

Working on elections – further information

Poll Staff

Scheduled elections usually take place on the first Thursday of May.

Polls are run from 7am to 10pm. If you work at a polling station you need to arrive by 6:30am at the latest to ensure there is time to set up all equipment.

Polling station staff are not permitted to leave the premises between 7am and 10pm. You should take enough food and drink with you for the whole day. It is a long day, and you must be willing to work more hours than the working time directive limit.

Count Staff

The votes are counted and results announced either that night after the polls close at 10pm or the following day(s). The length of time a count takes depends on the type of election and the complexity. You must be prepared to stay as long as it takes.

Job locations

Polling stations are in venues across the Sevenoaks District. These are usually community halls, schools or church buildings or in local pubs. You should be prepared to travel anywhere in the district as we cannot guarantee you will be placed at a polling station close to where you live.

The election count usually takes place at Sevenoaks Leisure Centre.

Before you apply

To work at elections, you must:

- be at least 18 years old to work in a polling station and at least 16 years old to work at the count;
- be entitled to work in the UK (in accordance with the Asylum and Immigration Act 2006);
- not work on behalf of a candidate during the election campaign or be related to a candidate;
- consent to working in excess of normal working hours; and
- comply with secrecy requirements which will be supplied to all staff.

If you are appointed to work, it is important you remain politically impartial when you are working at the election. This means you cannot publicly show your support for a particular political party or candidate in any way.

Entitlement to work in the UK

If you are appointed to work at a polling station or the counting of votes, you will need to provide, in-person, evidence of your eligibility to work in the UK by showing us either:

- your valid passport, or
- your birth certificate and proof of National Insurance number (e.g. P60, P45 or payslip)

Skills and experience

We are looking for motivated and enthusiastic staff. To work at a polling station, you should have excellent customer service skills and attention to detail. You will need to ensure that the proper procedures for voting are followed including checking voter identification.

To work at an election count, you should have good numeracy skills. We expect anyone working at an election to act impartially and be polite and professional in dealing with all voters, candidates and agents, Electoral Commission representatives and any accredited observers. Further details for each job role can be found on this page -

https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20053/elections_and_voting/393/elections_job_opportunities .

Elections Staff training

All polling staff must take part in a full training session. Depending on your role this may be face to face or online. More details will be included in your appointment letter.

Count staff will be briefed about what they need to do before the count begins so must arrive promptly.

Appointing staff

Appointments are temporary and made by the Returning Officer rather than the council. The council's usual recruitment policies and procedures do not apply, but we follow the principles of equal opportunities and good employment practices. Anyone who is not given a role is automatically added to our reserve list and may be contacted closer to election day if a role becomes available.

We will contact you by email if you have been appointed, giving you details of the role, location, training requirements if applicable and pay.

Payments

Pay rates vary depending on the role and type of poll. Fees for attending training and travel expenses may also be paid where appropriate. The amounts will be confirmed

to you before polling day. All fees are subject to tax on a PAYE basis but are exempt from National Insurance contributions.

The amount we pay for each role is regularly reviewed and payments are usually made within one month of polling day.

Any election work you do may affect any benefit or state pension you receive. You will be responsible for telling your benefit or pension provider about your earnings.

Poll staff – right to vote

If you are working at a polling station you would not be able to leave to vote at your usual polling station. It is recommended that you apply for a postal or proxy vote in advance of polling day. To do so please visit <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter> or contact your local council.

Working at future elections

We are always looking to add people to our elections staff database however; we must stress that being appointed to work at an election is not a guarantee of work at future elections.

The work available depends on the number of applications and available vacancies. We also cannot guarantee that you will always work with the same people or in the same location.

Thank you for your interest in our elections roles.