

# Public Consultation

Elections (Keys and Local Authorities)  
(Amendment) Regulations 2026

December 2025



**Isle of Man  
Government**  
*Reillys Ellan Vannin*

Cabinet Office

*Oik Coonceil  
ny Shirveishee*

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# Contents

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**Overview** .....Error! Bookmark not defined.

**This consultation**.....ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.

**About you** ..... **3**

**Publication of declarations of relevant interest** ..... **4**

**Pre-election meetings** ..... **5**

**Pre-verification of postal votes**..... **6**

**Thank you** ..... **6**

**Public Consultation**  
**Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) Amendment Regulations 2026**

**Overview**

The Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) (Amendment) Bill 2025 (the Elections Amendment Bill) is currently being considered by the branches of Tynwald. We launched a public consultation for the Bill in December 2024 – you can read the [results of that consultation](#) online.

If the Bill is passed and receives Royal Assent, it will introduce a variety of changes to our electoral system, and we will need to update our regulations to reflect some of those changes. We are consulting on how this should happen.

Two sets of regulations will need to be updated if the Elections Amendment Bill is passed by Tynwald – regulations for House of Keys elections and regulations for local authority elections (the Elections (Keys) Regulations 2021 and the Elections (Local Authorities) Regulations 2021). We intend to update both sets of regulations at the same time with the Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026.

If the Elections Amendment Bill is passed by Tynwald and receives Royal Assent by March 2026, the amendment regulations will be put before Tynwald for approval in April 2026.

**This consultation**

In this consultation we are asking for your views about how we should make changes to three parts of the election process: publishing candidates’ declarations of relevant interests; arranging pre-election meetings; pre-verifying postal votes.

The consultation has 13 questions and should take around 15 minutes to complete.

If you would like this document in a different format (e.g. large print), please contact the Crown and Elections Team on 685201 or [elections@gov.im](mailto:elections@gov.im).

Paper copies of this consultation are available from the Cabinet Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Government Office, Bucks Road, Douglas, IM1 3PN.

The consultation will close on 12 January 2026.

**Section 1. About you**

**Q1.** Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or as part of a professional group?

- No, I am responding as an individual
- Local authority
- Deputy returning officer
- Other election official
- Member of Tynwald
- Other organisation or professional group

Please specify

## Section 2. Publication of declarations of relevant interest

Please note: this section applies to both national and local elections.

Declarations of relevant interest are statements that all election candidates must make about any interest they have which could affect (or be seen to affect) the way they may carry out their duties if elected. Examples of relevant interests include owning stocks or shares in a company, doing consultancy work, or being sponsored by a group or organisation.

The Elections Amendment Bill will allow for candidates' declarations of relevant interests to be published – this applies to candidates in House of Keys elections and candidates in local authority elections. Making these declarations available for voters to inspect will increase transparency in our elections by giving people more information about the candidates they can vote for.

When we consulted about the Elections Amendment Bill an overwhelming majority (92%) of people who responded said that they thought candidates' declarations of relevant interest should be published.

The Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 will set out when and how these declarations will be published. The draft amendment regulations say that candidates' declarations of relevant interests should be published:

- On an appropriate website, and
- As soon as practicable after the close of nominations

**Q2.** Do you think it is appropriate to publish declarations of relevant interests online?

- Yes
- No

**Q3.** Is there anywhere else you think they should be published?

**Q4.** Do you think it is acceptable to publish these declarations as soon as practicable after the close of nominations?

- Yes
- No

**Q5.** Do you think the regulations should specify a different timeframe?

**Q6.** Is there anything else you would like to tell us about publishing declarations of relevant interests?

### Section 3. Pre-election meetings

Please note: this section only applies to national elections.

Pre-election meetings (sometimes called hustings) are meetings at which voters can hear from the candidates who are standing in their constituency and ask them questions. They give people an opportunity to scrutinize their candidates and find out more about their positions on important issues.

Pre-election meetings can be organised by different people or organisations. Before the 2021 House of Keys general election, the Cabinet Office arranged pre-election meetings in every parish, the four constituencies of Douglas, and in Castletown, Peel, and Ramsey. The Elections Amendment Bill will reduce the number of pre-election meetings to be organised by the Cabinet Office to a maximum of one per constituency – this will make it easier for other people or organisations (such as the Captains of the Parishes, or media outlets) to arrange their own pre-election meetings in addition to the ones arranged by the Cabinet Office.

The Elections Amendment Bill will require regulations to be written to standardise the format and quality of pre-election meetings arranged by the Cabinet Office. Specifying how pre-election meetings should be organised would create more consistency across meetings, making sure that voters in all constituencies get the same chance to hear from their candidates.

The Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 will set out how pre-election meetings arranged by the Cabinet Office should be run. The draft amendment regulations say that:

- The Cabinet Office must arrange one pre-election meeting for each House of Keys constituency
- The meetings must be held in accordance with the principles of equality, accessibility, and transparency
- The meetings must be chaired by someone independent
- The date and venue of the meetings must be published as early as possible
- The Cabinet Office must issue guidance about how meetings will be held, and how venues and chairpersons will be selected

**Q7.** Do you think the Cabinet Office should arrange one pre-election meeting per constituency?

- Yes
- No


**Q8.** Are there any other principles you think it would be important to consider alongside equality, accessibility, and transparency?

**Q9.** Do you think anything else should be included in the regulations for arranging pre-election meetings?

**Q10.** Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the arrangement of pre-election meetings?

## Section 4. Pre-verification of postal votes

Please note: this section applies to both national and local elections.

When someone votes by post, they return two sealed envelopes to the deputy returning officer – one contains their ballot, and the other contains their signed postal voting statement. The deputy returning officer verifies that the postal ballot is valid by checking the signature on the postal voting statement against the signature on the person’s application for a postal voting pack. All postal ballots must be verified before they are opened and counted.

The current election regulations say that postal ballots cannot be verified until polls are closed at the end of election day. This means that deputy returning officers must verify all postal ballots before the count can begin.

The Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 set out a procedure for pre-verifying postal ballots. This procedure would allow deputy returning officers to open voters’ postal voting statement and check the signature at any time. The ballot papers themselves would remain sealed until the close of the poll. Allowing pre-verification of postal votes would reduce the burden on deputy returning officers on election day and make counting the vote quicker, meaning that results could be announced sooner.

The draft amendment regulations say that:

- Postal ballots must be pre-verified in the presence of candidates’ counting agents
- Deputy returning officers must give candidates as much notice as possible, and no less than 48 hours’ notice, before they pre-verify any postal ballots
- Postal ballots themselves must not be opened until the counting of the vote

**Q11.** Do you agree that allowing pre-verification of postal ballots is a sensible way to make the vote count quicker on election day?

- Yes
- No

**Q12.** Do you think that a minimum of 48 hours’ notice for candidates is sufficient?

- Yes
- No

**Q13.** Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the pre-verification of postal votes?

### Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation. The consultation closes on 12 January 2026. All responses will be read and collated, and the information people have given us will help us to evaluate the draft Elections (Keys and Local Authorities) (Amendment) Regulations.

We will publish the results of this consultation by 16 February 2026 and tell you how those results have helped us to shape the amendment regulations.



Produced by Isle of Man Government, Cabinet Office

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