

27 November 2018

Hereditary peers' by-election

A vacancy has arisen among the excepted hereditary peers who sit in the House of Lords. It was created by the death of Lord Skelmersdale on 31 October 2018. Under Standing Order 10, the vacancy is to be filled by a by-election. This notice sets out the arrangements for the by-election.

Voting for the by-election will be on Tuesday 22 January 2019, between 10am and 8pm in The Queen's Robing Room.

Introduction

Lord Skelmersdale was one of 15 hereditary peers elected by the whole House in 1999 from among those ready to serve as Deputy Speakers or in any other office. Therefore, under Standing Order 10(3), his successor will be elected by the whole House. In 1999 the Procedure Committee recommended that a peer elected at a by-election in this category should not be expected to serve as a Deputy Speaker.

Electorate and candidatures

All members of the House who have taken the oath are eligible to vote, except those who are subject to statutory disqualification, suspended from the service of the House or on leave of absence.

Those eligible to stand are all hereditary peers who are on the register of hereditary peers wishing to stand for election as members of the House of Lords, maintained by the Clerk of the Parliaments. Those on this register are asked to indicate by 5pm on Monday 17 December 2018 whether they wish to be a candidate. A notice including the list of candidates and their statements will be sent to all members on Thursday 20 December 2018.

As the whole House will be entitled to vote, it has been agreed that for this by-election:

- Candidates will be invited, but not required, to declare a party affiliation or their intention to stand as a "Crossbencher".
- Candidates will be invited, but not required, to submit statements in support of their candidature. Such statements will be circulated by the House administration to all electors. Statements must not exceed 75 words.

Postal votes

Members who are unable to attend the House on 22 January 2019 may request a postal vote using the attached form. The Journal Office should receive requests for postal votes by 5pm on Monday 17 December 2018. Ballot papers will be sent to electors at the House of Lords, unless the Journal Office is notified of an alternative address on the attached form. Please note that postal ballot papers sent to members at the House of Lords will be delivered according to the recipient's instructions: please therefore ensure that your mail delivery instructions for the Christmas recess are up to date.

Postal ballot papers must be returned to the Clerk of the Parliaments' Office by 5pm on Tuesday 22 January 2019. Ballot papers received after this time will not be counted.

Timetable and conduct of the by-election

The timetable for the by-election is:

Monday 17 December, 5pm	Deadline for candidate registration and receipt of candidate statements. Deadline for receipt of requests for postal votes and alternative ballot addresses from electors.
Wednesday 19 December	Ballot papers issued to those requesting a postal vote.
Thursday 20 December	Notice with candidates and statements published.
Tuesday 22 January 2019, 10am to 8pm	Voting in The Queen's Robing Room.
Tuesday 22 January, 5pm	Deadline for postal ballots to be received by the Clerk of the Parliaments' Office.
Wednesday 23 January	Count and then result of the by-election reported to the House by the Clerk of the Parliaments.

The Code of Conduct for the by-election is in the annex to this notice.

Electoral Reform Services are assisting the Clerk of the Parliaments with organising the by-election.

Voting system and count

The Alternative Vote system will be used. Voters place the figure 1 in the box next to the name of the candidate they most strongly support, the figure 2 against the next most favoured candidate, and so on. Voters may cast as many or as few votes as they wish. In order to be elected, the successful candidate must receive at least as many votes as all the other candidates put together. In the event of this not happening after first-preference votes have been allocated, the votes of the candidates receiving the lowest number of first-preference votes will be shared out according to the second preference marked on them. This will be repeated until one candidate has at least half of the total valid votes.

Ballot papers will be invalidated if:

- any number is used more than once, or
- in the opinion of the Returning Officer (the Clerk of the Parliaments) the ballot paper is illegible or ambiguous.

The count will be conducted by Electoral Reform Services.



The result will be announced in the House of Lords chamber by the Clerk of the Parliaments at a convenient moment (likely to be after oral questions) on Wednesday 23 January 2019.

The full results, including the number of first-preference votes cast for each candidate and the position after each transfer of votes, will be available in the Printed Paper Office and the Library soon after the announcement by the Clerk of the Parliaments. The results will also be published online at www.parliament.uk.

Enquiries

Enquiries may be addressed as follows:

- By post: The Registry, Journal Office, House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW
- By telephone: 020 7219 5307
- By email: holjournaloffice@parliament.uk

ED OLLARD
Clerk of the Parliaments

Annex: Code of Conduct

1. Ballot papers will not indicate any qualification or reason why a candidate should be elected.
2. Candidates may not offer hospitality, entertainment or financial inducements to electors intended to influence their votes or likely to have that effect.
3. Candidates may not engage in any activity intended or likely to discredit other candidates in the by-election.
4. Candidates may not solicit votes near the room where the by-election is taking place.
5. If the Clerk of the Parliaments suspects, on reasonable grounds, that some material irregularity or improper conduct may have occurred in the electoral process, he may refer the matter to the Committee for Privileges and Conduct. The committee may, if it thinks fit, recommend the disqualification of a successful candidate if their election appears to have been influenced by material irregularity or improper conduct.
6. In this code of conduct, “candidate” includes an agent or supporter acting on behalf of the candidate.



Hereditary peers' by-election: vacancy created by death of Lord Skelmersdale (Whole House electorate)

APPLICATION FOR POSTAL VOTE

I wish to apply for a postal vote in this by-election.

I understand that the ballot paper will be posted on Wednesday 19 December 2018, and that it will be sent to me at the House of Lords unless I provide an alternative address in the box below.

I would like the ballot paper to be sent to me at the following address:

Signature: _____

Name (please print): _____

Please return this form to arrive by 5pm on Monday 17 December 2018 to:
Journal Office,
House of Lords,
London SW1A 0PW.

Or scan and email it to holjournaloffice@parliament.uk

