

Pre-election publicity guidance

UK Government
General Election '24

carmarthenshire.gov.wales

Guidance for Councillors and employees in the run up to the UK Government General Elections - July 4, 2024

INTRODUCTION

The UK Government General election will be taking place on **July 4, 2024**.

Carmarthenshire County Council will be administering the election for the Caerfyrddin constituency and Llanelli constituency.

The law in relation to this matter does not preclude the Council from carrying out its functions but Council must avoid giving the perception that public money is being used to support a particular political party and/or individual candidate which could influence the outcome of the election. This guidance applies to all council members, employees and Council's contractors.

The pre-election period will commence on 31 May 2024

PRE-ELECTION GUIDANCE

1. During the election period the Council needs to ensure that it remains impartial.
2. The Council should not give prominence or publicity to any candidate or political party. During this period, care is therefore needed regarding matters presented to Council, Cabinet and Committees or matters which receive public attention and which are seen to be linked to individual candidates or a political party.
3. The Council should strive to take a neutral stance and should avoid doing anything or saying anything that could be perceived as promoting an individual candidate or a political party.
4. Council publicity and/or any consultation and engagement should not deal with controversial or politically sensitive issues at a local or national level. Council should not report views, proposals, or recommendations in such a way that identifies them with any political parties and/or an individual candidate.
5. Candidates and/or political parties can legitimately issue their own press releases or public information. It should be clear that these represent the views of those individual candidates/parties however and not that of the Council.

6. The Council should not undertake engagements or make any announcements or decisions, which are or could be construed as conferring electoral advantage on a particular candidate or a political party.
7. No publicity should be given to events and projects that are funded by government grant funding during the pre-election period. Exemptions to this ruling **must** be approved by the Head of Service and Acting Returning Officer.
8. Consultation exercises can continue as normal during the election period provided there is no reference or link to individual candidates or a political party. Any intention to launch any consultation or engagement exercise during this period **must** be approved by the Head of Service and Acting Returning Officer.
9. Employees must be impartial and ensure that public resources which includes council establishments are not used for the purposes of any candidate or political party. Letters or e-mails from all candidates should receive equal treatment and Council facilities must not be used for the printing, translating and/or posting of candidates' publicity.
10. Employees must not provide briefings for use in election campaign debates/literature and publicity material relating to individual candidates or a political party.
11. During the election period, meetings with candidates should be avoided unless they are regular meetings (for example, of a partnership body) in which the individuals concerned normally take part. Officers should not invite candidates, individuals attributed to a political party, or any elected members to meetings, conferences, openings or launches during the election period.
12. Candidates are not permitted to use schools and public meeting rooms during the election period for campaigning and debate purposes. Also, posters or stickers for any political party or/and any candidates' should not be displayed in, on or within council offices, residential homes, depots, schools, vehicles etc.
13. We may publish factual information about candidates if requested to do so by the relevant Acting Returning Officer.
14. As per the Council press and media protocol, all contact with the press should be via the Marketing and Media team. Any Council statements that require to be published during this period will be attributed to a named senior officer.
15. No photographs of candidates, individual attributed to a political party, or any elected members will be issued or published by the Council.
16. Particular care is needed by all in relation to the use of all social media channels such as X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, TikTok. This includes but not restricted to posting and responding. Corporate social media editors

should refer to the social media Policy for further guidance on the use of corporate social media.

17. If members or officers have any questions in relation to any particular circumstances they should contact:

Steve Murphy	Interim Head of Law, Governance & Civil Services / Interim Monitoring Officer	01267 224010 spmurphy@cararthenshire.gov.uk
Deina Hockenhull	Marketing & Media Manager	01267 224654 DMHockenhull@cararthenshire.gov.uk
Caio Higginson	Media Manager	07880504296 CSHigginson@cararthenshire.gov.uk
Amanda Edwards	Electoral & Civil Registration Services Manager	01267 228609 AmEdwards@cararthenshire.gov.uk
Wendy Walters	Acting Returning Officer	01267 224112 WSWalters@cararthenshire.gov.uk