LOCAL AUTHORITY ELECTIONS

GUIDANCE FOR VOTERS

Isle of Man Government
Reitly Eilian Vannin
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1. INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been produced to provide guidance to voters on the Local Authority General Elections and provides details on registering to vote as well as how to place your vote at a Polling Station or apply for an absent vote etc.

Legislation does not allow for individuals to appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf in the Local Authority General Elections.

Please note that this document is intended only as a guide and should not be relied upon as being legally definitive. Furthermore, the Department cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions within this guide.

Also, please note that this guide does not provide information on the House of Keys Elections.

2. REGISTERING TO VOTE

2.1. How to Register to Vote

To vote in the Local Authority Elections your name must be listed on the current electoral register.

The Crown and Elections Unit have produced a guide entitled “How to Register to Vote” which sets out various details, such as, qualifying to register to vote and how to complete the registration form etc. This guide can be viewed via the web-link below, or alternatively further assistance could be sought directly from the Crown and Elections Unit: https://www.gov.im/media/625427/how-to-register-to-vote-update.pdf

2.2. Who to Contact to Register to Vote

To obtain a registration form to register to vote or to check your records, please contact the Electoral Registration Unit, whose contact details are as follows:-

**Address:**
Electoral Registration Unit
Crown and Elections
Cabinet Office
3rd Floor, Government Office
Bucks Road
Douglas, IM1 3PN

**Telephone:** (01624) 685754
**E-mail:** voters@gov.im

2.3. Viewing the Electoral Register

The full electoral registers are held at the following locations:-

- Local Authority offices (contact details can be found on page 6)
- General Registry (IOM Courts of Justice, Deemsters’ Walk, Douglas)
- Crown and Elections Unit (Cabinet Office, 3rd Floor, Government Office, Bucks Road, Douglas)
- Tynwald Library (Legislative Buildings, Finch Road, Douglas)
3. HOW TO VOTE

There are two methods of voting in the Local Authority Elections; either by placing a vote at the Polling Station for your electoral district/ward, or by applying for an absent vote. Under legislation, individuals are **not** allowed to appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf in the Local Authority Elections.

3.1. Polling Station

Where to Vote

During the month of the election, Local Authorities in contested areas will display a Notice of Poll in the local newspaper and in their local areas. This notice will set out the names, addresses and descriptions of all the candidates nominated for election, and will also set out the location of the polling stations. **See Form 5 and also Rule 23 of the Local Election Rules 2003 (as amended).**

The poll card will also inform you of the location of your polling station, as can the Returning Officer for your district/ward, whose contact details can be obtained from your Local Authority. (Please see table on page 6 of this document for the contact telephone numbers of each of the Local Authorities).

Casting a Vote

All the Island’s polling stations will be open between **8.00 am and 8.00 pm** on the day of the election. On arriving at the polling station for your ward/district, you will need to provide the Poll Clerk with your name and address. This is so that they can check you are on the Electoral Register. You will then be provided with a ballot paper and directed to a polling booth where you can then cast your vote.

Once having cast your vote, you will need to fold the ballot paper so that your vote cannot be seen, and then place it in the ballot box before leaving the polling station.

Should you require assistance in marking your ballot paper, please inform the Presiding Officer on your arrival at the polling station.

**Note:** You can still vote without your poll card, provided you are registered on the electoral register for your area.

3.2. Absent Vote

Obtaining an Absent Vote Application Form

A registered voter who is either off-Island on the day of the election or on-Island but unable to attend the polling station to vote, can if they wish, fill in an application form requesting to be treated as an absent voter. (An example copy of this form is attached at **Annex A**).

Absent vote application forms can be obtained from the following locations:-

- Local Authority Offices / Returning Officer for your ward or district
- Police Stations within the ward or district (during their normal office hours)

Submission of Absent Vote Application Form

Applications to be treated as an absent voter are to be completed, and also signed and dated by the applicant. Your signature is required to be witnessed by someone who knows you **(NOT a relative)**. The witness must also be aged 18 years or over.
You then need to submit the completed application form to the Returning Officer for your electoral area as follows:

a) **On-Island**: where the absent voter’s ballot paper is to be marked in the Isle of Man (i.e. voting on Island), the completed application form is to be submitted at least 7 clear days before the day fixed for the election;

b) **Off-Island**: where the absent voter’s ballot paper is to be marked elsewhere than in the Isle of Man (i.e. voting off Island), the completed application form is to be submitted at least 9 clear days before the day fixed for the election.

It is recommended that you contact your Returning Officer as soon as possible to request an application for an absent vote. The Returning Officer will also be able to confirm the cut-off date by which your completed form would need to be returned. Please do NOT wait to receive your poll card before contacting the Returning Officer for your area as the deadline for the submission of an absent vote application will have passed.

Casting an Absent Vote (Documents for Completion)

If satisfied you are entitled to be treated as an absent voter, the Returning Officer will make arrangements for you to receive the following documents:

- Ballot paper
- Declaration of Identity and Form of Instructions
- An envelope marked “A” (ballot paper envelope)
- An envelope marked “B” (covering envelope for return of the absent voter’s sealed ballot paper envelope and declaration of identity form)

At this stage, you will have already confirmed via your recently submitted absent vote application form how you intend to mark your ballot paper (see the sample form appended as Annex A). These options are set out as follows:

- If voting on-Island you can either (i) mark your ballot paper and complete your Declaration of Identity & form of instruction document at the office of the Returning Officer or you can (ii) mark your ballot paper and complete your Declaration of Identity & form of instruction document at an address stipulated by yourself on your absent vote application form.

- If voting off-Island, the Returning Officer will make arrangements to send the ballot paper and other documentation to you in the post, at an address stipulated by you on your absent vote application form.

You must mark your ballot paper in the presence (but not in the sight of) the Certifying Person. It cannot be completed before delivery to or collection by the Certifying Person.

You should ask the Certifying Person to show his or her warrant of appointment in order to check that they have been appointed for this purpose.
If you will be **in the Isle of Man**, you MAY be asked to produce the following to the Certifying Person:

- a) **satisfactory evidence of your identity** (e.g. valid passport or national identity document issued by the Government of a Member State of the EU; a full or provisional driving licence granted under the law for the time being in force in the Island, in any part of the UK, any part of the Channel Islands or Gibraltar; a proof of age card issued by the IOM Office of Fair Trading; or a bus pass issued by the Department of Infrastructure which contains a photograph of the holder); and

in any case, you MUST produce the following to the Certifying Person:

- b) **the declaration of identity & form of instruction**. (This is to be signed by the absent voter in the presence of the Certifying Person. If the absent voter is unable to sign the declaration of identity, the Certifying Person (on being satisfied as to identity of the absent voter) shall write the name of the absent voter and add the words “Absent voter unable to sign”).

- c) **the ballot paper showing the number and official mark on it**. (Once having signed the declaration of identity form, the absent voter must vote secretly by marking the ballot paper in the presence, but not in the sight of, the Certifying Person.

Once having voted, the absent voter must fold the marked ballot paper to conceal the vote and place it in **envelope ‘A’**. Envelope ‘A’ then needs to be sealed and placed inside **envelope ‘B’** along with the declaration of identity form. Envelope ‘B’ is then sealed and passed to the Certifying Person.

If you are unable to mark your ballot paper, the Certifying Person can mark the ballot as directed by you, in addition to sealing envelopes ‘A’ and ‘B’.

If you will be **off-Island** when marking your ballot paper, you will be required to follow the same process as set out above, with the exception that a) satisfactory evidence of identity, b) the declaration of identity, and c) the ballot paper, will instead need to be given to an individual who may act as a certifying person.

A list of all those who may act as certifying persons can be found at **Annex B**.

Please contact your Returning Officer should you have any queries about the above.

### 4. LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTACTS

The Department has given public notice that the Local Authority Elections in 2016 will be held on Thursday 28th April 2016.

For further information, please contact your Local Authority:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andreas</td>
<td>897686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port St Mary</td>
<td>832101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arby</td>
<td>823896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsey</td>
<td>810100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ballaugh</td>
<td>897686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rushen</td>
<td>834501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bride</td>
<td>819235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santon</td>
<td>822761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castletown</td>
<td>825005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onchan</td>
<td>675564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>696300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malew</td>
<td>823522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>816112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peel</td>
<td>842341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurby</td>
<td>897686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Erin</td>
<td>832298</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. LOCAL ELECTIONS LEGISLATION

Please view the following Acts and Regulations should you wish to obtain more information on the Local Authority Elections process:

- Local Elections Act 1986
- The Representation of the People Act 1995 (as amended)
- The Local Election Rules 2003 (as amended)
- The Local Election (Absent Voters) Regulations 2008 (as amended)

A copy of all the above Acts, Rules, and Regulations are set out within the Department of Infrastructure’s booklet entitled "Local Elections Legislation", published in February 2012. An electronic copy can be found on the Department's website via the following link: https://www.gov.im/media/44259/local-elections-legislation-documentv2.pdf

If needed, hardcopies of this booklet can be obtained from the Department of Infrastructure's Local Government Unit (see below for contact details).

6. USEFUL CONTACTS

**Local Authorities**

See Department of Infrastructure’s website on:-

**General Registry**

The Registries Building, Deemsters’ Walk, Bucks Road, Douglas, IM1 3AR (Enquiries Tel: 685265)

**Crown and Elections Unit**

Cabinet Office, 3rd Floor, Government Office, Bucks Road, Douglas (Enquiries Tel: 685754)

**Tynwald Library**

Legislative Buildings, Finch Road, Douglas (Enquiries Tel: 685520)

**Local Government Unit**

Department of Infrastructure, Sea Terminal Building, Douglas, IM1 2RF (LGU Tel: 686246 / 685900)
Annex A
Example Absent Vote Application Form

Reg.2(2)

APPLICATION TO BE TREATED AS AN ABSENT VOTER

[Front of form]

The Representation of the People Act 1995
The Local Elections Act 1986

[Name of local authority]

APPLICATION TO BE TREATED AS AN ABSENT VOTER

Electoral number ______________________________

Surname ________________________________

Other names ______________________________

Isle of Man Electoral Address ______________________________

District or ward ______________________________

Date of election ______________________________
Absent Vote Application

Please tick one of the following:-

1. I wish to mark my ballot paper at the office of the returning officer

2. I wish the certifying person to deliver the ballot paper to me at the address shown below.

3. I will be outside the Isle of Man on the date of the election (*on the dates shown below) and I wish to apply for a ballot paper to be sent to me at the address shown below.

*Dates I will be off-Island:- From (___ / ___ / ___) to (___ / ___ / ___)

Please supply the contact address for either 2 or 3 above (if different to your electoral address):

---------------------------------------------------------------------
---------------------------------------------------------------------
---------------------------------------------------------------------

Contact Tel No: ------------------------

Signature (or mark) of applicant ....................... Date .................

____________________

Witnessed by:

Signature -------------------------------------------Date ------------------------

Address -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

PRINT FULL NAME -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

A witness must know the person whose signature he/she witnesses. A witness must be aged 18 or over and must not be related to the person whose signature he/she witnesses.
Annex B

List of Certifying Persons

Where the ballot paper is to be marked in the Isle of Man, a certifying person must be —

(a) the returning officer for the district or ward; or
(b) an advocate; or a person appointed by the Department of Infrastructure (who will call on the absent voter and will, if requested, produce his or her warrant of appointment); or

Where the ballot paper is to be marked outside the Isle of Man, the certifying person must be any of the following —

- consular official;
- justice of the peace;
- minister of religion authorised to solemnise marriages;
- advocate;
- solicitor;
- barrister;
- notary public;
- physician;
- surgeon;
- dental surgeon;
- chartered accountant;
- commissioned officer in HM Armed Forces;
- master of a British ship;
- manager of a commercial bank or of any branch of such a bank;
- member of the academic staff of a university, university college or other institution of further or higher education;
- civil servant of the grade of Executive Officer or above;
- police officer;
- manager of a hospital, nursing home or residential care home where the absent voter is confined; or

If the absent voter is a presiding officer, poll clerk or counting clerk in the election, then the certifying person will be the returning officer by whom he or she was appointed;

BUT A CANDIDATE, THE SPOUSE OR CIVIL PARTNER OF A CANDIDATE, OR A POLLING AGENT OR COUNTING AGENT APPOINTED BY A CANDIDATE MAY NOT ACT AS A CERTIFYING PERSON.