

Dear Candidate and Agent

Candidate spending and donations at the Carrick Castle Local Government By-election 2018

Candidates and their agents at a Local Government by-election must follow certain rules about how much they spend campaigning, who they accept donations from and what they must report after the election. The Electoral Commission issues guidance on these rules.

Our guidance includes information on:

- how much you can spend, the activities covered by the rules and what information needs to be recorded
- the rules on donations, how to check if you can accept them and what records you must keep,
- how to report your campaign spending and donations after the election.

We issued guidance for the [last Local Government elections in 2014](#). Most of the guidance we issued in 2014 is applicable to a By-election. There are some differences, particularly, to the dates during which the rules apply and the deadlines you need to meet after the election which are set out at the end of this letter.

You should read the guidance, in conjunction with the additional information in this letter so that you are aware of the rules and comply with your legal and regulatory obligations. You can access our guidance at this address:

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/candidate-or-agent/local-government-elections-in-northern-ireland>

If after reading the guidance you have any questions about candidate campaign spending, donations or reporting after the election please contact us.

Yours sincerely

Roisin McDaid

Senior Officer (Political Parties Liaison)

Infonorthernireland@electoralcommission.org.uk

0333 103 1928

The Electoral Commission
Ground Floor
4 Cromac Place
The Gasworks
Belfast BT7 2JB

Tel: 028 9089 4020
Fax: 028 9031 4827
infonorthernireland@electoralcommission.org.uk
www.electoralcommission.org.uk

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Regulated period

Rules on candidate spending and donations apply during what is called the regulated period.

The regulated period begins on the date after you officially become a candidate and ends at the close of poll.

The earliest date you can officially become a candidate at the by-election is 12 September 2018. 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 12 September 2018 you will officially become a candidate on the earlier of:

- the date your intention to stand is announced
- the date when you are nominated

Post-election deadlines

After the election you must:

- ensure all invoices are received within **21 days** of the election result being declared
- pay all invoices within **28 days** of the election result being declared
- submit a report of spending and donations to the Deputy Returning Officer within **35 days** of the election result being declared. (This must be accompanied by the appropriate declaration/s)

	Latest date to		
	Receive your invoices	Pay your invoices	Submit your return and agent declaration
For an election result declared on 19 October 2018*	9 November 2018	16 November 2018	23 November 2018

*if the result is declared on a different date you will need to calculate the relevant dates based on the date the actual result is declared.