The Electoral Commission

Candidates and agents information

Leigh ward by-election, 10 December 2026

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Topics

This document outlines:

- key dates of the election timetable
- Candidate security
- qualifications and disqualifications
- nominations
- agents
- voter ID
- postal votes
- polling day
- counting of votes
- candidate spending
- Contacts

Election timetable

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Timetabled process:	Deadline
Publication of Notice of Election	Thursday 5 Nov
Nominations commence	Friday 6 Nov
Close of nominations	**4pm – Friday 13 Nov**
Notification of appointment of election agents	4pm – Friday 13 Nov
Publication of statement of persons nominated	By 4pm – Mon 16 Nov
Deadline for applications to register to vote	Midnight Tues 24 Nov
Deadline for new postal vote applications /changes to existing postal or proxy vote applications	5pm – Wed 25 Nov
Publication of notice of poll/situation of polling stations	By Wed 2nd Dec

Election timetable (cont'd)

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Timetable process:	Deadline:
Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	5pm – Wed 2nd Dec
Deadline for applications for a Voter Authority Certificate or Anonymous Elector's Document	5pm – Wed 2nd Dec
Appointment of counting and polling agents	Thurs 3 Dec
Polling day	10 December – 7am to 10pm
Deadline to apply to vote by emergency proxy	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	Wed 13 or Thurs 14 Jan 2027 (depending on date of result)

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Qualifications

- Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated and on polling day:
  - be at least 18 years of age
  - be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights
- 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

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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)
- 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**
- are subject to the **notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003**

Nomination Form

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- Include your full name
- Optional: complete 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
  - leave blank
  - Independent
  - party candidates can use party name or description authorised by a certificate issued by or on behalf of the Nominating Officer
- Subscribers – only ask to sign after completing name and description fields on form

1a – Nomination paper				Office use only
Local government election in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No
*ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS / A COUNCILLOR for the				
	electoral division/ward of the			
county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate				
Date of election:				

Candidate's Details		
Candidate's surname		Mr/Mrs/Miss/ Ms/Dr/Other
Other forenames in full		
Commonly used surname (if any)		
Commonly used forenames (if any)		
Description (if any) Use no more than six words (see note 5)		

We, the undersigned, being local government electors for the said *electoral division/ ward, do hereby assent to the foregoing nomination
*Delete whichever is inappropriate

	Signature	Print name	Electoral number	
			Polling District	Elector Number
Proposer				
Seconder				

Home address form

All Candidates must complete Part 1

Candidates only complete Part 2 if you do **NOT** want your address on the Statement of Persons Nominated and Ballot Paper

Candidates still need to submit Part 2 with their pack, even if not completed.

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1b – Home address form				Office use only	
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No	

*ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS / A COUNCILLOR for the	
	*electoral division/ward of the
*county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate	
Date of election:	

You must complete Part 1

Only complete Part 2 if you do not wish your home address to be made public

Part 1: To be completed by all candidates in England		
Full name of candidate		
Home address (in full)		
Qualifying address: Add your qualifying address, or qualifying addresses (in full) to each of the relevant qualifications below (you can complete more than one qualification).		
Qualifications that apply (tick those which apply)		Address
(a) I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the *county/district/London borough named above		
(b) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the area named above		
(c) my principal or only place of work during the preceeding 12 months has been in the *county/district/London borough named above		
(d) I have during the whole of the preceeding 12 months resided in the *county/district or London borough named above		
Witness details		
Full name of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form		
Full home address of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form		

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Home address form (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.

Part 2: To be completed only if you do not wish your home address to be made public. **Note: Please submit this part (part 2) of the home address form with your nomination papers, even if your home address is to be made public.**	
If you request that your home address is not made public then your address will not appear on the statement of persons nominated, notice of poll or the ballot paper. Instead the name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (or country, if outside the UK), as explained below, will appear on the statement of persons nominated, notice of poll and the ballot papers.	
Statement: I require my home address not to be made public	
The relevant area my home address is situated in:	(insert name of relevant area)[2]
OR	
My home address is situated outside the UK. My home address is situated in:	(insert name of country)
Signature of candidate (only required where Part 2 above has been completed)	
Candidate's signature:	
Date:	

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
  - Not allowed to sign consent form earlier than one calendar month before the deadline for submitting your nomination papers
  - Your signature must be witnessed. There are no restrictions on who can be a witness to the consent of nomination

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1c – Candidate's consent to nomination

Local government elections in England

Office use only

Date received	Time received	Initials	No

*You must declare that you meet at least one of the listed qualification(s) below. **To do this, strike through any that do not apply**. Any qualification(s) that apply must match the information given on your home address form.

Date of election:		
I (name in full):		
hereby consent to my nomination as a candidate for election as councillor for the:		*electoral division/ ward
of the *county/district/London borough of:		

I declare that on the day of my nomination, I am qualified and that, if there is a poll on the day of election, I will be qualified to be so elected by virtue of being on that day or those days a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland or a citizen of a Member State of the European Union, who has attained the age of 18 years and that:

*a. I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the *county/district/London borough named above; or

*b. I have during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day, or those days, occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the area named above; or

*c. my principal or only place of work during those 12 months has been in the *county/district/London borough named above; or

*d I have during the whole of those 12 months resided in the *county/district or London borough named above.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 (copies of which are printed overleaf), and I do not hold a politically restricted post, within the meaning of Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, under a local authority, within the meaning of that Part.

Date of birth:			Signature:	Date of consent:

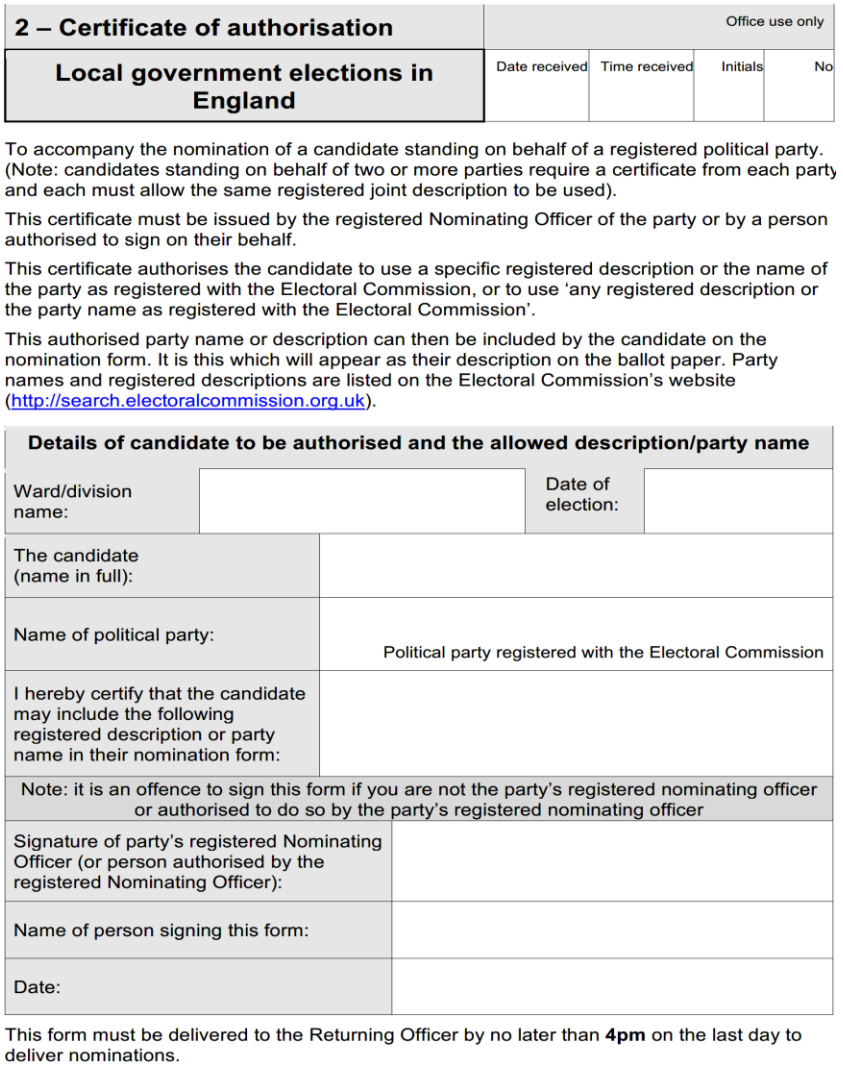
Witness: I confirm the above-mentioned candidate signed the declaration in my presence.

Witness (name in full):	
Witness's signature:	

Certificate of authorisation

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- 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 13 Nov



2 – Certificate of authorisation				Office use only	
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No	

To accompany the nomination of a candidate standing on behalf of a registered political party. (Note: candidates standing on behalf of two or more parties require a certificate from each party and each must allow the same registered joint description to be used).

This certificate must be issued by the registered Nominating Officer of the party or by a person authorised to sign on their behalf.

This certificate authorises the candidate to use a specific registered description or the name of the party as registered with the Electoral Commission, or to use 'any registered description or the party name as registered with the Electoral Commission'.

This authorised party name or description can then be included by the candidate on the nomination form. It is this which will appear as their description on the ballot paper. Party names and registered descriptions are listed on the Electoral Commission's website (http://search.electoralcommission.org.uk).

Details of candidate to be authorised and the allowed description/party name			
Ward/division name:		Date of election:	
The candidate (name in full):			
Name of political party:	Political party registered with the Electoral Commission		
I hereby certify that the candidate may include the following registered description or party name in their nomination form:			
Note: it is an offence to sign this form if you are not the party's registered nominating officer or authorised to do so by the party's registered nominating officer			
Signature of party's registered Nominating Officer (or person authorised by the registered Nominating Officer):			
Name of person signing this form:			
Date:			

This form must be delivered to the Returning Officer by no later than **4pm** on the last day to deliver nominations.

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 13 Nov
- Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required
- Emblem must be registered with the Electoral Commission

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3 – Request for a party emblem	Office use only			
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No

This form is for a candidate of a political party who is subject to a certificate of authorisation and who wishes to have a party emblem printed on the ballot paper next to their name.

Party emblems are listed on the Electoral Commission's website (http://search.electoralcommission.org.uk).

This form must be signed by the candidate.

Candidate's request for use of an emblem			
Ward/division name:		Date of election:	
Candidate name in full:			
I request that the ballot paper shall contain, against my name, the following registered emblem (please identify which emblem if the party has registered more than one):			
Emblem to be used (Please use name or description as on the Electoral Commission's website):			
Candidate's signature:			
Date:			

This form is only effective if delivered for a candidate standing on behalf of a political party to the Returning Officer by no later than 4pm on the last day to deliver nominations.

Candidates standing on behalf of more than one political party and using a joint description may choose one emblem from one of the parties that you are standing for. Please indicate the name of the party and the emblem name in the 'Emblem to be used' box above.

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Joint party candidates

- Nominated by **more than one party**
- May use registered joint party 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 party 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 – 13 Nov. Form is included in nomination pack.
- You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed.

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4 – Notification of an election agent	Office use only			
Local government elections in England	Date received	Time received	Initials	No
Ward/division name				
Date of election:				

Candidate's notification of their election agent	
I, (Candidate name in full):	
Hereby declare that the name and address of my election agent is:	
Agent's name:	
Agent's address (in full):	
The office address of my election agent to which all claims, notices, legal process and the other documents may be sent is:	
Agent's office address (in full):	
Candidate's signature (or of person authorised to act on behalf of candidate):	
Date:	
Confirmation of acceptance by election agent	
I [agent named above] confirm my acceptance as the election agent for the above named candidate. I understand that I must carry out my duties according to law. I understand that there are penalties if I fail to fulfil my duties according to law.	
Agent's signature:	
Date:	

Agent's other details in case of query (optional – will not be published)	
Home telephone:	
Work telephone:	
Mobile telephone:	
Email address:	

Return to the Returning Officer by no later than **4pm** on the last day to deliver nominations.

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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 3rd Dec.
  - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of the session. We will give 48 hours' notice.

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Submitting nomination papers (1)

- The documents that must be submitted by all candidates by 4pm on 13 Nov
  - the nomination form
  - their home address form
  - the consent to nomination
- Party candidates will also need to submit, by 4pm on 13 Nov
  - 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)

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Submitting nomination papers (2)

- Take care when completing your nomination papers, as mistakes may invalidate your nomination
- Complete nomination papers early and arrange for us to provide an informal check
- The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination **must be delivered by hand** and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means.
- Must return by 4pm on Friday 13 Nov

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Book in for an informal check

nominations@southend.gov.uk

01702 534814

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Delivery of nomination papers

- Nomination papers must be delivered to the address on the Notice of Election
- Do not hand/leave nomination papers at the front desk of the Civic Centre, they must be handed to a member of the election team.
- Book a slot if possible
- Deadline – **4pm, Friday 13 Nov**

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Access to electoral register/absent voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
  - earliest, on 5 November 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/website

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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

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Electoral Registration

- Encourage residents to register to vote as soon as possible
- The deadline for applying for the election is midnight, 24 Nov
- Can apply to register online at **https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote**. It only takes a few minutes.
- Requirements include:
  - their National Insurance number
  - date of birth and address

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Voter Identification

- Voters will need to provide a form of accepted photo ID if they wish to vote in person at a polling station.
- Voters will be able to present out of date photographic ID so long as the photograph is still a good likeness.
- 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

- Voters should be encouraged to check whether they have one of the forms of accepted photographic ID well 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 either online https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate or using a paper application form.
- 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 the 6th working day before poll.

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Absent voting applications

- Electors can now apply online at www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote or www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote
- Deadlines:
- Apply for or make changes to an existing postal vote postal vote 5pm 25 Nov.
- Application to vote by proxy 5pm 2nd Dec
- Requirements include:
  - their National Insurance number
  - date of birth and address
- Will only qualify if registered elector for election

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Postal Voting

- Postal Votes dispatched on 24 Nov (first batch)
- Please make sure candidate/agent/campaigners refer to the EC's Code of Conduct for Campaigners at UK Parliamentary general elections in Great Britain, local elections in England and Police and Crime Commissioner Elections
- Information regarding opening sessions will be given to candidates and agents

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Campaigning dos and don’ts

- Do use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites.
- 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).
- Do not handle any postal voting documents you are not entitled to.

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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:
  - Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law
  - Ensure electors are aware they can apply to register or for an absent vote online
  - Include the EROs address for the return of any paper 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:
  - Should not handle paper based Voter Authority Certificate applications and should encourage electors to send them directly to the ERO

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Code of conduct for campaigners (2)

- Postal voting documents:
  - Never touch any of an elector's postal voting documents
  - 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.

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Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm
- Office open 7am to 10pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
  - 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
- Voters in this election will need to present photographic ID in the polling station
- Voters can request to have their ID checked in private

Tellers

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Tellers have no legal status and voters have the right to refuse to give them any information.

Tellers must:

- always remain outside the polling station
- only enter the polling station to cast their own vote, to vote as a proxy or to accompany a disabled voter
- always comply with the instructions of the Returning Officer and Presiding Officer

- **Tellers may:**
- ask voters for their elector number
- display a coloured rosette or badge displaying the name of the candidate, party and/or emblem or description; the rosette/badge should not bear a slogan and must not be oversized
- remind electors as they approach the polling station that they need to provide photographic ID

- **Tellers must not:**
- attempt to influence how electors vote
- be able to see or hear what is happening inside the polling station
- impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling station
- demand any information relating to a voter's elector number, name or address
- ask to see or check a voter's photographic ID
- ask voters to re-enter the polling station to ascertain their elector number
- display any campaign material in support of or against any particular political party or candidate other than a rosette or badge

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The count

- The count will be held at Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea.
- Room location and other information, will be sent to candidates/agents.
- Candidates, election agents, counting agents and one other person appointed by the candidate are entitled to attend.
  - limits to counting agents: will provide number following close of nominations.
- Count protocol document will be shared with candidate and agents.

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Expenses

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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:
  - £960 + 8 pence per elector in ward/division on register in force on 2 November
  - reduced for joint candidates
- Must get and keep receipts (over £20)

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Candidates' spending returns

- Returns due 35 calendar days after result of election
- 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

- **Nomination enquiries**
  nominations@southend.gov.uk

- **General candidate enquiries**
  01702 534814
  louisarobinson@southend.gov.uk

- **Elector enquiries**
- elections@southend.gov.uk / 01702 215010

- **Electoral Commission contacts**
  - For questions on the Commission guidance on standing for election, contact: 0333 103 1928
  - For questions on election spending, contact: 020 7271 0616 or email:
    pef@electoralcommission.org.uk

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The newly elected candidate will be provided with an induction programme, which has been revised to offer more comprehensive information on:

- **general role requirements**
- **ways of working at SCC specifically**
- **the member/officer interface**