

Part C - Administering the poll

Local government elections in Wales:
guidance for Returning Officers

January 2022 (updated February 2022)

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
February 2022	<p>Updated to incorporate changes introduced by The Local Elections (Miscellaneous and Consequential Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• text on use of a correspondence address where a candidate acts as their own agent• text on sealing of packets containing marked registers and corresponding number lists

1 Engaging with political parties, candidates and agents

The guidance reflects the changes introduced by The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Wales) Rules, The Local Elections (Communities) (Wales) Rules 2021 and The Local Elections (Miscellaneous and Consequential Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2022 that take effect for principal area and community council elections held on and after the 5 May 2022.

For guidance on elections taking place on or before 4 May 2022 please contact the Electoral Commission Wales team.

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

A 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 The practices and process for standing for election may be unfamiliar to a significant number of candidates, agents and political parties, especially if they are new or less experienced, and they 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, for example

providing additional information about standing for election perhaps together with a nomination pack, in advance of any briefings.



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.

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 and any changes to the rules since the last election.

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.

A 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.

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.



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.

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](#) and [community council elections](#) that contain all the forms needed for nomination.

1.17 The nomination pack should contain:

- a nomination form
- a home address form
- a form for the candidate (or someone on their behalf) to give notice of appointment of an election agent (not required for 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 use a description 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 limits and donations for candidates](#)
- 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

You should also provide information to candidates and agents about how the process for [delivering nomination papers electronically](#) will work in practice in order support the successful delivery of electronic nominations and manage expectations. You could provide the information from the electronic delivery statement, emphasising the importance of delivering only to the email address provided and the risks of not doing so. You could also outline the arrangements for carrying out informal checks for nominations delivered electronically.

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Guidance for candidates and agents at [local principal area elections](#) and [community council 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 limit² (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),³ excluding any attainers who will not be 16 years of age on or before polling day⁴.

A The Commission has produced guidance for candidates and agents on spending and donations at [local 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 [community](#) council elections alongside the candidate spending return and declaration.



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 election.⁵ 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 ERO.⁶

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 standing.⁷

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 candidates.⁸

1.25 Excluding some prescribed limited exceptions, no version of the register or any absent voting lists published, or otherwise made available, must contain data relating to those under 16 years of age.⁹ In relation to local government elections in Wales, the exceptions where the data may be disclosed are:

- to the individual themselves or to a person they have appointed as proxy to vote for them¹⁰
- for the purposes of a criminal investigation or criminal proceedings relating to the registration of electors or the conduct of elections¹¹

- to EROs and Returning Officers in connection with the registration of electors or the conduct of elections¹²

1.26 The only other exception is that before a local government election in Wales, the information on those under 16 years of age **who will be eligible to vote at the election** (i.e. will attain the age of 16 on or before polling day), can, for the purposes of or in connection with the election, be disclosed in the electoral register, postal voters list, list of proxies and list of postal proxies, that is supplied to:

- candidates at a local government election in Wales for electoral purposes
- the Returning Officer for the purposes of a local government election in Wales

1.27 The information supplied before an election must not contain dates of birth, or anything else that would identify a voter as under 16 years old.¹³

- no other individuals or bodies may be supplied with any information relating to those aged under 16

1.28 Further guidance on the supply of data of those under 16 is detailed in the Access and supply of the electoral register section of our guidance for EROs.

A 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 the [Access and supply of the electoral register](#) section 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

1.29 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 Welsh.

2 The nominations process

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.

2.1 Nominations at local government elections are able to be submitted either:

- as hard-copy forms delivered in person to the RO; or
- electronically as per the arrangements the RO has set out in the Electronic Delivery Statement. Guidance on the Electronic Delivery Statement can be found below in para 2.8

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.

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Forms for nomination

2.4 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 paper¹⁴
- a home address form¹⁵

2.5 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 Wales.¹⁶ The candidate will also need to submit:

- a certificate of authorisation, authorising the use of the registered party name or a registered description on the ballot paper.¹⁷
- 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 invalid.
- If the registered party name does not already include Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig¹⁸ then the candidate may choose to supplement the registered party name as given on the certificate with 'Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig.'¹⁹
- Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig.' may also be used with the registered party name, if the name forms part of a registered description, authorised by the certificate.
- a written request to use one of the party's registered emblems²⁰ (if desired)

2.6 Candidates do not have to use the nomination form that you have produced and supplied²¹, but the form used must be in the form as provided for in the legislation or a form to the like effect ²²

2.7 Nomination papers can only be produced in English and/or Welsh, and not in any alternative languages or formats.²³ However, you must prepare nomination papers for signature if someone requests.²⁴ Information should be included with any packs sent out, signposting the information contained in the electronic delivery statement about the arrangements for delivering nomination papers by email or online. For example, you could include wording making it clear that nomination papers may be delivered electronically but can only be accepted if the delivery meets the specific requirements as set out on the electronic delivery statement as to form and method of delivery.

A We have produced a set of nomination papers for [principal area elections in Wales](#), and [community council elections in Wales](#) 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](#), and [community council elections](#).

Electronic delivery statement

2.8 You will need to detail the arrangements you have put in place for the management of electronic nominations on an electronic delivery statement which must be included with the notice of election.

2.9 Nomination papers may be delivered electronically:

- by being sent electronically to an email address as per the arrangements set out on the statement²⁵
- by submission online as per the arrangements set out on the statement

26

2.10 You should specify any specific requirements you have for submission of nominations electronically on the electronic delivery statement. For example, the specific email address(es) that must be used, any advice on how emails should be labelled or any requirements regarding format of email attachments etc. Guidance on planning for the management of electronic nominations can be found [here](#).

2.11 A template notice of election containing the electronic delivery statement which highlights some of the information that you should consider including can be found [here](#)

Informal checks

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

2.13 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, and/or providing an opportunity for checks to be carried out remotely.

2.14 If you are offering informal checks remotely, you should ensure that your communications with candidates clearly set out the process so that the risk is minimised of a nomination being delivered mistakenly rather than being submitted for an informal check.

2.15 When conducting an informal check it should be made clear that the nomination papers are being looked at informally. If you are offering informal checks remotely, you could provide an email address solely for the purpose of sending a nomination for an informal check.

2.16 At the conclusion of the informal check, you should offer to return the nomination papers if an issue has been identified. You may want to make a record of any advice you give to the candidate to rectify any issues identified.

2.17 If no issues have been identified, you should offer to accept them formally. For nomination forms submitted electronically, you should request

that the forms are now submitted as per the arrangements in the electronic delivery statement.



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

2.18 You may accept delivery of nominations by hand or via the arrangements you set out in the electronic delivery statement.

2.19 It is your responsibility as RO to ensure that candidates who want to deliver nominations electronically, can do so in the way that you have set out in your electronic delivery statement on the notice of election. This will include ensuring that the IT resources to support electronic delivery are in place throughout the nominations period, such as the ability to receive the increased number of large email attachments that may be sent to you, or checking spam email folders during the nomination period, for example. Your contingency plans should also cover disaster recovery arrangements for any outage or technical issues with your IT systems during the nominations period. .

Time of delivery

2.20 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.

2.21 You must state on the notice of election the times at which you will allow nominations to be delivered²⁷ by hand and in line with the arrangements you have in place for nominations to be delivered electronically. ²⁸

2.22 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.

2.23 The deadline for nominations is 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll.²⁹ This deadline cannot be moved or extended for any reason, other than in the unlikely event of nominations being disrupted by a riot or open violence.³⁰ Delivery is determined as being when the nomination papers are delivered, either at the place specified in the notice or in accordance with the arrangements set out in the electronic delivery statement.

2.24 A certificate of authorisation or emblem request must be received by you during the period for delivery of nominations.

2.25 No appointment is required to deliver nomination papers by hand. 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 by hand
- highlighting electronic methods for carrying out informal checks and delivery of nomination papers

2.26 It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that their nomination papers are delivered in the correct manner and by the required deadline, regardless of whether forms are delivered by hand or electronically. 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 invalid.³¹

2.27 You must ensure that your IT systems record the time that emails containing nomination papers or nominations submitted via an online system are delivered in order to ensure that delivery is in accordance with the required deadline .³²

How must nomination papers be submitted?

2.28 The nomination form, the home address form, must be delivered either:

- by hand³³ or
- electronically as per the arrangements set out in the electronic delivery statement.³⁴

2.29 Where a document is delivered by hand, the **original version** of each completed document must be submitted³⁵. Delivery by hand can include delivery by a courier.

2.30 Where a document is delivered electronically, the document may be signed electronically – this could take the form of a typed signature for example.

2.31 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.

2.32 Certificates of authorisation and emblem request forms may be delivered by hand, by post or electronically.

Community council elections

At 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.

Who can deliver nomination papers?

2.33 There are no restrictions on who can deliver nomination papers, whether by hand or electronically. 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

Nominations delivered by hand

2.34 Nomination papers not delivered electronically must be delivered by hand to the location specified by you on the notice of election.³⁶ The location you choose must be at the relevant council offices.³⁷

2.35 The location for the hand 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.

Community council elections

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

2.36 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.

2.37 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.

2.38 If a nomination paper is delivered by hand, the **original version** of each completed document must be submitted.

2.39 Once a nomination paper has been formally delivered, no changes can be subsequently made to it (subject to your power to correct minor errors).³⁸

2.40 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.

What to do if nomination papers are received by post

2.41 Any nomination forms or home address forms, received by post have not been 'delivered' in accordance with the rules.³⁹ The candidate is therefore not deemed to stand nominated and no decision can be taken as to whether the papers are valid.⁴⁰

2.42 You should have processes in place for monitoring postal deliveries to the place designated for the delivery of nomination forms and home address forms so that any papers received can be identified quickly and action taken to try to contact the candidate.

2.43 You should try to contact the candidate using the details on the home address form and advise them that the nomination form and home address form 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.

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

2.45 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 home address form. 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.

Nominations delivered electronically

2.46 It is your responsibility as RO to ensure that candidates who want to delivery nominations electronically, can do so in the way that you have set out in your electronic delivery statement on the notice of election.

2.47 You should be satisfied that nominations are treated as delivered in accordance with the arrangements set out in the electronic delivery statement,

for example when received by the specified email address detailed in the electronic delivery statement, or received onto an online portal if offered.

2.48 In order to do this you should ensure that the IT resources to support electronic delivery are in place and operational throughout the nominations period. For example, you should ensure that there is sufficient storage capacity on email inboxes and that contingency plans including disaster recovery processes are in place which cover what would happen should there be an IT outage or similar during the nomination period and particularly close to the deadline for nominations.

2.49 It is for the candidate to ensure that their nomination is delivered in accordance with the requirements. For electronic nominations delivered via email, this means being received by the server of the specific email address provided for the delivery of nominations by the deadline.

2.50 You cannot treat a nomination as delivered by the deadline solely on the basis that it has been sent by that deadline – the nomination must actually be delivered to you as RO by the deadline in order to be valid. For example, having proof that an email was sent by the deadline does not provide proof of delivery by the deadline.

2.51 You should confirm delivery of an electronic nomination as soon as practicable after receipt to inform the candidate that it has been formally delivered.

2.52 To manage expectations you should be clear in your communications with candidates and agents that the electronic delivery of a nomination paper does not mean that it has yet been determined. You could set up an auto-reply function for emails sent to the specific email account you have detailed to be used for the formal submission of nominations to inform candidates and agents that you have received their nomination but it has not yet been determined, and that a separate notification will be sent as to its validity. If practical, you could also use this auto-reply to give an indication of the likely timeframe involved.

2.53 Once a nomination paper has been formally delivered electronically, no changes can be subsequently made to it (subject to your power to correct minor errors).⁴¹ In order to ensure that nomination papers submitted electronically are delivered in accordance with the deadline, you must ensure that any computer system you use records the time that papers are received. 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.

What to do if nomination papers are delivered to an incorrect email address

2.54 Any nomination papers or home address forms received at a different email address to those provided in the electronic delivery statement have not been 'delivered' in accordance with the rules.⁴² Therefore no decision can be taken as to whether the papers are valid.⁴³

2.55 You should have processes in place for monitoring email address that could be associated with the Returning Officer or electoral services to which nomination papers and home address forms could be sent in error, so that any papers received can be identified quickly and action taken to try to contact the candidate. You should also consider how to make other teams across the council aware that they should contact you as soon as possible if they receive any emails regarding the nomination process.

2.56 You should try to contact the candidate using the details on the home address form and advise them that the nomination form and home address form cannot be accepted unless delivered to the designated email address for the receipt of nomination forms. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that this is done by the deadline for the receipt of nominations.

Delivering multiple nomination forms

2.57 If you receive more than one form that appears to be a nomination form signed by the candidate, you should ask the candidate to confirm which one of those forms is the correct one. If the candidate cannot or does not do this, you should determine yourself which is the correct one. Only the correct form should be assessed for validity and used for the details to be added to the statement of persons nominated and the ballot paper.

2.58 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.

Adjournment of nomination proceedings

2.59 If the nominations process is interrupted or obstructed on any day by riot or open violence, you must abandon proceedings for that day.⁴⁴

2.60 If the day on which proceedings are abandoned is the last day for the delivery of nomination papers, you must resume the next day.⁴⁵ In this case, the delivery for notices of withdrawal and publication of statement as to persons nominated are extended by one day.⁴⁶

Requirements of nomination

2.61 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.

2.62 No deposits are required to be paid at principal area and community council elections.

2.63 You should remind any person delivering the nomination papers that it is a criminal offence to provide information they know to be false statement on nomination papers.⁴⁷ 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 use.⁴⁸ You may warn candidates that the penalty for a false statement is an unlimited fine and/or up to one year's imprisonment.⁴⁹

Nomination form

Candidate's names

2.64 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 full.⁵⁰

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

2.66 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.

2.67 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

2.68 Where a candidate commonly uses a different name in any respect from their actual name, they can ask for their commonly used name(s) to be used instead of their actual name.⁵¹

2.69 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 forename '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. Additionally, a candidate who is commonly known by only part of their full name can reflect this on the nomination paper. For example, a candidate named 'Jane Angela' who is commonly known as 'Angela' can write 'Angela' in the commonly used forename box on the nomination form if they would rather only this forename to appear on the ballot paper.

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

2.71 It is not for you to decide whether the commonly used name is a 'name' that the candidate commonly uses. 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.

2.72 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 offensive⁵²

2.73 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 does not comply with the legislative requirements, 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 paper. 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 elected.⁵³

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

2.75 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](#), and [community council elections](#) (as appropriate).

2.76 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	Elsie Ann	Elsie	[Blank]	Elector, Elsie	ELECTOR, Elsie

2.77 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.

2.78 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.

2.79 If you refuse the use of a commonly used name, the validity of the nomination form remains unaffected.⁵⁴ 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 paper.⁵⁵ This should be made clear to candidates and agents and you must notify the candidate setting out the reasons for refusing to allow the use of the commonly used name⁵⁶.

Description

2.80 Where a candidate is standing on behalf of a political party they may use a registered party name or a registered description. For more information about party descriptions see **2.92**

Statement of party membership

2.81 The candidate must include a statement of party membership on their nomination paper.⁵⁷ The statement must state whether the candidate has been a member of any registered political party at any time during the relevant period.

2.82 The relevant period is defined as the 12 months ending with the day on which the notice of election is published.⁵⁸

2.83 If the candidate has been a member of any registered political parties during the relevant period, they must add each registered political party they have been a member of and the dates of membership. They must add the

name of the registered political party even if it has ceased to exist or is no longer a political party.⁵⁹

2.84 The candidate does not need to add the name of a registered political party of which they are/were a member if they have included a permitted party description on their nomination paper and they have not been a member of any other registered political party - other than the one provided on their nomination paper - during the relevant period.

2.85 You should highlight in briefings or other communications with potential candidates that it is an offence to knowingly fail to include a statement of party membership on the nomination form.

2.86 The information provided on the statement of party membership will be included on the statement of persons nominated.

Declarations ⁶⁰

2.87 The candidate must complete and sign the declarations on the nomination paper stating:⁶¹

- that they are qualified on the day on which they complete their nomination paper and on the day of the election, to be elected as a councillor
- that they will be a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a relevant citizen of the Union or a qualifying foreign citizen who has attained the age of 18 years on the day of the election
- that they meet at least one of the qualifications to stand for election listed in the declaration section on the nomination paper. The candidate must indicate which one or more of the qualifications a) – d) apply to them by ticking those that apply and putting a line through those that do not.
- That they are to the best of their knowledge and belief not disqualified from being elected as a councillor

Requirement for a signature

2.88 The candidate must sign the nomination paper.⁶² You must be satisfied that a signature has been provided and should not look beyond the face of the signature.

2.89 For nominations delivered electronically, an electronic signature could take the form of a typed name in the space for a signature for example

Signature of a witness

2.90 The candidate's signature on the declarations must also be witnessed by another person.⁶³ The witness should be present when the candidate signs their declaration. There are no restrictions on who can be a witness. The

witnesses full name and full address must be provided on the home address form.⁶⁴

2.91 The person who attests the signature of the candidate must also provide their signature on the nomination form.⁶⁵

Home address

2.92 Candidates 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 2.125 for further information**).

Use of party names, party descriptions and party emblems

2.93 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 Wales.⁶⁶

2.94 Political parties can register up to 12 descriptions⁶⁷ and the Welsh translations of those descriptions. If a candidate wants to use a registered party name that does not include Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig⁶⁸ then the registered party name may be supplemented with 'Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig'⁶⁹ in the description box on the nomination paper (including where the party name forms part of the registered description).

2.95 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](#)⁷⁰ and matches it exactly).⁷¹ If it does not, you must reject that nomination.⁷² 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.

2.96 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.

2.97 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.

2.98 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.

2.99 Political parties can also register up to three emblems.⁷³

2.100 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

2.101 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).⁷⁴ After that point, any changes or deletions to any party descriptions do not apply for that election.⁷⁵

2.102 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.

2.103 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.⁷⁶

2.104 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.

2.105 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 Commission.⁷⁷ 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](#).

a 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?

2.106 The legislation is precise about the use of descriptions. If a candidate wants to include a description, they may only use the following descriptions:

- the word 'Independent' or 'Annibynol' or both
- A description that is likely to lead electors to associate the candidate with a qualifying⁷⁸ registered political party and the description is the party's registered name or if the party has registered a name in English and a name in Welsh, either or both of those names⁷⁹
- A registered description of the party or, in the case of a description that has been registered in both English and Welsh, either of both of those descriptions

Community council elections

Candidates who are not standing on behalf of a political party may only use the description Independent or 'Annibynol' or both, or may leave the description box blank.

2.107 Examples of the descriptions that candidates may use on their nomination paper are given below:

- Independent
- Annibynol
- Independent / Annibynol
- Party's registered name (English)
- Party's registered name (Welsh)
- Party's registered names (English and Welsh)
- Party's registered description (English)
- Party's registered description (Welsh)
- Party's registered description (English and Welsh)

2.108 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).⁸⁰ 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 issued by or on behalf of the party's Nominating Officer, must be submitted by the deadline for the delivery of nomination papers.⁸¹

2.109 In addition to these examples above, if the party name registered with the Commission⁸² or description registered with the Commission⁸³ does not already include the words Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig⁸⁴ candidates may supplement it with the 'Wales', 'Welsh', 'Cymru' or Cymreig in the description box on the nomination paper.

2.110 Examples of the prefixed and suffixed party names that candidates may use on their nomination paper are given below:

- 'Wales' party name in description (English)
- 'Welsh' party name in description (English)
- Party name in description 'Cymru' (Welsh)
- Party name in description 'Cymreig' (Welsh)
- Wales' party name in description / Party name in description 'Cymru' (English and Welsh)
- 'Wales' party name in description / Party name in description 'Cymreig' (English and Welsh)
- 'Welsh' party name in description / Party name in description 'Cymreig' (English and Welsh)
- 'Welsh' party name in description / Party name in description 'Cymru' (English and Welsh)
- 'Wales' Electoral Commission Party (English)
- 'Welsh' Electoral Commission Party (English)
- Plaid Comisiwn Ehtoliadol 'Cymru' (Welsh)
- Plaid Comisiwn Ehtoliadol 'Cymreig' (Welsh)
- 'Wales' Electoral Commission Party / Plaid Comisiwn Ehtoliadol 'Cymru' (English and Welsh)
- 'Wales' Electoral Commission Party / Plaid Comisiwn Ehtoliadol 'Cymreig' (English and Welsh)

Using joint descriptions

2.111 Candidates standing on behalf of more than one registered party may use a joint description. The parties must both be registered with the Commission. The joint description can show either or both:

- the parties' registered names and any appropriate conjunctions and punctuation in English or
- the parties' registered names and any appropriate conjunctions and punctuation in Welsh.

2.112 If a party name used in the joint description does not already include the words Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig⁸⁵ candidates may prefix that name with 'Wales' or 'Welsh' on the English version, or suffix it with 'Cymru' or Cymreig in the Welsh version, in the description box on the nomination paper. The words Wales / Welsh / Cymru / Cymreig may be used with one or all party names used in the joint description, as long as the words do not already form part of the registered party name.

2.113 The order in which the party names appear in the joint description is for the candidate to decide.

2.114 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 papers.⁸⁶

2.115 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.

2.116 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).

2.117 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.

2.118 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.

2.119 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

2.120 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 paper.⁸⁷ To qualify, a candidate must have been authorised to use a party name or description other than 'Independent' or 'Annibynnol'.⁸⁸

2.121 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 description.⁸⁹ There is no provision for joint emblems to be registered with the Commission.

2.122 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 nominations.⁹⁰

2.123 If the party has more than one registered emblem, the candidate should specify which one they want to use. 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.

2.124 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.

2.125 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

2.126 Candidates are required to complete a home address form, which must be delivered 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)⁹¹
- any commonly used names, if these are included on the nomination paper⁹²
- their home address in full⁹³
- their qualifying address, or, where they have declared on their nomination paper that they meet more than one qualification, their qualifying addresses⁹⁴
- which of the qualifications on the nomination paper their qualifying address or addresses relate to⁹⁵
- the full name and the home address in full of the witness on the nomination paper⁹⁶

2.127 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)

2.128 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 **2.148** below).

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

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

- a statement, signed by the candidate, which states that they require their home address not to be made public⁹⁷
- if their home address is in the UK, the name of the relevant area in which their home address is situated ⁹⁸
- if their home address is outside of the UK, the name of the country in which their home address is situated⁹⁹

P Community council elections

If a candidate has chosen for their address not to be made public you will need to consider how you will help to ensure that they are able to receive any future correspondence as needed from the community clerk.

It may be appropriate for you to highlight to candidates in advance that they may wish to provide their details directly to the community clerk in order to receive such correspondence. You should discuss your approach with your data protection team.

Meaning of qualifying address and relevant area

2.131 Qualifying address means:

- where a candidate has selected option (a) on the home address form, the address in full where they are registered as a local government elector
- where they have selected option (b) on the home address form, 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 home address form, the address of their place of work
- where they have selected option (d) on the home address form, the address or addresses in full of where they have resided.

2.132 Relevant area means:

- 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 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 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.

2.133 The relevant area should be given in the format described above and is not the ward or community, nor should the local authority name be given in full.

2.134 The Commission has produced a home address form as part of its set of nomination papers for [principal area elections](#) and [community council elections](#)

Determining nomination and home address forms

2.135 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, the home address form has not been completed correctly (or the candidate dies or withdraws).¹⁰⁰

2.136 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 face.¹⁰¹ 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.

2.137 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 law.¹⁰² 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.

2.138 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.

2.139 You must determine the validity of a nomination paper and the home address form, as soon as is practicable after formal delivery.¹⁰³ 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.

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

- that the particulars of the candidate are not as required by law, or
- that the home address form does not comply with legal requirements ¹⁰⁴
- where the candidate's home address form contains a statement that the home address must not be made public, that the form does not comply with the requirements ¹⁰⁵

- That the nomination paper including the relevant declarations is not signed by the candidate, or that the candidate's signature has not been attested¹⁰⁶

2.141 Any description given on the nomination form is part of 'the particulars of the candidate'. Therefore, if the party name or any given description do not appear on the Commission's register of political parties as a party that can contest elections in Wales the nomination form must be rejected¹⁰⁷

2.142 . Equally, if the use of the registered party name or description has not been authorised by the delivery of a certificate of authorisation in the prescribed form, the nomination form must be held invalid.¹⁰⁸

2.143 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 nominations.¹⁰⁹

2.144 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 it.¹¹⁰ 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.

2.145 You must send notice of your decision that nomination papers are valid or invalid to the candidate¹¹¹. This should be done as soon as practicable after your decision has been made.

2.146 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.¹¹² For more information about the requirements see paragraph **2.126**

2.147 If you have not received the nomination form and the home address form 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.

A 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](#), and [community council elections](#).

What to do after your formal determination

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 petition.¹¹³

Correction of minor errors

2.148 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 nominated.¹¹⁴ This includes the correction of errors in relation to a person's elector number and obvious errors of spelling of a candidate's details.¹¹⁵ You should attempt to contact the candidate or agent before making any minor error amendment.

2.149 You must have regard to the Commission's guidance on the correction of minor errors.¹¹⁶

Errors of spelling in details of candidates

2.150 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

2.151 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.¹¹⁷

Inspection of nomination papers

2.152 You should keep the nomination papers secure. By law, you must allow public inspection, and copies to be taken, of the nomination form during office hours on any day after the last day for the delivery of nominations up to and including the day before polling day.¹¹⁸

2.153 For nominations delivered electronically, it is only the form that is open to inspection or objection, not any covering email or similar. The papers can be printed off so that a hard copy is made available for inspection, or alternatively the papers can be made available to be viewed on a screen.

2.154 After the inspection period has passed, the nomination papers are not open to further 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.

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

Inspection of home address forms

2.156 You should keep the home address forms secure. During office hours on any day after the last day for the delivery 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.¹¹⁹ These people are:

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

Community council elections

In the case of a community council election, electoral area is the community or a ward, depending on whether the community is warded

2.157 Home address forms should be inspected under supervision. Taking extracts of the home address forms, or copies of them, is not permitted.¹²⁰

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

2.159 Home address forms must be kept securely stored for a period of 35 working days after the result has been declared.¹²¹ They must be securely destroyed on the next working day after the 35-day period.¹²² 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).¹²³ They must then be securely destroyed as soon as is practicable following the conclusion of the proceedings or appeal.

Withdrawal of a candidate

2.160 It is possible for a validly nominated candidate to withdraw their candidature. For this to be effective, the notice of withdrawal must be signed by the candidate in the presence of a witness.¹²⁴ The witness must attest the candidate's signature.¹²⁵ The notice must be delivered to you by 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll.¹²⁶

2.161 There are no restrictions on who can deliver a notice of withdrawal. The notice must be delivered by hand to the place for the delivery of nomination papers or delivered to you electronically.¹²⁷ In order to ensure that any withdrawals submitted electronically are delivered in accordance with the deadline, you must ensure that any computer system you use records the time that they are received.

A 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](#) and [community elections](#) as appropriate.

2.162 The details of any candidates who by the close of withdrawals remain validly nominated must be printed on the ballot papers.¹²⁸ If a candidate has not withdrawn by the deadline, their name must go forward to the ballot paper.¹²⁹

After the close of nominations

2.163 After the close of nominations you must publish a statement of persons nominated and a notice of poll.¹³⁰ For details on what these notices should contain see Chapter 4.

Nomination in more than one electoral area

2.164 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.¹³¹ If they do not withdraw from all but one ward, they will be deemed to have withdrawn from all of the wards.¹³²

P Community council elections

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

Uncontested elections

2.165 If the local government election in any electoral area is uncontested, you must, not later than 6 days before the election, declare the remaining validly nominated candidate(s) elected.¹³³ You must give their names and addresses to the Proper Officer of the council for which the election is held, and give public notice of the name of each elected person.¹³⁴ No poll is necessary.

P Community council elections

At a community council election, you are required to give notice of the name and addresses of each person elected to the proper officer of the

community council and also to the proper officer of the council of the county or county borough in which the community is situated.¹³⁵

P Community council elections

Where there are not enough validly nominated candidates at the ordinary election of a community council, those candidates who are validly nominated are elected.¹³⁶

If the 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 seats¹³⁷.

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 county or county borough council) may:

- by order make direct appointments of people as community councillors
- do anything necessary or expedient for the proper holding of the 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 election¹³⁸

The principal area council must not exercise this power within 35 working days of the ordinary date of election and may allow a community council a period longer than 35 working days to fill vacancies by co-option if it wishes.¹³⁹

Death of a candidate

2.166 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.

2.167 You must be satisfied from the proof you are given that the candidate has died¹⁴⁰. What the proof of death can be is not specified in electoral law so local factors and individual circumstances may help to dictate what you accept as proof. While a death certificate would be the most reliable form of proof, it may not be available to you immediately and you may decide to accept alternative information as proof.

Proof of death received before the withdrawal deadline

2.168 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 election.¹⁴¹ 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 held.¹⁴² 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 vacancies.¹⁴³

Proof of death received after the withdrawal deadline and before the result is declared

2.169 If proof of the death of a validly nominated candidate at a contested election is received before the result declared, the notice of poll is countermanded and the poll does not take place.¹⁴⁴ If polling has begun you must direct that no further ballot papers are issued.¹⁴⁵ 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 way.¹⁴⁶

2.170 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 unopened.¹⁴⁷ A new election must be held.

New election

2.171 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 poll.¹⁴⁸ New nominations can be made, but candidates already validly nominated at the original poll do not have to be nominated a second time.¹⁴⁹ Candidates validly nominated prior to the countermanding or abandonment of the poll may not withdraw as their period for withdrawals has expired.

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 poll.¹⁵⁰ 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 agent.¹⁵¹

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 day.¹⁵²

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 agent.¹⁵³ They must notify you in writing of any such changes.¹⁵⁴

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 sent.¹⁵⁵ 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.

dao Community council elections

There is no provision for the appointment of election agents at community council elections.¹⁵⁶

3.6 The location of the office must be:

- within the local government area, or
- in the 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 borough¹⁵⁷

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 If the address provided is outside the relevant qualifying area as defined in the bullet points above, you should contact the agent and request that they provide an alternative address within the relevant qualifying area.

3.9 Where a candidate appoints themselves as their own election agent, and they have indicated on the home address form that they want their home address to remain private, their home address must not be made public on the notice of election agents.¹⁵⁸

3.10 In these circumstances the candidate must provide you with another correspondence address within England or Wales for publication on the notice of election agents.¹⁵⁹

3.11 Where a candidate fails to appoint an election agent and is deemed to be their own agent by default, they will not have an opportunity to provide another correspondence address. In this case their office address will either be:

- Their home address as provided on the home address form if that address is in England or Wales; or
- The first of their qualifying addresses provided alongside their qualification to stand for election.

3.12 This office address must be published on the notice of election agents. This will be the case even if they have requested to keep that information private on the home address form. You should ensure that this is brought to the attention of any candidate who fails to appoint either themselves or another person as their agent.

3.13 Upon notification of an election agent's name and address, you must publish a notice setting out those details as soon as possible.¹⁶⁰ You should also include the full name of the candidate on this notice, and you could add any commonly used name in brackets, for completeness. 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.¹⁶¹

3.14 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.

3.15 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.

a Our [data protection resource](#) covers the requirements of a privacy notice and document retention considerations.

Other agents

3.16 Candidates can appoint agents to observe the opening of postal votes, the poll and the verification and count.¹⁶² 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](#).¹⁶³

A 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](#), and [community council 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 referendum.¹⁶⁴ In addition to the count, counting observers at a mayoral referendum may also attend the opening of postal votes.¹⁶⁵

At a mayoral referendum, as Counting Officer you may appoint polling observers and you are under a legal duty to appoint counting observers.¹⁶⁶ 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 cause.¹⁶⁷

Polling and counting observers must be nominated in writing by the fifth working day before the poll.¹⁶⁸ The written notice must contain the name and address of each nominee.¹⁶⁹

The opening of postal votes

3.16 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 statements.¹⁷⁰ 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 attend.¹⁷¹ The Commission has developed a [form for the notification of appointment of postal voting agents](#).

3.17 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 opening.¹⁷²

Mayoral referendums

At a mayoral 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 session.¹⁷³

The poll

3.18 Polling agents are entitled by law to access polling stations for the purpose of detecting personation.¹⁷⁴ They can also observe the procedures to be followed inside a polling station.

3.19 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 poll.¹⁷⁵ The Commission has developed a [form for the notification of appointment of polling agents](#).

3.20 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.

3.21 The total number that may attend at any particular polling station is four or such greater number that you decide to allow.¹⁷⁶ 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 number.¹⁷⁷ 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.

3.22 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 station.¹⁷⁸ Those

who are not selected by the lot are not appointed as polling agents for that particular polling station.¹⁷⁹

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

The count

3.24 Counting agents can be appointed to observe the verification and counting processes.¹⁸⁰

3.25 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 count.¹⁸¹ The Commission has developed a [form for the notification of appointment of counting agents](#).

3.26 You must give counting agents who have been appointed notice in writing of the time and place at which the verification and count will begin.¹⁸²

3.27 You are permitted by law to limit the number of counting agents.¹⁸³ 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 candidates.¹⁸⁴

3.28 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.

A

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 may publish them online or in any other way you consider appropriate for bringing the contents to the attention of the public.¹⁸⁵ This should include local authority offices, websites, noticeboards, libraries, other public buildings or in any other conspicuous place within the electoral area.

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.

4.3 When you publish notices and information for voters online 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.

a

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 format.¹⁸⁶ You may produce them:

- in Braille
- in languages other than English and Welsh
- using graphical representations
- in audio format ¹⁸⁷
- 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 format.¹⁸⁸ The enlarged display copies of the ballot paper(s) may, however, be produced in other languages or formats.¹⁸⁹

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 poll.¹⁹⁰ 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 number of councillors to be returned for each electoral ward in the principal area
- the date of the poll if the election is contested
- the place where and the times at which nomination papers may be obtained and information about how and when forms of nomination may be obtained online
- the latest time for the delivery of nomination papers and
- the place and times where nomination papers may be delivered
- 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 election¹⁹¹

An electronic delivery statement.

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 electronic delivery statement included on the notice of election contains all of the information that candidates and agents need to be able to submit nominations electronically. For more information on the content of the electronic delivery statement, see paragraph **2.8**

4.13 The place specified in the notice as where nomination papers may be obtained and where nomination papers may be delivered by hand, must be at the office of the council for the principal area.¹⁹²

Community council election

Unlike nomination papers for principal area elections, the place specified on the notice of election for delivery of nominations papers by hand does not need to be at the offices of the council.

4.14. The place specified in the notice as where nomination papers may be obtained and where nomination papers may be delivered by hand, must be at the office of the council for the principal area.¹⁹³

4.15. 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.

4.16. 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).

Mayoral referendums

At a Mayoral Referendum, the notice of referendum must,¹⁹⁴ by law, state:

- the date of the poll
- the date by which applications to vote by post or proxy (including emergency proxies), must reach the ERO in order to be effective for the referendum¹⁹⁵

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

4.17. You must publish a statement of persons nominated for each ward by not later than 4pm, eighteen working days before the poll.¹⁹⁶

4.18. 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 rejected:¹⁹⁷

- name
- address or, if they have requested not to make their home address public, the name of the relevant area in which their home address is situated (or the country if their home address is situated outside the UK)
- description (if any)
- the information contained on their statements of membership of political parties as given on their nomination paper

- in the case of those who no longer stand nominated, the reason why they no longer stand nominated.

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

a Our [data protection resource](#) covers the requirements of a privacy notice.

4.20. The names of the candidates on the statement must be listed in alphabetical order of their surname;¹⁹⁸ this is also how they will appear on the ballot paper.¹⁹⁹ Where there are two or more candidates with the same surname, the alphabetical order of the other names will decide which candidate is listed first.²⁰⁰

4.21. 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 confusion²⁰¹. 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.

4.22. 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.²⁰²

4.23. If a person has stated a commonly used forename or surname on their nomination paper, the commonly used name must be shown on the statement instead of the actual name.²⁰³ 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.²⁰⁴

4.24. 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 name.²⁰⁵

Notice of poll

4.25. 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 day.²⁰⁶ The notice of poll must state:²⁰⁷

- the date and hours of the poll
- the number of councillors to be elected in the ward
- the names and descriptions (if any) of each candidate and their home address information

4.26. 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 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.²⁰⁸

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

a Our [data protection resource](#) covers the requirements of a privacy notice.

4.28. 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 statement and question to be asked in the referendum²⁰⁹

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

4.29. You must, before or at the same time as 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 there²¹⁰

Combination

Where two or more polls are combined, the Returning 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)²¹¹
- specify the relevant local authority in which the other election is held²¹²
- 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 held²¹³

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

4.31. 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 practicable²¹⁴ after giving the notice, and you should also give a copy of the relevant notice to all candidates. You should also be prepared to make these notices available to any accredited observers on request.

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

Production of poll cards

4.33. As local government RO you are responsible for sending electors and their proxies an official poll card.²¹⁵ Poll cards must follow the prescribed form or be in a form to like effect.²¹⁶

4.34. The poll card must set out the following:

- the name of the council to which councillors are to be elected,
- the electoral ward for which councillors are to be elected
- the number of councillors to be elected for that electoral ward
- the elector's name, qualifying address and number on the register
- the date and hours of the poll and the situation of the elector's polling station, and

- such other information as the returning officer considers appropriate.²¹⁷

Combination

If you and the Returning or Counting Officer for the other relevant election agree, you can issue combined poll cards for all polls.²¹⁸

Poll cards must follow the prescribed form²¹⁹ but you can make any necessary adaptations when combining them.²²⁰

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.

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.

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

4.36. 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.

4.37. 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.

4.38. 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.

4.39. 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.

4.40. 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.

4.41. 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.

4.42. 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.

4.43. 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.

4.44. 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.

A We have published a resource for ROs on [quality assurance of the production and delivery of election materials](#).



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.

4.45. EROs must publish two interim election notices of alteration before publishing the final election notice of alteration on the fifth working day before the poll.²²¹ These notices support the prompt dispatch of poll cards to those electors who have applied to register close to the registration deadline.

4.46. 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 poll.²²² The second interim notice must be published between the eighteenth and sixth working day before the poll (inclusive).²²³ 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.

4.47. 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.

A Further information on interim notices is included in [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

4.48. You must send out or deliver poll cards as soon as practicable after the publication of the notice of election.²²⁴ Where poll cards are combined, they can only be issued once the notice of election for all elections has been published.

P Community council elections

The requirement to send poll cards does not apply to community council elections. The community council can, however, request that you issue poll cards.²²⁵

In the case of an elector with an anonymous entry, the returning officer must issue the appropriate poll card whether or not the council has requested the issue of poll cards.

Any such request must, by law, be made not later than 4pm on the nineteenth working day before the poll.²²⁶ You should liaise with the clerk at an early stage to obtain early confirmation of the 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 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 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 community council 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.

4.49. 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.

4.50. 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.

4.51. Poll cards may be delivered by hand or by post.²²⁷

Delivery by hand

4.52. 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.

4.53. 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.

4.54. 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

4.55. 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.

4.56. 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.

4.57. 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.

4.58. 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 proxies.²²⁸

4.59. 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 address.²²⁹

A We have published a resource for ROs on [quality assurance of the production and delivery of election materials](#).

Production of ballot papers

4.60. The form of the ballot papers is prescribed in the relevant election rules and you must follow this precisely.²³⁰.

4.61. 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 desired.²³¹

4.62. 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

4.63. 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.

4.64. Tendered ballot papers must be a different colour to the ordinary ballot papers.²³²

Combination

Where polls are combined, the colour of the ballot papers for each poll must be different.²³³

The 'official mark'

4.65. An appropriate security mark – the 'official mark' – must be added to the ballot paper.²³⁴ 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.

4.66. 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 election. 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 area.²³⁵

Ballot paper numbers and the unique identifying mark

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

4.68. 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.

4.69. 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 paper²³⁶

Candidate details

4.70. For each election, candidates must appear on the ballot paper in the order that they are listed on the statement of persons nominated²³⁷ and their names and relevant details must be printed in accordance with the relevant directions for printing²³⁸. For example, the directions state that surnames must be capitalised, and this would include the capitalising of surnames beginning with MAC and MC, in such alphabetical order.

4.71. 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.

4.72. 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.

4.73. The maximum size of an emblem on the ballot paper is two centimetres square.²³⁹ 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

4.74. 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 format.²⁴⁰ There is no provision to put any hatching or other marks on the back of the ballot paper.

Printing of ballot papers

4.75. The ballot papers must, by law, be printed in accordance with the directions for printing in the appendix to the relevant election rules.²⁴¹ 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.

4.76. 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.

4.77. 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.

4.78. 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.

4.79. 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

4.80. 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.

A 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](#) and a resource for ROs on [quality assurance of the production and delivery of election materials](#) which you can use to help you quality assure the whole process.

4.81. 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.

4.82. 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.

4.83. 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

4.84. 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.

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

Ballot paper security

4.86. 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.

Setting up polling stations

A 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.

A 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.

A 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.
- Enlarged sample copy of the ballot paper(s) marked specimen for display inside the polling station²⁴².
- Enlarged hand-held sample copy of the ballot paper(s) marked specimen to give to electors to take to a polling booth with them for reference.
- Voting device for use by blind or partially sighted voters enabling voting without any need for assistance. 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 notice (for display both inside (but not in the polling booth) and outside the polling station).²⁴³
- 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.²⁴⁴

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 poll.²⁴⁵

A 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 staff.

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 necessary.²⁴⁶ 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 Officers.²⁴⁷ 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](#).

A 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 lists.²⁴⁸ 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. Identifying and rectifying clerical errors are the responsibility of the ERO and more information about that process, including some examples, can be found in our ERO guidance [Clerical errors on the electoral register](#).

5.25. 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.

5.26. 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 manner.²⁴⁹ 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 error.²⁵⁰ 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.

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

5.28. 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

5.29. 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](#).

5.30. 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 used.²⁵¹

5.31. 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 issued.²⁵²

Combination

Where two or more polls are combined, you must prepare and provide a combined corresponding number list for each polling station.²⁵³ 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 votes.²⁵⁴

A 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

5.32. Postal voters can return their postal vote by hand to any polling station in their appropriate area.²⁵⁵ Where the poll is not combined, this will be the ward.

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 issued.²⁵⁶

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

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

5.34. 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 so.²⁵⁷

5.35. 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.

5.36. 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

5.37. 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.

5.38. 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.

5.39. 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.

5.40. 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

5.41. You must produce the 'Guidance for voters' notice and the 'Instructions for voters' notice.²⁵⁸ The contents and display of the 'Guidance for voters' notice and the 'Instructions for voters' notice are prescribed in legislation.²⁵⁹

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.

5.42. The ‘Guidance for voters’ notice must be exhibited inside and outside of the polling station.²⁶⁰ The ‘Instructions for voters’ notice must be exhibited in every polling booth.²⁶¹

Use of English or Welsh in polling stations

5.43. You should ensure that when you brief polling station staff, you make clear that, in polling stations, only 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.

5.44. Some voters may need assistance in another language because of their limited 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 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

5.45. 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 law,²⁶² whether intentionally or not, our advice is that you should not allow photos to be taken inside polling stations.

5.46. 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

5.47. 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.

A 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

5.48. 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).²⁶³

5.49. 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.

A 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](#).

5.50 The Presiding Officer is required to seal the packets containing the marked copy of the register, list of proxies and the completed corresponding lists at the close of poll in the presence of any polling agents who are there.

5.51. If the packets are to be sealed in a location other than the polling station, the Presiding Officer must inform the polling agents and give them an opportunity to attend that place. You should ensure that Presiding Officers know the location where the sealing of the packets containing the marked copy of the register, list of proxies and the completed corresponding lists is

taking place so that they can communicate it to any polling agents present and ensure that all polling station material is secured and safely transferred to that place.

5.52. 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 and the sealing of packets.

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- ¹ Rules 3 to 16, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ² Representation of the People Act 1983 s 76(2)(b) (RPA 1983) and Art 35 SI 2012/1917
- ³ Section 76, RPA 1983 s76.
- ⁴ sch.2 para.15 Local Gov & Elections (Wales) Act 2021
- ⁵ Regulation 98, Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 (RPR 2001).
- ⁶ Regulation 98, RPR 2001 and sections 13AB and 13B, Representation of the People Act 1983
- ⁷ Regulations 102 and 108, RPR 2001.
- ⁸ Regulations 102 and 61, RPR 2001.
- ⁹ sch.2 para.15 Local Gov & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 extends the provisions in section 25 Senedd & Elections (Wales) Act 2020 to local election in Wales
- ¹⁰ Section 25 (7) and (9) Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020
- ¹¹ Section 25 (6) Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020
- ¹² Section 25 (2) Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020
- ¹³ Section 25 (4) Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020
- ¹⁴ Rule 5(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁵ Rule 9(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁶ Rule 6(9), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021.
- ¹⁷ Rule 6(4)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁸ Rule 7(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁹ Rule 7(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰ Rule 22(5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ²¹ Rule 4(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²² Rule 5(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³ Section 199C RPA 1983, having effect at elections from 5 May 2022, replacing Section 199B
- ²⁴ Rule 4(1)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021

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- ²⁵ Rule 3(6) (a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁶ Rule 3(6) (b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁸ Rule 3(5) and (6) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³⁰ Rules 5(2) (b), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³² Rule 1(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³³ Rule 5 (2) (a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³⁴ Rule 5 (2) (b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³⁶ Rule 3(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³⁷ Rule 3(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021
- ³⁸ Rule 16, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ³⁹ Rule 5(2) (a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁴⁰ Rule 10(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ⁴¹ Rule 16, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁴² Rules 5(2) (b), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁴³ Rule 5(2) and Rule 10(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ⁴⁴ Rule 19(1) and (2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁴⁵ Rule 19(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁴⁶ Rule 19(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁴⁷ Section 65A, RPA 1983.
- ⁴⁸ Section 65A(1)(a), RPA 1983.
- ⁴⁹ RPA 1983 s65A and s168 and Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 s85 Sections 65A and 168(1), RPA 1983.
- ⁵⁰ Rule 5(3)(a), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵¹ Rule 5(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵² Rule 14(2) (b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵³ Rule 10(8), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵⁴ Rule 10(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021 ;
- ⁵⁵ Rules 9(3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021

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- ⁵⁶ Rule 14(3)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵⁷ Rule 8(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵⁸ Rule 8(6) (c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁵⁹ Section 4 of Form of nomination paper prescribed in Appendix 1 of Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶⁰ Rule 5(3)(d) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶¹ Appendix 1, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶² Rule 5(5) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶³ Rule 5(5) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶⁴ Rule 9(5)(a) & (b) Sch.1 Principal Areas Rules
- ⁶⁵ Rule 5(5) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶⁶ Rule 6(9) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶⁷ PPERA s28A Section 28A, Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA 2000).
- ⁶⁸ Rule 7(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁶⁹ Rule 7(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁷⁰ Rule 6(9) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁷² Rule 10(3)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁷³ Section 29, PPERA s29 2000.
- ⁷⁴ Section 30(6A), PPERA 2000.
- ⁷⁵ Section 30(6A), PPERA 2000 s30(6A).
- ⁷⁶ Section 30, PPERA 2000 s30 and Rule 6 (10) (a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁷⁷ Rule 10(3)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁷⁸ Rule 6(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁷⁹ Rule 6(3)) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸⁰ Rule 6(3)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸¹ Rule 6(3)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸² Rule 7(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸³ Rule 7(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸⁴ Rule 7(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸⁵ Rule 7(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸⁶ Rule 6 (4)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021

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- ⁸⁷ Rule 22(5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁸⁸ 22(7), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ⁸⁹ 22(6), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁰ 22(7), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ⁹¹ Rule 9(2)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹² Rule 9(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹³ Rule 9(2)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁴ Rule 9(2)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁵ Rule 9(2)(d) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁶ Rule 9(5)(a) and (b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁷ Rule 9(6) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁸ Rule 9(7)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ⁹⁹ Rule 9(7)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰⁰ Rule 10(1) and (2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰¹ *Greenway Stanley v Paterson* [1977] 2 All ER 663; *R v An Election Court ex parte Sheppard* [1975] 1 WLR 1319.
- ¹⁰² *Sanders v Chichester* (1995) 139 SJLB 15
- ¹⁰³ Rule 10(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰⁴ Rule 10(3)(b), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹⁰⁵ 10(3)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰⁶ 10(3)(d)(aa) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰⁷ Rule 10(3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021; Rule 10(3) Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰⁸ Rule 10(3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021; Rule 10(3) Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁰⁹ Rule 10(5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021; Rule 10(5), Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹¹⁰ Rule 10(6),) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021; rule 10(6), Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹¹¹ Rule 10(7) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹¹² Rule 10(3)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹¹³ Rule 10(9) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹¹⁴ Rule 16(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹¹⁵ Rule 16(2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021

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- ¹¹⁶ Rule 16(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹¹⁷ Section 50, RPA 1983
- ¹¹⁸ Rule 17, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹¹⁹ Rule 18, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²⁰ Rule 18(3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²¹ Rule 66 (1)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²² Rule 66 (2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²³ Rule 66 (1)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²⁴ Rule 12(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²⁵ Rule 12(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²⁶ Rules 1 and 12, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²⁷ Rules 1 and 12, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹²⁸ Rules 12 and 22(2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹²⁹ Rules 12 and 22(2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹³⁰ Rules 1, 13 and 27, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹³¹ Rule 11, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021.
- ¹³² Rule 11, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹³³ Rule 1 and Rule 20 (2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹³⁴ Rule 20(3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021
- ¹³⁵ Rule 20(3), Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹³⁶ Rule 20(2), Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹³⁷ RPA 1985 s21 Section 21(2)(a), Representation of the People Act 1985 (RPA 1985).
- ¹³⁸ Section 21(2)(b), RPA 1985 and section 39(4), RPA 1983.
- ¹³⁹ Section 21(2), RPA 1985.
- ¹⁴⁰ Rule 67(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁴¹ Rule 10(2)(b), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁴² Rule 71(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁴³ Rule 20(2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 section 39(1) RPA 1983.
- ¹⁴⁴ Rule 67(1) and (2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁴⁵ Rule 67(2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁴⁶ Rule 67(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁴⁷ 67(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ¹⁴⁸ Section 39(1), RPA 1983.

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- ¹⁴⁹ Section 39(5)(b), RPA 1983.
¹⁵⁰ Section 67(1), RPA 1983 s67(1).
¹⁵¹ Section 70(1), RPA 1983 s70.
¹⁵² Section 70(2) and (3), RPA 1983.
¹⁵³ Section 67(3) and (4), RPA 1983.
¹⁵⁴ Section 67(4), RPA 1983 s67 and s70.
¹⁵⁵ Section 69(1), RPA 1983.
¹⁵⁶ Section 71(a), RPA 1983 s71.
¹⁵⁷ Section 69(2)(b), RPA 1983.
¹⁵⁸ Section 69 (1A)(b) RPA 1983
- ¹⁶⁰ Section 67(6), RPA 1983.
¹⁶¹ Section 67(6), RPA 1983 s67.
¹⁶² Rule 33 (1) (b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
¹⁶³ RPA 1983 s66, Rule 53(6) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
¹⁶⁴ Rule 18, Schedule 3, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Wales) Regulations 2008
¹⁶⁵ Regulation 68, RPR 2001 (as applied and modified by Table 5, Schedule 4, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Wales) Regulations 2008).- Please check this reference there is no Schedule 4 in the 2008 Regulations
¹⁶⁶ Rule 18(1) and (2), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2008 INCORRECT REF for 271-274 given here
¹⁶⁷ Rule 18(3) and (5), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2008
- ¹⁶⁸ Rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2008.
¹⁶⁹ Rule 18(4), Local Authorities Mayoral Referendums Rules 2008
¹⁷⁰ Regulation 68(d), RPR 2001.
¹⁷¹ Regulation 69(2), RPR 2001.
¹⁷² Regulation 80, RPR 2001.
¹⁷³ Regulation 80, RPR 2001 (as applied and modified by Schedule 4, Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums)(Wales) Regulations 2008
¹⁷⁴ Rule 33(1)(a), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁷⁵ Rule 33(8)(b), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁷⁶ Rule 33(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁷⁷ Rule 33(8) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
¹⁷⁸ Rule 33(4)(a) Rule 33(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁷⁹ Rule 33(4)(b) Rule 33(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁸⁰ Rule 33 (1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
¹⁸¹ Rule 33(7), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
¹⁸² Rule 52(2), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
¹⁸³ Rule 33(5) (a) , Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁸⁴ Rule 33(5) (b) , Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
¹⁸⁵ Article 5(6) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and article 4(6) Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021

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- ¹⁸⁶ Section 199C(2), RPA 1983
- ¹⁸⁷ Section 199C(3), RPA 1983
- ¹⁸⁸ Section 199C(4), RPA 1983.
- ¹⁸⁹ Rule 32(10) , Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁹⁰ Rule 1, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁹¹ Rule 3 (3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁹² Rule 3(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021
- ¹⁹³ Rule 3(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021
- ¹⁹⁴ Rule 5 (2), The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Wales) Regulations 2008
- ¹⁹⁵ Rule 5, The Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Wales) Regulations 20082008
- ¹⁹⁶ Rule 1, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁹⁷ Rule 13 (1) (b), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021 , Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 9, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006;
- ¹⁹⁸ Rule 13(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ¹⁹⁹ Rule22 (4)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021),
- ²⁰⁰Rule 13(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ²⁰¹ Rule 15(1)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰² Rule 15(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰³ Rule 14(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰⁴ Rule 13(4) and rule 14(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰⁵ Rule 14(2) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021,
- ²⁰⁶ Rule 1,Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ²⁰⁷ Rule 27(1) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰⁸ Rule 27(1)(c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁰⁹ Rule 12(1)(b), Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (Wales) Regulations 2008.
- ²¹⁰ Rule 27(3), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²¹¹ Sch 2, Rule 27(4)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²¹² Sch 2 Rule 27(4) (b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²¹³Sch 2 Rule 27(4) (c) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021.
- ²¹⁴ Rule 27(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²¹⁵ Rule 31(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;

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- ²¹⁶ Rule 31(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²¹⁷ Appendix 5, Rule 31(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²¹⁸ Sch 2, Rule 31(7) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021 Rule 27(6), Local Authorities Mayoral Combination Rules 2007 There is no rule 27(6)
- ²¹⁹ Sch 2, Rule 31(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²²⁰ Sch 2, Rule 31(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²²¹ Sections 13AB and 13B, RPA 1983.
- ²²² Section 13AB(5), RPA 1983.
- ²²³ Section 13AB(6), RPA 1983.
- ²²⁴ Rule 31(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021
- ²²⁵ Rule 31(1), Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²²⁶ 31(1), Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²²⁷ Rule 31(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²²⁸ Rule 31(2) and (3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²²⁹ Section 9B(8), RPA 1983 and rule 31(6) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³⁰ Rule 22 (3) and Appendix 2, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³¹ Rules 24(4) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³² Rule 46(1) (a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³³ Sch 2, Rule 22 (3) (d) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³⁴ Rule 24(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³⁵ 24(4), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021;
- ²³⁶ Rule 22(4)(c) and Appendix 2, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³⁷ Rule 22(4)(a) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³⁸ Rule 22(3)(b) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²³⁹ Directions as to Printing the Ballot Paper, Appendix 2, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021,.
- ²⁴⁰ Prescribed Ballot Paper, Appendix 2, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁴¹ Prescribed Ballot Paper, Appendix 2, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021 Com.
- ²⁴² Rule 32(6)(a), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁴³ Rule 32(9) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁴⁴ Rules 51(3), ; Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁴⁵ Rule 32, Principal Areas Rules 2006; rule 32, Parishes and Communities Rules 2006;
- ²⁴⁶ Rule 32(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021

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- ²⁴⁷ Rule 32(1), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁴⁸ Rule 32 (3)(b) and (d), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁴⁹ Rule 49, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021,
- ²⁵⁰ Rule 49, Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵¹ Prescribed corresponding number list forms in Appendix 3 to each set of rules; rule 23 (5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵² Prescribed corresponding number list forms in Appendix 3 to each set of rules; rule 23 (5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵³ Prescribed corresponding number list forms in Appendix 3, Sch 2, 23 (5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵⁴ Prescribed corresponding number list Appendix 3, Sch 2, 23 (5), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021,
- ²⁵⁵ Sch 2, Rule 58(5) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵⁶ Sch 2, 58(5) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵⁷ Rule 51(3) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵⁸ Rule 32(9) and (11) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁵⁹ Rule 32(9) and (11) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁶⁰ Rule 32(9) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021
- ²⁶¹ Rule 32(11) Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021, .
- ²⁶² Section 66, RPA 1983.
- ²⁶³ Rule (42(7), Local elections (Principal Area) (Wales) Rules 2021 and Local elections (Communities) Wales 2021