

Local Elections 2022

HOST A HUSTINGS

A guide by Perth Women's Collective



A wooden podium with a microphone is in the foreground, with a blurred audience in the background. An orange banner is overlaid on the right side of the image.

HOST A HUSTINGS

The 2022 Scottish local elections are due to take place on 5 May 2022, as part of the 2022 United Kingdom local elections. All 1,219 seats across all 32 Scottish local authorities will be up for election.

A great way to get involved in the elections in your area is to host a hustings. What follows is a guide to doing just that.

What is a Hustings?

A hustings is a meeting held in the run-up to an election where election candidates or parties debate policies and answer questions from an audience. Hustings provide voters with an opportunity to hear the views of candidates or parties. They usually feature candidates from all major parties, are most frequently organised by local organisations or community groups and are held in the area where the candidates are standing for election.

Why hold a Hustings?

A hustings can allow you to raise awareness and educate election candidates about issues important to you and your community as well as secure commitments from candidates, while building relationships with your potential elected representatives. We don't often get the opportunity to directly address our political representatives, at a hustings you can ask a question and get an immediate response from your election candidates. With an election imminent, politicians will be eager to connect with voters and could listen more attentively than they might once in office.

How to hold a Hustings

1. Select what type of hustings event you want to hold

There are two different types of hustings events, non-selective and selective.

A 'non-selective hustings' is one where there is no intention to promote any parties or candidates over any others. Spending on a non-selective hustings is not regulated and does not need to be reported by anyone.

A 'selective hustings' is one where there is an intention to promote candidates or parties who attend. In this case either the hustings organiser or the candidates or parties may need to account for the spending.

You can choose whether your hustings is non-selective or selective. Further information about these types of hustings and how they are regulated can be found on the Electoral Commission website -

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/are-you-holding-a-hustings>

How to hold a Hustings

2. Decide on a format and structure

- Where will your hustings take place, online or in person? In recent years many hustings events have by necessity been held online. With COVID restrictions lifting across the country the option of a face to face meeting is now possible but it is worth considering if an online meeting could increase accessibility.
- Select a date and time for your event, bearing in mind that certain times of the day, such as an evening meeting, might make it accessible to more attendees.
- Pick a chair for the event who isn't publicly affiliated with a political party, is familiar with the key issues and who will be able to maintain order in the event that candidates stray or go back and forth on a topic.
- Give some thought to the structure of your event, think about the length, typically hustings can last anywhere between 90 minutes and 2 hours and roughly split that time into sections.

How to hold a Hustings

2. Decide on a format and structure

Here is an example of how a hustings event could be structured -

- Welcome from the chairperson
- Chairperson invites introductory remarks from candidates
- Audience Q&A
- Chairperson invites closing remarks from candidates
- Chairperson closes hustings

How to hold a Hustings

3. Identify and invite your candidates

The Perth & Kinross council area is split into 12 wards. You can find out the ward area in which you reside on the PKC website -

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/15505/Find-your-local-councillor> - and you can contact the council to find out the list of election candidates for your ward by emailing elections@pkc.gov.uk.

Alternatively you can look up your postcode on <https://whocanivotefor.co.uk/> to find out your ward area and list of election candidates. This list of candidates should be available in full from 31 March 2022.

Once you have your list of candidates get in touch with the relevant parties to extend an invite to your hustings event.

How to hold a Hustings

4. Get the word out!

Once the details of your event have been decided on and the invites have been sent and responded to then it is time to start spreading the word to ensure a good attendance for your event. Use your friends and family networks, share information on local social media groups or contact local community groups directly. Don't forget to let Perth Women's Collective know and we will share on our social pages also!

