

Mayor of London and London Assembly Elections

Final briefing for candidates and agents

8 April 2024

Panel

- Mary Harpley – Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO)
- Alex Conway – Deputy Greater London Returning Officer (DGLRO)
- Lea Goddard – Senior Election Programme Manager
- DI Laura Riddell – Special Enquiry Team – Met Police
- PC Alex Vale – Met Police
- Chief Inspector Russ Joao – Silver Commander Met Police (remote)

Agenda

- Welcome
- Key dates
- Update from the Metropolitan Police
- Attendance at key events
- Count day activity
- Election results
- Election comms
- Questions

Key dates

5 April, 12pm	Elections booklet on website
From 5 April	Elections booklet delivered to all registered electors
16 April, 5pm	Deadline for applying to register to vote
17 April, 5pm	Deadline for applying for a postal vote
25 April	Deadline for appointing polling and counting agents (more on these roles later)
2 May, 7am to 10pm	Polling day
3 May, 9am	Verification of ballot papers starts
4 May, 9am	Counting of ballot papers starts
4 May	Declarations of Mayor and Assembly London-wide results (at City Hall), and Constituency Assembly results (at count venues)



**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**

**MORE
TRUST**

**LESS
CRIME**

**HIGH
STANDARDS**

SET candidates and agents briefing -
London Mayoral and Assembly elections May 2024



Topics to be covered

- Role of the Special Enquiry Team (SET)
- Authorised Professional Practice (APP) for policing elections
- Conduct of candidates, agents and supporters
- Common offences and how to avoid them
- Election expenses

Role of the Special Enquiry Team (SET)

- The Special Enquiry team, which is referred to as the SET, are part of the Specialist Crime Command and hold a key role in the policing of elections.
- We are the dedicated Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for electoral fraud and malpractice matters occurring within the MPS
- As such it is our teams responsibility to assess and investigate all allegations of electoral fraud and malpractice reasonably and proportionately without fear or favour.
- This will includes offences under:
 - Representation of People Act 1983 (RPA)
 - Election Act 2022
 - And some of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendum Act 2000 (PPERA)
- We work with the GLA, the Electoral Commission, IPSA, and policing colleagues including our Borough Command Units and the Public Order Planning Team to aid a fair and lawful election process.
- We take all election offences seriously and work closely with CPS to ensure we are proportionate and consistent in our decision making

Our core responsibilities

1. Maintain public confidence in the electoral process
2. Prevention is better than prosecution
3. Facilitation of peaceful voting
4. Elections should be fair and inclusive
5. Elections should be conducted in accordance with the law
6. Elections should be effectively policed



Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

Some guiding principles as to how we investigate (1/2)

- All criminal allegations relating to elections should be brought to the attention of the SET team.
- For every allegation the complainant is expected to provide an evidential statement. Hearsay is not acceptable. Therefore any unsubstantiated third party allegations will not be investigated.
- Guidance is encouraged via Electoral Services however it cannot be expected that they will refer to the Police. If you have a complaint then you or those concerned will have to provide a statement and evidence.

Authorised Professional Practice (APP)

Some guiding principles as to how we investigate (2/2)

- Allegations are prioritised by the Force SPOC and they decide when a matter is investigated. Offences that seriously undermine the democratic process always take precedence over those which have minimal effect.
- The CPS is responsible for all charging decisions, including cautions.
- SPOCs are mindful that allegations may be made in the belief that it would disadvantage a candidate/party.

Conduct of candidates, agents and supporters

The Electoral Commission provide clear direction for candidates, agents and supporters.

Voters should be able to trust that candidates will comply with the law and maintain the integrity of the election process.

Election agents are responsible for your campaign and are legally responsible for its financial management.

There are some key changes to the law, by way of the Elections Act 2022, which will affect this election:

- Undue Influence
- Handling of postal voting documents by political campaigners

The
Electoral
Commission

Common Allegations

Imprint – Printed campaign material (Sec 110)

An imprint must be added to election material that can reasonably be regarded as intended to promote or procure the election of a political party, candidate or groups of candidates.

The requirements, as set out by section 110 Representation of the People Act 1983 and section 143 Political Parties Elections and Referendums Act 2000, states the material must include:

1. the name and address of the printer of the document
2. the name and address of the promoter of the material
3. the name and address of any person on behalf of whom the material is being published (and who is not the promoter).

Digital material – It is now a legal requirement to have a digital imprint. The Electoral Commission have produced guidance to assist with this.

False statement as to a candidate (Sec 106 (1))

It is an illegal practice for a person to make or publish any false statement of fact in relation to the personal character or conduct (rather than the political character or conduct) of a candidate, before or during an election, for the purpose of affecting the return of the candidate at the election unless they can show that they had reasonable grounds for believing, and did believe, the statement to be true – RPA 1983 s 106.

Making statements about the performance of a candidate is a normal feature of politics.

Election expenses (1/2)

- The Electoral Commission has produced guidance and instructions on how to complete expenses returns.
- Please remember you must still submit a return even if you haven't spent any money
- Failure to submit a spending return or declaration by the deadline without an authorised excuse is a criminal offence (Sections 81 and 82 of the RPA)
- The Electoral Commission has a legal remit to secure compliance with the rules on candidates' spending and donations, but no sanctioning powers. Suspected breaches of the rules are therefore investigated by the police.

Election expenses (2/2)

- If a candidate has been elected but the spending return and/or declaration has not been submitted by the deadline they are disqualified from acting as elected mayor.
- It is important that candidates and agents are aware of their obligations to complete accurate and timely expenses returns.
- If there are any queries then these should be directed to the Electoral Commission.

Contact

Special Enquiry Team

SETElections@met.police.uk



08/04/2024

LONDON ELECTIONS 2024

Candidate safety and security

PC Alex Vale 975CO

Central Ceremonials – Public Order Planning

Candidate Safety

- Who might be interested in me?
- What may people be looking for?
- What about my home address?
- **Advice to keep you and your teams safe**

Why might I be of interest?

- Local tensions
- Position of power or influence
- Links to political parties or views
- Local and National Government access

How might I be targeted?

- On the campaign trail – in person
- Home/constituency addresses
- Social Media
- Phone calls/emails

What can I do?

- Pre-notify of events that may be contentious – Met Police website
- Venue security concerns – Local Safer Neighbourhood Teams
- Report suspicious incidents – 101 or Met Police Website
- Ongoing incident? – Ring 999
- Social Media – Block and report

Attendance at key events

What election events can you attend?



- Candidates and election agents are entitled to attend:
 - postal vote opening sessions
 - polling stations
 - the verification and counting of ballot papers
- In addition, you may appoint postal, polling and count agents to attend key events.
- The deadline for appointing polling and count agents is 25 April.
- Appointment for postal agents can be made on daily basis.
- Applications to be made to each Borough Returning Officer

Postal voting

- Over 1m of London's 6.1m registered electors are postal voters.
- The deadline for applying for a postal vote is 5pm on 17 April.
- Postal voting packs will be dispatched by boroughs from mid-April (varies by borough).
- The pack is made up of:
 - Envelope A in which the elector returns their ballot papers
 - Envelope B in which the elector then uses to enclose Envelope A and the postal vote statement
 - The postal voting statement contains the elector's name, the numbers of the ballot papers issued to them, instructions on how to vote by post and space for the elector to sign and provide their date of birth
 - The three ballot papers

Postal agents (1/2)

- Postal vote agents can be appointed as and when required to attend any opening session.
- Postal, polling agents can be appointed by providing, in writing, names and addresses to the relevant Borough Returning Officer (BRO).
- Please let the Borough Returning Officer know if you, as a candidate or your election agent, intend to attend a postal opening session.

Postal agents (2/2)

- Candidates, election agents and postal voting agents can attend postal vote opening sessions, which are run by Returning Officers in each borough.
- There will be several postal opening sessions in each borough. There will be a final session on the night of 2 May after 10pm.
- No votes are counted at postal opening sessions – postal vote ballot papers are sealed in ballot boxes and counted at the relevant count venue.

Postal vote opening sessions

- Staff check the date of birth and signature on postal voting statements matches those on their records. If there is a mismatch, the postal vote is rejected.
- Candidates and agents have the right to observe, but not to interfere with, this process. A postal voting agent can, however, object to the decision of a Returning Officer to reject a postal vote.
- You must not attempt to see how individual ballot papers have been marked. Keeping a tally of how ballot papers have been marked is not allowed.
- Information on when the sessions are held and how many agents are allowed to attend can be obtained from boroughs.
- Borough Returning Officer contacts:
<https://www.londonelects.org.uk/im-candidate/constituency-returning-officer-cro-contact-details>

Handling postal votes

- Political parties and campaigners are banned from handling postal votes, only Returning Officers and their teams can do so.
- There will be a limit on the number of postal votes a person can hand in at a polling station or council offices -- 5, plus their own
- When handing-in postal votes in person a return of postal votes form must be completed
- Secrecy requirements will be extended to postal and proxy votes
- New rules apply at elections from 2 May 2024
- For more information see:
<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/code-conduct-campaigners-uk-parliamentary-general-elections-great-britain-local-elections-england>

Attending polling stations on 2 May



- Polling agents can be appointed to attend polling stations to observe proceedings.
- Candidates and election agents are also entitled to observe proceedings inside polling stations.
- CROs will give notice of the location of polling stations by 24 April.
- CROs will send out polling agent appointment forms to each election agent. On receipt of names the CRO will issue letters of authorisation to attend polling stations, which you should bring with you and show to the presiding officer.
- Candidates and agents can:
 - see the empty ballot box(es) before they are sealed
 - watch the Presiding Officer mark ballot papers at the request of an elector who needs assistance
 - watch for and note any improper activities and keep notes
 - be present at the close of poll when the various packets of documents are sealed
 - attach a seal to the ballot box

Count agents

- Constituency Count agents can be appointed by providing, in writing, names and addresses to the relevant CRO.
- Mayoral and London-wide Assembly Member counting agents need to be appointed and accredited via London Elects.
- Anyone attending these events must maintain the secrecy of the ballot. A document in respect of this will be issued.
- Count agents can:
 - Oversee the process
 - Ensure it has been carried out in accordance with the law
 - Challenge the decision of the CRO on the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers

Adjudication of ballot papers



- Ballot papers are **adjudicated** where:
 - they do not have a clearly valid vote,
 - contain marks outside the voting boxes, or
 - fail security rules.
- Candidates and agents can observe votes being adjudicated. They can object to any decision made by the CRO, whose decision is final.

Rejected ballot papers

- A ballot paper will, by law, not be counted if:
 - is unmarked
 - it does not contain the official mark
 - contains votes for more than one candidate or party
 - contains any mark or writing that can identify the voter
 - does not indicate the voter's intention with certainty.
- London Elects has provided guidance for CROs on the adjudication of doubtful ballot papers.

https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/GLA%20Doubtful%20ballot%20paper%20booklet_0.pdf

Who can attend the count venues?

- Media can attend all count venues
- Counting agents can be appointed to more than one contest:

Mayoral election	<p>For each candidate the following can be appointed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate, the election agent, 1 guest and up to 8 count agents at each of the 14 constituency counts
London-wide Assembly Member election	<p>For each party or independent candidate the following can be appointed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate, the election agent, 1 guest and up to 8 count agents at each of the 14 constituency counts
Constituency Member elections	<p>The CRO will advise on the number of counting agents and guests that can be appointed.</p>

Accreditation process – agents and guests

- You will shortly receive a form to provide details of those you wish to accredit for the count. Candidates and election agents can attend as of right. For counting agents and guests there are two accreditation approval processes:

A For the **Mayoral and London-wide Assembly elections**, this form must be returned to stuart.scott@london.gov.uk by Sunday 20 April. Changes may not be possible after this date.

Accredited **Mayoral and London-wide Assembly** elections individuals will be notified by London Elects by Friday 26 April.

B For the **Constituency Assembly Member** elections, this form must be returned to the CRO via their elections team.

Accredited **Constituency Assembly Member** elections individuals will be notified by CROs.

Who can attend the City Hall declarations?



- Declarations for Mayoral and London-wide Assembly Member results will be made at City Hall on Saturday 4 May.
- The Mayoral declaration will be first. The London-wide declaration will be afterwards.
- Those accredited to attend will be notified by email by 1 May 2024.
- Mayoral candidates + one agent + up to 10 guests.
- London-wide list candidates + one agent per party/independent candidate + up to 10 guests per party/independent candidate.
- Invited guests of the GLRO.
- London Elects staff.
- Media.

Accreditation confirmation

- Every accredited individual will receive an email confirming their accreditation.
- An official form of photo ID (e.g. passport or photo-driving licence) should be brought to the relevant count venue along with the email invitation.
- CROs, not London Elects, are responsible for the accreditation policy at each of the constituency counts.
- At the count venues and City Hall, individuals will be given a wristband to enable their identification and confirm their role.
- Entry to City Hall is subject to an admissions policy which includes a security search.

Count day activity

14 constituencies, 9 count venues

Constituency	Count location
Barnet & Camden	Alexandra Palace, N22 7AY
Bexley & Bromley	ExCeL, E16 1XL
Brent & Harrow	Harrow Leisure Centre, HA3 5BD
City & East (Newham, Barking and Dagenham, City of London, Tower Hamlets)	ExCeL, E16 1XL
Croydon & Sutton	ExCeL, E16 1XL
Ealing & Hillingdon	Marquee, Walpole Park, W5 5EQ
Enfield & Haringey	Alexandra Palace, N22 7AY
Greenwich & Lewisham	ExCeL , E16 1XL
Havering & Redbridge	ExCeL, E16 1XL
Lambeth & Southwark	Oval Cricket Ground, SE11 5SW
Merton & Wandsworth	Westway Sport Centre, W10 6RP
North East (Waltham Forest, Hackney, Islington)	Copper Box Arena, E20 3HB
South West (Hounslow, Kingston upon Thames, Richmond upon Thames)	St Mary's University, Twickenham, TW1 4SX
West Central (Westminster, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea)	Olympia, W14 8UX

Securing and moving the ballot boxes



- At the close of poll on 2 May, ballot boxes will be sealed and securely moved to count venues.
- Security will be in place and will stay with the ballot boxes overnight.
- The ballot boxes will remain sealed until the start of the verification process (9am, Friday 3 May).

Count timetable

- The ballot papers will be counted manually: Mayoral, then Assembly Constituency, then London-wide Assembly member
- Ballot paper verification starts at 9am on Friday 3 May.
- Ballot paper counting starts at 9am on Saturday 4 May. Expectation is that all counts complete that day.

Count reporting



- Like parliamentary constituency counts, the 14 counts will finish at different times, depending on turnout, capacity of venue, numbers of counters and their speed.
- Possible that Assembly Constituency declarations will be made at 'faster' counts while Mayoral counts still underway elsewhere.
- Regular updates will be provided on the London Elects website on both verification and count days (which will confirm when verification and the count have started, are 50% and 100% complete).
- City Hall will be open on Saturday to candidates, agents and guests from noon.
- Candidate and agents will be given 2 hours' notice by email when the Mayoral and London-wide Assembly Member results are **expected** to be formally declared, in order to allow time to travel to City Hall.

Contingency Plans



- In event that counts take much longer than expected, or there is a physical problem at a venue, a decision will be taken on Saturday night whether all counts can complete, or whether certain counts – and/or declarations – may need to take place on Sunday.
- If this happens, we will also aim to confirm expected Sunday declaration times.
- Contingency plans are in place to utilise count venues on Sunday, including transferring counts if there are last-minute problems.
- If City Hall was not available, declarations would take place at the London Fire Brigade offices in Southwark.

Election results

The results: constituency results, local totals and recounts

- The CRO will share
 - the final verification statement on Friday
 - provisional local totals for the Mayor of London and London-wide Assembly Member elections on Saturday, before announcing them
 - provisional results of the Constituency Assembly Member election before declaring them.
- For all three contests, recounts may only be requested at the constituency level. In respect of the Constituency Assembly Member contest, the request may only be made before the constituency result is announced.
- In respect of the Mayor of London and London-wide Assembly Member contests, the request may only be made before the local totals have been announced.
- A CRO may decline any request for a recount if they deem it is unreasonable.

The results: Mayor of London and London-wide Assembly Members



- The GLRO will share the provisional Mayoral results at City Hall with candidates and election agents once the 14 local Mayoral counts have concluded and the London-wide results calculated.
- At this point a recount **cannot** be requested: there is no provision in law for London-wide recounts.
- The GLRO will then make the live streamed declaration.
- The process for the London-wide Assembly Member election is the same, but the provisional results will be shared only with election agents.

London-wide Assembly Members election

- The 14 Constituency Member seats are allocated first past the post.
- This provides the basis for calculating how the 11 London-wide seats are allocated.
- To be included in the calculation, each party or individual must receive 5%+ of the total number of London-wide votes.
- In the first round of calculations, each party's vote in the London-wide Member election is divided by the number of constituency seats won + 1 (the 'London figure').
- The first seat is allocated to the party or individual with the highest London figure.
- For the purpose of the calculation, their seats won is increased by one for the next round (i.e. constituency seats won +2).
- The calculation is repeated to award the second seat – and so on until all 11 seats are allocated.

Example calculation

Seat	Party A	Party B	Party C	Party D	Party E	Winner
Seat 1	$130,714/(0+1) = 130,714.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(0+1) = 203,465.00$	$665,443/(6+1) = 95,063.29$	$275,272/(0+1) = 275,272.00$	Party E
Seat 2	$130,714/(0+1) = 130,714.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(0+1) = 203,465.00$	$665,443/(6+1) = 95,063.29$	$275,272/(1+1) = 137,636.00$	Party C
Seat 3	$130,714/(0+1) = 130,714.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(1+1) = 101,732.50$	$665,443/(6+1) = 95,063.29$	$275,272/(1+1) = 137,636.00$	Party E
Seat 4	$130,714/(0+1) = 130,714.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(1+1) = 101,732.50$	$665,443/(6+1) = 95,063.29$	$275,272/(2+1) = 91,757.33$	Party A
Seat 5	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(1+1) = 101,732.50$	$665,443/(6+1) = 95,063.29$	$275,272/(2+1) = 91,757.33$	Party C
Seat 6	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(2+1) = 67,821.67$	$665,443/(6+1) = 95,063.29$	$275,272/(2+1) = 91,757.33$	Party D
Seat 7	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(8+1) = 92,837.22$	$203,465/(2+1) = 67,821.67$	$665,443/(7+1) = 83,180.38$	$275,272/(2+1) = 91,757.33$	Party B
Seat 8	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(9+1) = 83,553.50$	$203,465/(2+1) = 67,821.67$	$665,443/(7+1) = 83,180.38$	$275,272/(2+1) = 91,757.33$	Party E
Seat 9	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(9+1) = 83,553.50$	$203,465/(2+1) = 67,821.67$	$665,443/(7+1) = 83,180.38$	$275,272/(3+1) = 68,818.00$	Party B
Seat 10	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(10+1) = 75,957.73$	$203,465/(2+1) = 67,821.67$	$665,443/(7+1) = 83,180.38$	$275,272/(3+1) = 68,818.00$	Party D
Seat 11	$130,714/(1+1) = 65,357.00$	$835,535/(10+1) = 75,957.73$	$203,465/(2+1) = 67,821.67$	$665,443/(8+1) = 73,938.11$	$275,272/(3+1) = 68,818.00$	Party B
Total seats	1	3	2	2	3	

Election comms

Marketing Campaign



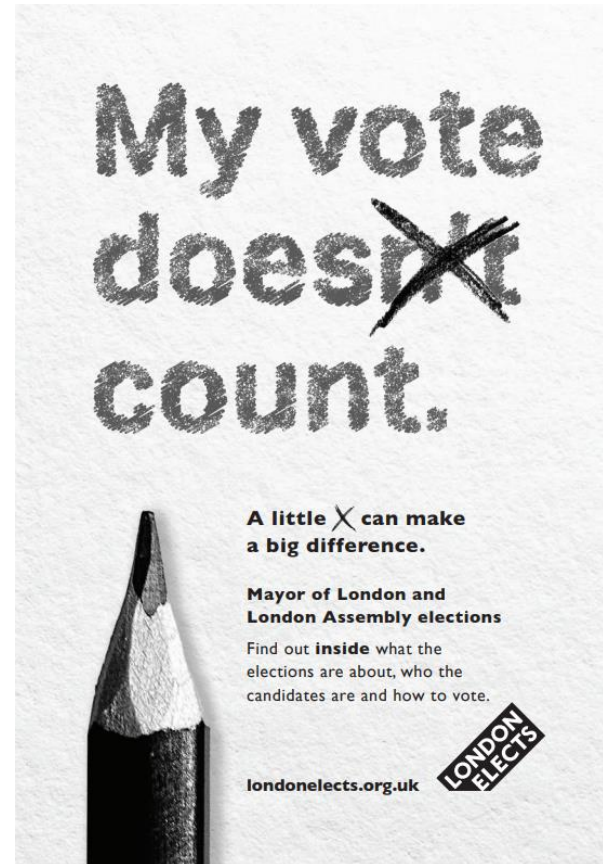
- London Elects marketing campaign is live until 2 May
- It is designed to reach a balanced audience of London voters
- It is informing them of when, where and how to vote, including key messages:
 - Bring photo ID to vote
 - How to complete your ballot papers
 - Understanding the role of the Mayor and Assembly
 - Postal and proxy vote application deadlines



Voter information booklet



- Booklet delivered to every London voter
- Includes mini-manifestos from 11 Mayoral candidates who chose to submit one, and lists of all candidates standing in the Mayoral and Assembly elections
- Delivery will prioritise postal voters and go out in three phases. Dispatch dates are:
 - Postal voters (5-9 April)
 - Registered voters (10-20 April)
 - Late registrants (23-24 April)



Questions?

Important contacts



General enquiries

Info@londonelects.org.uk

Media

Media@londonelects.org.uk
