

REPRESENTATIVE BODY ELECTIONS

A. Introduction

Elections to the Representative Body are held every year. The timing of the elections has to enable the announcement of the results at the Annual Members Meeting.

Each year, approximately one third of all elected positions on the Representative Body are contested, though this will vary from year to year if there have been any resignations of Representatives in the previous 12 months. Representatives are elected for a three-year term commencing at the Annual Members Meeting when their results are announced and concluding at the Annual Members Meeting three years later.

In order to ensure that elections are undertaken in a free and fair manner, an external election support provider will be procured to manage the ballot process. More detail on the support provided by the election support provider is provided in Annex 1.

At the start of the election process, the election is officially called by the Secretary. This will involve the submission of a report to the Representative Body for information, detailing the timetable for the election process and confirming the number of vacancies to be filled.

B. Candidate Process

At the start of the nominations process, all members will be written to and advised that the Representative Body elections are due to be held and inviting people to nominate themselves to stand for election. To ensure that prospective candidates are making an informed decision about standing for election to the Representative Body, a number of information sessions will be held across the Borough to inform people about the work of the Representative Body, the role of a Representative and the governance structures of RBH. Candidates will be required to submit a candidate statement and sign a statement of eligibility. For guidance on the candidate statement see Annex 2.

C. Eligibility

A member may not become a Representative if:

- They are a Director or they are the spouse or partner of a Director;
- They are the spouse or partner of another Representative;
- They have been removed from office by the Representative Body under the Rules of the Society

- They have been dismissed from employment by the Society or any part of the RBH Group for any other reason other than a voluntary redundancy which occurred more than one year previously;
- By doing so they would in the opinion of the Secretary bring the Society into disrepute.

Nominations will be validated by RBH to ensure that the candidates are eligible to stand. With respect to sub-paragraph (5) above, the following will be amongst the issues taken into account:

- Significant and increasing rent arrears,
- Subject to court action instigated by RBH, in relation to any breaches of tenancy
- A history of anti social behaviour or subject to an ongoing investigation regarding anti social behaviour.
- For employees, any formal disciplinary action

RBH reserves the right to undertake checks on open social media and other information within the public realm to ensure that candidates are not involved in activities which may bring RBH into disrepute.

D. Voting Method

Candidates are elected by a Single Transferable Vote (STV) system which ensures that as far as possible, every vote has a positive part in helping to elect a candidate. The STV ensures that no voting power is wasted and that no voter has a greater influence on the result than any other.

This is achieved by giving each elector one vote, irrespective of the number of vacancies to be filled, and making that vote transferable. Voting papers are completed by placing the candidates into a preferred order using the figure '1', '2', '3' etc. The figure '1' represents the vote and is mandatory. The rest are contingency markings and optional but important as they can influence the final result. For that reason, an elector is recommended to express preferences until he/she is unable to differentiate between any remaining candidates.

E. Canvassing

During the voting period, candidates are allowed and encouraged to canvass for votes. Guidance setting out the Rules for canvassing is at Annex 3.

F. Results

At the close of the voting period, the election results shall be validated by the election support company and then provided to RBH. The candidates will be

notified of the results by the Governance Team, with the formal announcement made at the Annual Members Meeting. The term of office for a Representative commences at the end of the Annual Members Meeting where their result is announced. New Representatives will be contacted by the Governance Team to arrange an induction.

G. Filling vacancies

If for any reason, an elected Representative needs to leave their position during their term of office, a replacement will be sought. The vacant position will be offered to the next highest polling candidate at the most recent election that is willing to take office. The new Representative will take over the remaining term of office of the vacating Representative.

If there is no such willing candidate, the remainder of the term of office will be contested at the next election for the Representative Body.

If the vacancy arose less than 6 months (mid-March) before the results of the next annual election are due to be announced, the seat will remain vacant until the next annual election.

The top polling candidates will fill the positions for a full three year term of office. If there are any partial terms of office to be completed, these will be filled by the next highest polling candidates. It should be confirmed to those elected representatives when they are informed of the results how long their term of office will be.

H. Appointed Representatives

Tenant Management Representatives serve for a period of three years commencing immediately after the Annual Members Meetings at which their election is announced and concluding at the end of the Annual Members Meeting three years later. They are eligible for re-election or re-appointment at the end of the period.

Two Council Representatives will be nominated by Rochdale Borough Council and appointed in each case by the Representative Body. Council Representatives are appointed for a one-year term of office, at the end of which, their appointment may be renewed subject to re-nomination by the Council, without any limit on the maximum period that may be served. It is probable that the Council will make its nominations in May.

The Representative Body may also co-opt not more than five additional persons to be (full voting) Co-opted Representatives. Co-opted Representatives are co-opted for a one year term of office, at the end of which their appointment or co-option may be renewed, without any limit on the maximum period that may be served.

I. Annexes

- 1 – Election Support
- 2 – Nominations and Candidate Statements
- 3 – Canvassing Guidelines