

Candidates and Agents Briefing

Local Elections - 5 May 2022



Agenda

- Context
- Who's Who
- Election Timetable
- Standing as a Candidate and Nominations
- Agents
- Registration
- Absent Voting
- Campaigning
- Polling Day
- Counting of Votes
- Candidate Spending

Context

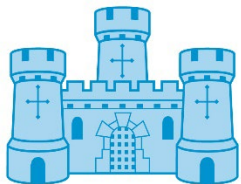
- Borough Elections
- Town/Parish Elections
- Neighbourhood Planning Referendum – Madeley
- Keeping an eye on COVID

Who's Who

- **Martin Hamilton**
Returning Officer, Electoral Registration Officer & Chief Executive for Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
- **Daniel Dickinson**
Head of Legal Services & Deputy Returning Officer
- **Stephanie Price**
Elections Manager & Deputy Returning Officer
- **Annette Bailey, Chris Booth, Janet Hammond and Stacey Ijewsky**
Elections Team

Election Timetable

Publication of Notice of Election Not later than 28 March	21 March 2022
Nominations commence	22 March 2022
Close of nominations	4pm – 05 April 2022
Notification of appointment of election agents	4pm – 05 April 2022
Publication of statement of persons nominated and notice of poll/situation of polling stations	no later than 4pm – 06 April 2022
Deadline for applications to register to vote	Midnight – 14 April 2022
Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications	5pm – 19 April 2022

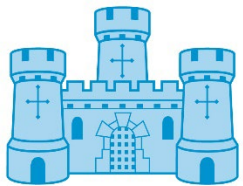


Election Timetable (continued)

Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	5pm – 26 April 2022
Appointment of counting and polling agents	27 April 2022
Polling day	05 May 2022 – 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 – polling day
Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends	5pm – polling day
Alterations to register to correct clerical error	9pm – polling day
Return of election expenses	
Borough	10 June 2022
Parish	6 June 2022



NOMINATIONS



**NEWCASTLE
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BOROUGH COUNCIL



Qualifications – Who Can Stand?

Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated and on polling day:

- be at least 18 years of age
- be a British, qualifying Commonwealth citizen, or national of an EU member state.

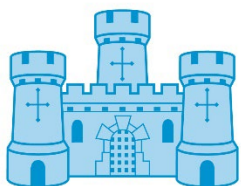
Also at least one of the following:

- **Registered local government 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

Standing as a Candidate - 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 restrictions 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
- are serving a disqualification due to being found guilty of a corrupt or illegal practice by an election court
- hold a politically restricted post



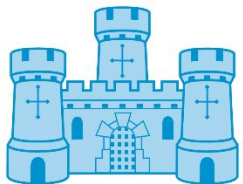
Nomination Forms to Submit

- Nomination Paper
- Home Address Form
- Candidate's Consent to nomination
- Certificate of Authorisation (if party candidate)
- Request for a party emblem (if party candidate)
- Notification of Election Agent (not applicable for Town/Parish Elections)

ALL by 5 April – 4pm

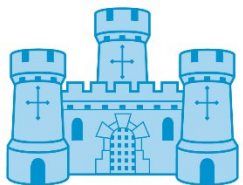
Nomination Paper

- Include your full name
- Commonly used name - if you are known by another name than your full name and wish to use it instead.
- You cannot use your first name as a commonly used name to exclude your middle name.
- 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
- The description field is different for parishes
 - The same as the above with the addition of
 - a description of no more than six words in English to appear on the ballot paper. It can be any description providing it is sufficient to identify you and is unlikely to associate you with a political party



Nomination Form - Subscribers

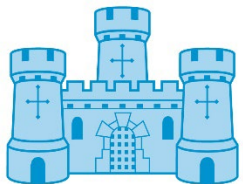
- Ten subscribers are required (Two for Town/Parish).
- Must **sign** & print their names. Check details of subscribers against electoral register.
- Only ask subscribers to sign after completing the name and description fields on the form.
- When collecting signatures
- Subject to data protection requirements – further guidance at <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guidance-for-the-use-of-personal-data-in-political-campaigning/>



Home Address Form – Part 1

Part 1 of the home address form must state:

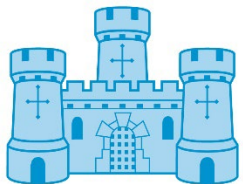
- your full name and home address in full
- your qualifying address/addresses
- which of the qualifications your qualifying address or addresses relate to (a, b, c and/or d)
- the full name and the home address in full of the witness to your consent to nomination



Home Address Form – Part 2

Part 2 of the home address form must be completed if you do not want your address to be made public:

- The name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (if your home address is in the UK),
- if you live outside the UK, the name of the country in which your home address is situated.



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
- date of consent
- witness' name and signature

Certificate of Authorisation

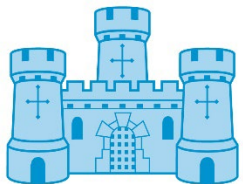
- Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person authorised to act on their behalf)

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 on 05 April 2022

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 on 05 April 2022
- 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: these must be supported by a certificate of authorisation from each party
- May use one emblem of one of the parties but there are no joint emblems

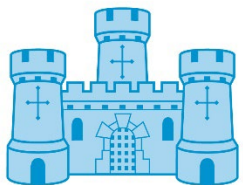
Submitting nomination papers

Candidates must submit the following papers by **4pm on 05/04/2022:**

- the nomination form
- their home address form
- the consent to nomination

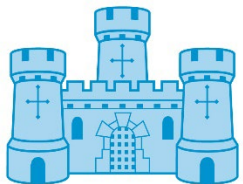
Party candidates will also need to submit, **by 4pm on 05/04/2022:**

- 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)



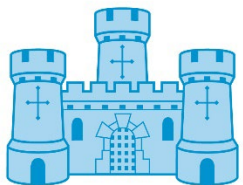
Submitting Nomination Papers

- Take care when completing your nomination papers - mistakes may invalidate your nomination.
- Complete nomination papers early and contact us by email at electreg@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk to make an appointment for an **informal check**.
- The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination must be delivered **by hand** to the **Returning Officer at Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle, ST5 1BL** and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email, etc



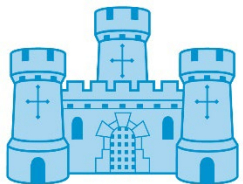
Submitting Nomination Papers

- Make an appointment for an informal check
- Make an appointment to **HAND DELIVER** final papers
- Email electreg@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk or contact 01782 742249 to arrange an informal check or an appointment to hand completed forms in.



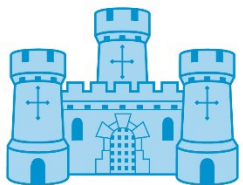
Election Agent

- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management.
- Notification of appointment must reach the RO by **4pm on 05 April 2022**. This form is included in the nomination pack.
- You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed.
- There is no provision for the appointment of election agents at parish council elections.



Other Agents

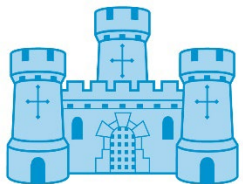
- Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on your behalf:
- You must give notice in writing of any people appointed as polling and counting agents by 27 April 2022.
- The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session.
- The dates and times for postal vote opening is contained in the guidance booklet.



Access to Electoral Register / Absent Voting Lists

Once you officially become a candidate:

- Make written request to the ERO For Electoral Register and Absent Voting Lists
- Forms will be included in your nomination pack, available on line, or available from the office;
- Only use data for permitted purposes
 - to complete the nomination form
 - to help you campaign
 - to check that donations/loans are permissible



Registration

- As a candidate you are uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote.
- You should encourage people to register as soon as possible.
- The deadline for applying for the election is midnight on 14 April 2022.
- Individuals can apply to register online at <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>. It only takes a few minutes.

Absent Voting

People can only qualify for a **Postal or Proxy** for this election if they are (or will be) registered in time to vote at the elections!!

Deadlines:

- Postal vote: 5pm on the 19 April
- Proxy vote: 5pm on the 26 April
- Emergency Proxy – 5pm on Polling Day!

Forms can be returned by post or via email to the elections team - Earlier the better!!

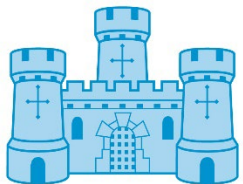
Campaigning – Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- 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.
- pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).



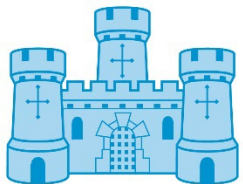
Campaigning – Code of Conduct

Use of Council resources

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.



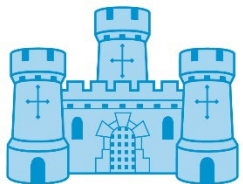
Campaigning – Code of Conduct (continued)

Postal ballot packs:

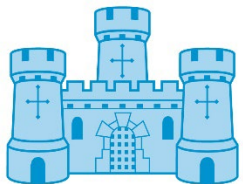
- Never touch a postal ballot paper
- Never observe electors completing their postal vote.
- Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot pack from voters

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 VOTE OPENING

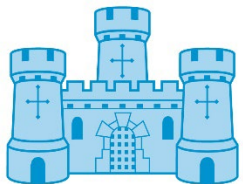


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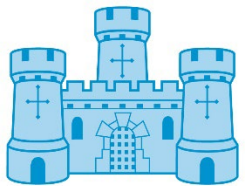


Postal Vote Opening Sessions

- Postal vote opening sessions will take place from 26 April 2022 at Jubilee 2
- Final opening sessions - 8pm and 10pm on 5 May 2022 at Keele Hall.
- Candidates & PV Agents can attend



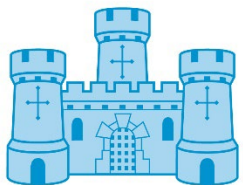
POLLING STATIONS



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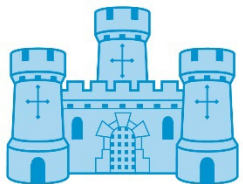
Polling Day – General Information

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- The Elections office will be open from 6.30am to 10pm for queries 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 the ward or delivered to the elections office until 10pm.
- A person in a queue at a polling station at 10pm waiting to hand in a postal vote can do so after 10pm.



Polling Day - Covid

- We have put arrangements in place to ensure that polling stations are safe places to vote
- Voters will be encouraged to bring their own pen or pencil - but pencils will be available
- Voters should be encouraged to check their poll card before polling day - Some Polling stations have changed;





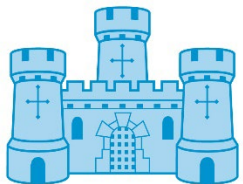
COUNT



Counting of Votes

- Count Venue - **Ballroom at Keele Hall,**
- Verification (Borough and Parish) – Friday 6 May
- Borough Count - Friday 6 May
- Town/Parish Count - Saturday 7 May

- Borough verification and count taking place in two tranches – morning and afternoon sessions



The Successful Candidate

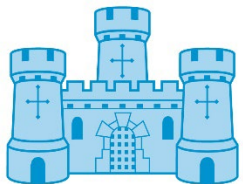
- After the declaration of result, successful candidates will be issued with an information pack informing them of the immediate steps that they will be required to take
 - E.g. making contact about signing acceptance of office

Candidate Spending

- Defined as certain expenses 'used for the purposes of the candidate's election' during the regulated period.
- Responsibility of **election agent**
- Limit on expenses:
 - £806 + 7 pence per elector
 - reduced for joint candidates
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)

Candidate Spending (continued)

- Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election (10 June). For Parishes the deadline is 28 calendar days from date of the election (6 June).
- Returns made public by **Returning Officer**
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the **Electoral Commission**
- Failure to submit a spending return is a criminal offence enforceable by police
- No spending will be reimbursed



Contacts

Elections Office

01782 742249

electreg@Newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Highways Department

0300 111 800

highways@Staffordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire Police (Single Point of Contact)

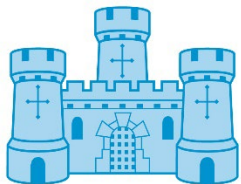
election.spoc@Staffordshire.pnn.police.uk

Electoral Commission

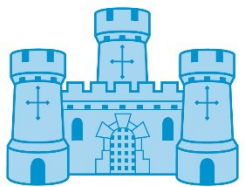
3 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8YZ

0333 103 1928 (switchboard)

infoengland@electoralcommission.org.uk



QUESTIONS



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