

# Spring Conference 2024

## BUSINESS MOTION

# Rules for the Selection of Elected Police & Crime Commissioners

AGREED BY THE WELSH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS CONFERENCE

Conference notes that:

- A. The annex to the Constitution of the Welsh Liberal Democrats Candidate Selection Rules October 2021 for all Police and Crime Commissioner selections requires drafting amends, including amends to accuracy of the Constitution such as addresses, and additions of new introductory text.
- B. That the current selection rules require review following the introduction of online selection processes for Westminster, and Senedd selections, which could be used for the selection of Police and Crime Commissioner Candidates.

Conference therefore agrees change the Rules for the Selection of Elected Police & Crime Commissioners by deleting all text from, and including, "Stage One: From Deciding to Select to the Close of Applications" and replace it with the following:

"Overview of the process

In order to ensure that all Police and Crime Commissioner Areas have an appropriately approved and democratically selected candidate for a Police and Crime Commissioner Election, the below rules govern the process of selecting candidates for Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Welsh Party, wishing to start the process of selection must instruct the Welsh State Chair of Candidates' (WSCC) to appoint an independent Returning Officer (RO) from outside the police area. The Returning Officer will then work with the Welsh party officers to ensure that the selection process is completed satisfactorily in accordance with these rules.

The principles underlying these rules

The selection process shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of Liberal Democracy. Everyone involved in the selection must act in such a way as to ensure that the Party is not brought into disrepute. In particular, selections must be conducted in a manner that is:

- Democratic
- Accountable
- Inclusive
- Fair
- Robust
- Manageable

Candidates for selection must make sure that they abide by the Candidates' Code of Conduct, the Party's Data Protection Rules and PPERA. Where these rules are silent, the Returning Officer will proceed using these principles as a guide. In addition, the EO CCC or the WSCC led working group may from time-to-time issue guidance and clarifications to these rules, which must also be derived from these principles.

In these rules, the words, "must", "shall" and "will" refer to mandatory actions. The words "may", "could" and "should" refer to optional actions.

## **Stage One: From Deciding to Select to the Close of Applications**

### **A. Returning Officers**

1. The Welsh Party, deciding to start the selection process must resolve to do so at a meeting of the CCC or The Board. They must then instruct the Welsh State Chair of Candidates (WSCC) to proceed and for an independent, accredited Returning Officer to be appointed. Relevant local party executives, or parts there in, within the region shall co-operate in making joint arrangements for the selection to proceed, in accordance with this constitution. The term area is the area of the PCC region, and 'local party executive' describes a joint committee of the co-operating local parties established for this purpose. The Responsible Committee is then CCC.

When the Welsh Party agrees to instruct the WSCC to appoint a Returning Officer they must have:

- Taken sustained steps to increase the number of members from under-represented groups in the Welsh Party.

- Evidence in the form of minutes that either or both of the motions in paragraph 7 below have been put to the executive committee, and the result recorded.

2. The WSCC will appoint a Returning Officer from the list of accredited Returning Officers held by the WSCC and the Campaigns and Candidates' Committee. The Returning Officer shall not be a member of the area to which they are appointed, nor shall they have any personal interest in the selection.

3. The Returning Officer will:

- Support the local party officers through the selection process.
- Protect the interests of members.
- Ensure the fair and equal treatment of applicants.
- Ensure that the selection rules are followed.

To comply with government guidelines, safety precautions or at the request of the CCC the Returning Officer may decide that some or all meetings, including the members' meeting, may take place virtually.

The EO CCC or the WSCC may mandate that all ballots for selection shall take place online (with a postal ballot and/or a link to vote online posted to any eligible voting member who has not provided an email address). If such a mandate is not in place CCC may decide whether the vote will be conducted by a traditional paper ballot or by electronic voting or by a hybrid system.

4. Returning Officers may claim reasonable expenses incurred while carrying out their duties. They must claim these as soon as possible after the selection. Claims should be in line with the expense rules in the Returning Officers' Guidance.

5. The Returning Officer must brief CCC, the board and the selection panel on the selection process before commencing the selection. They must agree on the selection method (all postal, all online or hybrid), agree candidate spending limits and the number of mass candidate communications allowed to voters.

6. The WSCC may appoint a replacement Returning Officer, or a substitute Returning Officer, or Deputy Returning Officer(s) for any part of the selection, if this becomes necessary at any time.

7. CCC or The Board may choose either:

- An all-disabled shortlist, or:

- To reserve a space on the shortlist for a candidate with a disability provided that they meet the selection criteria,
- And must decide if they wish to have Selection Criteria and Scoring in order to shortlist candidates.

These options must have been considered, agreed and recorded by CCC or The Board and recorded in the minutes. WSCC or the appointed RO may advise and help with this.

8. Before the Returning Officer starts the selection, CCC or The Board must contact the following Welsh Party officers to notify them that the selection will be taking place, asking them to encourage approved candidates to apply:

- The Welsh Diversity Officer.
- The Chair of the Welsh Young Liberals.

The Returning Officer must be provided with satisfactory evidence that this has been done before the selection can proceed.

## **B. Advertisement**

9. CCC or The Board will agree a timetable for the selection, the contents of the advertisement for inclusion on the federal Party website, arrangements for the preparation of the members' mailing and the members' meeting(s).

10. The advertisement must include the following:

- The requirement for a personal CV/manifesto
- The opportunity for the applicant to declare any protected characteristics and any specific needs for which reasonable adjustments should be made during the selection process. This information will be confidential to the Returning Officer except insofar as is necessary to allow reasonable adjustments to be made.
- Name and contact details of an independent person who can provide details of the constituency.
- A link to access the selection rules (i.e. these rules).
- Contact details of the RO.
- A link to Selection and Scoring criteria, if CCC or The Board has implemented this under Rule 7 above.

11. CCC or The Board must advertise the selection on the Federal Party website, including required standard wording (see Returning Officers' Guidance) and may also advertise more widely. All local parties within the

region and CCC must actively seek applications from as diverse a range of candidates as possible.

12. The advertisement on the Federal Party's website will be placed by the Returning Officer, with any costs being met by the Welsh Party. The closing date for applications shall not be less than two weeks from the date of the advertisement. Applications must be returned to the Returning Officer.

13. CCC or The Board, with advice from the Returning Officer, shall decide whether or not they wish to consider applicants who are not on the Party's approved candidates list but who have submitted an application for approval to the Candidates' Office. If they do wish to consider unapproved applicants, they may wait for applicants to gain approval, but no applicant can proceed to the shortlist unless they are approved.

14. The Returning Officer must appoint a Ballot Administrator if the selection process so requires. The Ballot Administrator is a trained person who sets up and runs the e-ballot software and liaises with the Returning Officer. This may be an employee of the professional organisation running the ballot, a member of party staff or a volunteer who has received the necessary training in use of the software and GDPR compliance. The WSCC holds a list of trained Ballot Administrator for selections.

### **C. Who may vote in the selection**

15. The Returning Officer will obtain a list of members, which will be available before the date of publication of the shortlist, from Lighthouse. This Selection Register will contain (where available) each member's name, address, telephone number, email and date of expiry of membership. The use of data in the Selection Register is subject to the Party's Data Protection Rules. Returning Officers will use the data to identify those eligible to vote in the selection. The cut-off date for inclusion on the Selection Register shall be the date of publication of the advertisement on the Party website, unless there is a delay in selection of more than six months, when the Returning Officer shall determine and publish a new cut-off date. If the RO has any concerns about unusual membership activity, they must immediately suspend the selection and inform the WSCC, who will inform Compliance where appropriate. The WSCC is responsible for taking the decision to restart the selection.

16. Only members who have paid their subscription before the cut-off date for inclusion and have reached the age of at least 10 years will be eligible to vote. Eligible members whose subscriptions are no more than three months overdue shall be entitled to attend any members' meeting but shall only be eligible to vote if they pay their overdue subscription before the members' meeting. In the case of electronic balloting they shall only be eligible to vote if they pay their overdue subscription and notify the Returning Officer in writing that they have done so at least two days before the date on which the Returning Officer intends to send the list of eligible voting members to the Ballot Administrator.

17. In the case of a local Party including more than one police area then the local Party constitution must be consulted to determine whether the whole local Party or only members in the relevant police area shall vote in the selection. If the local Party constitution is silent then only members in the relevant police area may vote as long as there are at least 30 members in the region.

18. The Returning Officer will provide the Selection Register to the Executive Officer for Membership Development to identify any errors or omissions in the Selection Register. These should be resolved by the date of publication of the shortlist, so that the register can be passed to applicants promptly at this date. Any further changes should be notified promptly to applicants and the shortlisting committee. Membership Services will warn Elections Officers that they must advise Membership Services of any discrepancies in their local Party's list and encourage their members to pay any overdue subscriptions before the date of close of applications, as the list at that date will be used to decide who will be eligible to vote in the selection.

19. The Selection Register must be used for:

- Deciding who may vote in the selection.
- Issuing ballot papers.
- Sending out the mailing to members.
- Any campaigning by applicants or their supporters, who must not use it for any purpose other than the selection.

#### **D. Deciding in a shortlist for the selection**

20. All applicants who are on the Party's list of approved candidates and have provided a CV/manifesto as required in the advertisement shall be

included on the shortlist, subject to the shortlist being consistent with any special requirement agreed by CCC or The Board (see Rule 7). If Selection and Scoring Criteria has been implemented under Rule 7, the responsible committee must then convene a meeting to assess the applications against the Selection Criteria. Only candidates who meet the minimum scoring criteria will be shortlisted. Police areas may normally proceed to selection with only one Applicant, after two advertisements have been placed.

21. Under the Equality Act 2010, political parties are entitled to adopt Selection Arrangements to address an under-representation of groups that share what the Equality Act refers to as a particular “protected characteristic”. Such Selection Arrangements may involve reserving places on a shortlist for people from such groups.

22. No applicant is to be shortlisted unless they have undertaken in writing:

- In the event of their selection, to take all reasonable steps to negotiate an agreed Compact between them and the relevant local Party setting out a commitment from each as to the level and nature of campaigning activity to be undertaken before the election and, if they are elected, for the term of their election
- In the event of their election, to make a reasonable contribution towards ongoing Party activity, the exact level to be determined following the election by agreement between the candidate and The Board and by reference to any relevant guidance then in force. Normally this should be at least 5% and preferably 10% of their base salary after tax as personal circumstances permit.

23. All applicants included on the shortlist will be notified of that outcome at the time of closure of applications. Details of shortlisting decisions will be confidential to the selection committee, the RO, the WSCC and the EO CCC.

24. Shortlisted applicants will be told of the location, date and time at which the count will take place which can be in person or remotely via a zoom type link.

## **Stage Two: The candidates' campaign and mailing to members**

### **A. The members' mailing**



25. A members' mailing shall be produced by CCC or party staff and approved by the Returning Officer. It must be sent to all members entitled to vote in the selection, all candidates in the selection and the Returning Officer. CCC may also decide to send the members' mailing to non-voting members.

26. The purpose of a members' mailing is to inform members of the selection and how they can vote. The members' mailing shall be produced by the Responsible Committee, and approved by the Returning Officer.

The members' mailing for electronic or hybrid voting system will contain the following elements:

- An introductory statement produced by the responsible committee, giving information on the selection and explaining the electoral system being used.
- The candidate(s)' manifestos or C.V.
- Details of the Members' Meeting(s) and how to get there and/or log in information.
- Information on how and when members will be able to vote, including postal voting.
- The date by which a lapsed member must pay their overdue subscription and notify the Returning Officer, in order to be eligible to vote.
- Information on how members may access a copy of the rules, and a reminder to members of the need to abide by them.

A postal ballot in person only selection mailing should also contain:

- A postal vote application form for each voting member.

The Members' Mailing must be sent to every eligible member. It must be posted or delivered by hand to members who cannot be emailed. For everybody else, emailing the Members' Mailing is also an option. It is also permissible, in both posted and emailed Members' Mailings, to provide links to download documents, rather than to include them all as printed copies or attachments.

27. All candidates must be given the opportunity to include a personal manifesto. If no manifesto is provided to the RO then the C.V. supplied in the application is used instead of a candidates manifesto. The specification (e.g. paper size, file type and maximum file size etc) for this must be agreed in advance by the Responsible Committee and approved by the Returning Officer. It must be the same for all candidates. Candidates should be given



the opportunity to provide both a colour and black-and-white version, with otherwise identical content, if CCC plans to use both types (e.g. colour for emailed or downloadable manifestos, black-and-white for posted ones).

Candidates should be given the opportunity to provide both an English and Welsh language version of their manifesto with identical content of the same size. This bilingual option applies to all documents provided throughout a candidates campaign.

The Returning Officer shall notify candidates of the deadline for receipt of their manifestos. Manifestos not received by the deadline will not be guaranteed to be included in the Members' Mailing, though may still be included alongside the distribution of any electronic ballot papers.

28. The distribution of the Members' Mailing will be undertaken by the Responsible Committee, or by the Ballot Administrator. The Responsible Committee will pay the costs for the Members' Mailing.

## **B. The candidates campaign**

29. The Returning Officer shall give candidates access to the Selection Register which includes the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone
- Mobile
- Membership Number
- Eligibility to vote
- Opt-In/Out status to Electronic comms

30. In addition to the members' mailing candidates may use any means (other than direct email and SMS) to communicate with members or publicise the campaign except that they (and their supporters) may not comment to the press on what is an internal party selection. All such communications must comply with these rules. Candidates will provide copy or electronic links to the Returning Officer so that all material can be scrutinised if necessary.

31. The amount of money that candidates can spend on their campaign will be limited by an expenditure cap agreed in advance by the shortlisting committee, who will use the suggested limits contained in Returning Officers'

Guidance to assist them. Candidates must keep a record of all expenses and receipts, and submit this to the Returning Officer at the conclusion of the selection process. These records must be available for inspection by the other candidates, who may ask the Returning Officer to investigate if they think the limit has been exceeded.

32. The number of direct communications with members (emails, messages or delivered materials) shall be restricted to a manageable (and affordable) number agreed in advance by the shortlisting committee.

33. The Returning Officer will arrange for however many bulk unsolicited emails (as agreed in rule 30 above) on behalf of the candidates. Bulk email to be sent by the Welsh Party via its Data Protection Act 2018 compliant bulk mail solution to members who have not opted out of receiving unsolicited email. One-to-one email communications will be permitted but candidates cannot email members directly unless first contacted by that member.

34. Unsolicited SMS messages are not permitted.

35. Candidates must not upload mobile and telephone numbers to any third-party platform, including social media websites.

36. Candidates and anyone acting on their behalf:

- Must comply with data protection laws, the Party's Data Protection Rules and with PPERA legislation at all times (e.g. candidates must not send group emails which reveal the email addresses of the recipients).
- Must not use their campaign to denigrate others.
- Must not use written endorsements of their candidature, whether in print or on any form of social media.
- May use photographs (including photographs with prominent local or national party figures) as they wish, as long as they do not contain and are not accompanied by any written endorsement, and both the copyright holder and the subject(s) of the photographs have given their permission.
- Must ensure that if using video footage on social media this does not contain any endorsement, spoken or written, by prominent figures in the local or national Party.
- May allow any supporters to campaign on their behalf but must ensure that all such people comply with these rules.
- Must ensure that their actions, and those of their supporters, comply with the Candidates' Code of Conduct.
- May continue with their normal party activities and campaigning during

the selection.

- Must preserve all campaign material and communication until the selection is complete and the result formally announced and accepted.

### **C. Postal votes**

37. All voting members who want one may apply for a postal vote. They should apply to the Returning Officer and may use the form supplied with the members' mailing for this purpose. Applications not on the supplied form are acceptable as long as the Returning Officer is satisfied that these are genuine.

38. The Returning Officer will produce and issue ballot papers for postal votes in accordance with these rules (see Returning Officers' Guidance). He/she/they shall state clearly the last time at which ballot papers can arrive before the members' meeting. Ballot papers not sent in advance may be delivered by hand to a members' meeting if an in-person/ postal only selection is being used.

### **D. Electronic voting and postal ballot papers**

39. All voting members who want one may apply for a postal vote. They should apply to the Returning Officer and may use the form supplied with the members' mailing for this purpose. Applications not on the supplied form are acceptable as long as the Returning Officer is satisfied that these are genuine.

40. When electronic voting is used, the Returning Officer will contact the Regional Candidates' Chair to request the nomination of a Ballot Administrator. The Responsible Committee will accept the cost in advance of the ballot happening and pay any fee levied by said organisation or software provider to provide and administer the ballot and run the count.

41. Electronic ballots will be emailed by the Ballot Administrator to members, alongside a downloadable copy of the candidates' manifestos or C.V. but no other materials. The counting software must be set to be able to receive votes only after the conclusion of the Members' Meeting, or the final Members' Meeting if there is more than one. This email may be sent more than once, but only to people who have not yet voted. Members who have

received an electronic ballot paper will exercise their vote by following the instructions online.

42. Because not everyone can or is willing to receive emails a different system must be used for:

- Members who do not have an email address registered with the party.
- Members who have opted out of email communications.
- Members who share an email address with others (e.g. if a family of members share one email address, then each person must use a separate postal ballot).
- Members whose email addresses are from Government (.gov) accounts. These members will instead have to request a postal ballot, whereupon the Returning Officer will send them a paper ballot, which has a unique link. They can exercise their vote either by using the link to vote online, or by posting the ballot paper to the Ballot Administrator or the Returning Officer. The method and deadline for doing so must be provided alongside the unique link.

The link will be made live at the same time as electronic voting opens. Paper ballot papers will not be issued until after the final Members' Meeting.

43. If and when the Ballot Administrator or Returning Officer finds that a link sent with a postal ballot paper has already been used and the vote cast varies from that on the posted ballot paper, then this vote shall be treated as 'tendered'. It will not be input to the counting system but shall instead be passed to the Returning Officer, who may contact the voter for clarification or rule the vote as void, as the Returning Officer sees fit.

44. The deadline for the return of all completed ballots, both electronic and postal, will be clearly provided on the instructions that accompany them, and will be at least 14 days after the electronic voting system goes live, which will be after the final Members' Meeting.

### **Stage Three: The members' meeting(s), vote and count.**

#### **A. The members' meeting**

45. The Welsh Party must arrange at least one members' meeting. All details will be agreed in advance and approved by the Returning Officer who will ensure these are available to applicants in advance of the meeting. These

meetings may be virtual or in person or both. At the members' meeting(s) applicants will be invited to:

- Meet members
- Speak
- Answer questions

46. The Members' Meeting(s) shall be chaired by an impartial member appointed by the responsible committee and attended and regulated as agreed by the Returning Officer.

47. At an in person members' meeting, candidates:

- Must remain in a candidates' waiting room whilst other candidates are speaking (or answering individual questions)
- May bring a nominated supporter to the Members' Meeting(s) who must remain with the candidate at all times. All other supporters must remain in the hall throughout the meeting(s). Mobile phones must be switched off for the duration of the Members' Meeting(s)
- Should at all times abide by these rules and by the Candidates' Code of Conduct
- Should not bring postal ballot papers (other than their own) to the meeting

48. Following the candidates' speeches the Returning Officer may give permission for the candidates to be questioned by the members in other ways (e.g. a "Question Time" panel or informal mingling) as long as the principles underlying these rules are maintained. For a virtual or hybrid meeting, the processes should be as similar as the technology allows. A recorded copy of the online meeting may be linked and shared with all voters members if agreed by the Local Party in advance.

49. The Returning Officer is responsible for overseeing the proper conduct of the meeting(s) and may intervene if he/she/they considers it necessary. He/she/they may appoint aides to assist at the meeting(s).

50. Non-voting members of the local Party may attend the Members' Meeting(s) as observers.

## **B. The vote and count**

51. The vote will be conducted by the alternative vote method (i.e. STV for single candidate elections) according to the standard method as laid out in the Returning Officers guide for selections.

52. The ballot paper will require voting members to rank candidates according to preference (sample ballot paper in Returning Officers' Guidance) and will include the option to re-open nominations (RON) where there are fewer than three candidates if this was agreed at the shortlisting meeting by the responsible committee.

53. Ballot papers (including all postal ballot papers) will be numbered and the numbers recorded on the Selection Register.

### **B. i. In Person/Postal Balloting**

54. The Returning Officer must be satisfied when issuing ballot papers that members are eligible to vote. If there is any doubt a tendered ballot paper (marked T) will be issued.

55. Eligible members may request a ballot paper, and vote, at any time during the members' meeting if an in person/postal only selection system is being used.

56. The votes will be counted by the Returning Officer at the end of the meeting. A representative of the local party, all candidates and their nominated supporter may attend.

57. Tendered ballot papers shall be considered at the end of each stage to determine if their inclusion would alter the result. If this is the case the count shall be suspended and will not proceed until it has been decided, by the Returning Officer, whether the tendered papers are eligible.

### **B. ii. Online Balloting**

58. The Ballot Administrator will conduct counting of the electronic ballot papers, as well as any postal votes which have been returned to them.

59. The Ballot Administrator or Returning Officer may open envelopes with returned paper ballots before the close of poll, in order to input the postal votes cast to the master computer program for the count. After that has been done the ballot papers and the envelopes in which they were posted will be held securely until all candidates have signed to accept the result or exhausted their right of appeal. No information will be disclosed as to the votes cast on returned ballot papers before the close of poll.

60. The votes will be counted as soon as practicable after the deadline for the return of ballot papers. Each candidate will be given the opportunity to be present at the count (in person, or by video link) or to be represented, and may be joined by one additional person to support them.

### **C. The declaration**

51. At the end of the count, the Returning Officer will notify all candidates of the result and ask any candidates physically present at the count to sign a copy of the results sheet to say they accept the result. If the candidates are not present, then they may send an email or written message via a mobile device, to the Returning Officer to indicate their acceptance. Verbal acceptance will not be valid; it must be in writing.

52. In the event that all candidates accept the result, the Returning Officer will immediately declare it and will provide a statement of the turnout and the name of the successful candidate which the Responsible Committee can email to its members.

53. In the event that one or more candidates do not accept the result, the result will not be declared immediately. Candidates will have seven days to accept the result, to formally withdraw from the selection, or to submit an appeal in accordance with the current appeals protocol. Any candidate (including the winning candidate) who neither accepts the result, nor withdraws, nor submits an appeal within seven days, is deemed to have withdrawn from the selection. The result will be declared once all candidates accept the result, or the seven-day deadline has passed without appeal, or once any appeal has been decided.

54. If a winning candidate withdraws from the selection, or does not accept the result within the seven-day period and is hence deemed to have withdrawn, the ballots will be counted again, with the second preference votes of the withdrawn candidate(s) being redistributed.

55. If a candidate who is in a politically-restricted occupation signs to accept that they have won the selection, they must within seven days of the date of selection agree a resignation date from that occupation with the Welsh party. Failure to do so, or then to resign on that date, will result in automatic deselection. The vote will then be recounted to select a new candidate.



56. At the conclusion of the selection the Returning Officer shall provide the WSCC with a summary report showing the number of initial applicants with protected characteristics who applied, the number shortlisted, and the votes cast for each candidate at the members' meeting. They shall also report any evidence of overt discrimination (for example in questions posed to applicants at shortlisting interview or at the Members' Meeting.)

## **Stage Four: Trouble-shooting**

### **A. Applicant or candidate withdrawal**

57. Before the announcement of the shortlist: For non-target seats no action is required as long as one applicant remains. However the local party officers in consultation with the Returning Officer may decide not to proceed if fewer than two applicants remain.

58. If a candidate withdraws at any time between the announcement of the shortlist and the Members' Meeting, all other candidates must be notified.

- If the members' mailing has not yet been sent then it should be altered to reflect the new shortlist
- If the members' mailing has been sent and no ballot papers issued then no action need be taken
- If some ballot papers have been issued then new ballot papers should be drawn up (including RON if necessary). At the count, for ballot papers reflecting the original shortlist, preferences for withdrawn candidate(s) shall be transferred when counting

59. If a candidate withdraws at the Members' Meeting existing ballot papers will be used and an explanation given to members with instructions to delete the withdrawn candidate.

60. If a winning candidate withdraws before they have signed their acceptance of the result then there will be a recount.

### **B. Breaches of the rules**

61. If applicants/candidates or members of the local party believe a selection rule has been breached they should:

- Put their concerns in writing to the Returning Officer

- Identify the rule they believe has been breached
- Provide details of the circumstances of the breach
- Explain the effect of the breach

62. Once they have been notified of alleged breaches of the rules (rule 61, above) the Returning Officer will:

- Investigate the situation
- Make a formal ruling, notifying the complainant and all applicants/candidates of the details of this.

63. If it is alleged that any candidate has behaved in a way that is contrary to the Candidates' Code of Conduct the Returning Officer shall consult the WSCC who shall investigate the allegation.

64. Anyone wishing to appeal a Returning Officer's ruling shall do so using the process laid down in Rules for the Conduct of Appeals. If an appeal is lodged, the Returning Officer shall immediately suspend the selection and inform the WSCC, all applicants/candidates, and the EO CCC."