District, Town and Parish Council Elections Thursday 2\textsuperscript{nd} May 2019

Candidates and Agents Post-Nomination Briefing
Topics

• Key Staff
• Campaigning
  – Rooms for Meetings/Access to Register of Electors and Absent Voter Lists/Imprints/Display of Campaign Material
• Postal Votes
  – Issue/Opening/Adjudication/Code of Conduct/Postal Vote Agents
• Polling Day
  – Tellers/Code of Conduct/Polling Station Agents
• Verification and Count
  – Processes/Code of Conduct/Counting Agents
• Expenses
  – Electoral Commission Guidance
• Marked Registers
  – Access to Marked Registers and Absent Voter Lists
• Security and Safety
  – Cyber Attack/Social Media/Personal Safety
• Fraud
• Contacts
## Key Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merran McRae</td>
<td>Returning Officer / Chief Executive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandra Hardy</td>
<td>Deputy Returning Officer / Electoral Services Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gillian Marshall</td>
<td>Chief Legal Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Raven</td>
<td>Deputy Electoral Services Manager – Elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jacqui Milnes</td>
<td>Deputy Electoral Services Manager – Registration</td>
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<td>Siobhan Lloyd</td>
<td>Team Leader – Elections</td>
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<td>Sarah Nestor</td>
<td>Team Leader - Registration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoe Geraghty</td>
<td>Electoral Support and Outreach Assistants</td>
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<td>Jacob Blackett</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jannine Earnshaw</td>
<td>Electoral Services Support / Receptionists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yasmin Knight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Chambers</td>
<td>Apprentice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hope Gurnhill</td>
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Campaigning – Rooms for Meetings

Premises:

• Pontefract Town Hall
• Castleford Civic Centre
• Wakefield County Hall
• Ossett Town Hall

• Schools – outside of normal school hours

You must contact the venues directly
There is no hire charge, but you may be charged for any expenses incurred
Campaigning - Access to electoral register/absent voting lists

- As an official candidate you are entitled to a copy of the electoral register and absent voting lists for the area you are contesting.

- Requests must be made in writing to the Electoral Registration Officer.

- You are only permitted to use the information for election purposes:
  - To help your campaign
  - To check that donations / loans are permissible.
Campaigning - Imprints

• Use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.

• Imprints must include:
  - Name and address of the Printer
  - Name and address of the Promoter

• Do not produce material that looks like a poll card
Campaigning – Display of Posters

• Comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners

• Do not put posters up near road junctions – adhere to the guidance

• Do not put posters on lamp columns where warning signs are displayed

• Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business)

• Do not remove or damage other candidate’s posters – this is a criminal offence

• Make sure outdoor posters are removed by Thursday 16th May
The Equality and Human Rights Commission have published guidance for political parties and candidates about how equality and human rights law relates to election campaigning.

A copy of their guidance can be found at: www.equalityhumanrights.com
Postal Votes – Key Dates

• Issue of Postal Votes
  – Friday 12th April – First issue, majority of postal votes
  – Wednesday 17th April – Second issue
  – Tuesday 23rd April – Final issue

• Postal Vote Opening Sessions
  – Wednesday 17th April – 1.00pm (opening of B envelopes only)
  – Thursday 18th April - 9.30am (Scanning only)
  – Wednesday 24th April – 9.30am
  – Friday 26th April – 9.30am
  – Tuesday 30th April – 9.30am
  – Wednesday 1st May – 9.30am (Scanning only)
  – Thursday 2nd May – 2.00pm – 2.00am (approx.)
Postal Votes

• Postal Vote Agents and Candidates – may observe
  – Opening of postal packs
  – Postal voting statement scanning
  – Adjudication of provisionally rejected postal voting statements

• Ballot papers will remain face down during the opening process

• Security
  – Report to main reception on arrival
  – You will be required to sign in and out
Postal Votes – Code of Conduct

• Absent votes applications
  – Make sure electors understand implications of absent vote
  – Do not encourage postal pack redirection
  – Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy
  – Ensure any applications received are sent unaltered immediately to electoral services

• Postal ballot packs
  – Do not handle postal ballot papers or observe electors completing them
  – Do not encourage electors to give you their completed postal ballot paper, envelopes or pack
  – If asked to take a postal ballot pack, immediately post it or take it directly to Electoral Services or to the relevant polling station
Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Electoral Services Office open 6.30am to 10.30pm from arrival of staff at polling stations to after the close of poll
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10 pm can be issued with a ballot paper
- Postal votes – can be handed into polling stations within relevant electoral area or delivered to the elections office until 10pm.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in postal vote can do so after 10pm.
- Postal votes handed in at the polling station will be collected by the Polling Station Inspectors throughout the day.
Polling Day – Code of Conduct

• Polling Stations
  – Keep access to polling places clear to allow voters to enter

• Polling Agents
  – Must make themselves known to the Presiding Officer
  – May request the Presiding Officer to ask the statutory questions
  – Must not impede or influence electors
  – Must observe the secrecy requirements

• Tellers
  – Must remain outside the polling station
  – May ask voters for information as they enter / leave the polling station
  – May display a rosette displaying the name of the candidate or party
  – Must not impede, obstruct or intimidate voters
  – Must not demand any information from voters
Verification and Count – Thursday 2\textsuperscript{nd} / Friday 3\textsuperscript{rd} May

- The verification and count will be held at Thornes Park Athletic Stadium
- Candidate and Agents will be permitted on to the count floor at 10.00 pm
- Mobile phones and tablets must not be used on the count floor
- The taking of photographs is not permitted
- Access to the verification and count
  - Everyone attending the count event be issued with a letter and security wristband which must be produced upon arrival
  - Letters and wristbands are non-transferrable
  - For security purposes everyone will be asked for an additional form of ID
  - Wristbands must be worn at all times
  - The Aerobics Studio has been designated as a viewing area and limited refreshments will be made available in there
Verification

- Verification of postal ballot papers received before 5.00 pm on polling day will commence at 10.00 pm.
- Any postal votes handed in at polling stations after 5pm will be verified after the final opening session at County Hall.
- The first ballot boxes from the polling stations are expected to arrive around 10.45pm.
- Verification of all ballot papers within a ward, including Town/Parish ballot papers, will be completed before the district count commences.
- Ballot papers will be face up during the whole process.
- Candidates and agents must not distract counting clerks.
- Candidates and agents are not permitted to touch ballot papers.
- At the end of the verification process, candidates who are not standing in District Elections and their counting agents must leave the count floor.
District Elections Counts

- Candidates and agents must not distract counting clerks
- Candidates and agents are not permitted to touch ballot papers
- Only Candidates and/or their Election Agents can object to the Returning Officer’s adjudication of bad and doubtful ballot papers
- Provisional results will be shared with Candidates and/or their Election Agents before the result is declared
- Results will be announced in the order in which they are completed
- Recounts may only requested by the Candidate and/or their Election Agent
- The Returning Officer’s decision is final
- Successful candidates may be permitted to make a short acceptance speech
- Successful District candidates will also be required to sign the Declaration of Acceptance
Town / Parish Elections Counts -
Friday, 3rd May

• Town and Parish counts will commence at 12.30 pm
• Candidates and agents must not distract counting clerks
• Candidates and agents are not permitted to touch ballot papers
• Only Candidates can object to the Returning Officer’s adjudication of
  bad and doubtful ballot papers
• Provisional results will be shared with Candidates before the result is
  declared
• Results will be announced in the order in which they are completed
• Recounts may only requested by a Candidate
• The Returning Officer’s decision is final
• Town and Parish Clerks will contact candidates in the week after the
  election to advise on taking up their office and signing relevant
  declarations
Appointment of Agents

• Postal Vote Agents – maximum 4
  – Must include name and address
  – Must be made 24 hours before the start of the session
  – Must include date and time of session

• Polling Agents – District maximum of 10; Town/Parish maximum of 5
  – Must include name and address
  – Must include the name of the polling stations
  – Must be returned to the Returning Officer by Thursday, 25th April
Appointment of Agents

- **Verification and Counting Agents – District Elections**
  - Each candidate may appoint 2 counting agents
    - Must include name and address
    - Must be returned to the Returning Officer by **Thursday 25th April**

- **Verification – Town and Parish Elections**
  - Each candidate may appoint 2 verification agents
    - Must include name and address
    - Must be returned to the Returning Officer by **Thursday 25th April**

- **Count – Town and Parish Elections**
  - Each candidate may appoint 2 counting agents
    - Must include name and address
    - Must be returned to the Returning Officer by **Thursday 25th April**
Expenses Limits

• Defined as certain expenses ‘used for the purposes of the candidate’s election’ during the regulated period
• Responsibility of election agent (if appointed) – District only
• Limit on expenses
  – £740 + 6 pence per elector in ward/division on register in force on 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2019
• Must get and keep receipts
  – District - £20 or more
  – Town/Parish - £10 or more
Expenses Returns

- Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election
- Town and Parish Candidate returns due 28 calendar days after result of election
- Returns made open to inspection by Returning Officer
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission
- Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence enforceable by the police
- No spending will be reimbursed
- Any queries relating to expenses or campaign finances should be raised with the EC
Marked Registers and Postal Voter Lists

• Available after the election
• Application form and sample costings available at a later stage
• Based on;
  • On paper - £10 + £2 per 1000 electors or part thereof or
  • In data format - £10 + £1 per 1000 electors or part thereof
• Invoices will be sent out no earlier than 20th May 2019
• Payment must be made before collection/despatch of marked registers/marked lists
Security

- Cyber Attack - https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/
- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter
- Personal Safety – Protect Yourself
Contacts

Electoral Services Office – administration of election process, registration and absent voting
E mail: elections@wakefield.gov.uk
Helpline: 01924 305023
Website: www.wakefield.gov.uk/elections

Election Posters/Material/Leafleting on Highway:
Helpline: 03458 506506
Email: customerservices@wakefield.gov.uk
Non-highway related matters: Legal Services – 01924 305011

Electoral Commission – campaign administration and expenses
Website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk
Helpline: 0333 103 1928
Email: infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk
Questions ?