

Role of Agents

This document provides information on the role of Agents and should be read in conjunction with the Electoral Commission Guidance provided to Candidates/Election Agents and also available on the Commission's website at <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/local-council-elections-in-scotland>

Election Agents

- Every candidate **must** have an agent (although a candidate can be his/her own agent)
- Deadline for appointing an election agent is the same as the deadline for the close of nominations.
- Election Agent is the person responsible in law for the proper management of your election campaign and is responsible for all financial aspects of your election.
- Election Agent must have an office all documents may be sent to. It is often their home address but may also be a local political party office or an office set up for the election.

Polling Agents

- Appointed by the candidate to observe proceedings on polling day at polling places. Passes will be issued by the Returning Officer on receipt of the application form containing polling agents' names.
- Only one polling agent for a particular candidate can be present at a particular polling station at any given time.
- Can check the ballot box is empty before the opening of the poll.
- Are present to assist in detecting any incidences of personation.
- Polling agents must not impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling station/polling place.

Agents at Postal Vote Openings

- Appointed by the candidate or election agent to observe proceedings at the opening of postal votes. The Returning Officer must be notified in writing of the names and addresses of any agents appointed before the time fixed for the opening of postal votes.
- Observe the postal vote opening process.

Counting Agents

- Are appointed by the candidate or election agent to observe proceedings at the count. Must be named on the relevant application form. Passes will be issued by the Returning Officer on receipt of the form.
- Oversee the counting process and make sure that it is undertaken in an orderly, accurate and correct manner.
- Draw to the attention of count staff any doubtful ballot papers.

Tellers

Tellers are usually volunteers who stand outside the polling places and record the elector number of voters who have voted. This is for the purpose of assisting party workers to identify potential supporters who have yet to vote. However, tellers should be made aware that voters have the right to refuse to give any information. Tellers must not impede, obstruct or intimidate voters on their way in or out of the polling place.

Jim Savege
Returning Officer