Parishes and Communities Rules 2006; rule 37(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Rules 2007; rule 37(6), Combined Authorities Mayoral Rules 2017.