

21<sup>st</sup> March 2017

**To the Chair and Members of the  
ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE**

**ELECTORAL SERVICES UPDATE ON KEY ISSUES REPORT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides an update to Members on preparations for the combined Local Government and Mayoral Elections taking place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. The Committee is asked to note the report and make any additional comments in relation to the contents.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?**

3. Having accessible and well organised elections is key to public engagement in the democratic process.

**BACKGROUND**

4. The Terms of Reference of this Committee provide for an overview of Electoral Services issues. Set out below is the current position in respect of recent and current activity.

**PREPARATIONS FOR COMBINED MAYORAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS**

5. The Local Government Elections for Doncaster MBC Ward councillors will take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 combined with an Election for the Mayor of Doncaster. The hours of poll are 7.00am to 10.00pm.
6. The Verification of all ballot papers will take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 at Doncaster Racecourse followed immediately with the counting of the Mayoral ballot papers. The Local Ward Councillor ballot papers will commence on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May at 1.00pm and the counting sheets method will be used.
7. Arrangements for recruiting staff are complete with all positions appointed to, any staff that we employ on polling stations will not be engaged on the Thursday evening Verification/Count but are able to work on Friday's Count.
8. All polling stations have been booked and confirmed with the following new polling stations identified. These new polling stations will be highlighted on polling cards notifying electors of a change to their previous polling place.

- Bessacarr Ward – St Francis Church Hall has been designated as the new polling place for polling district EF replacing Willow Primary School as the School was unable to remain open on polling day.
- Tickhill and Wadworth Ward – Carr Lodge Academy has been designated as the new polling place for polling district IA replacing Time 2 Play as the premises are very expensive to hire. Carr Lodge Academy is a new building at a much cheaper rate. The School will not need to close on polling day as the polling station can be kept separate.
- Thorne and Moorends Ward – The Community Centre, Northgate has been designated as the new polling place for polling district QG/QH replacing Miners Welfare & Community Centre. As a potential Candidate manages the centre it is thought better on this occasion to utilise an alternative venue. The new venue offers similar facilities and remains a central venue for electors.

There will also be the polling station finder on the council's website and on all polling cards. This will allow electors to search for their polling station by typing in a post code or address and they will be given their polling station location, map and directions of how to get there from their home address.

9. A timetable of key dates is provided at Appendix A.

#### **HATFIELD TOWN COUNCIL – HATFIELD WOODHOUSE BY-ELECTION**

10. Due to a recent vacancy advertised, an election was called by ten electors for the vacancy within Hatfield Town Council – Hatfield Woodhouse ward to be filled by election. The Election will take place on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017. The Verification and Count will take place at the close of poll at the Methodist Church Hall, Main Street – which is also being used as a polling place on polling day. The cost of this election will be charged to the Town Council.

#### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

11. All of the above are statutory duties and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements. This report is primarily for information only.

#### **IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES**

12.

	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	We will provide strong leadership and governance, working in partnership.	By ensuring the necessary arrangements are in place to deliver well-run elections and improving our reputation by meeting the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

13. Sufficient resources will need to be made available to run two Elections so close together and to continue to drive individual registration in order to ensure that the Council complies with its legal duties detailed above.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

14. The arrangements detailed in this report are designed to ensure compliance with a range of statutory duties including:

- Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006
- Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000
- Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

15. The costs of the Local and Mayoral combined Elections will be at a full cost to the Council.

## **REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTRIBUTORS**

Trina Barber  
Electoral Services Manager  
Legal & Democratic Services  
Tel: 01302 734398  
E-mail: [Trina.Barber@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Trina.Barber@doncaster.gov.uk)

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous EDSC reports

**Jo Miller**  
**Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer**