

*Draft Regulations laid before Senedd Cymru under section 26(7) of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024, for approval by resolution of Senedd Cymru.*

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DRAFT WELSH STATUTORY  
INSTRUMENTS

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**2025 No. (W. )**

**REPRESENTATION OF THE  
PEOPLE, WALES**

**The Welsh Elections Information  
Platform Regulations 2025**

**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations make provision for a Welsh elections information platform, as required by section 26 of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024 (asc 5) (“the 2024 Act”). The Regulations provide for the establishment of the Welsh elections information platform that will provide up-to-date information, or access to up-to-date information from other electronic sources, to electors to support their participation in the elections specified in regulation 1, namely Senedd Cymru elections and ordinary elections to principal councils in Wales.

Regulation 3 specifies the Electoral Management Board (“EMB”), established by the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru, under section 20E of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013 (anaw 4) (as amended by section 1 of the 2024 Act), as the platform operator.

Regulation 4 confers the functions of establishing and operating the platform on the platform operator and sets out what the operator must do when carrying out those functions. Regulation 5 places a duty on the EMB to provide guidance about the operation of the platform.

Regulation 6 sets out the information that must be placed on the platform, including particular information relating to candidates and registered political parties standing at an election, and information that returning officers are duty bound to publish during the election process. The regulation

also provides the platform operator with discretion to publish other information to assist electors.

Regulation 7 requires the platform operator to take reasonable steps to ensure that the information published on the platform is accessible to electors.

Regulations 8 and 9 provide that, for Senedd Cymru elections, individual candidates, a registered political party which has submitted a list of candidates for a constituency, or election agents may provide an election address to the platform operator for publication on the platform. The provisions deal with how election addresses are to be submitted and set out material that they must not contain.

For ordinary elections of principal councils in Wales, regulations 10 to 12 state that candidates, or the candidate's election agent, may provide a candidate statement to the platform operator for publication on the platform. The provisions prescribe the format and content of the document.

Candidates will be notified of the deadline for the submission of an election address or candidate statement by the platform operator through a notice of submission process as outlined in regulation 13.

Regulation 14 provides that the platform operator must publish on the platform an election address or candidate statement that complies with the requirements in these Regulations. Regulation 15 requires the platform operator to ensure that it makes arrangements to enable an election address or candidate statement to be submitted electronically or in hardcopy.

Regulation 16 makes provision that only candidates and the election agent for the candidate or for the registered political party, which has submitted a list of candidates for a constituency, and no other person, may incur any civil or criminal liability for the publication of the content of an election address or candidate statement on the platform.

Regulations 17 to 19 make provision requiring the Welsh Ministers to publish and lay before Senedd Cymru reports for each specified election about how the platform has been established and operated. The platform operator must provide Welsh Ministers with assistance and information in connection with the preparation of a report.

The Welsh Ministers' Code of Practice on the carrying out of Regulatory Impact Assessments was considered in relation to these Regulations. As a result, a regulatory impact assessment has been prepared as to the likely costs and benefits of complying with these Regulations. A copy can be obtained from Welsh

Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ and is published on [www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales).

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**2025 No. (W. )**

**REPRESENTATION OF THE  
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**The Welsh Elections Information  
Platform Regulations 2025**

*Made*

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*Coming into force*

*14 March 2025*

The Welsh Ministers, in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 26(1), (2), (3)(a), (4), and (5), and 71(1) of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024(1), make the following Regulations.

In accordance with section 26(7) of that Act, a draft of these Regulations was laid before, and approved by a resolution of, Senedd Cymru.

**PART 1**

**GENERAL**

**Title, coming into force and application**

**1.**—(1) The title of these Regulations is the Welsh Elections Information Platform Regulations 2025.

(2) These Regulations come into force on 14 March 2025.

(3) These Regulations apply to specified elections.

(4) But these Regulations do not have effect in relation to—

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(1) 2024 asc 5. Section 26(9) defines “specified” to mean specified in regulations under subsection (1).

- (a) an election to Senedd Cymru, the poll for which is held on or before 6 April 2026;
- (b) ordinary elections to principal councils in Wales, the polls for which are held on or before 5 May 2027.

## Interpretation

### 2. In these Regulations—

“the 2006 Act” (“*Deddf 2006*”) means the Government of Wales Act 2006(1);

“the 2021 Rules” (“*Rheolau 2021*”) means the Local Elections (Principal Areas) (Wales) Rules 2021(2);

“candidate” (“*ymgeisydd*”) means (as the context requires)—

- (a) an individual who is a candidate to be a Member of the Senedd;
- (b) a candidate on a list of candidates to be Members of the Senedd submitted by a registered political party under section 7 of the 2006 Act;
- (c) a candidate at an ordinary election to a principal council in Wales;

“candidate statement” (“*datganiad ymgeisydd*”) means a statement that has been prepared for publication on the platform and which is in support of candidacy, for an ordinary election to a principal council in Wales, at which the candidate is standing;

“election address” (“*anerchiad etholiadol*”) means a final approved postal communication which, by virtue of an order under section 13 of the 2006 Act(3), may be sent free of any charge for postage and which is to be or has been submitted for publication on the platform;

“the platform” (“*y platfform*”) means the electronic facility, known as the Welsh elections information platform, established by these Regulations and which is to provide electors with up-to-date information, or access to up-to-date information from other electronic sources, about specified elections;

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- (1) 2006 c. 32. Relevant amendments are made by the Wales Act 2017 (c. 4), section 5(1), the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020 (anaw 1), Schedule 1, paragraph 2(1), (15), (16), (17) and (19) and the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act 2024 (asc 4), section 8.
  - (2) S.I. 2021/1459 (W. 374). Relevant amendments are made by S.I. 2023/1064 (W. 180) rules 4 and 8.
  - (3) At the time that these Regulations were made, the relevant order made under section 13 is S.I. 2007/236 and article 65 of it provides for a right to send a postal communication free of any charge for postage.

“the platform operator” (“*gweithredwr y platfform*”) means the person specified in regulation 3;

“registered political party” (“*plaid wleidyddol gofrestredig*”) means a party registered under Part 2 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000<sup>(1)</sup>;

“relevant requirements” (“*gofynion perthnasol*”) means—

- (a) in relation to an election address, the requirements imposed by regulations 8(2) and 9;
- (b) in relation to a candidate statement, the requirements imposed by regulations 11 and 12;

“specified elections” (“*etholiadau penodedig*”) means—

- (a) elections to Senedd Cymru;
- (b) ordinary elections to principal councils in Wales;

“submission date” (“*dyddiad cyflwyno*”) means the date required by regulation 13(3)(a) to be included in a notice of the submission process for election addresses and candidate statements.

## PART 2

### ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION OF THE PLATFORM

#### **The Platform operator**

3. The Electoral Management Board established under section 20E of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013<sup>(2)</sup> is specified as the platform operator.

#### **Functions of the platform operator**

4.—(1) The platform operator must establish and operate the platform in accordance with these Regulations.

(2) In carrying out its functions under paragraph (1), the platform operator must—

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(1) 2000 c. 41.

(2) 2013 anaw 4. Section 20E was inserted by section 1(2) of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024. The short title of the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013 was changed to that title from the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 by section 11 of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act 2024 (asc 4).

- (a) make arrangements to appoint a third party to create and build an electronic facility (such as an online system);
- (b) ensure the platform provides, hosts and publishes information in a politically neutral manner about—
  - (i) specified elections,
  - (ii) candidates, and
  - (iii) registered political parties standing in elections to Senedd Cymru;
- (c) maintain the platform by keeping the published information up-to-date;
- (d) ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that appropriate security measures are in place to protect the platform's electronic facilities and content from unauthorised access, interference, or use;
- (e) deliver a system to check that election addresses and candidate statements, submitted to the platform for publication, comply with the relevant requirements prior to them being published on the platform.

## **Guidance**

5.—(1) The platform operator must provide guidance about the operation of the platform.

(2) The guidance must include information about the following—

- (a) the service provided by the platform and the mechanisms used to provide that service;
- (b) the documents that electoral administrators may send to the platform operator for publication on the platform;
- (c) the required format of any documents that are submitted to the platform operator;
- (d) the means by which electoral administrators may publish information referred to in regulation 6 which would assist the platform operator to obtain and publish that information on the platform;
- (e) how election addresses and candidate statements may be produced and sent to the platform operator.

(3) The guidance may include any other matter that will assist the platform operator in carrying out its functions in relation to the operation of the platform.

(4) The guidance must be published on the platform by the platform operator.

## PART 3

### INFORMATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

#### **Information to be published on the platform**

**6.—**(1) The platform operator must publish, or arrange to be published, the following in relation to each specified election—

- (a) notice of election required by (as the case may be)—
  - (i) an order made under section 13 of the 2006 Act<sup>(1)</sup>;
  - (ii) rule 3 of Schedule 1 to the 2021 Rules;
  - (iii) rule 3 of Schedule 2 to the 2021 Rules;
- (b) statements of those nominated required by (as the case may be)—
  - (i) an order made under section 13 of the 2006 Act<sup>(2)</sup>;
  - (ii) rule 13 of Schedule 1 to the 2021 Rules;
  - (iii) rule 13 of Schedule 2 to the 2021 Rules;
- (c) notice of poll required by (as the case may be)—
  - (i) an order made under section 13 of the 2006 Act<sup>(3)</sup>;
  - (ii) rule 27(1) of Schedule 1 to the 2021 Rules;
  - (iii) rule 27(1) of Schedule 2 to the 2021 Rules;
- (d) an election address, in accordance with regulation 14;
- (e) a candidate statement, in accordance with regulation 14;
- (f) notice of the situation of each polling station and the description of voters entitled to vote there required by (as the case may be)—
  - (i) an order made under section 13 of the 2006 Act<sup>(4)</sup>;
  - (ii) rule 27(3) of Schedule 1 to the 2021 Rules;
  - (iii) rule 27(3) of Schedule 2 to the 2021 Rules;

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- (1) At the time that these Regulations were made, the relevant provision is rule 3 of Schedule 5 to S.I. 2007/236.
  - (2) At the time that these Regulations were made, the relevant provisions are rules 16 and 17 of Schedule 5 to S.I. 2007/236.
  - (3) At the time that these Regulations were made, the relevant provision is rule 32 of Schedule 5 to S.I. 2007/236.
  - (4) At the time that these Regulations were made, the relevant provision is rule 32(2) of Schedule 5 to S.I. 2007/236.



- (g) accessibility arrangements in place at polling stations;
- (h) declaration of results required by (as the case may be)—
  - (i) an order made under section 13 of the 2006 Act<sup>(1)</sup>;
  - (ii) rule 60(3) or 60W(3) of Schedule 1 to the 2021 Rules;
  - (iii) rule 64(3) or 64Z1(3) of Schedule 2 to the 2021 Rules.

(2) The platform operator may publish, or arrange to be published, the following information on the platform—

- (a) information about the electoral system and voting process in relation to specified elections, including, but not limited to—
  - (i) the devolution of specified elections;
  - (ii) a description and explanation of the different levels of government that exist in Wales and their respective responsibilities;
  - (iii) the different elections that take place in Wales and the voting systems used at each election;
- (b) information about electoral arrangements and electoral processes for specified elections including, but not limited to—
  - (i) eligibility to vote;
  - (ii) registering to vote, including anonymous registration, and absent voting;
  - (iii) the practical process of voting, including information on how, when and where to vote when voting at polling stations, by post or by proxy;
  - (iv) accessibility rights for voters when voting;
  - (v) contact details for local electoral teams which provide assistance to electors for each area in Wales;
  - (vi) contact details for elected representatives for each Senedd constituency or local government electoral ward in Wales;
- (c) such other information about specified elections that the platform operator considers appropriate.

(3) The information mentioned in paragraphs (1) and (2) may include—

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(1) At the time that these Regulations were made, the relevant provisions are rules 62 and 64 of Schedule 5 to S.I. 2007/236.

- (a) factual information produced by the platform operator;
- (b) links or signposts to other relevant web locations.

#### **Information accessibility**

7. The platform operator must take reasonable steps to ensure that—

- (a) the platform and its content is user friendly and accessible for electors, and
- (b) the information published on the platform is searchable, where relevant, by postcode, Senedd constituency or local government electoral ward.

## **PART 4**

### **ELECTION ADDRESSES AND CANDIDATE STATEMENTS**

#### **Election address for Senedd Cymru elections**

8.—(1) During a Senedd Cymru election, an election address may be submitted to the platform operator by—

- (a) an individual candidate who prepared the election address or on whose behalf it was prepared;
- (b) the election agent of such a person;
- (c) a registered political party, which has submitted a list of candidates for a constituency, who prepared the election address or on whose behalf it was prepared;
- (d) the election agent of such a registered political party.

(2) An election address must—

- (a) contain only matter relating to the election,
- (b) be submitted to the platform operator as specified in the notice of the submission process published under regulation 13, and
- (c) be submitted with evidence of final approval by the universal service provider for the postal communication.

(3) In this regulation—

“evidence of final approval” (*“tystiolaeth o gymeradwyaeth derfynol”*) means the approval and artwork checking code that is sent from the universal service provider to the candidate or registered political party.

“universal service provider” (“*darparwr gwasanaeth cyffredinol*”) has the same meaning as in Part 3 of the Postal Services Act 2011<sup>(1)</sup>.

**9.** An election address must not contain any material that—

- (a) is obscene, offensive, or indecent, or
- (b) the publication of which would likely amount to the commission of an offence.

### **Candidate statement for ordinary elections of principal councils**

**10.** During an ordinary election to a principal council in Wales, a candidate, or candidate’s agent, may send to the platform operator a candidate statement to be published on the platform.

**11.—(1)** A candidate statement must—

- (a) be in Welsh, English or both languages,
- (b) use Times New Roman script,
- (c) be no more than 180 words, and
- (d) be about the candidate and the reasons why the candidate is seeking election.

**(2)** A candidate statement must include, without counting towards the word limit—

- (a) any description included in the nomination paper under rule 5(3)(b) of Schedule 1, or rule 5(3)(b) of Schedule 2, to the 2021 Rules, and
- (b) the information contained in the statement of party membership included in the nomination paper under rule 5(3)(c) of Schedule 1, or rule 5(3)(c) of Schedule 2, to the 2021 Rules.

**(3)** A candidate statement (including any photograph under paragraph (4)) must not contain any material—

- (a) that is obscene, offensive, or indecent;
- (b) the publication of which would likely amount to the commission of an offence;
- (c) that amounts to advertising or could result in commercial gain;
- (d) that could mislead or confuse electors as to the electoral system in use at the election or the effect of giving their vote.

**(4)** A candidate statement may include one photograph of the candidate and if it does so, the photograph must—

- (a) be recent, and
- (b) show no other person.

**12.** A candidate statement must be submitted—

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<sup>(1)</sup> 2011 c. 5, see section 65.

- (a) to the platform operator as specified in the notice of the submission process published under regulation 13;
- (b) with a statement by the candidate or candidate's agent confirming that—
  - (i) the candidate statement has been prepared by the candidate or the candidate's agent,
  - (ii) the candidate statement complies with the relevant requirements, and
  - (iii) the information within the candidate statement is the responsibility of the candidate or the candidate's agent.

### **Notice of submission process**

**13.**—(1) For each specified election, the platform operator must publish on the platform a notice of the submission process for election addresses or candidate statements.

(2) The notice of the submission process must be published on the platform as soon as reasonably practicable after the publication of notice of the election.

(3) The notice of the submission process must include—

- (a) the date which is the last day on which an election address or candidate statement may be submitted for publication on the platform (“submission date”),
- (b) the process for submitting an election address or candidate statement, including instructions about how to send the document to the platform operator and the electronic format required if submitted electronically, and
- (c) any other information the platform operator considers appropriate to assist candidates, their agents, and registered political parties when submitting an election address or candidate statement.

### **Publication of election addresses or candidate statements**

**14.**—(1) The platform operator must publish, or arrange to be published, on the platform, an election address or candidate statement that—

- (a) is received on or before the submission date, and
- (b) complies with the relevant requirements.

(2) The election address or candidate statement must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after it

is received by the platform operator and, in any event, no later than the fourth day before the day of the poll.

(3) The following days are to be disregarded for the purposes of calculating the deadline referred to in paragraph (2)—

- (a) a Saturday;
- (b) a Sunday;
- (c) Christmas Eve;
- (d) Christmas Day;
- (e) Good Friday;
- (f) a day that is a bank holiday in England and Wales under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971<sup>(1)</sup>;
- (g) a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

### **General**

**15.** The platform operator must ensure that arrangements are in place to enable an election address or candidate statement to be submitted electronically or in hardcopy.

### **Liability for election addresses and candidate statements**

**16.—**(1) No person is to incur any civil or criminal liability in respect of the publication of the content of an election address or candidate statement on the platform, other than—

- (a) the candidates or candidate to whom the election address or candidate statement relates, and
- (b) the election agent for the candidate or for the registered political party, which has submitted a list of candidates for a constituency, to which the election address or candidate statement relates.

## **PART 5**

### **REPORTS**

#### **Reports by Welsh Ministers on functions exercised in relation to the platform**

**17.—**(1) The Welsh Ministers must publish a report for each specified election that sets out how functions conferred on the platform operator by these

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<sup>(1)</sup> 1971 c. 80.

Regulations have been exercised in relation to that election.

(2) A report under paragraph (1) must be published—

- (a) in the case of functions exercised in respect of a Senedd Cymru election, before the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the day of the poll for that election;
- (b) in the case of functions exercised in respect of ordinary elections of principal councils, before the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the day of the poll for those elections.

(3) A report under paragraph (1) must include, in relation to the election to which the report relates—

- (a) how the platform operator has engaged with local authority partners, electoral administrators and other providers of information in exercising its functions in relation to the election;
- (b) a summary of the information that has been published on the platform to support electors' participation in the specified election;
- (c) an evaluation as to the usage of the platform, including the extent to which parts of the platform have been accessed by users;
- (d) an assessment of the cost of operating the platform, including maintenance costs.

**18.** The platform operator must give the Welsh Ministers such assistance and information as the Welsh Ministers may reasonably require in connection with the preparation of a report under regulation 17(1).

**19.** A report published by the Welsh Ministers under regulation 17(1) must be laid before Senedd Cymru.

*Name*

Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government,  
one of the Welsh Ministers

*Date*