

Shire of Northampton

Ordinary Election

21 October 2023



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INTRODUCTION

A total of 124 local governments requested that the Electoral Commissioner conduct their ordinary elections in October 2023. This compares with 98 local governments in 2021 and 90 in 2019.

The Western Australian Electoral Commission was engaged by the Shire of Northampton to use postal voting for the October 2023 elections.

Within this report the *Local Government Act 1995* is referred to as the Act and regulations within the *Local Government (Elections) Regulations 1997* are referred to as regulations. The Western Australian Electoral Commission is abbreviated to the Commission.

The report that follows provides information about the election process together with the election results.

ELECTION TIMETABLE

The election timetable is prescribed by the Act. A copy of the timetable used for this election appears in Appendix 1. Key dates for this election were:

Close of the roll	25 August 2023
Opening of nominations	31 August 2023
Close of nominations	7 September 2023
Lodgement of packages to electors	Between 15 and 22 September 2023

RETURNING OFFICER

Appointment

In accordance with section 4.20(4) of the Act, the Electoral Commissioner appointed Luisa STADE to be the Returning Officer for the election. The Electoral Commissioner is also required to appoint one or more Deputy Returning Officers under section 4.21(2) of the Act. Several staff members from the Electoral Commission were appointed as Deputy Returning Officers to assist with those electoral processes conducted centrally.

Duties

The Returning Officer was responsible for:

- receiving nominations from candidates;
- receiving and recording nomination fees;
- conducting the draws for positions on the ballot papers;
- receiving and reviewing candidate profiles and photographs;
- training of casual staff;
- organising the count;
- declaring the result of the elections; and
- parcelling the ballot papers and returning election material to the Commission.

Support for Returning Officer

The role of the Commission was to support the Returning Officer by:

- providing all guides, manuals and forms;

- arranging for the printing of materials for the election packages;
- producing the residents' roll;
- arranging for the secure dispatch of election packages;
- recording the return of votes by mail;
- notifying the Minister for Local Government of the results of the election;
- providing electoral information on the Commission's website;
- parcelling and forwarding the election material for storage by the Shire of Northampton;
- organising casual staff with recruitment agency;
- seeking legal advice as required; and
- preparing this election report.

ADVERTISING

Statutory Advertising

The Act requires the placement of three statutory advertisements. Changes to regulations in August 2020 now provide that Statewide public notice can be achieved by publication on the official website of the local government and the website of the Western Australian Electoral Commission, exhibition on a local government noticeboard or by electronic means, including social media.

The following notices were published by the Western Australian Electoral Commission and the local government in accordance with the above requirements:

- *Close of Enrolments*
- *Call for Nominations*
- *Notice of Election*

Notices advising of the election results were published in a similar manner to the other notices.

Appendix 2 shows the noticeboard advertisements described above as supplied by the Western Australian Electoral Commission.

The Commission Website

The Shire of Northampton had a visual presence on the Commission's website at www.elections.wa.gov.au in terms of logo, address, and link to its home page. People visiting the Commission's website could view a broad range of electoral information, including:

- key dates and deadlines for the election;
- how to vote information;
- lists of candidates (after close of nominations);
- Returning Officer and local government contact details; and
- Australia Post daily package return figures.

The election results were shown on the Commission's website on election night.

ELECTORAL ROLLS

The rolls closed at 5.00 pm on 25 August 2023 in accordance with section 4.39(1) of the Act.

The Chief Executive Officer prepared the owners' and occupiers' roll. The Electoral Commissioner prepared the residents' roll.

Electronic rolls were produced and placed on a secure portal. These were made available to candidates as soon as they had nominated.

Candidates and members of council were provided with one free copy of the residents' roll and the owners' and occupiers' roll on request.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION ON THE COMMISSION WEBSITE

Information was made publicly available on the Commission website that included:

- a handbook entitled *Candidates Information Guide*;
- a handbook entitled *Information for Scrutineers*;
- a booklet entitled *Formality of Ballot Paper Guide*;
- a booklet entitled *Service Charter for Local Government Elections*;
- Form LG08 *Nomination for Election by Candidate*;
- Form LG09 *Nomination for Election by Agent*;
- Form LG9A *Disclosure of Gifts*; and
- Form LG18 *Appointment of Scrutineer*;

NOMINATIONS

Nominations opened on 31 August 2023 and closed at 4.00 pm 7 September 2023 in accordance with Section 4.49(a) of the Act.

Nominations were called for the following councillor vacancies:

Ward Name	No of Vacancies	Length of Term
District	4	4 year term
District	1	2 year term

Candidates were required to supply the following when they nominated for a vacancy:

- nomination form;
- profile of no more than 1,000 characters (including spaces);
- nomination deposit of \$100.00; and
- photograph (optional)
- additional information (optional).

At the close of nominations, the Returning Officer had accepted 5 nominations for councillor.

Only one nomination was received for each of the following vacancies:

Ward	Expiry of Term	Name of Candidate
District	16 October 2027	SUDLOW, Liz
District	16 October 2027	SUCKLING, Karl
District	16 October 2027	SUCKLING, Roslyn
District	16 October 2027	BURGES, Richard
District	18 October 2025	PIKE, Des

The candidates were therefore declared elected unopposed by the Returning Officer.

DECLARATION OF RESULTS

The Returning Officer publicly declared the results of the election following the completion of counting and crosschecking by the Commission Head Office staff, in accordance with section 4.77 of the Act.

The following candidates were elected as Councillors of the Shire of Northampton for the terms given below.

Ward	Expiry of Term	Councillors Elected
District	16 October 2027	SUDLOW, Liz
District	16 October 2027	SUCKLING, Karl
District	16 October 2027	SUCKLING, Roslyn
District	16 October 2027	BURGES, Richard
District	18 October 2025	PIKE, Des

Appendix 3 contains complete details of the election results.

The Returning Officer subsequently gave local public notice of the result in accordance with regulation 80.

The result was uploaded to the Commission's website.

REFUND OF NOMINATION FEES

Nomination fees were refunded to all candidates who were elected. Those candidates who received at least 5% of the total number of first preference votes included in the count also had their nomination fee refunded.

CANDIDATE PARTICIPATION

Appendix 4 provides statistical information on the candidates.

STATUTORY REPORT

In accordance with regulation 81, a report of the result of the election was sent to the Minister for Local Government on Thursday 9 November 2023.

COMPLAINTS

Over the 2023 Local Government period the Feedback team at the Commission's Head Office received over 400 queries and complaints. Complaints were made and resolved through a variety of channels, typically commencing with the Returning Officer. As a consequence, many straight-forward complaints were addressed without the need to refer the matter to the Feedback team.

Typical issues involved misleading material, authorisation, social media activity, signage and candidate and campaign conduct. Matters were dealt with in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1995* and associated Regulations. Most issues were able to be resolved within 2 working days with a small number of more complex matters requiring more time.

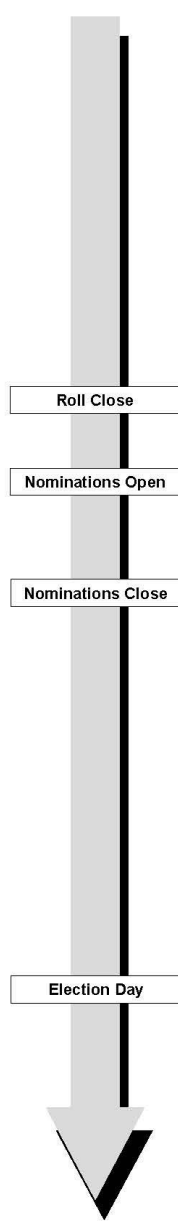
Appendix 1: Election Timetable



POSTAL ELECTION TIMETABLE 2023 Local Government Ordinary Election

Days to Polling Day	Local Government Act	References to Act/Regs	Day	Date
80	Last day for declaration to have the Electoral Commissioner conduct a postal election.	LGA 4.20 (2)(3)(4)	Wed	2/08/2023
80	A decision made to conduct the election as a postal election cannot be rescinded after the 80th day.	LGA 4.61(5)	Wed	2/08/2023
70	Electoral Commissioner to appoint a person to be the Returning Officer of the Local Government for the election.	LGA 4.20 (4)	Sat	12/08/2023
70 to 56	Between the 70th/56th day the CEO is to give Statewide public notice of the time and date of close of enrolments. Preferred date Wednesday 16 August 2023	LGA 4.39(2)	Sat to Sat	12/08/2023 to 26/08/2023
56	Last day for the CEO to advise the Electoral Commissioner of the need to prepare a residents roll.	LGA 4.40(1)		26/08/2023
56	Advertising may begin for nominations from 56 days and no later than 45 days before election day. Preferred date Wednesday 30 August 2023	LGA 4.47(1)	Sat	26/08/2023
50	Close roll 5.00 pm	LGA 4.39(1)	Fri	1/09/2023
45	Last day for advertisement to be placed calling for nominations.	LGA 4.47(1)	Wed	6/09/2023
44	Nominations Open First day for candidates to lodge completed nomination paper, in the prescribed form, with the Returning Officer. Nominations period is open for 8 days.	LGA 4.49(a)	Thu	7/09/2023
38	If a candidate's nomination is withdrawn not later than 4.00 pm on the 38th day before election day, the candidate's deposit is to be refunded.	Reg. 27(5)	Wed	13/09/2023
37	Close of Nominations 4.00 pm on the 37th day before election day.	LGA 4.49(a)	Thu	14/09/2023
36	Last day for the CEO to prepare & certify an owners & occupiers roll for the election. Last day for the Electoral Commissioner to prepare & certify a residents roll.	LGA 4.41(1) LGA 4.40(2)	Fri	15/09/2023
29	Commencement of lodgement of Country Local Government District election packages with Australia Post. Delivery dependent on normal Australia Post standards.		Fri	22/09/2023
24	Commencement of lodgement of Metropolitan Local Government District election packages with Australia Post. Delivery dependent on normal Australia Post standards.		Wed	27/09/2023
22	The preparation of any consolidated roll under subregulation (1) be completed on or before 22nd day before election day.	Reg. 18(2)	Fri	29/09/2023
26	Public Holiday		Mon	25/09/2023
19	Last day for the Returning Officer to give Statewide public notice of the election. Preferred date Wednesday 20 September 2023	LGA 4.64(1)	Mon	2/10/2023
19	Commence processing returned election packages		Mon	2/10/2023
0	Election Day Close of poll 6.00 pm	LGA 4.7	Sat	21/10/2023

Post Election Day	Post Declaration	References to Act/Regs	Day	Date
5	Election result advertisement.	LGA 4.77	Thu	26/10/2023
14	Report to Minister. The report relating to an election under section 4.79 is to be provided to the Minister within 14 days after the declaration of the result of the election.	Reg.81	Sat	4/11/2023
28	An invalidity complaint is to be made to a Court of Disputed Returns, constituted by a magistrate, but can only be made within 28 days after notice is given of the result of the election.	LGA 4.81(1)	Sat	18/11/2023



Appendix 2:
Noticeboard advertisements

- 1. CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**
- 2. CLOSE OF ENROLMENTS**
- 3. NOTICE OF RESULTS**



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORDINARY ELECTION
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
Shire of Northampton**

An Ordinary Postal Election will be held on Saturday, 21 October 2023 in the Shire of Northampton to fill the following vacancies:

District	4 Councillors	4 year terms
District	1 Councillor	2 year term

Nominations Open on Thursday, 31 August 2023

Nominations Close at 4:00pm Thursday, 7 September 2023

Nominations must be lodged with the Returning Officer:

- at any time during the above period by arrangement; or
- between 2:00pm and 4:00pm Thursday, 7 September 2023 (close of nominations) at the Shire of Northampton, Hampton Road, NORTHAMPTON.

Nominations Requirements

Candidates are required to lodge with the Returning Officer:

- a completed nomination in the prescribed form, signed and witnessed. This form is available from the Returning Officer or the Western Australian Electoral Commission (www.elections.wa.gov.au);
- a single A4 page profile of not more than 1,000 characters (including spaces) containing information about the candidate;
- a nomination deposit of \$100 (cash, EFT, bank cheque or postal order);
- a recent passport-sized photograph (optional);
- every candidate must have completed the online course titled *Local Government Candidate Induction*, available at www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au, prior to nominating; and
- (optional) in addition to your A4 profile, you may provide additional information that you consider to be relevant to your candidature. This written statement must be not more than 2,000 characters (including spaces), must be in the English language and is for publication on the local government's official website.

The Commission has developed an online system called Nomination Builder to assist candidates to complete their nomination form which includes the candidate profile. This is the preferred method of completing the nomination form and profile for elections conducted by the Commission. Candidates complete their nomination details and profile, print the completed form which has a reference number allocated and lodge it with the Returning Officer. The nomination builder can be accessed via www.elections.wa.gov.au.

You cannot use Nomination Builder to prepare the additional information.

Where an agent lodges a nomination on a candidate's behalf, it must be in the prescribed form with a written authorisation signed by the candidate.

The documents may be hand delivered or posted to the Returning Officer and must be received by the close of nominations.

Information

Full details about eligibility and nomination procedures for prospective candidates can be obtained by contacting the Returning Officer, **Luisa STADE** on 0476 939 174 or the Western Australian Electoral Commission on 13 63 06.

**ROBERT KENNEDY
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER**





**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORDINARY ELECTION
CLOSE OF ENROLMENTS
Shire of Northampton
ROLL CLOSE: 5:00 PM Friday, 25 August 2023**

You may be eligible to be enrolled to vote in the local government elections on 21 October 2023 if you live in or are an owner or occupier of rateable property in the Shire of Northampton.

Residents

You are automatically enrolled to vote if you are on the State Electoral Roll as at 5:00 PM Friday, 25 August 2023. If you are not already on the State Electoral Roll and meet the eligibility criteria, or if you have changed address recently, you must complete an enrolment form.

Enrolment Forms

You can enrol or update your details online, or download an enrolment form, via the Western Australian Electoral Commission website (www.elections.wa.gov.au/enrol). Forms are also available from the Australian Electoral Commission (www.aec.gov.au). Enrolments and updates must be completed and received by 5:00 PM Friday, 25 August 2023.

Non-Resident Owners and Occupiers

If you are a non-resident owner or occupier of rateable property in the Shire of Northampton and are on the State or Commonwealth Electoral Roll, you are eligible to enrol to vote. If you are **not** on the State or Commonwealth Electoral Roll and own or occupy rateable property in the Shire of Northampton you may be eligible to enrol to vote. This applies if you were on the last electoral roll for the Shire of Northampton prior to May 1996 and have owned or occupied rateable property in the district continuously since this time. Please contact your local government for details. Owners of land who were on the last Local Government roll continue to retain that status until they cease to own the rateable property to which the enrolment relates. Occupiers do not have continuous enrolment and should contact the Shire of Northampton to confirm their enrolment status. To be eligible to enrol as an occupier, you will need to have a right of continuous occupation under a lease, tenancy agreement or other legal instrument for at least the next three months following the date of the application to enrol.

Joint Owners and Occupiers

If a rateable property is owned or occupied by more than two people, a majority of the owners/occupiers may nominate two persons from amongst themselves who are on either the State or Commonwealth Electoral Roll, to enrol as owner/occupier electors.

Corporations

A body corporate that owns or occupies rateable property may nominate two people who are on either the State or Commonwealth Electoral Roll to enrol as owner/occupier electors.

Enrolment Forms – Non-Resident Owners and Occupiers Only

Enrolment forms can be obtained from local governments and must be lodged with the Chief Executive Officer by 5:00 PM Friday, 25 August 2023. Further information can be obtained from the Shire of Northampton.

ROBERT KENNEDY
ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER
13 63 06



**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
Electoral Commission**



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORDINARY POSTAL ELECTION
NOTICE OF RESULTS
Shire of Northampton**

The result of the Ordinary Election conducted as a postal vote on Saturday, 21 October 2023 is as follows:

CANDIDATES ELECTED UNOPPOSED

District	Expiry of Term
SUDLOW, Liz	16 October 2027
SUCKLING, Karl	16 October 2027
SUCKLING, Roslyn	16 October 2027
BURGES, Richard	16 October 2027
PIKE, Des	18 October 2025

Eleanor Elizabeth SUDLOW is elected as Councillor for the Shire of Northampton and will hold office until 16 October 2027.

Karl John SUCKLING is elected as Councillor for the Shire of Northampton and will hold office until 16 October 2027.

Roslyn SUCKLING is elected as Councillor for the Shire of Northampton and will hold office until 16 October 2027.

Richard George BURGES is elected as Councillor for the Shire of Northampton and will hold office until 16 October 2027.

Desmond Ray PIKE is elected as Councillor for the Shire of Northampton and will hold office until 18 October 2025.

Luisa STADE
RETURNING OFFICER
0476 939 174



**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
Electoral Commission**

Appendix 3

Election Result

NORTHAMPTON

Candidate	Votes	Expiry of term
PIKE, Des	Elected Unopposed	18 October 2025
SUCKLING, Karl	Elected Unopposed	16 October 2027
BURGES, Richard	Elected Unopposed	16 October 2027
SUCKLING, Roslyn	Elected Unopposed	16 October 2027
SUDLOW, Liz	Elected Unopposed	16 October 2027



Appendix 4

Candidacy Statistics

Number of Candidates

<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Number of Candidates</u>
Northampton	5
Total	5

Shire of Northampton Candidate Information

Number of male candidates	3
Number of female candidates	2
Number of male candidates elected	3
Number of female candidates elected	2
Number of sitting members re-elected	4
Number of sitting members not re-elected	0
Average age of candidates	57
Age range of candidates	44 - 68

