Candidates and agents
Briefing

District and Parish/Town Council Elections 2019
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 Returning Officer** is the person responsible for running the elections. The Returning Officer is Stacey Burlet.
- **The Deputy Returning Officer** is Simon Copley.
- **The Electoral Registration Officer** is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters’ lists. The Electoral Registration Officer is Stacey Burlet.
- **The Business & Democracy team** administer the election and electoral registration processes.
## Election Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publication of Notice of Election</td>
<td>Wednesday 6 March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nominations commence</td>
<td>Thursday 7 March (between 10am &amp; 4pm)</td>
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<td>Close of nominations</td>
<td>4pm – Wednesday 3 April</td>
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<td>Notification of appointment of election agents</td>
<td>4pm – Wednesday 3 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of statement of persons nominated</td>
<td>4pm – Thursday 4 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for applications to register to vote</td>
<td>Midnight – Friday 12 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for new postal vote applications / changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications</td>
<td>5pm – Monday 15 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for applications for new proxy votes</td>
<td>5pm – Wednesday 24 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publication of Notice of Poll</td>
<td>Not later than Wednesday 24 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appointment of counting and polling agents</td>
<td>Thursday 25 April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polling day</td>
<td>Thursday 2 May – 7am to 10pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline to apply to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or if unexpectedly called away because of employment or service</td>
<td>5pm – polling day</td>
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<td>Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends</td>
<td>5pm – polling day</td>
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<td>Alterations to register to correct clerical error</td>
<td>9pm – polling day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Return of election expenses</td>
<td>Friday 7 June (District)</td>
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<td>Thursday 30 May (Parish)</td>
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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 (for a parish – the parish area and any area within 4.8km of it)
  – 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 (parish elections excepted)
Submitting nomination papers

• Three forms must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm – Wednesday 3 April
  – the nomination form
  – the home address form
  – the consent to nomination

• Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm – Wednesday 3 April
  – A certificate authorising the use of a party name/registered description on the ballot paper
  – 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, not by post or electronically (although do not have to be delivered by the candidate)
- To arrange an informal check, contact the Business & Democracy team (details provided later)
Nomination form

- Include your full name
- 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 – 3 options for District:
  - leave blank
  - Independent
  - party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Nominating Officer
  - parish candidates can use any description up to six words, so long as it does not confuse with a party name or description
Nomination form

- Subscribers: 10 subscribers are required for District elections and 2 for Parish elections. Must sign & print their names. Check details of subscribers against electoral register. Only ask subscribers to sign *after* completing the name and description fields on the form. You must include their full electoral number (including polling district letters).
Home address form

• Must state home address in full
• Must state if you do not want your address to be made public and to appear on the ballot paper. If so:
  - give the name of the principle authority in which your home address is situated or,
  - if you live outside the UK, the name of the country in which you reside.
• Must include qualifying address(es)
• Must include attestor’s name and address
Consent to nomination form

- Must include:
  - name
  - which area standing in
  - confirmation of qualification(s) that apply (at least 1, but select all that apply)
  - date of birth & signature
  - witness’ name and signature (this must be the same person as the attestor on the home address form)
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 Wednesday 3 April
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 Wednesday 3 April.

- Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required.
Joint candidates

• Nominated by **more than one party**

• May use registered joint descriptions
  – must be supported by certificate of authorisation from each party

• May use one emblem of one of the parties but there are no joint emblems
Election agent

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

- Notification of appointment must reach the RO by 4pm – Wednesday 3 April. Form is included in nomination pack.

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

- No election agents for parish elections.
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 Thursday 25 April.
  - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session. The RO will give 48 hours’ notice.
  - Forms are available for notifying the RO.
Access to electoral register/absent voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you officially become a candidate:
  - earliest, on Wednesday 26 March 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 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.

• Electoral registration and absent vote applications:
  – Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law
  – Include the ERO’s address for the return of forms
  – Ensure unaltered applications are sent to ERO within two working days.
  – Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.
  – Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
  – Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.
Code of conduct for campaigners

• Postal ballot packs:
  – Never touch a postal ballot paper
  – Never observe electors completing their postal vote.
  – Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot pack from voters

• Campaigning outside polling stations:
  – You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including public spaces outside polling places.
  – Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.
Postal Votes

- If you have a postal vote in place by 3 April, your postal ballot pack will be mailed on 15 April
- If you apply after that date, your postal ballot pack will be mailed on 18 April
- Deadline to apply Monday 15 April
- Opening sessions at Ryedale House on dates set out in election timetable included with nomination pack
- Final opening session at the Malton Community Sports Hall at 10pm on Thursday 2 May
Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 7am to 10pm for telephone queries or problems relating to the administration of the election. Reception open 9am to 4pm.
  - for queries relating to election finance issues, contact the Electoral Commission (contact details shown later)
- 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/parish or delivered to the elections office until 10pm.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in postal vote can do so after 10pm.
Counting of votes

• Count centre will open to candidates and agents from 10am on Friday 3 May

• The count will be held in:
  – Malton Community Sports Centre, Broughton Road, Malton YO17 7BP

• Candidates, election agents, counting agents and one other person appointed by the candidate are entitled to attend.
  - limits to counting agents: 1 per candidate
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 for District elections and candidate for Parish elections
- Limit on expenses:
  - £740 + 6 pence per elector on register in force on 6 March 2019
  - reduced for joint candidates
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20 for District or £10 for Parish)
Candidates’ spending returns

- Returns due for District 35 calendar days after result and for Parish 28 calendar days after election, even if uncontested
- Returns made public by Returning Officer
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission
- Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence
- If late, cannot sit or vote on parish council until spending return submitted
- No spending will be reimbursed
Contacts
Contacts

• Business & Democracy team – 01653 600666 or elections@ryedale.gov.uk

• Electoral Commission contacts
  – North of England team 0333 103 1928
Questions
Thank you