

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING – FEBRUARY 14TH 2023

Item 11 – To receive and note an updating report on planning for the May 2023 Parish Council Elections

Following my report to the January 13th 2023 Council meeting I can confirm that the following actions have taken place or are shortly to take place:-

1. The February 2023 Parish Council newsletter included a front page article inviting anyone interested in finding out more about being a Parish Councillor to contact me.
2. The back page of that newsletter carried a large article devoted to the introduction of “Voter ID” and explained the process of how those without suitable photo ID could apply to the Electoral Services Team at NFDC for a “Voter Authority Certificate”
3. The introduction of Voter ID was also the subject of a post on the Parish Council Facebook page which was then shared with the local area Facebook Group.
4. A web page dedicated to the Elections has now been added to the Parish Council’s website and will shortly be populated with articles related to prospective councillors and voter information
5. An A5 leaflet has been posted on the Council side of the noticeboards to raise awareness about seeking election to become a councillor.
6. Further articles will be included in the March about the elections including mention of the Annual Parish Meeting which will hopefully include a few existing councillors talking about their role.

In addition to the above I am sharing information received from NFDC, HALC and NALC about various aspects of the upcoming elections with all current councillors. Attached to this update is a copy of the latest “Guidance for Clerks” bulletin issued by NFDC. Once councillors have read this bulletin I am happy to try and answer any questions you may have (or try find the answer).

David Rigby, Clerk to Copythorne Parish Council
February 7th 2023

Local Elections Thursday 4 May 2023 - Guidance for Clerks

Bulletin 2 – February 2023

Introduction

In addition to bulletin 1 which was sent to you in November 2022 (via the post), this guidance has been prepared to give more information around the scheduled town and parish elections that will be taking place on Thursday 4 May 2023.

As a reminder, all seats currently held on all town and parish councils will be up for re-election therefore, your town or parish council **must** put forward candidates to hold these seats for the coming term.

We advise anyone wishing to stand in these elections to read the candidate guidance produced by the Electoral Commission [Candidate or agent | Electoral Commission](#)

Useful information will be posted on our website throughout the election process. We have set up a dedicated webpage for these elections [Local elections Thursday 4 May 2023 - New Forest District Council](#)

We welcome your support in sharing any relevant information with your electorate and prospective candidates in your parish newsletters, notice boards or webpages.

Contents of this bulletin

This bulletin includes

- Election timetable
- Notices
- Nomination papers for town and parish candidates
- How to submit a nomination
- Briefing session
- Electoral changes
- Voter ID – how you can help

We would appreciate your support in considering and sharing this information with relevant people.

Election timetable

Publication of Notice of Election	Monday 20 March 2023
Receipt of Nominations	4:00 pm Tuesday 4 April 2023
Withdrawal of Candidate	4:00 pm Tuesday 4 April 2023

Appointment of Election Agents	4:00 pm Tuesday 4 April 2023
Publication of Notice of Election Agents	4:00 pm Tuesday 4 April 2023
Publication of Statements of Persons Nominated	4:00 pm Wednesday 5 April 2023
Last Date for Registration	Monday 17 April 2023
Last Date for Receipt of Postal Vote Applications	5:00 pm Tuesday 18 April 2023
Publication of Notice of Poll	Tuesday 25 April 2023
Last Date for Receipt of Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Tuesday 25 April 2023
Appointment of Poll and Count Agents	Wednesday 26 April 2023
First Day to Issue Replacement Lost Postal Ballot Papers	Thursday 27 April 2023
Last Day to Issue Replacement Spoilt or Lost Postal Ballot Papers	5:00 pm Thursday 4 May 2023
Last Day for Receipt of Emergency Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Thursday 4 May 2023
Day of Poll	7:00 am to 10:00 pm Thursday 4 May 2023
Return of Election Expenses	Thursday 8 June 2023

Notices

The publication of the Notice of Election triggers the election timetable, and you are required to publish our notices as part of the local election process.

We will contact you via email with a link as to where our notices will be published on our website. You can then download, print, and publish on your notice boards on the relevant dates.

To assist with your planning, you can expect to hear from us on or before the following dates with links to find the following notices on our website

- Notice of election – Monday 20 March 2023
 - The notice of election triggers the election timetable and gives official notification that the election will be held.
- Notice of election agents – Tuesday 4 April 2023
 - The notice of election agents officially designates the names and office addresses of agents who can act on their candidate's behalf.
- Statement of persons nominated – Wednesday 5 April 2023
 - Names listed on the statement of persons nominated are officially candidates in the election and will appear on the ballot paper.
- Notice of poll – Tuesday 25 April 2023

- The notice of poll is the official notification that a poll will take place and includes such details as the time and date of the poll, the number of councillors to be elected, details of those standing for election, and details of the polling station(s).

Nomination papers for Town and Parish elections

Whilst it is the responsibility of individual candidates to ensure that they are properly nominated and that their nomination forms are completed correctly, it is often the case that the parish clerk is asked to assist with this process.

Nomination papers can now be downloaded from the Electoral commission website.

[Parish council elections in England | Electoral Commission](#)

Attached to this bulletin will be annotated nomination paper guidance produced to assist prospective candidates in filling in their forms.

How to submit nomination papers

The window to submit papers opens on Monday 20 March 2023 and the deadline for our receipt of nomination papers is 4pm Tuesday 4 April 2023.

Papers must be submitted by hand to our Lyndhurst offices at the address below. We are asking all candidates and agents to book an appointment to submit their papers.

We strongly advise that candidates also book an informal check where we can ensure all forms are completed correctly ahead of their formal submission.

You must book an appointment, and more information can be found on our website [Information for Candidates and Agents - New Forest District Council](#)

If no changes are needed, then we can formally accept the nomination papers at the same time.

Briefing session

A briefing session for all prospective candidates and agents will be held on Monday 1 March at 6:30pm which all parish clerks are welcome to attend.

This session will be hosted online via Microsoft Teams. In order for us to gauge attendance please email electoralservices@nfdc.gov.uk, and we will forward the invite.

Electoral Changes 2023

As a reminder there are a number of changes affecting the delivery of elections in the New Forest. Your support is welcome in communicating these changes to your electorate via your parish newsletters, noticeboards, or website.

Effective from May 2023 the following will be in force

- Changes to polling stations
- Changes to poll cards
- Changes to ward boundaries

- Changes arising from the Elections Act 2022.

For the Town and Parish councils that have been affected by the boundary changes candidates will be nominated and elected for the new parish ward areas.

These changes have already been communicated to you, but the information is held on [Ward boundary changes 2023 - New Forest District Council](#)

Voter ID – How you can help

The change in the law arising from the Elections Act 2022 requires all electors to show photographic ID at the polling station. This will apply to the polls in May 2023.

We welcome your support in sharing this important message with your communities in the following ways

- Information including accepted forms of ID and how to apply for a free voter authority certificate can be found on our website at [Voter ID - New Forest District Council](#). Please share this information with all relevant parties to be used to provide clarity should you receive any queries.
- Attached to this bulletin are some posters produced by the Electoral Commission, they can be printed on a standard printer to post on noticeboards or in your public areas. Please display where appropriate.
- Our communications team are working hard posting information regularly via our social media accounts. If your parish council has their own social media sharing can really amplify our message and ensure more residents see our posts. Links to our social media can be found on our website [News and social media - New Forest District Council](#)

Count arrangements

Planning has begun and the count will take place at Applemore Health & Leisure Centre on Friday 5th May 2023. There will not be an overnight count.

In order to assist with timings, we plan to share an indicative timetable for when results are likely to be declared. This will be sent to you via email in the coming months.

All results will be posted on our website [2023 local election results - New Forest District Council](#)

Contact details

If you have any queries or questions, please get in contact in good time and we will do our best to support you.

Email electoralservices@nfdc.gov.uk

Phone 023 8028 5445

Office address Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7PA

More information will be available on our website [Voting and elections - New Forest District Council](#)