

**FIFE COUNCIL**

**UK PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION**

**THURSDAY 4 JULY 2024**

**COWDENBEATH AND KIRKCALDY CONSTITUENCY**

**DUNFERMLINE AND DOLLAR CONSTITUENCY**

**GLENROTHES AND MID FIFE CONSTITUENCY**

**NORTH EAST FIFE CONSTITUENCY**

**Notes for the Guidance of Candidates**

**These notes should be read in full before completing and submitting your nomination papers**

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**NOTES FOR THE GUIDANCE OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES**

These notes are produced for the guidance and convenience of prospective candidates in at the election of a constituency Member of the UK Parliament for the Cowdenbeath and Kirkcaldy, Dunfermline and Dollar, Glenrothes and Mid Fife and North East Fife constituencies at the UK Parliamentary Election on Thursday 4 July 2024.

While every care has been taken in the preparation of these notes, they do not have any binding force and candidates are advised, where necessary, to consult the relevant statutory authorities. For the Register of Electors or qualifications for absent and proxy voting, information may be obtained from the relevant Electoral Registration Officer (ERO).

**The Returning Officer and their staff cannot give advice as to the conduct of the election campaign by candidates or agents, particularly in relation to the legality or otherwise of their actions.**

Candidates should refer to the Electoral Commission’s comprehensive [guidance for candidates and agents](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-and-agents-uk-parliamentary-general-elections-great-britain) which has been prepared by the Electoral Commission before submitting their nomination papers.

The Returning Officer will be holding an online briefing session after the close of nominations on Friday 14 June 2024. This session will cover the local arrangements for the poll, postal voting sessions and the verification and counting of votes cast.

**1. Administration & Management of Election**

The persons involved in the administration and management of this election are as follows: -

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Returning Officer**  | **Depute Returning Officer** |
| Ken GourlayChief Executive Fife Council Fife House North StreetGlenrothesKY7 5LT T: 03451 55 55 55 Ext 440473E: Ken.Gourlay@fife.gov.uk  | Lindsay Thomson Head of Legal & Democratic Services Fife Council Fife House North StreetGlenrothesKY7 5LT T: 03451 55 55 55 Ext 430141E: Lindsay.Thomson@fife.gov.uk  |
| **Electoral Services Manager/Depute Returning Officer**  | **Electoral Registration Officer (Fife)** |
| Shona Cameron Electoral Services Manager Fife Council Fife House North StreetGlenrothesKY7 5LT T: 03451 55 55 55 Ext 474962E: shona.cameron@fife.gov.uk  | Lindsay Thomson Head of Legal & Democratic Services Fife Council Fife House North StreetGlenrothesKY7 5LT T: 03451 55 55 11E: voters.roll@fife.gov.uk  |
| **Electoral Registration Officer (Central)**  | **Postal Vote Manager**  |
| NameCentral VJB Ground Floor RightGlendevon House The Castle Business ParkStirling FK9 4TZT: 01786 892200E: registration@centralscotland-vjb.gov.uk  | Emma WhyteCommittee Officer Fife Council Fife House North StreetGlenrothesKY7 5LT T: 03451 55 55 55 Ext 442303E: postals@fife.gov.uk  |

Information on the election is available to members of the public via the Fife Council website. This will include the “Statement of Persons Nominated and Notice of Poll” which will detail the candidates standing in each constituency after the close of nominations.

[www.fife.gov.uk/elections](http://www.fife.gov.uk/elections)

**2. Electoral Services Team**

The Electoral Services Team is based at Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes, KY7 5LT.

T: 03451 55 55 22

E: election.enquiries@fife.gov.uk

**3. Nomination of Candidates**

**3.1 General Provisions**

**3.1.1** The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination form must be submitted by hand and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email, or other electronic means. The only exception to this is where a candidate is overseas, in which case their consent to nomination may be sent electronically. Certificates of authorisation and emblem request forms may be submitted by hand or by post, but cannot be submitted by fax, email, or other electronic means.

**3.1.2** Please ensure where signatures are required on any form that you submit the original signed version of each completed form and not a copy. Documents without original signatures cannot be accepted.

**3.1.3** It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that your nomination papers are delivered to the Returning Officer by the deadline. Your nomination form and home address form may only be delivered by yourself, your proposer or seconder, or by your election agent. There are no restriction on who may deliver your consent to nomination, certificate of authorisation and emblem request from but we recommend that you, your election agent or someone you trust does this, so you can be sure they are delivered to the Returning Officer by the deadline of for receipt of nomination papers **4pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

**3.1.4** Nomination papers for this election may be completed and lodged with the **Returning Officer, Election Office, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes, KY7 5LT** from **10.00am to** **4.00pm** on any weekday after the date of publication of the Notice of Election (Monday 3 June 2024), but in any event not later than **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

Please refer to [Section 3.4](#SP34) for information on the informal check of nomination papers prior to formal submission.

**3.1.5** It is a criminal offence to knowingly make a false statement on nomination papers. This includes submitting a commonly used name for a candidate on the nomination form which they do not actually commonly use.

The penalty for a false statement is either a fine, currently set at a maximum of £10,000 and/or up to one year’s imprisonment.

**3.2 Qualifications/Disqualifications**

To be able to stand as a candidate at a UK Parliamentary election you must on the day you are nominated and on polling day be:

* be at least 18 years old, and
* be a British citizen, Irish citizen or an eligible Commonwealth.

There is no requirement in law for you to be a registered elector in the UK.

Apart from meeting the qualifications for standing for election, you must also not be disqualified from standing on the day of your nomination and on polling day. Please refer to the [Electoral Commission’s Guidance for Candidates and Agents](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-and-agents-uk-parliamentary-general-elections-great-britain) if you require more detailed guidance on this.

Questions of eligibility or disqualification are a matter for the candidate only and the Returning Officer cannot give advice on such matters.

You cannot stand in more than one constituency at the same UK Parliamentary Election.

**3.3 Nomination Papers**

**3.3.1 Nomination Form (UKPE1)**

If you wish to stand as a candidate, you, your election agent or the proposer or seconder as noted on your nomination paper must submit the following completed forms to the Returning Officer by **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

**UKPE1**  Nomination Form

**UKPE2** Home Address Form

**These forms must be delivered by hand.**

Attention is drawn to the rules for completing nomination papers and other provisions relating to nominations, as contained in the parliamentary election rules in Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983.

Your nomination paper must be subscribed by 10 registered electors on the Parliamentary electoral register that is in force on the last day for the publication of the notice of election on Tuesday 4 June 2024.

**3.3.2 Consent to Nomination Form (UKPE3)**

You must formally consent to your nomination in writing using the prescribed form. You are required to give your date of birth and declare that you are not disqualified from standing.

If you are absent from the United Kingdom this consent may be sent electronically. In all other circumstances this must be delivered by hand to the Returning Officer by **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

**3.3.3 Commonly Used Names**

If a candidate commonly uses a surname or forename that is different from their actual surname or forename or uses one or more forenames or surname in a different way from the way they are stated on the nomination form, the candidate may request this be used instead of their actual name.

Any commonly used name will appear on the Statement of Persons Nominated, the Notice of Poll and the ballot paper only.

Please refer to the Electoral Commission guidance for candidates and agents for more information on the rules about commonly used names.

**3.3.4 Description of a Candidate/Use of Party Emblems (UKPE4/UKPE5)**

A candidate may only use one of the following descriptions:

* the word “Independent” or
* the registered party name of a registered political party or
* one of the descriptions the party has registered with the Electoral Commission

If you are standing on behalf of a registered political party and wish to use the registered party name and emblem, you must also submit the following forms to the Returning Officer by **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

**UKPE4** Certificate of Authorisation

**UKPE5** Request for a Party Emblem

**These forms may be delivered by hand or by post.**

A party name may only be used if the request is supported by a Certificate of Authorisation signed by or on behalf of the party’s Nominating Officer before the close of nominations.

A candidate standing on behalf of a political party whose nomination is supported by a valid Certificate of Authorisation (**Form UKPE4**) may request, in writing, to have that party’s emblem, or one of them, printed next to their name on the ballot paper. **Form UKPE5** is provided for this purpose. It would be helpful for candidates from registered political parties, who wish to take advantage of this provision, to supply a copy of the chosen emblem when they request to use one.

If you are standing on behalf of two parties, you may use a joint description which is registered with the Electoral Commission. You must submit a certificate of authorisation issued by each of the political parties, Nominating Officers or persons authorised to act on their behalf.

Both the certificate of authorisation and the request to use a party emblem must be received by the Returning Officer by close of nominations i.e. not later than **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

**3.3.5 Candidate’s deposit**

In order for you to be validly nominated, your or someone acting on your behalf must deposit the sum of £500 with the Returning Officer by **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**  This sum may be paid by in legal tender, bankers draft or bank transfer.

 The preferred method of deposit is by bank transfer using the following details:

 Royal Bank of Scotland, Glenrothes

 Sort Code: 83-22-37

 Account Number: 00197588

 Reference: UK Deposit (followed by candidate surname)

It would be preferable if these funds were deposited prior to submitting your nomination papers with the Returning Officer.

**3.4 Informal Check of Nomination Papers**

Nomination papers must be checked for accuracy and conformity with statutory requirements when they are lodged. Occasionally the nomination papers cannot be accepted, and candidates are required to amend them to meet statutory requirements. It is therefore in the interest of candidates when lodging nomination papers to ensure that there is adequate time for any such amendment, as in no circumstances may the Returning Officer accept a nomination paper after **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**

Nomination papers may be submitted to the Electoral Services Manager by email for an informal check to be carried out before the formal submission. Any errors found will be communicated to the candidate and/or their election agent by email to allow these to be corrected before formal submission. However, it should be noted that the correct completion of the nomination forms remains your responsibility or that of your election agent and an informal check cannot guarantee that all errors will be identified.

Candidates and agents are urged to make an appointment for the formal submission of nomination papers. Papers will also be checked at the formal submission stage.

**3.5** **Withdrawal of Nominations**

If you wish to withdraw your nomination, you may do so by lodging a Notice of Withdrawal signed by you and attested by one witness. The Notice of Withdrawal must be lodged with the Returning Officer at the address shown in paragraph 3.1.4 within the time for delivery of nomination papers.

**4. Appointment of Election Agent (UKPE6)**

Each nominated candidate must appoint an election agent. You may act as your own election agent if you wish.

Notice of appointment of an election agent must be delivered to the Returning Officer at the address detailed in paragraph 3.1.4 by the close of nominations i.e. not later than **4.00pm on Friday 7 June 2024.**  **Form UKPE6** is provided for this purpose.

If you fail to notify the Returning Officer of the name and address of an election agent by the above-mentioned date, you shall be deemed to be acting as your own election agent.

**4.1 Appointment of Sub Agent (UKPE7)**

All four constituencies in Fife are County constituencies. An election agent in a county constituency may appoint sub-agents to act on their behalf.Election agents may appoint sub-agents for particular parts of the constituency in which their candidate is standing as long as these do not overlap.

In the event of such appointments being made, the name and address of the sub-agents must be declared in writing to the Returning Officer at the address detailed in paragraph 3.1.4, no later than **Tuesday 2 July 2024 Form SPE6** is provided for this purpose. The Returning Officer will publish the name and address of each sub-agent appointed.

**5. Appointment of Polling Agents (UKPE8)**

You may appoint polling agents to attend at polling stations for the purpose of detecting personation or to observe the procedures being followed in the polling station. Such appointments should be made by giving notice in writing to the Returning Officer at the address detailed in paragraph 3.1.4 not later than **Thursday 27 June 2024 Form UKPE8** is provided for this purpose. Please ensure that a polling agent’s full name and home address (including postcode) is provided to the Returning Officer.

Whilst there is no limit to the number of polling agents you may appoint, by law only one polling agent may be admitted at the same time to a polling station on behalf of the same candidate. If you wish your spouse/partner to visit polling stations with you on polling day, it will be necessary for them to be appointed as a polling agent.

**6. Appointment of Counting Agents (UKPE9)**

You may appoint counting agents to attend at the counting of the votes. The Returning Officer will confirm the number of counting agents who you may appoint at the Candidates and Agents meeting on Friday 14 June 2024.

Notice of the appointment of counting agents, stating their names and full addresses, should be given in writing to the Returning Officer at the address indicated in paragraph 3.1.4, not later than **Thursday 27 June 2024. Form UKPE9** is provided for this purpose.

You may also invite one guest to attend the count.

**7. Opening of Postal Votes**

The provisional dates for opening of postal votes are as follows:

Tuesday 25 June 2024

Wednesday 26 June 2024

Thursday 27 June 2024

Friday 28 June 2024

Monday 1 July 2024

Tuesday 2 July 2024

Wednesday 3 July 2024

Thursday 4 July 2024

The timing of each session will be confirmed at the candidates and agents meeting.

The postal vote opening venue is located on the 2nd Floor of Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes, KY7 5LT. Candidates, election agents and postal vote opening agents should report to the Reception Desk at Fife House to receive a visitor’s badge and wait to be escorted to the PV opening area by a member of the Election team.

The **final opening of postal votes** will take place in the Michael Woods Centre on **Thursday 4 July 2024.**  This session will include the opening of any postal votes handed in at polling stations before the close of poll.

Candidates may appoint **one** postal voting agent to be present at each postal vote opening session and you should give notice of any such appointment to the Returning Officer at the address shown in paragraph 3.1.4 before the start of the opening session that the agent wishes to attend. **Form UKPE10** is provided for this purpose.

There will be a briefing session explaining the scanning, verification and adjudication process for candidates and agents prior to the start of the first opening session.

**8. Notification of Requirement of Secrecy**

The Returning Officer is required to ensure that all persons involved in the election are given a copy in writing of the appropriate secrecy provisions of Section 66 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. A link to this is enclosed with your nomination pack*.*

**9. Verification and Counting of Votes Cast**

The verification and counting of the votes cast at the election will take placein the **Michael Woods Centre, Glenrothes** commencing immediately after the close of poll. The Returning Officer will confirm the arrangements for the verification and counting of votes cast at the Candidates and Agents meeting on 14 June 2024.

Admission to the count will be restricted to those members of the Returning Officer's staff engaged in the count, the Police, candidates, their election agent and counting agents, one guest for each candidate, accredited observers and members of the media authorised by the Returning Officer. Admission letters will be issued by the Returning Officer on receipt of the appropriate forms.

**10. Copy of Registers of Electors/Absent Voters Lists**

Once you officially become a candidate you are entitled to one free copy of the full Electoral Register and Absent Voter lists for the constituency in which you are standing. The Electoral Registration Officer cannot supply a copy of the register or absent voter lists to any candidate before they officially become a candidate. The earliest date you can become a candidate is on the date the UK Parliament is dissolved.

For a candidate to receive a copy of the full Electoral Register and Absent Voter lists forms **UKPE11/UKPE12** should be completed, signed, and returned to the Election Office. The Election team will pass the completed forms to the relevant Electoral Registration Officer for action. If you are standing in the Dunfermline and Dollar constituency, part of the electoral register and absent voting lists will be provided by the Electoral Registration Officer, Central VJB.

It is important to note that candidates who have been supplied with a copy of the full register must not pass on a copy of the register to any other person, must not disclose any information from the register (which is not contained in the edited version of the register) or make use of such information except for electoral purposes. Any person who is found guilty of breaching these conditions may face a fine of up to £5,000.

**11. Election Expenses**

 Please refer to the [Electoral Commission’s guidance for candidates and agents](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/guidance-candidates-and-agents-uk-parliamentary-general-elections-great-britain), for detailed information on the rules on spending and donations in the run up to the UK Parliamentary election.

 Spending laws apply during the “regulated period”. There can be two separate regulated periods known as the “long campaign” and the “short campaign”. There is no long campaign for the forthcoming UK parliament election.

 The short campaign begins on the day after your officially become a candidate and ends on polling day. The earliest date you can become a candidate is the date of the dissolution of parliament 30 May 2024. You will become a candidate on this date if you or others have already announced your intention to stand. If your intention to stand has not been announced by the 30 May 2024, you will officially become a candidate either on the date your intention to stand is announced or the date when you submit your nomination papers.

The spending limit during the short campaign is based on a fixed amount, plus a variable amount per registered elector in your constituency.

 Fixed amount: £11,390 Variable Amount: 12p per registered elector

Election agents must, within 35 days of the day on which the result of the election has been declared make a return of election expenses on the appropriate form, together with all bills and receipts. At the same time that the election agent transmits that return, or within 7 days afterwards, the candidate must return a declaration as to these expenses.

A copy of the Electoral Commission’s candidate spending return along with the appropriate declarations which must be completed and further guidance are available to download from the Electoral Commission website [www.electoralcommission.org.uk](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk).

Please note that all queries regarding candidate election expenses should be directed to the Electoral Commission and not the Electoral Services Team:

T: 0333 103 1928

E: infoscotland@electoralcommission.org.uk.

**12. Candidate Mailings**

Each constituency candidate is entitled to free postage on an election communication sent to electors in your constituency, Please consult the Royal Mail’s guidance on candidate mailings [www.royalmail.com/business/manage-mail/candidate-mail](http://www.royalmail.com/business/manage-mail/candidate-mail). If you would like to make use of this service, please contact Royal Mail directly.

**13. Situation of Polling Stations**

The situation of polling stations in all constituencies will be published along with the Statement of Persons Nominated and Notice of Poll on Friday 7 June 2024. A copy will be provided to your Election Agent after the close of nominations.

**14. Summary of Key Dates**

A summary of the key dates at this election is set out below: -

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monday 3 June June 2024** | Publication of Notice of Election |
|  |  |
| **4pm on Friday 7 June 2024**  | Deadline for delivery of Nomination PapersDeadline for Withdrawals of NominationDeadline for notification of appointment of election agent |
|  |  |
| **5pm on Friday 7 June 2024** | Publication of Notice of Poll including Situation of Polling Stations, if no objections received |
|  |  |
| **Wednesday 12 June 2024**  | Candidates & Agents Briefing Session – online meeting |
|  |  |
| **Tuesday 18 June 2024**  | Deadline for receiving applications for electoral registration from voters |
|  |  |
| **5pm on Wednesday 19 June 2024** | Deadline for receiving new postal vote and postal proxy applications from voters and for changes to an existing postal vote or proxy vote  |
|  |  |
| **5pm on Wednesday 26 June 2024** | Deadline for receiving new applications to vote by proxy (not postal proxy or emergency proxies) |
|  |  |
| **5pm on Wednesday 26 June 2024**  | Deadline for receiving applications for Voter Authority Certificates from voters |
|  |  |
| Thursday 27 June 2024 | Deadline for notification of appointment of polling and counting agents |
|  |  |
| Friday 28 June 2024  | First date that electors can apply for a replacement for lost postal vote  |
|  |  |
| Tuesday 2 July 2024  | Deadline for notification of appointment of sub agents |
|  |  |
| Tuesday 2 July 2024 | Deadline for the notification of appointment of sub-agents |
|  |  |
| **Thursday 4 July 2024** | **POLLING DAY (7am to 10pm)** |
|  |  |
| **5pm on Thursday 4 July 2024**  | Last time for re-issue of spoilt or lost postal votes  |
|  |  |
| **5pm on Thursday 4 July 2024** | Deadline for emergency proxy applications  |
|  |  |
| **9pm on Thursday 4 July 2024**  | Last time to alter the register due to a clerical error |
|  |  |
| **10pm on Thursday 4 July 2024**  | Deadline for production of temporary Voter Authority Certificate |
|  |  |
| **Close of Poll on Thursday 4 July 2024**  | Verification and Count process commences  |
|  |  |

**15.** **Arrangements in force at the Poll**

A copy of the arrangements in force on the day of poll for the UK Parliamentary election in Fife will be forwarded to your election agent. Anyone campaigning for you on the day of poll **must** be given a copy of this document for information.

**16. Meeting of Candidates and Election Agents**

A meeting of candidates and election agents will be held by remote meeting on Friday 14 June 2024. Joining instructions for the meeting will be issued to all Candidates and Election Agents after the close of nominations. Any candidate who is unable to attend may wish to be represented by their election agent or other representative.

**Ken Gourlay**

**Returning Officer – Fife**

**23 May 2024**