

	What worked well?	To be addressed	Key recommendations	To be completed by
1. Project planning				
	<p>The election planning worked well on the whole especially areas that were improved following the Mayoral election in 2013, specifically opening postal votes, receipt of ballot boxes and the count.</p> <p>Electoral Commission Standards across all areas were met.</p>	<p>Complete tasks earlier wherever possible E.g. development and printing of stationery for postal vote opening sessions and the verification and count.</p> <p>Prepare ballot boxes and contents in the weekend prior to the election.</p> <p>Include more resources to prepare ballot boxes for collection due to the volume of material PO needs to collect, especially large, heavy ballot papers.</p>	<p>Develop project plan to take into account procedures for combination of 3 polls – Parliamentary, all out ward and all out parish. To include recruitment of all staff, all procedures and count layout.</p>	<p>January 2015</p>
2. Polling places/stations				
	<p>Reduction in number of polling stations by merging dual stations.</p> <p>Success achieved in the programme to reduce the number of schools remaining open for polling day. 22 in 2013, 29 in 2014 and already another 2 for 2015.</p>	<p>Consider impact of a higher turnout for 2015 elections.</p> <p>Use information gathered by Polling station inspectors to inform polling district, places and stations review.</p> <p>Impact of Boundary review on polling district, places and stations review.</p>	<p>A review of polling stations to be commenced as soon as the boundary review is finalised and finalised by the deadline of the statutory period for the polling district, places and stations review by January 2015. The review to include location, accessibility and cost.</p> <p>Letters to go out to schools to invite us to visit to assess if the</p>	<p>January 2015</p> <p>September 2014</p>

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		Mobile polling stations are expensive, time consuming and susceptible to error. Alternative venues need to be explored whenever possible.	poll can be held without the need to close the school.	
3. Equipment and stationery				
	New large outdoor polling station signs used for the 1 st time.	The use of 2 ballot boxes proved to be beneficial at the Time was saved by eliminating the need to separate and sort ballot papers before verification. The boxes were verified simultaneously so if an elector had put one in the 'wrong' box it was easily rectified.	Continue to use 2 ballot boxes and explore the advantages and disadvantages of supplying 3 ballot boxes for those stations with a contested parish election. Check stock levels and procure additional boxes if necessary.	Dec 2014
4. Printers				
	Adare appointed as supplier of printing of electoral services through the NEPO contract.	Project management and proof checking approach worked well and there were no issues with printing of poll cards, ballot papers and postal vote packs. The use of Adare post has reduced the report of non delivery of poll cards and postal vote packs. There was a localised report of non receipt of postal vote packs due to a Royal Mail	Continue to engage in project planning meetings and determine and ensure the best approach for Doncaster.	March 2015

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		employee not carrying out his duties. Investigations showed only 3 streets were affected and 1 postal vote was delivered late but still in time to be used.		
5. Software performance				
	The newly purchased Express software was used for the 1 st time at these elections.	There was a noticeable increase in performance particularly in relation to the production of notices and the transfer of data. The suppliers responded quickly and efficiently to any requests for assistance.	Core team to continue to increase knowledge and expertise in the use of the Express elections management software.	March 2015
6. Effectiveness of other Council departments.				
	In the main all worked well. There were a few isolated issues re equipment and polling stations being open after 6.30am and 1 incident of a premises being opened late although the Presiding Officer had set up in her car boot and no electors attended until the premises were open.	Put systems in place to ensure 100% of polling stations are opened on time. Arrange for a DMBC vehicle to be set up as a polling station and be on stand by to attend anywhere in the Borough in case of unforeseen problems opening a station. The collection of election stationery from the Mary	Heads of Service to be responsible for the management of their teams input. E.g. monitoring delivery of equipment and opening of polling stations on time. Review the arrangements after the declaration of result for packing up and collection, transportation and storage of the votes and election stationery.	Dec 2014

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		Woollett Centre was not possible as arranged on Friday following the poll as keys could not be located. The elections team were all at the count venue.		
7. Recruitment and training				
	<p>Training session were held at The Hub 6pm until 8pm for 4 evenings in the week before the lection. This was to train presiding officer and their poll clerks together. Several PO and PC did not attend on their allocated training session and the idea of training them together did not always happen. Although the feedback was generally good training this volume of people used resources that may have been better used elsewhere.</p>	<p>Train only Presiding Officers, the Council Chamber would then be large enough to hold 4 sessions.</p> <p>Arrange a drop in session for any new poll clerks to view the set-up of a polling station and to ask any questions. Unless we are directed to train all staff.</p>	<p>Establish a list of experienced/well trained Presiding Officers by using by-elections for hands on training.</p> <p>Develop training to incorporate the 3 combined polls for polling stations, postal vote processing and count. Especially where the new boundaries create crossover in parliamentary constituencies.</p>	Dec 2014
8. Processing/handling of queries				
	<p>The contact centre took phone calls for the duration of the election period although more specialised enquiries had to be escalated to the core election team and responding to a high level of calls prevented the election team undertaking other</p>	<p>The contact centre could provide more support with additional training on the election software.</p>	<p>Review and agree provision of contact centre support. Provide enhanced training to Team Leaders.</p>	Dec 2014

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	tasks .			
9. Resources				
	The election team worked long days and weekends and numerous hours over and above their contracted hours. To an extent this is expected and all deadlines were met. However it was particularly challenging at times and needs to be addressed from a risk management perspective.	The capacity of the core election team to fulfil the key elections tasks of a combined all out elections be reviewed and any shortfall in capacity and any training needs to be identified. Explore the employment of DMBC apprentices over the age of 18 as poll clerks and count assistants.	A review to be undertaken of potential temporary internal support available for the election period.	Sept 2014
10. Security/integrity				
	Guidance and information was issued to Candidates and Agents in the nomination pack and briefing sessions.	Several queries were raised regarding publication of materials and posting of election notices.	Further develop the briefing sessions to raise awareness of the requirements during the election campaign.	Oct 2014
11. Verification and count arrangements				
Project planning	The verification and count procedures were revised to increase efficiency and visibility and the improvements were noticeable, particularly when sorting and counting the votes. Observers from the Electoral Commission were in attendance and gave positive feedback on the proceedings and positive	Explore the impact of the count taking place immediately following the poll. In particular the provision of polling station inspectors, checking of unused ballot papers and count supervisor.	Review of staffing resources and build capacity for election count being held immediately after poll. Review of staffing resources required to ensure an effective and efficient process for checking ballot paper accounts and verifying and counting returns from the mini counts.	Dec 2014

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	comments were received from candidates, agents and others attending the count.		Develop new procedures for verifying and counting 3 polls. Develop and deliver training programme for count supervisors.	
Delivery of ballot boxes	Delivery of ballot boxes to the Racecourse was completed by 11.15pm. Postal votes delivered by presiding Officers with the ballot boxes were transported to the final postal vote opening session to be processed and the last postal vote boxes were delivered to the count venue at 12.45am.	Further improve on the delivery method. Investigate using neighbourhood services staff to check off and remove all boxes and stationery from PO car to reduce time checking in.	Review procedures and resources for receiving and checking ballot boxes and official stationery taking into account the count will be taking place immediately at close of poll.	Oct 2014
Timings of verification and count	The verification of all ballot papers began at 9.30am on Friday 23 May 2014 and concluded at 11.30am. The borough election count followed immediately and the first result was declared at 1.10pm and the last result at 2.14pm. The count for the European election began at 6.30 pm on Sunday 25 May and concluded at 10.25pm.	Explore the impact of the counts taking place immediately following the poll and the impact of time taken to verify all 3 polls before the count can commence for the Parliamentary elections.	Carefully consider the timing and commencement of the counts for the all out ward elections and all out parish elections. Ensure contingency plans are in place for unexpected delays and fatigue. Given that polling station staff will not be available as count staff, review the numbers, experience and capability of count assistants in order to ensure a pool is established well in advance of the election timetable.	Oct 2014
Venue and layout	The floor space available at the Racecourse means the count layout worked well. There is	The count taking place immediately after close of poll will need to be carefully	Consider the floor plan for the 2015 combined election verification and counts. Taking	Nov 2014

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	<p>additional space to verify unused ballot papers and to sort and securely pack stationery from the polling stations.</p> <p>The racecourse staff were very helpful and efficient. Security is available 24 hours and ctv cameras in some areas.</p> <p>The ballot boxes were delivered speedily and efficiently due to the Presiding Officers being able to drive up the door of the count hall.</p> <p>The European ballot papers were stored securely from the Friday verification until the Sunday count.</p>	<p>managed to get all boxes and stationery into the count hall when a large number of candidates, agents and guests will be present.</p>	<p>into account the new boundaries, particularly in cases of shared boundaries.</p> <p>Consider the provision of refreshments with the Racecourse to ensure there is adequate food available for purchase whilst keeping waste to a minimum. One suggestion is the provision of a 'packed lunch'.</p>	
12. Postal voting				
Processing	<p>The revised procedure to process a combined postal vote pack worked very well.</p> <p>Postal vote processing time was reduced due to the new election software and procedures. A total of 60,755 postal vote packs were issued and 39,873 (66%) statements were returned. Of these, 705 (1.8%) statements were rejected.</p>	<p>Electors who had their postal vote statement rejected will be informed within 3 months of the poll that their postal vote was rejected because the signature or date of birth that they have supplied on the postal voting statement failed to match that held on record - or where they had simply been left blank. A new postal vote application will be included for</p>	<p>Review resources required for opening verifying and matching postal vote ballot papers taking into account the count will be taking place immediately at close of poll.</p> <p>Review the postal vote procedures to include consideration of a combined pack including parish ballot papers. The date we know whether or not</p>	Oct 2014

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	Of the 705 statements rejected, in 200 cases the statement was not completed at all, in 221 cases neither the signature nor the date of birth matched the application form, in 250 cases the date of birth did not match the application form and in 34 cases signature did not match the application form.	the elector to update their records.	a parish is contested may mean it must be a separate pack. Review the arrangements after the final postal vote session of packing up and collection, transportation and storage of the postal vote statements and stationery.	
13. Candidates and agents				
	<p>A prospective candidates and agents meeting took place on Friday 11 April. The meeting provided information and advice regarding standing for election, completing the nomination paper and general information about the postal vote process and the count. Attendees collected their nomination pack at the close of the meeting.</p> <p>A candidates and agents meeting was held on Friday 25 April following close of nominations. The meeting provided more detailed information, arrangements for postal vote</p>	<p>At this election 103 nomination papers were processed.</p> <p>Several candidates submitted incomplete or incorrectly completed nomination papers that impacted on the processing time.</p> <p>In several cases the certificate of authorisation was not handed in with the nomination papers and/or the description used did not match the authorised description.</p> <p>Mainly due to the above the appointment system was not</p>	<p>In 2015 we can expect in excess of 300 together with nomination papers for parliamentary candidates and parish candidates.</p> <p>Meet with group leaders in advance of next years all out election. Raise awareness of all out elections and the need for nom papers to be right 1st time.</p> <p>It would be useful if political parties could appoint a person to check all nomination papers are complete before they are</p>	Jan 2015

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	<p>opening and the count were discussed in detail and it was an opportunity for questions to be asked. An information pack was sent out to all election agents or the candidate if they were their own election agents, if they did not attend.</p> <p>The information gave the electronic link to the expenses guidance and forms.</p>	<p>practicable. One appointment was booked and several nomination papers were handed in and those handing in incorrectly completed papers needed assistance.</p> <p>There were several enquires about matters that had been discussed at the meetings and regarding information that was included in the nomination pack.</p> <p>Candidates were asking for information that had gone out to agents.</p> <p>Agents are used to being provided with hard copies of the expenses forms.</p>	<p>submitted.</p> <p>Group leaders to consider the practicality of the practice of appointing other councillors as agents in an all-out elections.</p> <p>Expenses forms to be included in the nomination pack.</p> <p>Explore the advantages/disadvantages of an appointment system.</p>	
14. Communication				
	<p>A 'Ballot Box' was published on the front page of DMBC website for the election period to provide easy links to all election information e.g. notices and results.</p> <p>There was a PowerPoint presentation at the count that updated the results as they were</p>	<p>Elections 2015 will have more candidates for each result. Explore if the elections software can download information in real time to eliminate duplication of effort of the communications team producing tables for PowerPoint presentation and website.</p>	<p>Discuss practicalities with IT and test any system prior to the count.</p>	<p>Sept 2014</p>

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	<p>declared.</p> <p>Results were published on the website as they were declared.</p>			
15. Summary of feedback				
	<p>Feedback from training sessions was complimentary although attendees questioned the need for training and the venue and training session times.</p> <p>Compliments were received from members regarding the new processes at the opening postal vote's sessions and from attendees at the verification and count.</p> <p>Letters of thanks received from political parties and individuals congratulating electoral services on the presentations and high quality documents made available and for the courteous manner when dealing with enquiries.</p>		<p>Consider the number of training sessions needed for each job and detail the training dates on the application forms.</p>	