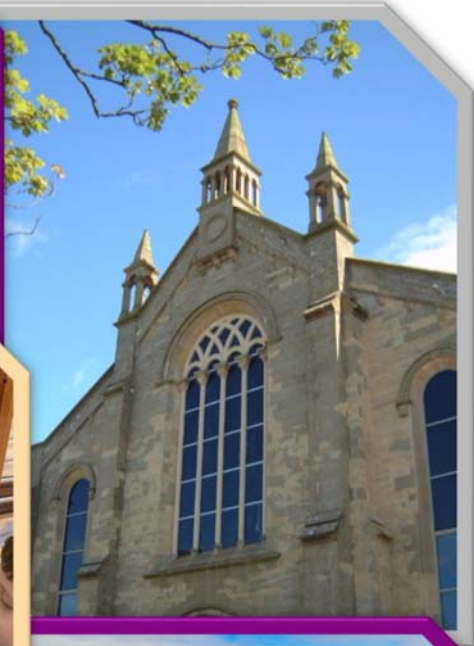
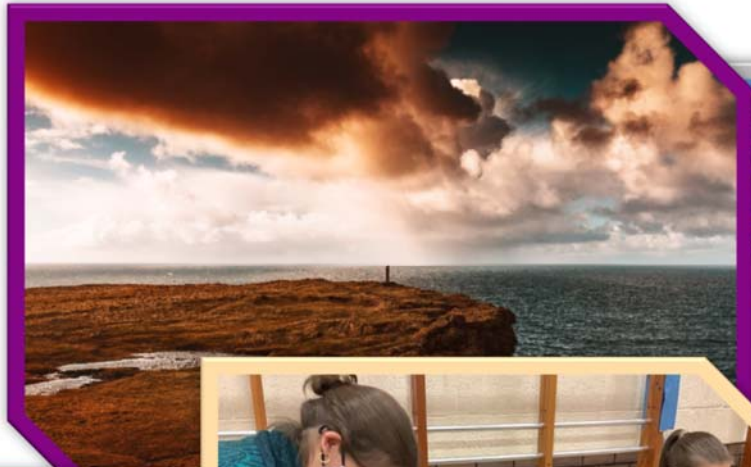


Candidate Information Pack



Local Government Elections
5 May 2022



Introduction

As the Council looks to welcome a new team of councillors this year, might you fit the bill?

With electors returning to the polls on 5 May 2022, Orkney voters have a fresh opportunity to vote for the people who demonstrate a real understanding of the needs of their local community – but they can only vote for you if you stand as a candidate.

This document aims to give a brief overview of what you might wish to know, as well as providing a number of links to more detailed information that we would encourage you to read, and our Election Team will be happy to assist you with clarifications and in directing you to specific material that will help you in considering the role fully.

February 2022

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About Orkney Islands Council

How we work

Our activities touch the lives of everyone living in our island community, from schools to the care of the elderly, from rubbish collection to maintaining the county's roads and from caring for burial grounds to handling planning applications. Orkney Islands Council has an impact on many aspects of everyday life, and we are the county's biggest employer.

The Orkney Integration Joint Board (IJB) commissions the delivery of all Community Health and Social Care functions in the Orkney Islands, under the 'delivery arm' or service of Orkney Health and Care (OHAC).

Orkney Health and Care, (OHAC) is a partnership between Orkney Islands Council and NHS Orkney. The Partnership aims to improve and develop social care, community health and wellbeing. We want to provide the best possible care for people in Orkney, wherever they live and whatever their circumstances.

Orkney Islands Council works closely with other organisations to provide services to the local community. A large part of the Council's joint working with local organisations is carried out through community planning and involves many organisations. These partners have a legal duty to facilitate community planning: Orkney Islands Council, NHS Orkney, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. Other organisations have a duty to participate in the process, have been co-opted or play an important part as members of one of the Delivery Groups and more information can be found on the [Orkney Partnership website](#).

Our current [Council Plan 2018 to 2023](#) details the position and aims of the Council as set out and agreed in 2017 and councillors elected this year will be part of the process in developing a new plan towards the end of 2022.

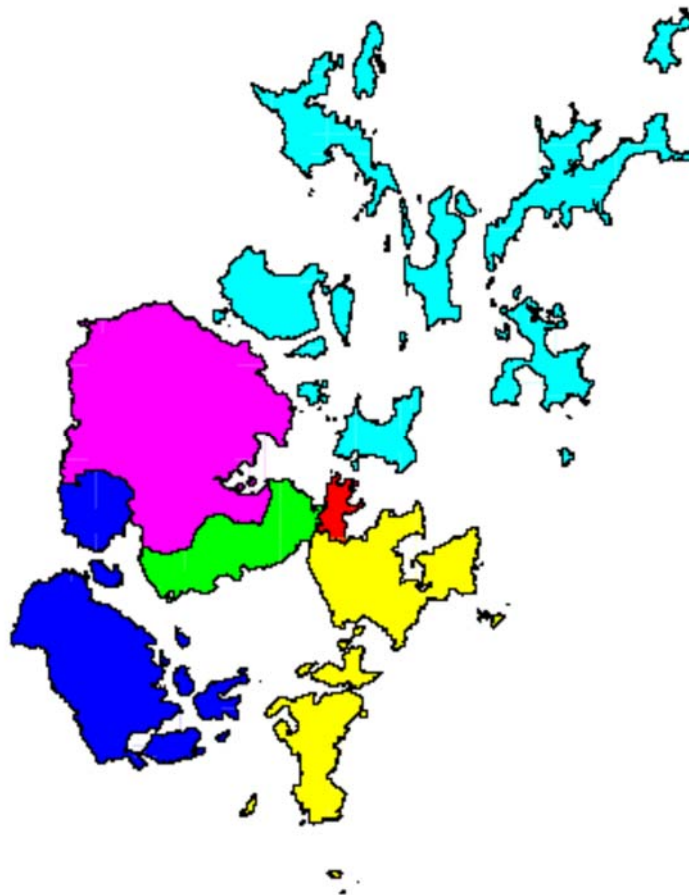
Our [Customer Service Charter](#) sets out the standards that employees should strive for when dealing with customers.

Electoral Wards

The Orkney Islands Council area comprises of six electoral wards and the total number of elected members is 21.

Each ward is represented by either three or four members as detailed below:

Ward No.	Ward Area	Number of Elected Members
1	Kirkwall East	4 Members
2	Kirkwall West & Orphir	4 Members
3	Stromness & South Isles	3 Members
4	West Mainland	4 Members
5	East Mainland, South Ronaldsay & Burray	3 Members
6	North Isles	3 Members



There is currently no ruling political party in Orkney Islands Council, so it is classed as independent.

Business is conducted through a variety of committees and over the past year these meetings have taken place either virtually using Microsoft Teams, or via a hybrid arrangement where some councillors were present in the Council Chamber and others joined via Microsoft Teams. Committee meetings are audiocast live with recordings made available to the public using SoundCloud.

The Role of Councillor

As explained in more detail on the localcouncillor.scot site, there are 7 areas that councillors will potentially be involved in:

- **Decision making**
 - Providing direction, accountability and appropriate working arrangements to ensure the council achieves what it sets out to do
- **Developing and reviewing policy**
 - Through constituency case work, a role on policy or scrutiny committees, as a representative on local community groups
- **Scrutiny**
 - Monitoring and scrutinising how well services are delivered by the Council and its partners
- **Representation**
 - Communicate council policy and decisions within their ward and act as advocates for their communities, being visible and a trusted point of contact
- **Leadership**
 - Support communities, balance competing demands and lobby for local issues
- **Regulator**
 - In issues such as planning, licencing, trading standards and environmental health
- **Political Role**
 - Additional duties if representing a political party including reporting back and engaging with the local organisation and working within a national framework of rules

What else do I need to know?

The term of office if elected would be five years, from May 2022 to May 2027.

The rate of pay for Councillors is set by Scottish Ministers and not by the Council. Councillors are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Many Councillors retain another job or paid commitment alongside their elected position, but this may need careful consideration and discussion with your current employer to ensure there is flexibility available.

All Councillors will go through an induction process and there will be additional training for specific roles and positions.

The Council's Democratic Services team will be available to support Councillors with administrative duties including diary co-ordination, arranging travel and processing expense claims.

Key Contacts

Organisation of Elections

The Chief Executive of Orkney Islands Council is the Returning Officer for the conduct of the poll and the counting of votes cast within the Orkney electoral wards. The team responsible for organising and administering the election are:

Returning Officer	John Weir Mundell OBE
Depute Returning Officers	Karen Greaves BEM & Gareth Waterson
Election Manager	Fiona Ratter
Assistant Election Manager	Audrey Waterson
Head of Communications	Kirsty Groundwater

Election enquiries

Day to day enquiries about the election, polling stations, the processes for prospective councillors etc are dealt with through the Elections Office based within the Council Offices.

Address: Elections Office, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY

Telephone: 01856 886 350

Email: electionoffice@orkney.gov.uk

Electoral Registration enquiries

Enquiries relating to electoral registration and postal and proxy vote applications are dealt with by the Electoral Registration Office, adjacent to the Cathedral.

Address: Electoral Registration Office, 8 Broad Street, Kirkwall, KW15 1NX

Telephone: 01856 876222

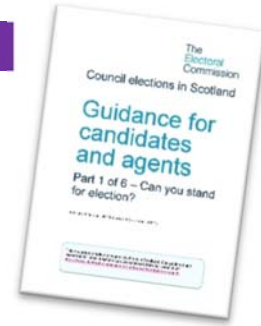
Email: ero@orkney.gov.uk



How to stand as a candidate

Nomination qualification

- ! There are qualifications as to whether someone can stand as a candidate at a local council election in Scotland and, to ensure you are able to do so, we strongly advise you check the "[Guidance for candidates and agents](#)" overview and accompanying documents published by The Electoral Commission.



Key dates for nomination

Once you have checked that you can stand as a candidate, you need to prepare nomination forms. These will be provided on request as part of the nomination pack for candidates and will also be available to download from the Council's website.

!	Nomination period commences	Tuesday 15 March 2022
	Deadline for lodging nomination papers	Wednesday 30 March 2022 at 4pm
	Appointments for lodging of nomination papers can be made	Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm

A full timetable of relevant deadlines can be found at Appendix 1 at the end of this Information Pack.

What do I need to provide?

The items required if [standing as an independent](#):

1. Nomination paper
 - Includes home address and consent to nomination
2. Appointment of an Election Agent

The items required if [standing on behalf of a political party](#):

1. Nomination paper
 - Includes home address and consent to nomination
2. Appointment of an Election Agent
3. Certificate of authorisation
4. Request to use registered party emblem

When and how do I lodge a nomination?

You may return completed nomination forms and the related papers between 10am and 4pm on any weekday after the Notice of Election is advertised - **between Tuesday 15 March and Wednesday 30 March 2022.**

It is essential that you keep to these dates. **The Returning Officer is, by law, unable to accept any form submitted after the final deadline of 4pm on Wednesday 30 March 2022.**

Forms must be submitted in hard copy and in person to the Election Office. Please telephone (01856 886 350) or email (electionoffice@orkney.gov.uk) in advance to arrange an appointment to lodge your nomination.

Appointment of an Election Agent

All nominated candidates must name an Election Agent by declaring the agent's name and address on the form enclosed within the nomination pack and submitting this along with their nomination paper prior to the deadline of 4pm on Wednesday 30 March 2022.

A candidate may name themselves as Election Agent in terms of Section 67(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983. If a candidate does not return the form by this date the law deems the candidate has named themselves as Election Agent and their name will be published accordingly.

Appointment of Polling and Counting agents

Details and forms for the purpose of appointment of Polling and Counting agents will be issued as soon as possible after the close of nominations.

Accuracy and checking of nomination papers

When nomination papers are lodged, they will be checked for accuracy to ensure that they conform to statutory requirements. Occasionally, nomination papers cannot be accepted and new or amended papers are required to meet statutory requirements although the Election Team are there to assist with any corrections.

It is, however, in the interest of candidates when submitting their nominations to take this into account and ensure they have given themselves sufficient time in case any amendments are required.

What if I change my mind after lodging my nomination papers?

If a candidate wishes to withdraw their nomination, they must lodge a Notice of Withdrawal with the Election Office before the **close of the period for withdrawals on Wednesday 30 March 2022 at 4pm.** This must be signed by the candidate and by one witness. The nomination pack includes a form for this purpose.

Candidate spend

During the election regulated period you must record all spend on activities to promote your candidacy. You will need to include this information in your spending return.

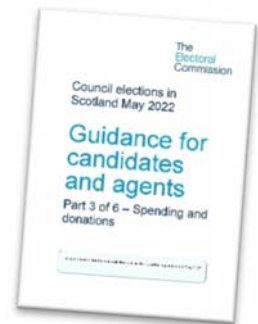
Once appointed, the agent is responsible for all payments and must keep invoices or receipts for any payments over £20.

For each item of spending, you must record the following information to put into your spending return:

- What the spending was for – for example, leaflets or advertising
- The name and address of the supplier
- The amount or value
- The date that you spent the money

The spending limit for the regulated period in 2022 is £806 plus 7p per local government elector in the ward registered to vote on the last day for publication of the notice of election in the ward which you are standing for – Wednesday 23 March 2022.

Full guidance on this is set out in Electoral Commission's "[Guidance for candidates and agents – Part 3 of 6 – Spending and Donations](#)".



Forms, declarations and spreadsheets to report and declare a candidate's spending, as required in law, will be provided to the candidate's election agent after the close of nominations.

! Candidate spending is often known as "expenses". Sometimes, people think this means that spending can be reclaimed from the local council. This is not the case. You are not entitled to recover any spending from public funds.

Poll, postal vote and count information

Polling stations



Polling takes place on Thursday 5 May 2022 and all polling stations are open from 7am to 10pm.

There are 10 polling places and a total of 16 polling stations.

Staying Safe

Measures will continue to be put in place to minimise the risk of the spread of coronavirus to both attendees and staff at polling stations, postal vote opening sessions and the verification and count including physical distancing, hand sanitiser, face coverings, perspex screens and relevant public health notices.



Postal votes

The first issue of postal ballot papers will be passed to Royal Mail for delivery between Thursday 14 and Tuesday 19 April 2022.

Completed and returned postal ballot envelopes will be opened to verify the identity of the elector, but the ballot papers themselves will not be counted until the count commences.

Candidates and Election Agents may attend postal vote opening sessions if they wish to and information on the dates and times of these will be issued after the close of the nomination period.



Close of poll

Following the close of poll sealed ballot boxes from all the polling stations will be delivered to the Council Offices where they will be stored securely overnight until the count the following morning.



The verification of identities of electors on postal votes handed into polling stations will be undertaken at close of poll, along with those on any postal votes retrieved from Kirkwall Post Office and the Council Offices mailbox by 10pm on Thursday 5 May 2022.

All ballot boxes remain sealed, and securely stored, until the count commences on Friday morning 6 May 2022.

The Count

The counting of votes will take place on Friday 6 May 2022 in the Arena at the Pickaquooy Centre, Muddisdale Road, Kirkwall.

Admission to the count will be restricted to:

- Members of the Returning Officer's staff engaged in the count
- Candidates, a guest and their election and counting agents or persons nominated to attend instead of a guest or election agent
- A number of guests invited by the Returning Officer
- Observers accredited by the Electoral Commission and the Returning Officer



Confirmation of who will be attending will be required in advance so that identification badges can be prepared ready for the count.

The count will be STV (single transferable vote) and more detailed information with regards to the Count process and STV method which is used will be issued at a later date as well as details of a Count briefing and walk through.

Display of election materials on verges and street furniture

Orkney Islands Council has a policy on the display of election materials on verges and lighting columns in its ownership. Please refer to Annex 2 for guidance.

Use of schools and rooms for local election meetings

If you wish to hire a room in a school for election meetings, please refer to Annex 3 for guidance.

What support is there to help me after the Count?

A programme of induction and support for councillors will be delivered from Monday 9 May 2022 which will guide you through the first few weeks of office. This will cover a range of themes including participating and chairing meetings, media interview skills, local government finances and key information about our services. Council officers will also provide objective professional advice and information for you, including seminars and briefings, on various topics in order to assist you in the decision-making process.

You'll also get invaluable administration support from our Democratic Services Team based in the Council Offices. They will help you with your day-to-day councillor duties by providing clerical support (including looking after your diary), arranging your travel and processing any expenses claims.

Links to more information

Further guidance for candidates and election agents may be found through the following websites:

www.localcouncillor.scot

Includes resources on what is expected of councillors, how to decide if standing as a candidate is right for you and preparing for elected office.

www.improvementservice.org.uk

Includes resources on the roles and responsibilities of councillors at ward and council level, and examples of 'a day in the life of a councillor'.

www.orkney.gov.uk

Orkney Islands Council's own website, where you can find the current Council Plan, dates of Council meetings, links to audio recordings of meetings, financial information amongst a host of other information.

www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/codes-of-conduct

Outlines the codes of conduct that must be adhered to by those in public office.

www.electoralcommission.org.uk

The independent body that oversees elections and regulates political finance in the UK.

www.audit-scotland.gov.uk

The independent body providing assurance to the people of Scotland that public money is spent properly, efficiently and effectively.

<https://inclusionScotland.org/disabled-people-become-a-leader/civic-participation/aeo-fund>

Administrators of the Access to Elected Office Fund, that pays for practical support to allow disabled people to fully participate in the political process. This covers reasonable adjustments that level the playing field between disabled and non-disabled candidates, but not general campaign costs. Applicants do not need to have been selected yet nor do they need to be members of a party to apply for the Fund.

Annex 1 - Timetable

Timetable for Scottish council elections on 5 May 2022

The days which are disregarded in calculating the timetable are Saturday, Sunday, Good Friday, Easter Monday¹, bank holidays (i.e. Monday 2 May) and any day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

Please be aware that the timetable may change in the event of days being appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

The timetable contains the statutory deadlines as set out in the election rules and also reflects the directions issued by the Convener of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland. Dates which reflect a direction issued by the Convener appear in boxes shaded in blue.

Event	Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)	Date
Publication of notice of election	Not earlier than the thirty-fifth day before the date of the poll and not later than the twenty-eighth day before the date of the poll	Monday 14 March
Dispatch of poll cards to electors	As soon as practicable after the issue of notice of election	Between Tuesday 15 and Wednesday 16 March
Delivery of nomination papers	Not later than 4pm on any working day from the day after the publication of notice of election until 4pm on the twenty-third day	Not later than 4pm on any working day after the publication of the notice of election until 4pm on Wednesday 30 March
Deadline for withdrawals of nomination	23 days (4pm)	4pm on Wednesday 30 March
Deadline for the notification of appointment of election agents	23 days (4pm)	4pm on Wednesday 30 March

¹ Although disregarded in relation to calculating the election timetable, Easter Monday is not a disregarded day in Scotland in relation to calculating the registration deadline.

Event	Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)	Date
Publication of notice of poll, including situation of polling stations	As soon as practicable after the deadline for withdrawals	As soon as practicable after 4pm on Wednesday 30 March
First dispatch of postal ballot packs		Between Thursday 14 and Tuesday 19 April
Deadline for receiving applications for registration	12 days	Monday 18 April
Deadline for receiving new postal vote and postal proxy applications, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes	11 days (5pm)	5pm on Tuesday 19 April
Deadline for new applications to vote by proxy (not postal proxy or emergency proxies)	6 days (5pm)	5pm on Tuesday 26 April
Final dispatch of postal ballot packs		Tuesday 26 April
Deadline for notification of appointment of polling and counting agents	5 days	Wednesday 27 April
POLLING DAY	0 (7am to 10pm)	7am to 10pm on Thursday 5 May
Last time that electors can apply for a replacement for a lost and spoilt postal vote	0 (10pm)	10pm on Thursday 5 May
Deadline for emergency proxy applications	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 5 May

Event	Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)	Date
Last time to alter the register due to clerical error or court appeal	0 (9pm)	9pm on Thursday 5 May
Verification and count		Friday 6 May First ballot boxes are opened after 8am and not later than 9.30am
Latest day for candidates to receive their invoices	21 calendar days	If result is declared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 May it is 27 May • 7 May it is 30 May*
Latest day for candidates to pay their invoices	28 calendar days	If the result is declared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 May it is 6 June • 7 May it is 6 June
Latest date for candidates to submit their return and agent declaration	35 calendar days	If the result is declared: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 May it is 10 June • 7 May it is 13 June*
Sending postal vote identifier rejection notices	Within 3 months beginning with the date of poll	By Thursday 4 August

*Although these deadlines are calculated on calendar days, the deadline cannot fall on a dies-non. The deadline will in that case be the next working day.

Annex 2: Display of election material

Orkney Islands Council

Display Of Election Material On Verges And Street Furniture

Orkney Islands Council has adopted the following policy on the display of election materials on verges and lighting columns in its ownership.

The Council permits the display of election material on roadside verges and lighting columns within the Council area in connection with any election or referendum, subject to the following conditions:

- 1 Before material is displayed, the chairman or secretary of the relevant party association or, where there is no such association, the candidate, must undertake in writing to the Executive Director Development and Infrastructure that the association or candidate, agrees to indemnify the Council against any damages awarded as a result of the negligent display of election material. Associations and candidates should ensure that they are in a position to meet any successful actions for damages in these circumstances;
- 2 Material must not be displayed prior to the publication of notice of election;
- 3 Material must not, in any circumstances, be located on refuge islands in the centre of roads, traffic signal posts, road signs, control boxes, or on roundabouts;
- 4 Material must be located at the rear of any verge;
- 5 Material must not be located so as to interfere with the visibility of drivers emerging from side roads or private accesses;
- 6 Material must be so mounted that the material and its mount will not afford any resistance or damage to a vehicle coming into contact with it;
- 7 Material attached to lighting columns must be fixed first to a card of adequate stiffness, which in turn must be attached with string to the lighting column. The use of paste or glue is not permitted. The height of the mounting card must not be less than 2.1 metres (7 feet) above the height of the footway;
- 8 The area of any election material must not exceed 0.2 square metres, and the maximum overall vertical or horizontal dimension must not exceed 0.5 metres;
- 9 All election material must be removed within 48 hours of the date of poll.

For statutory reasons the Returning Officer cannot give advice or approval regarding the display of election material. Enquiries regarding the operation of this policy must be made to Development and Infrastructure, Council Offices, Kirkwall.

Except as stated above, the Council does not give permission for the display of election material on any of its property.

Annex 3: Use of schools and rooms

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT 1983

Schools and rooms for local election meetings

Section 96(1) "Subject to the provisions of this section, a candidate at a local government election is entitled for the purpose of holding public meetings in furtherance of his candidature to the use free of charge at reasonable times between the last day on which notice of the election may be published in accordance with rules made under section 36 or, in Scotland, section 42 above (ie of the 1983 Act) and the day preceding the day of election of –

- (a) a suitable room in the premises of a school to which this section applies;
or
 - (b) a meeting room to which this section applies.
- (2) This section applies –
- (a)
 - (b) in Scotland, to any school (not being an independent school within the meaning of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980) situated in the electoral area for which the candidate is standing (or, if there is no such school in the area, in any such school in an adjacent electoral area).

[‘electoral area’ in relation to elections to the new local authorities means electoral ward]
- (3) This section applies –
- (a)
 - (b) in Scotland, to any meeting room the expense of maintaining which is payable by the council of a region, islands area or district.
- (4) Subsections (4), (5) and (7) of section 95 above (ie of the 1983 Act) and paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 5 to this Act (ie to the 1983 Act) shall apply for the purposes of this section as they apply for the purposes of that section, and any person stating himself to be, or to be authorised by, a candidate at a local government election in respect of an electoral area which falls (or partly falls) within a constituency, or his election agent, shall be entitled to inspect the lists prepared under Schedule 5 to this Act in relation to the constituency or a copy of them at all reasonable hours during the period beginning with the day on which notice of the election is published and ending with the day preceding the day of election”.

If you wish to hire a room in a school for election meetings please contact Ingrid Scott, Education, Leisure and Housing in the first instance on 01856 873535.