

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

**ANTICIPATED COMBINED LOCAL AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS –  
6TH MAY 2010 – PROGRESS REPORT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The Local and Parliamentary General Elections are both expected to take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010. The purpose of this report is to provide information on progress that has been made in the initial preparation for the elections.

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. The Committee is asked to consider and approve the report subject to any comments it wishes to make in relation to the contents.

**BACKGROUND**

3. Although the date of the Parliamentary Election has not yet been determined it is generally anticipated that it will take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> May with the Local Elections. In preparing for the elections allowance has been made for the various scenarios but for the purposes of this report it has been assumed that a combined election will take place.
4. The organisation of a combined election creates additional complexities over the organisation of a single election and it will be essential to take these issues into account as part of the planning process. In the event that the Parliamentary Election is held on a different date and is not combined with the Local elections contingency arrangements will operate to meet this eventuality.
5. The arrangements for the conduct of both elections are prescribed in regulations. The regulations covering both elections are in place and the funding arrangements for the Parliamentary Election have been agreed avoiding the problems which were experienced with the European Parliamentary election last year.
6. The cost of combined elections is shared where facilities are used for both elections e.g. polling stations. This is on an actual cost basis usually where there are two elections taking place this will be 50%.

7. Planning is underway to put in place all the usual arrangements for polling stations; issue and opening of postal votes; nominations; the verification and count along with the numerous other arrangements that are necessary for the conduct of a successful election.
8. A key consideration will be the verification and count which will be more complicated because of the requirements of the two elections. The additional requirements imposed by legislation to ensure the security of the poll, particularly in relation to postal voting, impacts on the operation of the count and taking account of this it is intended that the verification of ballot papers and the counting of votes for the Parliamentary Election will take place on Thursday night following the close of polls. The count for the Local Election will be undertaken on the morning of Friday the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2010.
9. Taking these issues into account on Thursday night the ballot boxes would be received at the count venue the verification of both the Parliamentary and Local ballot papers would be undertaken followed by the counting of the ballot papers for the Parliamentary election. The ballot papers for the local election would be sealed and secured ready for counting on Friday morning.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

10. The elections are a statutory duty and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

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

- 11.

<b>Doncaster Priorities</b>	<b>Implications of this initiative</b>
A Prosperous Place	The democratic process contributes directly to the well being and prosperity of the area
Skills & Lifelong Learning	See note in Prosperous Place
Healthy & Caring	See note in Prosperous Place
Safer, Cleaner & Greener	See note in Prosperous Place
Equality of Opportunity (Cross-Cutting)	See note in Prosperous Place
Improving Neighbourhoods Together (Cross-cutting)	See note in Prosperous Place
Protecting The Environment (Cross-cutting)	See note in Prosperous Place
Achieving Excellence	See note in Prosperous Place

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

12. The delivery of an election is a significant and complex undertaking with strict statutory deadlines. Planning is a key component in reducing or eliminating risks.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

13. The provisions for the conduct of the Local election are contained in the Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006 and for the Parliamentary Election in the Parliamentary Election Rules, Schedule 1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. These regulations set detailed requirements for the conduct of the elections subject to the requirements of primary legislation. In addition the authority has a statutory duties relating to the provision of resources to the Returning Officer for the resources conduct of the Local Elections under section 35 of the 1983 Act.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

14. The cost of the Local election is met by the Council whilst funding for the Parliamentary Election is met by the Government. The combination of the elections and the sharing of costs will reduce the overall cost burden of the elections to both the Council and the Government. Provision has been made within the 2009 budget for the cost of the Local election.

## **CONSULTATION**

15. Consultation is not undertaken in connection with elections however activities will be undertaken at a national and local level to raise awareness and promote participation in the elections.

## **REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTRIBUTORS**

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

File –Local and Parliamentary Election – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010

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