

Briefing for Candidates and Agents

Solihull MBC Local Elections

7 May 2026



1

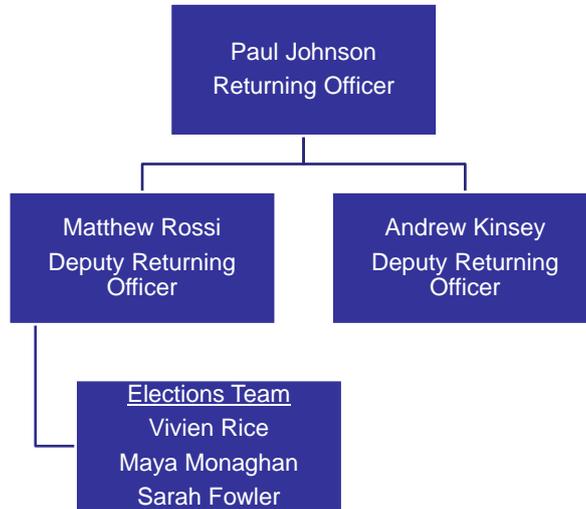
Topics

- who's who
- key dates of the election timetable
- qualifications
- disqualifications
- nominations
- agents
- postal votes
- voter ID
- the poll
- postal vote handling
- counting of votes
- candidate spending
- update from West Midlands Police
- contacts



2

Who's who



3

The Solihull (Electoral Changes) Order 2025

- Previous 17 wards abolished.
- Creation of 17 new wards -
 - Balsall and Berkswell
 - Blythe
 - Castle Bromwich
 - Chelmsley Wood
 - Dorridge and Hockley Heath
 - Elmdon
 - Fordbridge
 - Kingshurst and Smith's Wood
 - Knowle
 - Lyndon
 - Meriden and Arden
 - Olton
 - Shirley East and Sharmans Cross
 - Shirley South
 - Shirley West
 - Silhill
 - St Alphege with Monkspath and Hillfield

4

The Solihull (Electoral Changes) Order 2025

Term of office of elected councillors in 2026

1 st place	4-year term	Re-elect in 2030
2 nd place	2-year term	Re-elect in 2028
3 rd place	1 year term	Re-elect in 2027

Fallow year (no election) in 2029



5

Key dates

Publication of Notice of Election	Tuesday 24 March 2026
Poll Cards despatched	From Tuesday 24 March 2026 (mostly hand delivered)
Nominations commence	Wednesday 25 March 2026
Close of nominations and appointment of election agents	4pm on Thursday 9 April 2026
Publication of statement of persons nominated, including notice of poll and situation of polling stations	4pm on Friday 10 April 2026
First Issue of Postal votes	Around Monday 20 April
Deadline for applications to register to vote	Monday 20 April 2026
Deadline for new postal vote applications/ changes to existing postal or proxy vote arrangements	5pm on Tuesday 21 April 2026



6

Key dates

Deadline for applications for new proxy votes	5pm on Tuesday 28 April 2026
Last day for voters to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate (free voter ID)	5pm on Tuesday 28 April 2026
Appointment of polling and counting agents	Wednesday 29 April 2026
Polling day	7 May – 7am to 10pm
Deadline to apply for emergency proxy	5pm on 7 May
Replacement for lost/spoilt postal votes ends	5pm on 7 May
Return of election expenses (+35 calendar days after result declared)	Friday 12 June 2026

Qualifications

Candidates must satisfy criteria on the day they are nominated **and** on polling day:

- be at least 18 years of age
- be a British citizen, an eligible Commonwealth citizen, a qualifying EU citizen or an EU citizen with retained rights
- Also at least **one** of the following:
 - Registered local government elector for local authority area
 - Occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in the local authority area during the whole 12 months preceding nomination
 - Principal or only place of work (including unpaid) during last 12 months in local authority area
 - Lived in the local authority area during the last 12 months

Disqualifications

A person **cannot** be a candidate if they:

- are **employed by the local authority** or hold a paid office under the authority (including joint boards or committees). Candidates may be 'employed by the local authority' if they work at certain schools, fire services, police or health services
- are subject of a **Bankruptcy Restrictions Order** (or interim restrictions order)
- have been sentenced to a term of **imprisonment** of three months or more (inc. suspended sentence) without option of a fine, during the 5 years before polling day
- are serving a disqualification due to being found guilty of a **corrupt or illegal practice** by an election court
- hold a **politically restricted post**
- are subject to the **notification requirement of or under Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003**

Nominations – Completing the forms

- Number of signatures for local government elections is **two**
- Location to deliver nomination papers – Council House reception, Manor Square, Solihull B91 3QB
- Legal requirement to be **hand delivered**.
- Please make an appointment with Matthew Rossi, Electoral Services Manager –
 - Tel. 0121 704 8303
 - Email. matthew.rossi@solihull.gov.uk

Submitting nomination papers

- All candidates must submit by **4pm on Thursday 9 April 2026:**
 - their nomination form
 - their home address form
 - their consent to nomination
- Party candidates will also need to submit by that time:
 - a certificate authorising the use of a party name/registered description on the ballot paper
 - a written request to use one of the party's emblems on the ballot paper (optional)

Submitting nomination papers

- Take care when completing your nomination papers as mistakes may invalidate your nomination!
- Complete your nomination papers early and arrange for us to provide an informal check.
- The nomination form, home address form and consent to nomination **must be delivered by hand** and cannot be submitted by post, fax, email or other electronic means.

Form 1a – Nomination Paper

1a – Nomination paper		Office use only			
Local government election in England		Date received	Time received	Initials	No
*ELECTION OF COUNCILLORS / A COUNCILLOR for the					
WARD NAME (e.g BLYTHE)		electoral division/ward of the			
county/district/London borough of *Delete whichever is inappropriate		SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL			
Date of election:		7 May 2026			

Must be FULL name
(No initials or prefixes) →

Commonly used name
(optional): →

Description: 3 options →

1. Leave blank
2. "Independent"
3. Party candidates can use party name or a registered description with Electoral Commission. The description must match the description on the Certificate of Authorisation from the party.

Candidate's Details		
Candidate's surname	BLOGGS	Mr/Mrs/Miss/ Ms/Dr/Other
Other forenames in full	JOSEPH IAN	
Commonly used surname (if any)	BLOGGS	
Commonly used forenames (if any)	JOE	
Description (if any) Use no more than six words (see note 5)	THE PASTA PARTY	



13

Nomination form (1a)

- Subscribers: **Two** subscribers are required for local elections.
- They must be registered to vote in the ward the candidate wishes to stand.
- Must sign & print their names. Check details of subscribers against electoral register.
- Only ask subscribers to sign after completing the name and description fields on the form.
- Data protection requirements
 - Subscribers must be aware of what their personal data is being used for.

We, the undersigned, being local government electors for the said *electoral division/ward, do hereby assent to the foregoing nomination *Delete whichever is inappropriate				
	Signature	Print name	Electoral number	
			Polling District	Elector Number
Proposer	<i>M Macaroni</i>	MICHAEL MACARONI	AB	125
Seconder	<i>Y Meatball</i>	YVONNE MEATBALL	AB	126



14

Home Address Form (1b) Part 1

Must be FULL name

Must be FULL address
 •No abbreviations
 •Current home address
 •Not a business address
 (unless you run a business from home)

TICK the qualifications that apply (a,b,c and/or d) and provide FULL address (no abbreviations)

FULL name and address of witness – must be the same person who signs the Consent to Nomination. (1c)

Part 1: To be completed by all candidates in England	
Full name of candidate	JOSEPH IAN BLOGGS
Home address (in full)	12 PARMESAN STREET MOZZARELLA HEIGHTS SOLIHULL PA5 7A1
Qualifying address: Add your qualifying address, or qualifying addresses (in full) to each of the relevant qualifications below (you can complete more than one qualification).	
Qualifications that apply (tick those which apply)	Address
(a) I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the *county/district/London borough named above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 PARMESAN STREET MOZZARELLA HEIGHTS SOLIHULL PA5 7A1
(b) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the area named above	
(c) my principal or only place of work during the preceding 12 months has been in the *county/district/London borough named above	
(d) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months resided in the *county/district or London borough named above	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12 PARMESAN STREET MOZZARELLA HEIGHTS SOLIHULL PA5 7A1
Witness details	
Full name of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form	SHEILA CANDLE
Full home address of the person who will witness the candidate's consent to nomination form	14 PARMESAN STREET MOZZARELLA HEIGHTS SOLIHULL PA5 7A1



15

Home Address Form (1b) – Part 2

Complete this form if you **DO NOT** want your home address published on

- Statement of Persons Nominated
- Notice of Poll
- Ballot Paper

Name of relevant area where your home is situated.

e.g. for addresses in Solihull Borough, we'll print **Address in Solihull Borough**

Sign and date

Part 2: To be completed only if you do not wish your home address to be made public.	
Note: Please submit this part (part 2) of the home address form with your nomination papers, even if your home address is to be made public.	
If you request that your home address is not made public then your address will not appear on the statement of persons nominated, notice of poll or the ballot paper. Instead the name of the relevant area in which your home address is situated (or country, if outside the UK), as explained below, will appear on the statement of persons nominated, notice of poll and the ballot papers.	
Statement: I require my home address not to be made public	
The relevant area my home address is situated in:	SOLIHULL BOROUGH (insert name of relevant area) ²
OR	
My home address is situated outside the UK. My home address is situated in:	(insert name of country)
Signature of candidate (only required where Part 2 above has been completed)	
Candidate's signature:	<i>J BLOGGS</i>
Date:	28 MARCH 2026



16

Consent to nomination form (1c)

Qualifications: Cross out any that do not apply.

The qualifications must match your Home Address Form

Date of consent: must not be signed earlier than 1 month before close of nominations.

Witness: Must be the same person as on the Home Address form.

Date of election:	7 MAY 2026	
I (name in full):	JOSEPH IAN BLOGGS	
hereby consent to my nomination as a candidate for election as councillor for the:	WARD NAME (E.G. BLYTHE)	*electoral division/ ward
of the *county/district/London borough of:	SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL	
I declare that on the day of my nomination, I am qualified and that, if there is a poll on the day of election, I will be qualified to be so elected by virtue of being on that day or those days a qualifying Commonwealth citizen, a citizen of the Republic of Ireland, a qualifying EU citizen, or an EU citizen with retained rights, who has attained the age of 18 years and that:		
*a. I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the *county/district/London borough named above, or		
*b. I have during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day, or those days, occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the area named above; or		
*c. my principal or only place of work during those 12 months has been in the *county/district/London borough named above; or		
*d I have during the whole of those 12 months resided in the *county/district or London borough named above.		
I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, sections 89 or 81A of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011, or section 30 of the Elections Act 2022 (copies of which are printed overleaf), and I do not hold a politically restricted post, within the meaning of Part 1 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, under a local authority, within the meaning of that Part.		
Note 1: A candidate who is qualified by more than one qualification may complete any of those which may apply.		
Note 2: Disqualifications set out under s 81A of the Local Government Act 1972 only apply to a person who is subject to any relevant notification requirements, or a relevant order, made on or after 28 June 2022.		
Date of birth:	05.05.1989	
Signature:	J BLOGGS	
Date of consent:	28 MARCH 2026	
Witness: I confirm the above-mentioned candidate signed the declaration in my presence.		
Witness (name in full):	SHEILA CANDLE	
Witness's signature:	S CANDLE	



17

Certificate of authorisation

Party candidates must have written permission to use the party name/description from the Nominating Officer (or a person appointed to act on their behalf).

The certificate may:

- allow the use of the party name or a description
- allow the candidate to choose whether to use the party name or any of the descriptions registered with the Electoral Commission

Must be signed by Nominating Officer (or person authorised by the registered Nominating Officer)

Details of candidate to be authorised and the allowed description/party name			
Ward/division name:	WARD NAME (E.G. BLYTHE)	Date of election:	7 MAY 2026
The candidate (name in full):	JOSEPH IAN BLOGGS		
Name of political party:	THE PASTA PARTY Political party registered with the Electoral Commission		
I hereby certify that the candidate may include the following registered description or party name in their nomination form:	THE PASTA PARTY		
Note: it is an offence to sign this form if you are not the party's registered nominating officer or authorised to do so by the party's registered nominating officer			
Signature of party's registered Nominating Officer (or person authorised by the registered Nominating Officer):	J CANNELONI		
Name of person signing this form:	JULIA CANNELONI		
Date:	28 MARCH 2026		



18

Emblem request form

- Party candidates can ask for an emblem to be printed on the ballot paper
- Party candidates should supply an electronic version of the emblem to the Returning Officer if required.
- Must be signed by candidate

Candidate's request for use of an emblem	
Ward/division name:	WARD NAME (E.G. BLYTHE)
Date of election:	7 MAY 2026
Candidate name in full:	JOSEPHIAN BLOGGS
I request that the ballot paper shall contain, against my name, the following registered emblem (please identify which emblem if the party has registered more than one):	
Emblem to be used (Please use name or description as on the Electoral Commission's website):	EMBLEM 1 - PASTA BOWL
Candidate's signature:	<i>J Bloggs</i>
Date:	28 MARCH 2026

Joint candidates

- Nominated by **more than one party**
- May use registered joint descriptions
 - must be supported by certificate of authorisation from each party
- May use one emblem of one of the parties but there are no joint emblems

Election agent

- Responsible for the proper management of your election campaign; particularly its financial management.
- Notification of appointment must reach the RO by **4pm on Thursday 9 April**. Form is included in nomination pack.
- You will become your own agent by default if none is appointed.

Note: If you act as your own agent and do not provide an office address, your home address will be published on the Notice of Election Agents (even if you have requested for this information to be withheld from the SOPN and Ballot Paper)



21

Election Agent

- Full name and address of election agent required.
- Office address is published on **Notice of Election Agents**
- Office address must be within **Solihull Borough** and be a physical address.

4 – Notification of an election agent		Office use only			
Local government elections in England		Date received	Time received	Initials	No
Ward/division name	WARD NAME (E.G. BLYTHE)				
Date of election:	7 MAY 2026				
Candidate's notification of their election agent					
I, (Candidate name in full):	JOSEPH IAN BLOGGS				
Hereby declare that the name and address of my election agent is:					
Agent's name:	ANDREA PESTO				
Agent's address (in full):	19 GARGONZOLA AVENUE SOLIHULL PA5 1AI				
The office address of my election agent to which all claims, notices, legal process and the other documents may be sent is:					
Agent's office address (in full):	19 GARGONZOLA AVENUE SOLIHULL, PA5 1AI				
Candidate's signature (or of person authorised to act on behalf of candidate):	J I BLOGGS				
Date:	28 MARCH 2026				
Confirmation of acceptance by election agent					
I [agent named above] confirm my acceptance as the election agent for the above named candidate. I understand that I must carry out my duties according to law. I understand that there are penalties if I fail to fulfil my duties according to law.					
Agent's signature:	A PESTO				
Date:	28 MARCH 2026				



22

Other agents

- Other agents can be appointed to attend postal vote openings, polling stations and the count on your behalf:
 - You must give notice in writing of any people appointed as polling and counting agents by **Wednesday 29 April**. We will provide forms.
 - The appointment of postal voting agents attending a particular opening session must be made before the start of each session.

Access to electoral register / absent voting lists

- Access by candidates – once you **officially** become a candidate:
 - earliest, on **30 March** if you or others, have declared yourself a candidate
 - after 30 March, once you or others have declared yourself a candidate or you submit your nomination papers, whichever is earliest.
- Access by political parties – at any time.
- Register request forms will be provided upon request.

Using the electoral register / absent voting lists

- Only use data for permitted purposes -
 - to complete your nomination form
 - to help you campaign
 - to check that donations are permissible
- The electoral register must not be used for any other purpose.

Registration

- As a candidate you are uniquely placed to encourage people to register to vote.
- Encourage people to register as soon as possible.
- The deadline for applying for the election is **20 April**
- Individuals can apply to register online at **www.gov.uk/register-to-vote**. It only takes a few minutes.

Registration

- When discussing registering to vote with individuals, you will need to make them aware that they will need:
 - their National Insurance number,
 - date of birth and address to register.
- People who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance Number can still register, but they may need to provide further information. If so, they will be contacted by the elections team.

Absent voting

- Electors can apply online to vote by post and proxy
 - Postal www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote
 - Proxy www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote
- Paper applications are still accepted
- When talking to electors about applying to vote by post or proxy, you should make them aware of the relevant deadlines and advise them to apply early.
- Deadlines for this election -
 - Postal - 5pm on Tuesday 21st April
 - Proxy - 5pm on Tuesday 28th April

Absent voting

- You will need to make them aware that they will need to provide their National Insurance number, date of birth, signature and address to register.
- People who do not have / cannot retrieve their National Insurance Number or cannot provide a signature can still apply, but they may need to provide further information. If so, they will be contacted by the elections office.
- If you are encouraging people to apply for a postal (or proxy) vote, make sure you explain that they will only qualify for one if they are (or will be) registered to vote in time to vote at the election.

Absent voting - campaigners

- Campaigners cannot handle postal votes for other electors who are not close relatives or someone for whom they provide regular care
- Campaigners may handle postal voting documents if that's a feature of a job they hold (e.g. a postal worker)
- Limits on the number of postal votes that can be handed in – a maximum of **five** plus their own for each poll

Absent voting – Who is a campaigner?

A campaigner is:

- a candidate at the election
- an election agent
- employed by the candidate (for the purposes of the candidate's activities at the election)
- a member of a registered political party who is carrying out activity to promote a particular outcome at an election
- someone employed by a registered political party in connection with that party's political activities

Voter Identification

- Voters in this election will need to provide a form of accepted photographic ID if they wish to vote in person at a polling station.
- Voters will be able to present out of date photographic ID so long as the photograph is still a good likeness.
- If a voter fails to present a form of accepted photographic ID they will not be issued with a ballot paper.
- This includes those who act as a proxy for another person.

Accepted forms of Voter ID

- Voters should be encouraged to check whether they have one of the forms of accepted photographic ID well in advance of the election
- If a voter does not have an accepted form of photographic ID, they can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate either online <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate> or using a paper application form.
- Electors who are registered anonymously must have an Elector's Document to vote in person
- Any applications must be received by the ERO by **5pm on 28 April 2026**.

Campaigning dos and don'ts

- **Do** use imprints on all your campaign material, including websites
- **Do** obtain consent for town centre/street events from the Communications Team by emailing events@solihull.gov.uk
- **Do not** produce material that looks like a poll card
- **Do not** put election material on Solihull MBC street furniture
- **Do not** pay people to display your adverts (unless they display adverts as part of their normal business).
- **Do not** handle any postal voting documents you are not entitled to.

Code of conduct for campaigners (1)

Campaigners are an essential element of a healthy democracy, but their activities should not bring into question the integrity of the electoral process.

- **Electoral registration and absent vote applications:**
 - Ensure forms fully conform to the requirements of electoral law
 - Ensure that voters are aware they can register to vote and apply for an absent vote online
 - Include the elections office address for the return of forms
 - Ensure unaltered applications are sent to the election's office within **two working days**.
 - Make sure electors understand implications of applying for an absent vote.
 - Do not encourage postal ballot pack redirection.
 - Do not encourage electors to appoint a campaigner as proxy.
- **Voter Authority Certificate Applications:**
 - Should not handle paper based Voter Authority Certificate applications and should encourage electors to send them directly to the elections office.

Code of conduct for campaigners

- **Postal voting documents:**
 - Never touch any of an elector's postal voting pack
 - Never observe electors completing their postal vote
 - Never handle or take any completed ballot paper or postal ballot packs from voters.
- **Campaigning outside polling stations:**
 - You are allowed to put your messages to voters on polling day, including in public spaces outside polling places
 - Keep access to polling places and the pavements around polling places clear to allow voters to enter.
 - Tellers (do's and don'ts)

Postal Votes Despatch

- First Issue – Around 20 April
- Second Issue – Around 23/24 April

Postal Vote Opening

- Opening daily from end of April (Council House)
- Postal Vote Opening Agents must be appointed before each opening session
- Observers should report to Council House reception
- Signature and DOB matching
- Last opening session at Count venue
- Duty to maintain secrecy

Polling day

- Polling stations open from 7am to 10pm.
- Office open 6.30am to 10.00pm for queries or problems relating to the administration of the election
 - for queries relating to election finance issues, contact the Electoral Commission (*contact details shown later*)
- Voters in this election will need to present photographic ID in the polling station
- Voters can request to have their ID checked in private
- Voters in the polling station or in a queue outside the polling station at 10pm can apply for a ballot paper.

Completed postal votes handed in to polling stations

- Postal votes can be handed into polling stations within **Solihull**.
- Anyone returning postal votes by hand must complete a **postal vote return form**, otherwise the postal votes will be rejected
- Polling station staff may assist anyone wishing to hand in postal votes to complete the relevant form
- An individual may hand in a maximum of 6 electors' postal votes (their own and five others) per poll
- If the individual is a campaigner they may only handle their own postal vote and those that belong to close family members or people for whom they provide care
- Polling station staff will not be able to provide advice about whether someone is a campaigner, but they may reject postal votes if they have reasonable cause to believe an individual is a campaigner
- If postal votes are handed in not in accordance with the rules, then they will be rejected

Completed postal votes handed in to council buildings

- Restrictions on the numbers of returned postal votes and who may hand in postal votes are the same as for polling stations
- An individual may hand in a maximum of 6 electors' postal votes (their own and five others) per poll
- Postal votes for all contested electoral areas may be returned by hand to the **Council House reception** or **Solihull Connect**.
- Staff authorised by the Returning Officer may assist anyone wishing to hand in postal votes to complete the relevant form
- Postal votes dropped off to reception or other council office desks or locations or any posted into council letter boxes without completing the postal vote return form will be rejected and will not be counted

Counting of votes

- The verification and count will be held at **North Solihull Sports Centre on Friday 8 May**
- Candidates, election agents, counting agents and one other guest named by the candidate are entitled to attend
- Two stages -
 - Verification – staff will verify that the number of ballot papers match the Presiding Officers account of ballot papers issued. At this stage, ballot papers are not sorted into candidates.
 - Count – votes are counted for each candidate

Counting of votes

- Voters can vote for up to **three** candidates.
- The ballot papers will be put into two piles before counting starts.
 - Block Votes
 - Everything else (Kangaroo Board)

Block Votes	Everything else
Where a voter has voted for 3 candidates of the same political party	Where voters haven't used all 3 votes, or have voted for different parties/ candidates

Counting of votes

- Block votes will be counted first and added to totals.
- Kangaroo Boards (grass skirt method) will be used for all other ballot papers.
- Demonstration of Kangaroo Boards - https://youtu.be/aQIbuz_Ah5s
- Equality of votes
 - When two or more candidates have the same number of votes

Candidate spending

- Defined as certain expenses 'used for the purposes of the candidate's election' during the regulated period.
- Responsibility of **election agent**
- Limit on expenses:
 - £960 + 8 pence per elector in ward on register in force on 30 March
 - reduced for joint candidates
- Candidates for local elections must get and keep receipts over £20

Candidates' spending returns

- Returns due 35 calendar days after the declaration of result – **Friday 12 June 2026**
- Returns made public by **Returning Officer**
- Sample of returns may be reviewed by the **Electoral Commission**
- Failure to submit an expenses return is a criminal offence enforceable by the Police
- Even if the election is uncontested or the candidate did not spend anything, all candidates must still submit a return.
- Spending is not reimbursed!

Key dates for New Councillors

Date and time	Induction topic
Monday 11 May (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	The Council, Code of Conduct and declaring interests
Tuesday 12 May (5.30pm – 7.00pm)	Formal welcome from the Corporate Leadership Team
Wednesday 13 May (5.45pm – 6.45pm)	Personal safety
Thursday 14 May (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Introduction to Scrutiny
Tuesday 19 May (5.45pm – 7.45pm)	Corporate Parenting
Wednesday 20 May (5.45pm – 7.45pm)	Safeguarding
Wednesday 24 June (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Solihull Community Housing (SCH)
Tuesday 30 June (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Local Government Finance
Wednesday 1 July (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Planning
Monday 13 July (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Performance Management
Thursday 16 July (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Community Leadership and Engagement
Tuesday 21 July (5.30pm – 7.30pm)	Equality and Diversity



47

Update from West Midlands Police



48

Contacts

Elections office contacts:

Matthew Rossi
0121 704 8303
matthew.rossi@solihull.gov.uk

Andrew Kinsey
0121 704 6146
akinsey@solihull.gov.uk

Electoral Commission contacts:

0333 103 1928
www.electoralcommission.org.uk



49

Questions



50