

**UK PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION – 4 JULY 2024**

**ABERDEENSHIRE NORTH AND MORAY EAST CONSTITUENCY  
GORDON AND BUCHAN CONSTITUENCY  
WEST ABERDEENSHIRE AND KINCARDINE CONSTITUENCY**

**Guidance for Candidates and Election Agents**

- |          |   | <i><b>Document<br/>enclosed</b></i> |
|----------|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Election Timetable</b>   |                                     |
| 1.1      | An Election Timetable is attached showing when the main stages of the election occur.   | <i>Election<br/>timetable</i>       |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Nominations</b>  |                                     |
| 2.1      | Nominations should be delivered to the Returning Officer between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. on any weekday from Monday 3 June 2024, <b>but no later than 4.00 p.m. on Friday 7 June 2024</b> , at either Woodhill House or one of the constituency election offices at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The Faithlie Centre, 1 Saltoun Square, Fraserburgh</b></li><li>• <b>Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie</b></li><li>• <b>Viewmount, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven</b></li></ul>  |                                     |
|          | <p>It is extremely helpful to have advance notice of when nominations are likely to be delivered and I would therefore urge you to make an appointment for this purpose with either the Elections Coordinator or the relevant Constituency Officer/Assistant Constituency Officer.</p> <p><b>Candidates and agents should note, however, that it is highly advisable not to leave the lodging of nomination papers until the last day in case changes may be required and to help avoid the possibility of disqualification due to uncorrected errors or discrepancies.</b></p> |                                     |
| 2.2      | Apart from a person delivering the nomination and the Returning Officer's staff, the legislation provides that the following may attend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the candidate</li></ul>  |                                     |

- the proposer and seconder of the first paper delivered for the candidate
- the election agent, if appointed at or before that time
- one person chosen by the candidate
- one other person, if the candidate is acting as his or her own agent
- a candidate who has already been nominated in the same constituency
- Representatives of the Electoral Commission

2.3 The nomination should be in the correct format. It is not essential to use the form provided, but any other form used must comply with the wording laid down in the legislation. *Nomination form*

2.4 Nominations should be completed in the following way:

- except for signatures, write legibly in capitals
- do not use correction fluid or cross out/ initial any deletions
- insert address in full (e.g. Road, not Rd.) but leave out postcode (except for London addresses)
- use electors' numbers from the current register

2.5 To be accepted, a nomination requires:

- the signatures of a proposer and a seconder, and of eight people who assent to the proposed nomination, none of these ten having signed another valid nomination which has already been received, and all being registered for this election in the constituency
- the correct information in the nomination paper
- the candidate's consent to be nominated
- the home address form indicating the candidate's home address but on which he or she may, if desired, request instead that their home constituency appears on the Notice of Poll and ballot paper
- the candidate's declaration that he or she is not disqualified under the House of Commons Disqualification Act
- a **deposit of £500** by electronic bank transfer

*Consent to nomination form*

*Home Address form*

and these conditions must be satisfied by the closing time for nominations.

2.6 It should be noted that a nomination paper may not include a description of a candidate which is likely to lead voters to associate the candidate with a registered political party, unless the description is authorised by a certificate issued by, or on behalf of, the registered nominating officer of the *Certificate of Authorisation*

party. A certificate authorising the description must be lodged with the Returning Officer **not later than 4.00 p.m. on Friday 7 June 2024**. If the certificate is issued by someone else on behalf of the registered nominating officer, evidence of direct delegated authority must also be provided **not later than 4.00 p.m. on Friday 7 June 2024**.

- 2.7 Any candidate who wishes to place next to their particulars on the ballot paper an emblem of a registered political party must produce a certificate indicating entitlement to use that emblem. **A request to use such an emblem must be signed by the candidate**, NOT the election agent. *Request for Use of Emblem form*
- 2.8 Nominations will be checked when they are delivered and, if correctly completed, an acknowledgement and receipt for the deposit will be issued.
- 2.9 The people listed in paragraph 2.2 (except for the person chosen by the candidate) have a right to attend at the election office any time during the time for delivery of nominations. They may inspect any nomination papers submitted. They may make objections by noon on Friday 7 June 2024 or, in the case of papers delivered on that day, by 5.00 p.m.
- 2.10 If a candidate wishes to withdraw, this should be done by **written notice by 4.00 p.m. on Friday 7 June 2024**. The notice should be signed by the candidate and attested by a witness. Different arrangements apply under Parliamentary Election Rule 13(2) if the candidate is outside the U.K. and advice can be given on this. *Withdrawal form*
- 2.11 Nominations will be made public after 5pm on Friday 7 June 2024.

### 3 Electoral Registers

- 3.1 A prospective candidate, or somebody acting on his or her behalf, may obtain one copy of the electoral register for the appropriate constituency by returning the enclosed register and AV list request form to the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) at Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen (telephone 01224 068400). *Register and AV List Request forms*
- 3.2 No further copies of the register will be issued to the candidate or election agent.
- 3.3 Lists of postal and proxy voters will be ready when the ERO has finalised them following the closing date for new applications, which is **5.00 p.m. on Wednesday 19 June 2024 for postal votes and Wednesday 26 June 2024 for proxy votes**. The incomplete lists can be inspected by arrangement before then, if required.

## 4 Appointment of Election Agent

- 4.1 The election agent's appointment and office address, and his or her consent to the appointment, must be delivered to either Woodhill House or one of the constituency election offices by **4.00 p.m. on Friday 7 June 2024**.
- 4.2 If no appointment and consent is delivered by that time, the candidate will be deemed to be acting as his or her own agent.
- 4.3 The Returning Officer and his staff will contact the election agent for most purposes. The election agent is responsible for running the election campaign on behalf of the candidate. The candidate, unless acting as his or her own agent, may not discharge the functions of the election agent, but does have a general duty to supervise the way the campaign is run.

*Election Agent's  
appointment*

## 5 Arrangements for Election Day

### *Polling*

- 5.1 You may appoint polling agents to attend the poll. There is no restriction on numbers, provided there is never more than one polling agent for a given candidate within a polling station at any one time. Agents can be appointed for particular polling places or more generally.
- 5.2 **The Returning Officer must receive notice, on or before 4pm on Thursday 27 June 2024 of the polling agents you have appointed.** Attendance cards will be issued directly to you for onward distribution to polling agents; it will clearly help to have early notice of at least some of the agents.
- 5.3 The candidate and election agent may also enter a polling station.
- 5.4 All those attending at polling places, either within the station or as tellers or drivers, should be aware of the rules which the presiding officer will be enforcing. Copies of the "Arrangements in Force at the Poll" are enclosed and should be read in conjunction with the Electoral Commission's Guidance for Candidates and Agents.

*Notification of  
Appointment of  
Polling  
Agents*

*Arrangements in  
Force*

- 5.5 While it is acknowledged that you or your party (if appropriate) may appoint polling station tellers, it is worth highlighting that they have no legal status in elections and may not enter a polling place except to cast a vote themselves or as a proxy. Please note that tellers must not obstruct voters' access to the polling place, ask voters for their registration number or address *before* they have cast their votes, ask an elector how they have voted, distribute any material within a polling place designed to affect support for a candidate or party, nor canvass or wear any item encouraging electors to vote in a particular way.

*Guidance for  
Tellers*

### ***Counting***

- 5.6 The count starts after 10.00 p.m. on the day of election, at P&J Live, Aberdeen.
- 5.7 You are entitled to appoint counting agents to attend on the floor of the count. The number of agents permitted will depend on the number of candidates and will be notified to you after the close of nominations. **Please note that you should notify the Returning Officer of the proposed attendance of the candidate, election agent and any guest of the candidate.** Separate authorisations will be provided for the candidate and election agent to attend the count and any polling stations within the constituency.
- 5.8 **The Returning Officer must receive notice on or before 4pm on Thursday 27 June 2024 of the counting agents you have appointed.** Counting agents shall be required to produce Photo ID at reception to attend the count; it will clearly help to have early notice of at least some of the agents.

*Notification of  
Appointment of  
Counting  
Agents*

## **6 Postal Votes**

- 6.1 Any applications for postal and proxy votes should go to the Electoral Registration Officer, who is quite separate from the Returning Officer. The Electoral Registration Officer prepares the lists of those entitled to vote by post or proxy.
- 6.2 The first, main issue of postal votes will take place between 18 and 19 June 2024, by the service provider appointed by the Returning Officer. A further issue will take place between 25 and 26 June 2024.
- 6.3 Postal Voters' Ballot Boxes and the envelopes contained therein will be opened daily from Monday 24 June 2024 starting at around 9.30 a.m. at Gordon House, Inverurie.

Formal notification will be issued to appointed election agents. You may appoint, before each opening session starts, one agent to attend. The candidate and election agent (or a substitute appointed for the purpose by the candidate) may also attend.

**The Returning Officer must receive notice in advance of any given postal vote opening session the name of the agent you have appointed for that day.**

## 7 Secrecy - Attendance of Candidate and Guest

- 7.1 All those attending any of the proceedings as, or on behalf of, a candidate must observe the secrecy of the ballot. The election agent should give them a copy of section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended). A copy is enclosed for this purpose.
- 7.2 The candidate's guest is permitted at various proceedings as noted above. Any request to this effect should be made to the Returning Officer as soon as possible.
- 7.3 Authorisation for the candidate's guest should be requested to avoid any difficulty in accessing the various proceedings he or she may attend, particularly at the count venue where a strict admissions policy will be in force to ensure an appropriate level of security.

*Section 66,  
ROTP Act 1983*

## 8 Return of Election Expenses

- 8.1 The election agent must account for all relevant expenses.
- 8.2 The election agent, or the candidate where no agent has been appointed, must deliver a return of election expenses to the Returning Officer within thirty-five days after the day on which the result was declared. Therefore, **the last date for the receipt of returns (assuming results are declared on Friday 5 July 2024) is Friday 9 August 2024. Where an election agent has been appointed, both the candidate and the agent must make a declaration.**

The expenses limit for the regulated period is:

- ◆ County Constituency - £11,390 plus 12p per elector

The applicable electorate figure for the constituency is the one on the last date for the publication of the Notice of Election (Tuesday 4 June 2024).

Where a candidate has incurred no expenses, a return to this effect must still be made.

## 9 Deposit

- 9.1 The deposit for any candidate polling more than 5% of the total number of votes cast will be returned to the person who made the deposit. It will be returned or posted no later than Monday 8 July 2024.



## **10 Flyposting**

- 10.1 It has been our practice for several years to prohibit the posting of election material promoting any candidate or party on Council land or property (including roadside verges and lampposts or other street furniture). *Guidance on Unauthorised Signs*

Should any instruction to remove material result eventually in a cost being incurred, we will require this to be borne by the appropriate candidate or party.

## **11 Guidance Relating to the Pre-Election period**

- 11.1 The attention of candidates and agents is drawn to the guidance note on restrictions applying to the activities of the Council, its staff & elected members during the pre-election period. *Guidance Note for Staff etc.*

**Jim Savege, Returning Officer for Aberdeenshire North and Moray East constituency; Gordon and Buchan constituency; and West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine constituency**