

# **Presiding Officer**

## **Reports to: Polling Station Inspector**

### **The Polling Station Team**

Each polling station will have one Presiding Officer and at least one Poll Clerk. There may be more than one polling station at a venue.

The role of Polling Station team is to ensure that voters are able to cast their vote in secret, free from influence and in a calm atmosphere.

Polling stations are open from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. (the hours of poll) and Presiding Officers manage the conduct of the poll in the Polling Station they are assigned to. You must arrive at your polling station no later than 6:30 a.m. to allow enough time to set up your station.

### **Skills and Experience:**

- Experience of working in a Polling Station – you must have acted as a Poll Clerk at least 3 times, and knowledge of the electoral process
- Previous line-management or supervisory experience
- Ability to work independently under pressure
- Excellent face to face interpersonal skills and customer service skills
- Planning and organisational skills including the allocating of tasks to others
- Experience of working as part of a team
- Political awareness
- Good timekeeping
- Full UK Driving Licence and access to a car on polling day

### **Role:**

Presiding Officers are responsible for:

- Complying with any instructions issued by the Returning Officer and the Polling Station Inspector
- Managing activity and behaviour in around the Polling Station
- Ensuring that all electors are able to cast their vote in a calm atmosphere while experiencing a high level of customer service
- Maintaining the secrecy of the ballot
- The supervision of Poll Clerk(s) at the Polling Station

### **Role Accountabilities:**

Before Polling Day:

- Undertake the On Line Training
- Attend training sessions delivered by your Polling Station Inspector

- Read and understand the Polling Station handbook including the procedures for packaging up and accurately completing all paperwork
- Liaise with contact person for designated Polling Station in advance of polling day to confirm arrangements for key collection / access to the building
- Contact the Polling Station ahead of polling day to ensure that polling day arrangements are in place
- Make contact with Poll Clerks(s) to confirm arrangements for the day of poll

#### Polling Day:

- Collect and transport the ballot box and contents to the Polling Station keeping it secure at all times
- Ensure the Polling Station and polling booths are accessible to all voters throughout the day of poll
- Ensure the health and safety of all staff and visitors at all Polling Stations
- Ensure that all signs are displayed in accordance with instructions
- Keep the Polling Station tidy and free from obstructions
- Instruct and supervise the work of the Poll Clerk(s)
- Ensure the eligibility of all voters prior to issuing a ballot paper
- Check and mark electors' electoral numbers in the register of electors and on corresponding number lists
- Ensure that voters cast their votes in secret and put them into the [correct] ballot box
- Provide assistance to voters where appropriate
- Receive postal votes delivered by hand
- Manage the attendance of those entitled to be present in the Polling Station e.g. candidates, agents, Electoral Commission representatives and observers, and ensure they do not interfere with the voting process
- To ensure the rules regarding the activity of tellers at Polling Stations are followed
- Answer voters' questions, when appropriate, in a friendly and professional way while remaining impartial at all times
- Report any issues immediately to the Polling Station Inspector or Elections Office in line with reporting procedures

#### Close of Poll:

- Ensure the Polling Station is closed once any eligible electors in a queue at 10.00 p.m. have cast their vote
- Supervise the dismantling of the Polling Station and ensure the room is returned to good order
- Accurately complete the ballot paper account and associated paperwork and pack it in accordance with instructions
- Deliver the ballot box and associated paperwork to the count venue as soon as practicable after the close of poll

The Returning Officer is not permitted to employ anyone who is / or has carried out duties on behalf of any political party or candidates at the election.