

Part A – Returning Officer role and responsibilities

Senedd and Police and Crime
Commissioner elections: guidance for
Returning Officers

October 2020

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. These resources should be provided in English and Welsh.

For information on obtaining this publication in another language or in a large-print or Braille version please contact the Electoral Commission:
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Updates to this document

| Updated | Description of change | Paragraph number |
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| March 2016 | Re-published to include legal references | N/A |
| October 2020 | Updated to take account of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 Updated to reflect the changes introduced by the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 | |

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1 Introduction to this guidance

Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this guidance is to assist Returning Officers with the practice and procedure of running a poll for Senedd elections where the poll is combined with the poll at a Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) election.
- 1.2 The Constituency Returning Officer (CRO) at the Senedd election is the person who has been appointed as the Returning Officer for local government elections in that area; in the case of a constituency that includes more than one local authority, the CRO will be designated by Welsh Ministers¹.
- 1.3 As CRO, you are responsible for administering the nominations of candidates at the constituency contest, the conduct of the poll, the counting of votes for both the constituency election and that part of the regional contest is included within the constituency. The Regional Returning Officer (RRO) is responsible for administering the nominations of parties and individual candidates at the regional contest and calculating the regional result. The RRO will also be a CRO and will be designated by Welsh Ministers².
- 1.4 As CRO you are responsible not only for the delivery of the Senedd election in your constituency, but also for the combined elements of the poll. By virtue of being the CRO, you will also be the Local Returning Officer (LRO) for the PCC election³. This guidance covers all aspects of planning for and administering the polls.
- 1.5 It has been developed in close consultation with members of the Wales Electoral Coordination Board, the Wales Electoral Practitioner's Working Group, the UK Electoral Advisory Board (EAB), and the Elections, Registration and Referendums Working Group (ERRWG). It reflects what we, the WECB, WEPWG, and ERRWG believe that Constituency Returning Officers (CROs), Regional Returning Officers (RROs) and Local Returning Officers (LROs) should expect of their staff in preparing for and delivering the polls.
- 1.6 You should read it in conjunction with any additional guidance or directions issued by the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO) as part of their role in co-ordinating the delivery of the PCC election in their area. The PARO has the power to give general or specific directions to LROs relating to the discharge of their functions at the PCC election, and so when acting as LRO you must comply with any such directions. This power to give directions does not, however, extend to the Senedd election or the combined elements of the

pollⁱ. In any case, you should liaise closely with the PARO and take into account any guidance issued by them in preparing for and delivering the polls as a whole. We have produced separate planning guidance for PAROs in [English](#) and in [Welsh](#) which is available for download from our website.

1.7 Throughout this guidance we generally use ‘you’ to refer to you as CRO and LRO. Where we are referring to the RRO or the PARO, this will be explicitly stated. For further details about the roles and responsibilities of all ROs, see chapter 3 - Roles and responsibilities.

1.8 This guidance has been produced based on, and should be read in accordance with, the requirements set out in the following legislation (as amended):

- Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000
- Government of Wales Acts 1998 and 2006
- Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
- Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001
- *The National Assembly for Wales (Elections: Nomination Papers) (Welsh Form) Order 2001*
- Representation of the People (Combination of Polls) (England and Wales) Regulations 2004
- Electoral Administration Act 2006
- National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007
- The Representation of the People (National Assembly for Wales) (Access to Election Documents) Regulations 2007
- Political Parties and Elections Act 2009
- Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011
- The National Assembly for Wales (Returning Officers' Accounts) Regulations 2011
- The National Assembly for Wales (Returning Officers' Charges) Order 2016
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections Order 2012
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Functions of Returning Officers) Regulations 2012
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Designation of Local Authorities) Order 2020
- The Police and Crime Commissioner (Disqualification) (Supplementary Provisions) Regulations 2012
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Returning Officers' Accounts) Regulations 2012
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Local Returning Officers' and Police Area Returning Officers' Charges) Order 2016
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Elections (Welsh Forms) Order 2012
- Wales Act 2014

ⁱ Except that the PARO may direct the time by which verification procedures must begin (unless one of the combined polls is the poll at a UK parliamentary election).

- The National Assembly for Wales (Disqualification) Order 2015
- The Transfer of Functions (Police and Crime Commissioner Elections) Order 2015
- The Senedd Cymru (Representation of the People) (Amendment) Order 2020
- The Representation of the People (Election Expenses Exclusion) (Wales) (Amendment) Order 2020

1.9 The list above includes only the legislation that makes provision in areas that this guidance relates to and the legislation that is currently in force. We expect further legislation to provide for amended conduct regulations, combination rules in Wales, designation of PAROs and fees and charges.

1.10 Revised data protection legislation applies to the processing of all personal data. You are personally responsible for ensuring that you comply with the requirements of data protection legislation. The Commission has published a [resource](#) to support you in meeting your obligations under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018, as they relate to your electoral administration responsibilities.

1.11 CROs, RROs, PAROs and LROs are also required to have regard to the public sector equality duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when carrying out their duties.

1.12 CROs, RROs, PAROs and LROs are also required to have regard to the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, which require services in Wales to be delivered equally in English and in Welsh.

How to use this guidance

1.13 The guidance is divided into six areas:

- Part A – Returning Officer roles and responsibilities ([Welsh](#))
- Part B – Planning and organisation ([English](#) or [Welsh](#))
- Part C – Administering the poll ([English](#) or [Welsh](#))
- Part D – Absent voting ([English](#) or [Welsh](#))
- Part E – Verifying and counting the votes ([English](#) or [Welsh](#))
- Part F – After the declaration of results ([English](#) or [Welsh](#))

1.14 Each of these parts covers:

- what CROs/LROs, RROs and the PARO are required to do by law ('musts')
- what we expect they will need to have in place, and what we would expect to see to be able to be satisfied that the key outcomes of the Commission's performance standards can be delivered
- recommended practice to assist CROs/LROs and RROs in understanding and discharging their duties

1.15 This guidance is supplemented by resources which can be accessed through links contained throughout the guidance.

1.16 Should you have any questions about our guidance or any other matter relating to the administration of the elections, we are available to provide on-going support. We will also be providing an out-of-hours advice service to deal with urgent electoral administration queries in the run up to and immediately following the elections. Further information on the out-of-hours service will be provided through our [Bulletin for electoral administrators](#).

Terminology

1.17 In this guidance the term 'constituency' refers to a constituency at an Senedd election. The term 'region' refers to a region at a Senedd election. The term 'voting area' should be read as an Senedd constituency for the purposes of the PCC election in Wales. The 'police area' at a PCC election is the area covered by the police force.

2 Context of the elections

2.1 The elections will be a significant event, bringing their own particular challenges, and your work to deliver well-run polls will come under considerable scrutiny – from voters, candidates and political parties, and the media, including through social media.

2.2 Even if you have worked as a CRO, RRO or LRO before, there have been changes in legislation – and landscape – since the last equivalent polls which make this event different from any other election you may have delivered previously. In particular, the combination of the poll at the Senedd election with the poll at the PCC election and the overlap of electoral areas will present particular challenges for planning for and delivering the polls.

2.3 This chapter seeks to highlight some of the particular aspects of context relevant to these polls which you should ensure underpin all aspects of your planning.

Nature of the contests

2.4 There are risks inherent in the combination of Senedd and PCC polls that will need to be mitigated for both elections to be well-run. For example, there will be two different electoral systems in use, incorporating two methods of voting, with three ballot papers.

2.5 The extension to the Senedd franchise will see 16 and 17 year olds and qualifying foreign nationals able to participate in this poll for the first time meaning that there will be differences in who can vote at each poll. This will not only increase the overall size of the electorate but will also expand the pool of those who may be voting for the first time and so who may need more support to be able to cast their vote in the way they intended. It will also mean that the franchise will be different for each poll. Clear and tailored information for voters on how to cast their vote will be essential to minimise confusion.

2.6 Even though the PCC elections will be administered on Senedd constituency boundaries, a number of Senedd constituencies cross local authority boundaries and not all police areas are co-terminous with the Senedd region, adding a layer of complexity to the processes to be carried out. To ensure that voters receive a consistently high quality of service irrespective of where they live and to minimise any voter confusion, you will need to work closely with the PARO(s), RRO(s), CROs/LROs and local government ROs in your area.

2.7 The evolving political landscape could mean that even in places where there have traditionally been large majorities this may no longer be the case, meaning the focus and circumstances could be different from anything experienced in your area before.

2.8 There may be a significant number of new or less experienced political parties, candidates and agents who are unfamiliar with the practices and processes of an election and who will need your assistance to be able to participate effectively.

2.9 Given the possibility of close and hard-fought contests, you should be prepared for the integrity of the elections to be scrutinised. Allegations and cases of electoral fraud will not only have a negative impact on the confidence of electors and campaigners, but they may also have a significant impact on your capacity to manage the election processes effectively. It is therefore crucial that you put in place detailed and robust plans for monitoring and maintaining the integrity of the elections in your area. You should work closely with the local police, ensuring you have in place good lines of communication for referring any allegations.

Scale

2.10 Many aspects of planning for the elections will need to reflect assumptions as to the likely turnout. Establishing such assumptions at an early stage in planning is of key importance as the scope for adjusting plans is limited at a later stage in the process. There are always challenges with developing such planning assumptions, with it often being difficult to predict in advance of the election period what the levels of engagement in the particular polls are likely to be. Given the potential for high levels of interest and engagement in these elections, some of which may not emerge until close to the polls, the potential for a high turnout needs to be reflected in all aspects of planning for the polls.

2.11 For example, higher turnout would mean more voters at polling stations, and it is vital that appropriate provision is made, with the numbers of stations and the numbers of staff within them sufficient to deal with the number of electors allocated to them. Although the legislation allows any voters in a queue at their polling station at 10pm to vote, the need to ensure that voters do not face undue delays in voting and can receive a high-quality service still remains.

2.12 As the polls become closer, the context will continue to evolve as the campaigns pick up pace. You will need to be prepared to react to events which could have an impact on the effective delivery of the polls, and this will include having robust contingency plans in place that you can turn to where required. If, for example, there are televised Leaders' debates, these could result in a late surge of registration and absent voting applications, as well as having an impact on turnout and could alter the traditional pattern of when completed postal votes are returned.

2.13 It is vital that appropriate provision of polling stations is made, with the numbers of stations and the numbers of staff within them sufficient to deal with the number of electors allocated to them. Although any voters in a queue at their polling station at 10pm are able to vote, the need to ensure that voters

do not face undue delays in voting and can receive a high-quality service remains.

2.14 The media focus on the verification, count and declaration of results could be significant and it will be important to manage expectations, not only of the media but of all with an interest in the results, by consulting on your proposed approach and subsequently communicating clearly what you expect to deliver and by when, particularly where combination will impact on your expected result declaration times.

Registration of electors

2.15 The focus on the numbers of those registered and not registered is as high profile as it has ever been, and this is set to continue.

2.16 The potential for a high number of registration applications close to the deadline for the elections should be anticipated and built into your plans, reflecting lessons learnt from the experience of the elections. The impact of such applications and related questions from residents about their registration status is not only relevant to the ERO but will also have implications for the administration of the poll and your plans should ensure you are able to respond effectively.

2.17 Online registration has also brought greater opportunities to engage local residents in the democratic process and to boost the levels of registration among under registered groups, with a Senedd election providing a strong hook for your local public engagement activity. And you do not need to do this on your own – opportunities for working with local partners who can reach out to voters in under-registered groups in your area could be a valuable part of your engagement work locally and should be sought out and seized.

3 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Every city, county and county borough council is required to appoint an officer of the council to be the RO for the election of councillors to their local authority.

3.2 You will act as CRO for the Senedd election and, consequently, as LRO for the PCC election by virtue of being a local government RO. Where a constituency contains more than one local authority area, the CRO will be designated by Welsh Ministers. The RRO will be a CRO and will also be designated by Welsh Ministers. At a PCC election, an LRO is appointed for each voting area within the police area. The voting area is defined as the Senedd constituency area.

Your role and responsibilities

3.3 You play a central role in the democratic process. Your role is to ensure that the elections are administered effectively and that as a result, the experience of voters and those standing for election is a positive one. To achieve this, as both CRO and LRO, you will need to have in place an effective mechanism for liaising with the RRO (if you are not also the RRO), adjoining CROs/LROs and with the PARO.

3.4 If you are also the RRO or PARO you are also uniquely placed to liaise with the CROs/LROs in your area to ensure that all voters in the elections receive a consistent and high quality experience.

3.5 You should set out at an early stage what each of you wants to achieve and what success would look like for you.

3.6 As a CRO, in your constituency, you are personally responsible for the conduct of the Senedd election, including:

- publication of the notice of election for the constituency contest⁴
- administration of the nomination process for the constituency contest⁵
- encouraging participation
- publication of the statement of persons nominated and the notice of poll for the constituency contest⁶
- provision and equipment of polling stations⁷
- appointment of polling station staff⁸
- conduct of the poll⁹
- management of the postal vote process¹⁰
- verification and counting of the votes for both the constituency contest and that part of the regional contest that falls within the constituency¹¹
- declaration of the constituency result¹²
- transmission of both contest results to the RRO¹³

3.7 For the Senedd and PCC elections, as CRO, you will also take on responsibility for the combined elements of the polls, including:

- the provision of polling stations
- the appointment and training of Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks
- conducting the poll
- the notice of situation of polling stations
- the equipment of polling stations
- the notification of the secrecy requirements at polling stations
- signing certificates of employment for polling station staff allowing them to vote at the polling station they are working at, as opposed to the one allocated to them
- authorisation to order the removal of persons from polling stations
- verification of all ballot papers
- where it has been decided to combine the issue of postal votes:
 - the corresponding number list
 - the issue of postal votes including creating a copy of the postal voters list and proxy postal voters list and marking it on issue
 - the opening of postal votes including the marking the returned postal vote statements on the lists and the verification of the personal identifiers on the returned postal voting statements

3.8 As LRO, in your voting area you are personally responsible for:

- counting the PCC votes for your voting area¹⁴ (unless the PARO has given notice that they will take on responsibility for this)
- transmitting the local total for the voting area to the PARO¹⁵
- printing the PCC election ballot papers (unless the PARO has given notice that they will take on responsibility for this)
- managing the postal vote process at the PCC election (but only if the decision has been taken to not combine the issue of postal votes at the local and PCC elections)

3.9 Your duties as CRO and LRO are separate from your duties as a local government officer. As CRO and LRO you are not responsible to the local authority but are directly accountable to the courts as an independent statutory office holder.

3.10 While you can appoint one or more persons to discharge any or all of your functions as CRO and LRO¹⁶, you cannot delegate your personal responsibility for delivering your duties at the elections. Further information on the appointment of deputies can be found in Part B – Planning and organisation ([English](#) or [Welsh](#)).

Regional Returning Officer

3.11 If you are also the RRO, in your region you will be personally responsible for:

- publication of the notice of election for the regional contest¹⁷
- administration of the nomination process for the regional contest¹⁸
- directing, if necessary, CROs in your region about the means of informing you of the number of votes given for registered parties and individual candidates for the regional poll in their constituency¹⁹
- publication of the statement of persons and parties nominated and the notice of poll for the regional contest²⁰
- collation and calculation of the number of votes given for each individual candidate and political party in the regional contest, and calculation of the allocation of seats for the electoral region²¹
- declaration of the regional result²²

Your skills and knowledge

3.12 You should have a working knowledge of the legislation governing the conduct of the elections. This means that, in addition to having a clear understanding of your particular statutory functions, you should have an overview of what the legislation contains and an understanding of how it affects the administration of the elections, so that you can review, question where necessary, and quality-assure the whole process.

3.13 There are management responsibilities attached to your role. For example, you should:

- command the required staff and resources to deliver well-run elections
- draw in the necessary support, skills and expertise from across your own local authority
- oversee the planning, project management and risk management of the elections and incorporate any lessons learnt from previous polls
- identify and oversee any actions necessary to mitigate any issues arising
- ensure that staff are appropriately trained to deliver the roles required of them
- support the staff administering the elections and provide appropriate oversight of their work
- provide direction to staff, monitor progress and receive regular feedback on activities
- if you are not also the RRO, maintain an effective working relationship with the RRO
- if you are not also the PARO, maintain an effective working relationship with the PARO
- if the constituency crosses local authority boundaries, maintain an effective working relationship with the ERO(s)

- in the case of cross-boundary constituencies, maintain an effective working relationship with the ERO for the other local authority area
- maintain an effective working relationship with the CROs in your electoral region to help to ensure that electors across the region receive a consistent, high quality experience
- in the case of cross-boundary constituencies, seek advice and assistance from the CRO and staff at the other local authority
- maintain an effective working relationship with your police Single Point of Contact (SPOC)
- ensure that election accounts are completed in a timely manner

Breach of official duty and power to correct procedural errors

3.14 The CRO, RRO and LRO are each also subject to breach of official duty provisions. This means that if they or their appointed deputies are, without reasonable cause, guilty of any act or omission in breach of official duty they (and/or their deputies) are liable on summary conviction to an unlimited fine.

3.15 The CRO, RRO and LRO each has the power to take such steps as they think appropriate to remedy acts or omissions that arise in connection with any function of the elections for which they are responsible and that are not in accordance with the rules.²³

3.16 This power allows the CRO, RRO and LRO to correct procedural errors that they, an ERO, a Presiding Officer or a person providing goods or services to the CRO/RRO/LRO (or any deputies of any of these) make.

3.17 Where a CRO/LRO/RRO remedies an act or omission in full by using your power to correct a procedural error, they will not be guilty of an offence of breach of official duty.²⁴ You should remember that the power to correct procedural errors does not enable you as CRO to recount the votes once the constituency result has been declared, nor does it enable the RRO to recalculate the result for the region once the result has been declared. Similarly as LRO the power to correct procedural errors does not enable you to recount the PCC votes once the result is declared.²⁵

3.18 As CRO and LRO you are personally liable for the conduct of the elections in your constituency. You should ensure that you have insurance cover and that it is up-to-date. You should be prepared to demonstrate robust planning and decision-making processes in the event of any challenge to the elections and a claim against you. If you are also the RRO, you should ensure that you have appropriate insurance cover for your RRO responsibilities too and that it is up-to-date. The team at your local authority dealing with insurance may be able to help determine what existing cover is in place and available, and to provide advice as to whether it should be extended.

Appointment, role and responsibilities of the Police Area Returning Officer

3.19 The PARO is designated by an Order made by the Secretary of State and must be an Acting Returning Officer for a UK Parliamentary constituency which falls within or partly within the police area.²⁶

3.20 The PARO is personally responsible for:

- publishing the notice of election for the PCC election²⁷
- administering the nomination process for the PCC election²⁸
- publish the statement of persons nominated²⁹
- ensuring that PCC candidates comply with the requirements regarding the content of their election addresses³⁰
- collating and calculating the number of votes given for each candidate at the PCC election and calculating the result³¹
- declaring the PCC result³²

3.21 The PARO may also take on responsibility for the following LRO duties by giving notice to the relevant LRO(s):

- printing the PCC election ballot papers
- verification
- counting the PCC votes³³

3.22 The PARO has the power to give general or specific directions to LROs relating to the discharge of their functions at the PCC election, including directions requiring LROs to take specified preparatory steps or to provide any information that they have or are entitled to have. This power to give directions does not extend to the local government election or the combined elements of the pollⁱⁱ.

ⁱⁱ Except that the PARO may direct the time by which verification procedures must begin (unless one of the combined polls is the poll at a UK parliamentary election).

4 Performance standards

4.1 The Electoral Commission sets standards and monitors and reports on the performance of Returning Officers.³⁴ The performance standards applicable to the polls can be found at [Appendix A – Performance standards for Returning Officers](#).

4.2 The framework was developed around the key outcomes from the perspective of voters and those who want to stand for election, and in particular whether Returning Officers are taking the necessary steps to deliver the following outcomes:

- Voters are able to vote easily and know that their vote will be counted in the way they intended
- It is easy for people who want to stand for election to find out how to get involved, what the rules are, and what they have to do to comply with these rules, and they can have confidence in the management of the process and the result

4.3 [Parts B to F](#) of this guidance include what we expect Returning Officers will need to have in place, and what we would expect to see to be able to be satisfied that the key outcomes of the standards can be delivered.

Appendix A – Performance standards for Returning Officers in Great Britain

Performance standard 1: Voters

Ensuring that planning for and delivery of the poll enables voters to vote easily and know that their vote will be counted in the way they intended

| Outcome | What does the RO need to do to achieve the outcome | What will demonstrate how the outcome has been met |
|---|--|--|
| Voters receive the information they need, in an accessible format and within time for them to cast their vote | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement robust project management processes• Evaluate planning for and delivery of previous polls and identify lessons learnt, updating plans as required• Put in place arrangements to manage contractors and suppliers to ensure that the work is delivered as required by the specification• Ensure robust processes are in place for ensuring that there are no errors on voter materials, notice of poll and notice of election• Ensure poll cards are received by voters as soon as possible so that | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project planning documentation which is kept under regular review• Planning documentation reflecting lessons learnt• Arrangements in place for the management of contractors and suppliers• Processes for the proof-checking of voter materials, notice of poll and notice of election• Information on the method for delivery of poll cards, including an estimation of when poll cards will be delivered |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> voters have the maximum amount of time to act on the information Ensure information on the poll, including the notice of election and notice of poll, is easily accessible to voters, such as through the local authority website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the poll easily accessed through the local authority website |
| Voters receive a high-quality service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that access needs are taken into account when planning for and setting up polling stations Decide on the allocation of electors and staff to polling stations to ensure polling stations are properly staffed so that voters receive a high-quality service, giving consideration to the factors set out in Commission guidance Ensure polling station staff are trained to set-up polling stations in such a way that takes account of voter needs Ensure postal ballot packs are received by voters as soon as possible so that voters have the maximum amount of time to act on the information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment regarding access needs, identifying any problems and actions taken to remedy these Approach taken to allocating electors and staff to polling stations Guidance/training provided to polling station staff Information on the method for delivery of postal ballot packs, including an estimation of when postal ballot packs will be delivered |

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| Voters have confidence that their vote will be counted in the way they intended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain a clear audit trail of the issue, receipt and opening of postal ballot packs ● Have in place processes to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate potential integrity problems, including what steps are to be taken to deal with any such problems ● Maintain the secure storage of ballot papers and postal ballot packs at all times ● Put in place appropriate resources to ensure the verification and count is timely ● Ensure the results are communicated to voters in a clear and timely way ● Ensure count processes are designed and managed to secure an accurate result, with a clear audit trail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrangements to maintain a clear audit trail of the issue, receipt and opening of postal ballot packs ● Processes for dealing with integrity problems ● Arrangements for securely storing ballot papers and postal ballot packs ● Information on how the verification and counting is to be organised and managed, including the process you followed to arrive at your decision ● Arrangements for communicating results to voters ● Arrangements in place to maintain a clear audit trail of the count processes |
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Performance standard 2: Those who want to stand for election

Ensuring that planning for and delivery of the poll enables people who want to stand for election to find out how to get involved, what the rules are, and what they have to do to comply with these rules, and enables them to have confidence in the management of the process and the result

| Outcome | What does the RO need to do to achieve the outcome | What will demonstrate how the outcome has been met |
|---|---|--|
| People who want to stand for election receive all the information they need to take part | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure information on the election process and spending is easily available for candidates and agents, including through providing briefing sessions and ensuring they are issued with written guidance• Ensure that candidates have the opportunity to have their nomination papers informally checked prior to their formal submission | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written guidance issued to candidates• Date(s) of briefing sessions and briefing resources• Arrangements in place for candidates to have their nomination papers informally checked prior to formal submission |
| Candidates have confidence that the process is well-managed, and have confidence in the results | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that those entitled to attend postal vote opening sessions are able to follow what is happening, where and when• Ensure count processes are transparent, with everything at the verification and count carried out in clear view of all those entitled to | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Layout plan of postal vote opening sessions• Information provided to attendees at postal vote opening sessions• Layout plan of the count• Information provided to attendees at the count |

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| | <p>attend, with information provided to attendees on the processes to be followed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure count processes are designed and managed to secure an accurate result, with a clear audit trail ● Have in place processes to identify any patterns of activity that might indicate potential integrity problems, including what steps are to be taken to deal with any such problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arrangements in place to communicate progress at the count ● Arrangements in place to maintain a clear audit trail of the count processes ● Processes for dealing with integrity problems |
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Performance standard for statutory office holders with a power of direction

Performance standard 3: Co-ordination and management of the poll

Co-ordinating the planning for and delivery of the poll to ensure a consistent high-quality experience for voters and those wanting to stand for election

| Outcome | What does the statutory office holder need to do to achieve the outcome | What will demonstrate how the outcome has been met |
|---|---|---|
| To ensure that local ROs have the necessary arrangements in place to deliver well-run elections in their area | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop and implement robust project management processesDevelop guidance and issue directions where necessary to ensure the effective administration of the polls in each local RO areaDevelop and implement plans for communicating with local ROsDevelop and implement a strategy for co-ordinating and delivering public | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Project planning documentation which is kept under regular reviewArrangements for ensuring the consistent delivery of the poll, including guidance issued and whether and how you have used your power to give directionsPlans for communicating with local ROs |

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| | <p>awareness and engaging with electors across the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Where appropriate, develop a process for receiving and submitting local results | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A strategy for co-ordinating and delivering public awareness activity and engaging with electors across the area● Arrangements on how you intend to manage the process of collating local results, including any protocols and guidance issued to local ROs |
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- ¹ SI 2007/236 Art.18.
- ² SI 2007/236 Art.18.
- ³ SI 2012/1917 Art.2.
- ⁴ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 3(1).
- ⁵ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 4 to 20.
- ⁶ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 16 and 32.
- ⁷ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 34 and 37.
- ⁸ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 38.
- ⁹ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 41-53
- ¹⁰ SI 2007/236 Sch.3, Sch.5 paras 33 and 40
- ¹¹ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 54 and 61.
- ¹² SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 62.
- ¹³ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 61 and 62(3).
- ¹⁴ SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 paras 48-56 and para 60.
- ¹⁵ SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 para 57.
- ¹⁶ SI 2007/236 Art.20, SI 2012/1918 Reg.5.
- ¹⁷ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 3(2).
- ¹⁸ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 6-20.
- ¹⁹ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 61(4).
- ²⁰ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 paras 17 and 32.
- ²¹ SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 63.
- ²² SI 2007/236 Sch.5 para 64.
- ²³ SI 2007/236 Art.21, SI 2012/1918 Reg.6.
- ²⁴ SI 2007/236 Art.32(4), SI 2012/1917 Art.19(4).
- ²⁵ SI 2007/ Art 21(2), SI 2012/1918 Reg.6(2).
- ²⁶ SI 2012/1917 art 2 and SI 2012/2085 Art.3.
- ²⁷ SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 para 4.
- ²⁸ SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 paras 5 to 16.
- ²⁹ SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 para 13
- ³⁰ SI 2012/1917 Art. 52(2) and Sch.8.
- ³¹ SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 paras 57-61.
- ³² SI 2012/1917 Sch.3 para 62.
- ³³ SI 2012/1918 reg.3(4)

³⁴ Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act 2000 s.9A.