

Candidates and agents Briefing

Police and Crime Commissioner election, 2 May 2024

Mark Heath

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Topics

- who's who
- key dates of the election timetable
- qualifications
- disqualifications
- nominations
- agents
- voter ID
- postal votes
- candidate spending
- contacts

Who's who

- The **Police Area Returning Officer (PARO)** is the person responsible for the overall conduct of the election. The PARO for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight police area is **Mark Heath**.
- The PARO is also responsible for liaising and co-ordinating the work of the **Local Returning Officers (LROs)** in the police area. The LRO for the Southampton area is also **Mark Heath**.
- The **Electoral Registration Officer (ERO)** is responsible for maintaining the register of electors and absent voters' lists. The Electoral Registration Officer for the Southampton area is **Mark Heath**.

Election Timetable

Publication of Notice of Election	21st March
Nominations commence	22nd March
Close of nominations and Deadline for withdrawals of nomination	4pm on 5th April
Notification of appointment of election agents	4pm on 5th April
Publication of statement of persons nominated	No later than 4pm on 8th April
Deadline for applications to register to vote	16th April
Deadline for new postal vote applications/changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications	5pm on 17th April
Publication of notice of poll / situation of polling stations	Not later than 24th April
Deadline for applications for new proxy vote	5pm on 24th April

Election Timetable (cont'd)

Deadline for applications for Voter Authority Certificates	5pm on 24th April
Appointment of sub-agents, counting and polling agents	25th April
Polling day	2nd May – 7am to 10pm
Deadline to apply to vote by proxy on grounds of medical emergency or if unexpectedly called away because of employment or service	5pm on 2nd May
Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends	5pm on 2nd May
Alterations to register to correct clerical error	9pm on 2nd May
Return of election expenses	+70 calendar days from result

Combined elections

- Police & Crime Commissioner election on 2nd May will be combined with Southampton City Council elections.
- Same electoral franchise and timetable.
- Combined:
 - Poll cards
 - Postal votes
- Polling station changes.

Qualifications

- To stand for the Police and Crime Commissioner election candidates must (on the day they are nominated **and** on the day of the poll) be:
 - at least 18 years of age
 - a British or eligible Commonwealth citizen, or a citizen of any other EU member state.
 - a registered local government elector for a local authority within the police area.

Disqualifications (part 1)

- A person **cannot** be a candidate if (on the day of their nomination **and** on the day of the poll) they:
 - have been nominated as a candidate at a PCC (or PFCC) election taking place on the same day for a different police area
 - have ever been convicted of an imprisonable offence
 - are a police officer, or are directly or indirectly employed by the police
 - are a member of the legislature of any country or territory outside the UK
 - are a member of staff of a local council that falls wholly or partly within the police area in which they wish to stand
 - are employed in an organisation that is under the control of a local council in the police area in which they wish to stand
 - are subject to a bankruptcy restrictions order (or interim order)

Disqualifications (part 2)

- Disqualifications that apply only on election:
 - Being a Member of the House of Commons, the Scottish Parliament, the Senedd, the Northern Ireland Assembly, or European Parliament.

If elected, they must resign their seat before taking up the post of Police and Crime Commissioner.

Submitting nomination papers (1)

- All candidates must submit by **4pm on 5 April** their:
 - **nomination form**
 - **home address form**
 - **consent to nomination.**
- Party candidates will also need to submit by that time a:
 - a certificate authorising use of a party name or a registered description on the ballot paper
 - a written request to use one of the party's emblems on the ballot paper (optional).
- Nomination packs are available from the Electoral Commission's website (link on our website).

Submitting nomination papers (2)

- **Take care when completing nomination papers as mistakes may invalidate the nomination.**
- The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination form must be delivered **by hand** and cannot be submitted by post, fax or other electronic means.
- Nomination papers must be delivered by **appointment only** to the Returning Officer at the Civic Centre, Southampton.
- Appointments can be arranged from Friday 22 March by email: mike.hickman@southampton.gov.uk or by or telephone: 023 8083 3954.

Submitting nomination papers (3)

- The nomination form and home address form may only be delivered by:
 - the candidate
 - the election agent (if the Police Area Returning Officer has previously received notification of their appointment)
 - the proposer or seconder.
- £5,000 deposit
 - can be made by BACS, bankers draft, or legal tender (BACS - a/c 37675842, sort code 56-00-68)
 - the deposit is returned if a candidate polls at least 5% of the valid votes across the police area.

Nomination form (1)

- Include candidate's full name
- Optional: complete commonly used name box(es) if commonly known by a name other than full name and wish to use this instead.
- Description field – 3 options:
 - leave blank
 - Independent
 - party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Nominating Officer

Nomination form (2)

- Subscribers: **proposer, seconder and 98 other 'assentors'** from the police area are required (must be registered local government electors).
- Each subscriber must sign and print their name. Details are checked against register that is valid on 1st March 2024. If they are not on that register, they cannot subscribe the nomination.
- Only ask subscribers to sign **after** completing the candidate's name, address and description fields on the form.
- Subscribers can only sign **one** nomination form for the same Police & Crime Commissioner election.

Home address form

- Candidates' home addresses will appear on the ballot papers and statement of persons nominated, unless Part 2 of a home address form is submitted.
- Part 1 of the form must be completed in all cases and must include the home address in full.
- Part 2 is to be completed only if the home address is not to be made public and should state the electoral area where the candidate is registered.

Consent to nomination form

- The consent to nomination requires candidates to confirm that they are:
 - 18 years old or over;
 - registered as a local government elector at an address in the police area;
 - not nominated as a candidate in any other police area on the same day;
 - not disqualified from standing.
- The consent must also include the candidate's date of birth and signature, together with the name, address and signature of a witness.

Certificate of authorisation

- Party candidates must have written permission from the Nominating Officer (or a person appointed to act on their behalf) to use the party name or a registered description.
- 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 with the other nomination papers by **4pm on 5 April**.

Emblem request form

- Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper.
- If used, the emblem request form must be submitted by **4pm on 5 April**.
- If required, party candidates should be able to supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Police Area Returning Officer.

Joint candidates

- Nominated by **more than one party**.
- May use registered joint descriptions
 - must be supported by a certificate of authorisation **from each party**.
- May use the emblem of one of the parties, but there are no joint emblems.

Election Address

- Each candidate is entitled to make a campaign statement for publication on the ChooseMyPCC website provided by the UK government.
- Election address must be prepared by the election agent and submitted to the PARO via the online interface on the ChooseMyPCC website.
- PARO will check to ensure that the election address complies with the legal requirements.
- Deadline for submissions - **12 Noon on 5 April.**

Election agent

- Responsible for the proper management of the election campaign; particularly its financial management.
- Notification of appointment must reach the PARO by **4pm on 5 April**.
- A candidate will become their own agent by default if none is appointed.

Sub-agents

- Election agent can appoint 'sub-agents' to act on their behalf. Sub-agents can do everything that the election agent is entitled to do within the area to which they have been appointed.
- Sub-agents must be made aware of the election rules, as anything they do will be regarded as if it has been done by the election agent.
- Notice in writing of any sub-agent appointments must be given to the **PARO** by **25 April**.

Other agents

- Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on the candidate's behalf:
 - Notice in writing of any **polling** or **counting** agent appointments must be given to the **LRO** for the relevant local authority area by **25 April**.
 - Notification of **postal voting** agent appointments for a particular opening session must be made to the **LRO** for the relevant local authority before the start of the session.
 - Appointment forms are available from the Electoral Commission's website.

Access to electoral register/absent voting lists (1)

- These are available once a person **officially** becomes a candidate:
 - for anyone who has already announced their intention to stand as a candidate, or has been declared as such by others, this is the last date for publication of the Notice of Election (26th March);
 - for anyone who has not announced their candidature by 26th March, they become a candidate on the date they make the announcement, or on the date when they submit their nomination, whichever is the earlier.
- Any request must be made in **writing** to the ERO for the local authority area(s) required– forms are available from the Electoral Commission’s website.

Access to electoral register / absent voting lists (2)

- Electoral data may only be used for permitted purposes:
 - to complete the nomination form
 - to help a candidate's campaign
 - to check that donations/loans are permissible.

Registration (1)

- A candidate is uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote.
- They should encourage people to register as soon as possible.
- The deadline for applying to register for this election is **Tuesday 16 April**.
- The quickest and simplest way to register is online at **<https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>**. It only takes a few minutes.

Registration (2)

- When discussing registering to vote with individuals, candidates will need to make them aware that to make an application they will need to provide their:
 - nationality,
 - date of birth,
 - National Insurance number.
- Individuals who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance Number can still register, but they may need to provide further information. If so, they will be contacted by the relevant ERO.

Absent voting

- If encouraging people who don't have a postal (or proxy) vote to apply for one, make sure to explain that they will only qualify for one if they are (or will be) registered to vote.
- The deadlines for applying for an absent vote are:
 - Postal/postal proxy – 5pm on Wednesday 17 April
 - Proxy – 5pm on Tuesday 24 April
- Applications can be made online at:
www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote
www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote

Voter Identification

- Voters at this election will need to provide a form of accepted photographic ID if they wish to vote in person at a polling station.
- If a voter fails to present a form of accepted photographic ID they will not be issued with a ballot paper.
- This includes those who act as a proxy for another person.

Accepted forms of Voter ID (1)

- Voters should be encouraged to check whether they have one of the forms of accepted photographic ID in advance of the election.
- If a voter does not have an accepted form of photographic ID, they can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate online
<https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>.
- Electors who are registered anonymously must have an Elector's Document to vote in person.
- Any applications must be received by the ERO by 5pm on 24th April.

Accepted forms of Voter ID (2)

International travel

- Passport (issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state or a Commonwealth country)
- Irish Passport Card

Driving & Parking

- Driving licence (issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, or an EEA state)
- A Blue Badge

Accepted forms of Voter ID (3)

Local travel

- Older Person's bus pass
- Disabled Person's bus pass
- Oyster 60+ Card
- Freedom pass
- Scottish National Entitlement card
- 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card
- Disabled person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card
- Senior SmartPass issued in NI
- Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's SmartPass issued in NI
- War Disablement SmartPass issued in NI
- 60+ SmartPass issued in NI
- Half Fare SmartPass issued in NI

Accepted forms of Voter ID (4)

Proof of age

- Identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)

Other Government issued documents

- Biometric immigration document
- Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identify Card)
- Nationality identity card issued by an EEA state
- Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland
- Voter Authority Certificate
- Anonymous Elector's Document

Campaigning dos and don'ts

- **Do** use imprints on all printed campaign materials and on digital materials where required.
- **Do** comply with planning rules relating to advertising hoardings and large banners.
- **Do** 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 (1)

- 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:
 - If not using Electoral Commission forms, ensure they 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
- Voter Authority Certificate Applications:
 - Campaigners should not handle paper-based Voter Authority Certificate applications and should encourage electors to send them directly to the ERO

Code of conduct for campaigners (2)

- Postal ballot packs:
 - **Do not** touch a voter's postal ballot paper
 - **Do not** observe electors completing their postal vote.
 - **Do not** 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.

Spending issues

Candidate spending (1)

- Election spending is defined as certain expenses 'used for the purposes of the candidate's election during the regulated period'.
- Regulated period starts from the **day after** a person officially becomes a candidate and ends on polling day (2 May 2024).
- Responsibility of the **election agent**. Limit on expenses for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police Area is £356,810.
- Agents must stay within this limit during the regulated period and keep a record of spending on items and services (receipts required for expenditure over £20).
- A record of any donations received must be kept.

Candidate spending (2)

- Forms relating to the return of candidate spending and donations are available from the Electoral Commission's website.
- Returns are due 70 calendar days after the result of the election has been declared.
- All returns are made available for public inspection by PARO.
- A sample of the returns may be reviewed by the Electoral Commission.
- Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence.

Contacts

Contacts (1)

- Elections office – 023 8083 3954
- Highways department – 023 8083 2628

Please note:

The Police Area Returning Officer and his staff have a duty to conduct elections strictly in accordance with the appropriate laws, rules and regulations.

They are required to comply with these at all times and this may occasionally restrict the level of assistance that can be offered.

Contacts (2)

- Electoral Commission:
 - For enquiries about guidance or standing for election, contact:
 - Tel: 0333 103 1928
 - Email: pef@electoralcommission.org.uk
 - Website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk

Questions

Thank you

NEXT BRIEFING:

11.30am on 24th April 2024

Candidates and agents briefing on the arrangements for
polling day and the verification / count