



Ballot for the election of Deputy Speakers

Introduction

1. This note describes the practical arrangements for the election to fill the vacant First Deputy Speaker post by secret ballot. This procedure is set out in detail in Standing Order No. 2A.

Nominations

2. This election is to fill a single vacant post and to maintain the party balance between the Deputies, only members of parties represented in Her Majesty's Government shall be eligible for nomination.

3. Nominations should be submitted in writing to the Lower Table Office between 10am and 5pm on Tuesday 15 October (the day before the election). Nomination Forms will be available in advance from the Table Office and the Vote Office but need not be used, provided that in all respects nominations meet the provisions of the Standing Order. To be valid, nominations must contain a brief signed statement made by the candidate declaring willingness to stand. This may be up to 500 words and may be in the form of a CV; as the Procedure Committee indicated, such a statement should not be a personal manifesto. This statement must be accompanied by the signatures of not fewer than 6 nor more than 10 Members. There are no requirements as to the party affiliations of these sponsoring Members. As on this occasion there is only one vacancy to fill, Members may not sign more than one such statement of nomination—and if any Member does so, that Member's signature will be invalidated for all nominations.

4. It would assist the production of the booklet of candidates if candidates could send an electronic copy of their statements to Georgina Holmes-Skelton, Clerk of Divisions, Public Bill Office, once it has been tabled (holmesskelton@parliament.uk).

5. As soon as possible after the close of nominations, the list of candidates and their sponsors will be placed in the Vote Office in the Members' Lobby and published on the intranet. As soon as possible after that, a booklet with candidates' names, photographs and statements will be made available in the same way.

The ballot

6. The ballot will be held in the Aye lobby between 11.30 am and 2.00 pm on Wednesday 16 October. Members should vote in the Aye Lobby, entering by the doors behind the Speaker's Chair; Members will have their name recorded at temporary division desks before being issued with a ballot paper from a table further down the lobby. Members should approach the division desks in three queues as if for a normal division:

Surnames beginning with A to F
Surnames beginning with G to M
Surnames beginning with N to Z

7. Any Members on the Parliamentary Estate but incapacitated from voting in the lobbies may ask for a Clerk to obtain a ballot paper in the lobby on their behalf, bring it to the Member, and return to cast it for them in the ballot box. Members who need to use this service should make such a request in writing or by email to Georgina Holmes-Skelton, Clerk of Divisions, Public Bill Office (holmesskelton@parliament.uk). Requests should arrive not later than one hour before the ballot opens.

8. The ballot paper will give the names of candidates in alphabetical order. Members should complete the ballot paper at one of the stations erected in the lobby, and then deposit it in one of the ballot boxes at the exit from the lobby.

9. Members each have one vote, which is transferable. They place candidates in their preferred order using the figures '1', '2', '3', etc. The figure '1' represents the vote and is mandatory. The rest are contingency markings and are optional but allow the elector to influence the final result. Members should therefore express preferences until they are unable, or do not wish, to differentiate between any of the remaining candidates.

10. At 2.00 pm the ballot will be closed and the entrance doors to the lobbies will be locked. All Members in the lobbies when the doors are locked will be allowed to vote. If the ballot has been interrupted at any point for a division of the House, additional time will be allowed as if it were a deferred division.

The Count

11. The Standing Orders dictate that the ballot will be counted under the Single Transferable Vote. The votes are counted with reference to a quota, which is the number of votes a candidate requires to be elected. The quota is the number of valid votes cast divided by the number of places to be filled plus one. On this occasion, as there is only one place to be filled, this means that the candidate will need to achieve 50% of votes cast plus one.

12. If no candidate reaches the 50% plus one quota on the basis of first preferences, the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be excluded from the ballot and their votes transferred to the next stated preference (if any) on those ballot papers.

13. As soon as practicable after the votes have been counted the Speaker will announce to the House the results of the ballot and direct the Clerk to enter the names of the elected Member in the Journal of the House.

14. The Deputy Speaker is elected to serve until the end of the Parliament.

Contact

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