

Company Handbook



Guidance on council processes and policies

Pre-election period

A summary of the pre-election period and what this may mean for the companies



Introduction

1. This Guidance Note is intended to help you understand how the requirements of the Pre-Election Period (**PEP**) apply to council-owned companies and to sign-post where you can go for more information.

Guidance

2. Local authority trading companies have the same prohibition on political publicity as local authorities.¹ This means they must not publish, or arrange for the publication of, material designed to affect support for a political party.
3. Local authorities are, by convention, subject to a period of heightened sensitivity in relation to political publicity during a PEP.
4. This has relatively little impact upon the council-owned companies. However, it is suggested that the companies avoid using politicians for publicity during a PEP, particularly if they are involved in the election.
5. As a rule of thumb, pre-planned meetings go ahead as usual. The Monitoring Officer will determine whether any agenda items at council meetings relating to the companies need to be deferred.

Further information

6. If you would like to discuss a particular proposal or have a query, please contact the Shareholder Liaison Service: ShareholderLiaison@bristol.gov.uk
7. The following additional resources may also be of interest:
 - a) ['A short guide to publicity during the pre-election period'](#), Local Government Association, January 2021
 - b) [Code of recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity](#)

¹ Section 2, Local Government Act 1986 and Article 5(1), Local Authorities (Companies) Order 1995

Table 1: Version Control Table

Version	Summary of Edits	Editor	Date of Version
V 1	First version for publishing	Shareholder Liaison Service	November 2021
V 2	Second version for publishing	Shareholder Liaison Service	October 2023
	Second version reviewed (no changes made)		April 2024