

To: Prospective Candidates

Dear Candidate

Scottish Council elections: Thursday 5 May 2022

Preparations for the Scottish Council elections on Thursday 5 May 2022 are well under way. You may be intending to stand as a candidate in the election and therefore will find the following information of interest.

Electoral Commission Guidance

The Commission has produced a suite of guidance to assist candidates and agents. The guidance can be found on our [website](#) and covers

- Part 1 Can you stand for elections?
- Part 2a Standing as an independent candidate
- Part 2b Standing as a party candidate
- Part 3 Spending and Donations
- Part 4 The Campaign
- Part 5 Your right to attend key events
- Part 6 After the declaration of results

Supporting resources such as an election timetable, nomination forms, forms for the appointment of agents etc., are also available for your use.

Spending Limits

The spending limit for the regulated period will increase from 1 January 2022 to £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 (23 March) which you are standing for.

There are separate spending limits for joint candidates. You are a joint candidate if you stand in the same ward and:

- Have the same election agent, or
- Use the same campaign rooms, or
- Publish joint material

Number of joint candidates	Reduction of spending limit
Two	25% - a quarter
Three or more	33% - a third

Donations controls

Section B of our updated guidance on spending and donations includes guidance on new donations controls.

Candidates may only accept donations towards campaign spending from permissible sources and have 30 days from receipt to check if they can accept the donation. Donations from impermissible sources cannot be accepted and must be returned to the source or paid to the Commission. All accepted donations, and donations from impermissible sources, must be reported after the election to the Returning Officer with the spending return.

A donation in this context is money, goods, property or services given:

- towards your candidate spending
- without charge or on non-commercial terms

and have a value of over £50. Anything with a value of £50 or less does not count as a donation.

Candidates and election agents should familiarise themselves with the new rules on donations. We have also refined our guidance on notional spending for candidates.

Imprint rules

The rules on imprints which apply to printed election material now apply to online materials published on websites and on social media sites such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook.

An imprint helps to identify the promoter of the election material and the person on whose behalf the material is being promoted. It is an offence to publish election material without an imprint.

The imprint rules for candidates are regulated by Police Scotland. You can find guidance on the requirements on our [website](#).

Awareness raising campaigns

The Commission will be running campaigns to encourage voters to register and to ensure voters understand how to cast their vote with confidence. The campaigns will include paid advertising, press, and partnerships with third sector organisations. An information booklet will also be sent to every household in Scotland which will cover how to register, voting options, and how to vote using Single Transferable Vote. You can [sign up to the Commission's newsletter](#) to keep up to date with the campaigns and access voter information resources.

Directions of Convener of the Electoral Management Board for Scotland

You may also be interested in the directions given to Returning Officers and Electoral Registration Officers by the Convener of the EMB. These directions are designed to promote consistency in delivery of key aspects of the election and by law must be followed. You can find the directions on the [EMB's website](#). Questions in relation to the Convener's directions should be directed to the EMB.

Your local Returning Officer will be able to advise you on local arrangements for the conduct of the polls in your area. If you require any advice or assistance on any aspect of our guidance you can contact the Commission's Scotland Team at infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk or telephone 0131 225 0200.

Yours sincerely

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