Candidates & Agents Briefing – 2 March 2017

Hampshire County Council Elections - 4 May 2017
Topics

- who’s who
- election timetable
- qualifications
- disqualifications
- nominations
- agents
- postal votes
- day of poll
- counting of votes
- candidates expenses
- contacts
Who’s who

- The County Returning Officer (CRO) is responsible for overall running of the election. The County Returning Officer is John Coughlan.
- The Deputy County Returning Officer (DCRO) is responsible for the running of the election for the divisions that come within the boundary of Basingstoke and Deane. This includes the receipt of nominations. The Deputy County Returning Officer is Melbourne Barrett.
- The Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters’ lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is also Melbourne Barrett.
- You can contact him through the electoral team.
## Election Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication of Notice of Election</td>
<td>Friday 24 March 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nominations commence after Publication of Notice of Election</td>
<td>Tuesday 28 March 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Close of nominations</td>
<td>4pm on Tuesday 4 April 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of statement of persons nominated</td>
<td>Not later than 4pm on Wednesday 5 April 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of notice of poll and situation of polling stations</td>
<td>Not later than Tuesday 25 April 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for receiving applications to register</td>
<td>Thursday 13 April 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications</td>
<td>5pm on Tuesday 18 April 2017</td>
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### Election timetable (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for applications for new proxy votes</td>
<td>5pm on Tuesday 25 April 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appointment of counting and polling agents</td>
<td>Wednesday 26 April 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polling day</td>
<td>7am to 10pm on Thursday 4 May 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline to apply for new applications to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or business reasons</td>
<td>5pm – polling day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement for lost/spoil postal votes ends</td>
<td>5pm – polling day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of election expenses</td>
<td>Friday 9 June 2017</td>
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The following divisions are up for election on 4 May:

- Basingstoke Central
- Basingstoke North
- Basingstoke North West
- Basingstoke South East
- Basingstoke South West
- Calleva
- Candovers, Oakley and Overton
- Loddon
- Tadley and Baughurst
- Whitchurch and the Cleres
1. Basingstoke Central
2. Basingstoke North
3. Basingstoke North West
4. Basingstoke South East
5. Basingstoke South West
6. Calleva
7. Candovers, Oakley and Overton
8. Loddon
9. Tadley and Baughurst
10. Whitchurch and the Cleres
Qualifications

• Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated and on polling day:
  – at least 18 years of age
  – British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen (with indefinite leave to remain), national of an EU member state.

• Also at least one of the following:
  – Registered local govt elector for local authority area
  – Occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the local authority area during the whole 12 months preceding nomination
  – Principal or only place of work (including unpaid) during last 12 months in local authority area
  – Lived in the local authority area during the last 12 months
Disqualifications

- A person **cannot** be a candidate if they:
  - are employed by the local authority or hold a paid office under the authority (including joint boards or committees). Candidates may be ‘employed by the local authority’ if they work at certain schools, fire services, police or health services.
  - are subject of a Bankruptcy Restrictions Order (or interim order) in England or Wales.
  - have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of three months or more (inc. suspended sentence) without option of a fine, during the 5 years before polling day.
  - have been disqualified under Audit Commission Act 1998.
  - are serving a disqualification due to being found guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court.
  - hold a politically restricted post.
Nomination and consent to nomination forms must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm on Tuesday 4 April 2017

Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm on Tuesday 4 April 2017

a. A certificate authorising the use of a party name/registered description on the ballot paper

b. A written request to use one of the party’s emblems on the ballot paper (optional)
Submitting nomination papers

- Make sure the nomination papers are filled in correctly, as mistakes may invalidate your nomination.

- Nomination papers must be delivered in person

- Book appointments with the Electoral Team
Nomination form

- Include your full name & home address
- Optional: use commonly used name box(es) if commonly known by a name other than full name and wish to use it instead.
- Description field – 2 options:
  - leave blank
  - party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Nominating Officer
  - This will be checked against the register of political parties held by the Electoral Commission
Nomination form

- Subscribers: 10 subscribers are required. Must sign & print their names. Check details of subscribers against electoral register. Only ask subscribers to sign after completing the name, address and description fields on the form.
Consent to nomination form

• Must include:
  – name and address
  – which area standing in
  – confirmation of qualification(s) that apply (at least 1, but select all that apply)
  – date of birth & signature
  – witness’ name, address and signature
Certificate of authorisation

- Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person appointed to act on their behalf)

- The certificate may:
  - allow the use of the party name or a particular description
  - allow candidate to choose whether to use the party name or any of the descriptions registered with the Electoral Commission

- Must be submitted by 4pm 4 April 2017
Emblem request form

• Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper

• Emblem request form must be submitted by 4pm 4 April 2017

• Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required
Election agent

- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management.

- Notification of appointment must reach the Deputy County Returning Officer by 4pm 4 April 2017.

- You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed.
Other agents

- Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on your behalf:
  - The RO requires notice in writing of any people appointed as polling and counting agents by 26 April 2017.
  - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made in writing before the start of the session. The DCRO will give 48 hours’ notice.
Access to electoral register/absent voting lists

• Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
  – earliest, on 24 March 2017 if you, or others declared yourself a candidate
  – once you or others have declared yourself a candidate after this date / date you submit your nomination papers

• Make **written** request to the ERO – forms are available from the office / are included in your nomination pack.
Access to electoral register / absent voting lists

• Only use data for permitted purposes!
  – to complete the nomination form
  – to help you campaign
  – to check that donations/loans are permissible
Campaigning

- Use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- Comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners.
- Make sure outdoor posters are removed 2 weeks after the election.
- Do not produce material that looks like a poll card.
- Do not pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).
Code of conduct for campaigners

• Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, but their activities should not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.

• Absent vote applications:
  – Make sure electors understand implications of absent vote.
  – Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
  – Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.
  – Ensure unaltered applications are sent to ERO within two working days.

• Postal ballot packs:
  – Never touch a postal ballot paper or observe electors completing their postal vote.
  – Do not encourage electors to give you their completed postal ballot paper or envelope.
  – If asked to take a postal ballot pack, immediately post it or take it directly to the office of the Deputy County Returning Officer or to a polling station.

• Polling stations:
  – Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.
Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 6 am to 10.30 pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10 pm can apply for a ballot paper
- Postal votes – can be handed into polling stations within ward/division or delivered to the elections office until 10pm.
- If after 5pm on 25 April 2017 a person cannot go to the polling station in person for employment, service or medical purposes, they will be able to apply to appoint an emergency proxy up to 5pm on polling day. These must be supported by the elector’s employer, commanding officer or medical professional.
Counting of votes

- Candidates, counting agents and one other person appointed by the candidate are entitled to attend.
- Verification and Counting of votes will take place on Thursday 4 May after close of polls.
- The count will be held at the Hampshire Court Hotel, Centre Drive, Basingstoke, RG24 8FY
Spending issues
Candidate spending

- Defined as certain expenses ‘used for the purposes of the candidate’s election’ after the date they officially become a candidate

- Responsibility of election agent

- Limit on expenses:
  - £740 + 6 pence per elector in division you are standing
  - reduced for joint candidates

- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)
Candidates’ spending returns

- Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election (i.e. 9 June 2017)
- Returns made public by Deputy County Returning Officer
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission
- Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence
- No spending will be reimbursed
Contacts
Contacts
Melbourne Barrett
Deputy County Returning Officer – 01256 845788
Karen Widdowson
Democratic Services Manager – 01256 845182
Electoral Team – 01256 845467
electoral.services@basingstoke.gov.uk

Electoral Commission Contacts
– Eastern and South East Office 020 7271 0600
– Party and Election Finance 020 7271 0616
– www.electoralcommission.org.uk
Questions
Thank you