



## Agenda

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To all Members of the

# ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE

**Notice is given that a Meeting of the above Committee is to be held as follows:**

**Venue:** Room 008 - Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

**Date:** Tuesday, 13th March, 2018

**Time:** 10.00 am

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### Items for Discussion:

Item	Page No.
1. Apologies for absence.	
2. To consider the extent, if any, to which the public and press are to be excluded from the meeting.	
3. Declarations of Interest, if any.	
4. Minutes of the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee Meeting held on 21st November 2017.	1 - 6
<b>A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.</b>	
5. Electoral Services Update on Key Issues.	7 - 14
6. Individual Electoral Registration - Progress Report.	15 - 24

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**Jo Miller**  
**Chief Executive**

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Issued on: Monday 5 March 2018

Governance Officer for this meeting:

Amber Torrington, Governance Officer.  
Tel. 01302 737462

**MEMBERS OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES  
COMMITTEE (11)**

**Chair** – Councillor Phil Cole

**Vice-Chair** – Councillor Nick Allen

Councillor Sean Gibbons	Councillor Jane Nightingale
Councillor Pat Haith	Councillor Tina Reid
Councillor David Hughes	Councillor Kevin Rodgers
Councillor Majid Khan	Councillor Sue Wilkinson
Councillor Sue McGuinness	

# Agenda Item 4.

## DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 21ST NOVEMBER, 2017

A MEETING of the ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE was held in Room 008, CIVIC OFFICE on TUESDAY, 21ST NOVEMBER, 2017, at 10.00 am.

#### PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Phil Cole  
Vice-Chair - Councillor Nick Allen

Councillors Pat Haith, David Hughes, Sue McGuinness, Jane Nightingale, Kevin Rodgers and Sue Wilkinson.

#### APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sean Gibbons and Tina Reid.

#### 5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

#### 6 MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY, 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee held on 11 July, 2017, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 7 DONCASTER DEVOLUTION COMMUNITY POLL

The Committee received a report, which updated Members on the 'Community Poll' taking place to seek the views of the Doncaster Electorate about the next stages in Devolution proposals.

In presenting the report, the Monitoring Officer reported that following the extraordinary Council meeting on Thursday, 9th November, 2017, Council had agreed that Doncaster Council would hold a Community Poll in December, seeking the views of Doncaster's electorate as to whether they would prefer Doncaster to pursue a Devolution deal based upon either a Wider Yorkshire area or upon the Sheffield City Region arrangement. The Local Government Act 2003 provides that Councils can carry out a Community Poll of their inhabitants on issues regarding the delivery of services. The Act provides that the Returning Officer of the Council can decide the means used to take the views of its residents. It was noted that whilst the results of the poll are not legally binding, the Council has agreed to do its best to respect the outcome of the Poll.

The Monitoring Officer advised that for reasons of efficiency, costs and practicalities, the Council was to carry out a postal vote exercise to those persons registered on the electoral roll, who would receive a voting pack in the first week of December,

comprising of an introductory letter from the Mayor, a leaflet providing information about both devolution options, a ballot paper and a return envelope. People would be given the option to either complete returns on-line or by post. There will be no polling stations utilised for this Poll. The ballot paper would be marked with a unique identifying code for security purposes, but would not require the voter's signature. It was noted that the cost of the community poll was estimated to be in the region of £120,000, which would include costs for postage and printing. Costs may vary, dependent upon the number of postal vote returns. There is a significant saving if voters use the on-line option. It was explained that the higher the turnout the more expensive it would be.

It was further reported that the election process is to be carried out by the Electoral Reform Services (ERS). ERS are leading experts in this area and have previously carried out devolution ballots in other local authorities. The Council's internal Electoral Services Team would not be involved to a great extent, but would provide ERS with data, deal with the more complicated telephone enquiries and provide general support to the process. It was further reported that postal vote returns would go directly to an ERS address, were they are opened securely and then scanned and the scanner reads the results. ERS have given an undertaking to turn around the postal vote results within 24 hours when the poll closes on 1200 noon on 20th December 2017.

Discussion followed, during which the Electoral Services Manager and Monitoring Officer responded to various questions from Members and clarification was provided in respect of the following issues:-

- The counting of postal vote returns would be carried out by the Electoral Reform Services.
- Voting packs were to be sent out to the electorate on 1st December 2017 and it was expected that people would be in receipt of the packs on 2nd or 3rd December
- The Council will be using social media channels to encourage people to submit returns on line in order to reduce costs to the authority and publicise the options available to them for voting.
- As with general and local elections, only those people on the electoral register that are aged 18 years or above on the date of the community poll will be eligible to vote.
- It was noted that the Council were actively encouraging people not currently on the register to be included on the electoral register. This was to ensure that as many people as possible would be eligible to vote. The deadline for the receipt of information to ERS was Friday, 24 November.
- In respect of the inclusion of 'None of the above' question on the ballot paper, it was noted that this was not an option at this point in time. "None of the above" is not generally an option on ballot papers in any event. Doncaster Council have previously committed itself to devolution. The purpose of this poll is to seek views on whether or not the residents of Doncaster favoured a wider Yorkshire arrangement or the Sheffield City Region option. Members were advised that the wording of the questions on the ballot paper had been drafted following advice from Counsel.

A wider discussion on devolution was then held by members of the Committee.

The Chair on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Electoral Services Manager for her work in compiling the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee in noting the report, welcomed the Democratic initiative taken by the Council in respect of this issue.

## 8 ANNUAL CANVASS UPDATE

The Electoral Services Manager submitted a report, which provided an update on a number of key work streams being undertaken by the Electoral Services Team, in relation to the Register of Electors Annual Canvass.

The Electoral Services Manager summarised the key points in the report and tabled for Members' information, an updated copy of Appendix A to the report, which provided a breakdown of the Household Enquiry Forms (HEF) by return method in comparison to 2015 and 2016. It was explained that the HEFs were sent out to the property and not the electors. Members noted that at the start of the canvass, HEFs had been sent out to approximately 137,000 properties. Of the first letters that were sent out, there had been a 57% response rate from households, which were either responded to on-line, by phone, by text and by post. It was noted that further to the second reminder being sent out, a good response was received. A third reminder was subsequently sent out to chase up responses from those properties which hadn't responded. The Electoral Services Team employed canvass staff to visit properties to try and obtain a response. In addition to visiting properties they were also contacting people by telephone and social media and the One Stop Shop, the Council's Contact Centre and Council Tax departments were also trying to obtain a response when a member of the public contacted them.

It was reported that throughout the canvass, it had resulted in 13,073 people being sent an invitation to register, (ITR) form and the Council had obtained new people that had since been added to the register. The Electoral Services Manager explained that these people had either moved or had reached the age of 18, 16-17 year old attainer's, or people who had moved into the Borough that hadn't completed the HEFs online automatically. It was further reported that the Council was currently investigating 7,712 electors on the register to identify if they may have been duplicated, due to a change of name. It was reported that the Electoral Services Team endeavoured to encourage people to respond to the HEFs.

The Electoral Services Manager then outlined the activities taking place to help increase the response to the annual canvass and increase the number of electors on the register which included telephone canvassing, dedicated personal visits to care homes and HMO's, targeting hard to reach/unapproachable areas, working with schools and colleges and social media. It was noted that the annual canvass would end this week and the annual electoral register would be published on 1st December, 2017.

In referring to the statistics, Members were pleased to note that the total percentage return rate had increased from 71.58% in 2015 to 82.87% in 2016. The Electoral Services Manager reported that Doncaster was currently at the same response rate to that of last year's figures, with an additional £2,500 properties been added to the

register and she hoped that it would increase up to another 5% once the canvass came to a close.

During discussion, Members raised a few queries and commented on various aspects of the report. It was noted that:-

- the Electoral Services Team liaised with south and west Yorkshire local authorities in order to ascertain information regarding returns achieved and shared and considered best practice. At the beginning of September, Doncaster was achieving the same response rate as neighbouring authorities.
- 8-12 people were employed to carry out the telephone canvass, who worked in the Council's Contact Centre, and were very efficient and experienced in this type of work. It was noted that both personal visiting canvassers and telephone canvassers were paid by return results.
- In relation to the targeting of those people who were not registered, it was noted that the most cost effective and efficient way to get to those individuals on the register was by canvassers visiting their homes, rather than sending out a number of reminders by post.
- In accordance with legislation, the Electoral Services Team were able to register people by telephone. However, like any registration the information provided had to be verified by the Department of Works and Pensions.
- The Council targeted people living in shared houses and amend the register of electors in terms of the number of people living in each room.
- In relation to the response to the canvass, Electors were able to respond to the Household Enquiry Form via the Short Message Service (SMS), provided that there is no changes to the property.
- The Council was not legally able to remove non-responders from the register of electors. It was explained that the Council was unable to remove a person from the register, unless they had received notification and had been provided with two valid reasons to remove a person.

During further discussion, regarding completion of the annual canvass in December, the Electoral Services Manager gave an undertaking to provide the Committee with details on the number of electors that had been obtained by canvassers knocking on doors and also to provide Members with a further update on the canvass statistics.

At the close of debate, the Chair on behalf of the Committee thanked the Electoral Services Manager and the Electoral Services Team and staff involved for their work in delivering the annual canvass, commenting that the electoral registration efforts were commendable.

RESOLVED that the report on the Register of Electors Annual Canvass, be noted.

9 ELECTIONS/BY-ELECTIONS UPDATE

Members received a report, introduced by the Electoral Services Manager, which provided an update on recent Elections that had taken place since the last meeting of the Committee, in relation to Thorne Moorends Town Council, held on 13th July, 2017.

A by-election was held in the Thorne Town ward on 13th July 2017, as a result of a casual vacancy occurring due to the death of Town Councillor. It was reported that out of 9,261 eligible electors to vote in the Thorne Town ward election, 1,498 electors cast their vote, marking a turnout of 16.18%

In addition, a further vacancy had recently occurred due to a Councillor resigning and it was not called by electors for the vacancy to be filled by an election. Therefore, on the 6th November 2017 the Clerk was notified to arrange for the casual vacancy to be filled by co-option.

The Electoral Services Manager reported that currently there were two casual vacancies that had been advertised in Bawtry Town Council, which was due to close on 7th December and Cantley with Branton Parish, Council which was due to close on 5th December.

A short question and answer session followed seeking points of clarification on matters referred to in the report. Members noted that the costs for Parish/Town Councils elections were paid for by Parish/Town Councils. The costs varied and were dependent upon the number of electors, postal vote electors and the number of polling stations required. The next all out Parish Council elections were to take place in 2021, which would coincide with the Mayoral and Borough elections.

RESOLVED that the report on the Elections/By-Elections update, be noted.

10 BOUNDARY COMMISSION PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARY REVIEW 2018 - REVISED PROPOSALS

The Committee considered a report, presented by the Electoral Services Manager, which provided an update on the revised proposals for new 2018 Parliamentary constituency boundaries for Doncaster. The Electoral Services Manager reported that she had sent an email to Members regarding the revised proposals.

The Electoral Services Manager summarised the key points within the report and drew Members' attention to the Boundary Commission's revised proposals for the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries, which were set out in paragraphs 7 to 9 of the report. The Electoral Services Manager explained that the figures in the report were based on 2015's electorate. It was noted that consultation on the Boundary Commissions revised proposals was to take place from 17th October to 11th December 2017. A detailed copy of the report in relation to the revised proposals could be accessed via the Boundary Commissions website, as set out within paragraph 11 of the report. It was reported that the Boundary Commission have received responses to the proposals from Councillors, members of the public, and MP's and those comments have been taken on board. New Mappings of the ward boundaries were available to view at the Council's One Stop Shop.

During discussion on this item, a Member sought confirmation of when the revised proposals would come into effect. It was noted that the next cycle of Parliamentary

elections was 2022 and the proposals for new 2018 Parliamentary constituency boundaries were currently out for consultation. When the boundaries were finalised, they would be presented to Parliament for endorsement prior to implementation.

Members discussed the revisions to the Parliamentary boundaries and the consequence of the Dearne South ward being moved from the Borough of Barnsley to the Doncaster North constituency. Whilst it was felt that the proposals were an improvement on the initial proposed constituencies, Members raised some concern regarding communities from a neighbouring Borough being divided and transferred to another area. Members discussed the implications for Doncaster and how this would impact on the election process in terms of verification and the counting of ballot papers.

RESOLVED that the report, be noted.

CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



# Doncaster Council

## Report

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13<sup>th</sup> March 2018

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

### ELECTORAL SERVICES UPDATE ON KEY ISSUES

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018, Sheffield City Region Combined Authority will elect a mayor for the first time. This report provides a detailed update to Members on the preparations for the Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority Mayoral Election.

#### EXEMPT REPORT

2. N/A

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

3. 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?

4. Having accessible and well organised elections is key to public engagement in the democratic process. Elections are the cornerstone of our democratic process and are important to all of our residents. Elections give the electorate the opportunity to hold politicians to account and shape the future direction of national and local government.

#### BACKGROUND

5. In 2014 the Sheffield City Region Combined Authority was established. Led by the nine council leaders, this brought together the four 'constituent' South Yorkshire authorities with Bassetlaw, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Derbyshire Dales and North East Derbyshire as 'non-constituent' members. The Combined Authority Mayor will work with these leaders to deliver the area's economic development, regeneration and transport priorities to drive the growth of the economy. This is the first time the Combined Authority will elect a Mayor for the Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield

Combined Authority. The successful candidate will be elected for a four-year term, with another election in 2022.

Like our elected Mayor the supplementary voting system is used which means electors will have two votes in this election – one for their first choice candidate and one, if they wish to use it, for their second choice candidate.

The Terms of Reference of this Committee provide an overview of Electoral Services issues. Set out below is the current position in respect of recent and current activity in relation to this upcoming election:

#### Preparations for the Combined Authority Mayoral Election

Preparations are underway for the Combined Authority Mayoral Election taking place on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018. Polling hours will be the usual 7.00am to 10.00pm.

Dave Smith, the Chief Executive of Sheffield City Region will be the Returning Officer for the election, with Johanna Miller the Council's Chief Executive acting as Local Returning Officer in Doncaster.

The Verification and Count of all ballot papers will take place on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at Doncaster Racecourse at 9.00am. Arrangements for recruiting staff are well underway for all positions on polling stations, postal vote opening and count.

All polling stations have been booked and confirmed. However, there was a requirement to change four polling stations due to the Tour de Yorkshire coming through the borough causing road closures with no alternative access into these polling stations at some point during polling day. There was also the need to change two other polling stations for the reasons set out below. These new polling stations will be highlighted on polling cards notifying those effected electors of a temporary change to their previous polling station on this occasion.

#### Stainforth & Barnby Dun

- Polling District RB - Stainforth Pavilion has been designated as the new polling place replacing Stainforth Youth Centre due to the access restrictions and a road closure into the polling station during Tour de Yorkshire passing through.
- Polling District RC - Our Lady Assumption Church Hall has been designated as the new polling place replacing Stainforth Methodist Church due to the access restrictions and a road closure into the polling station during Tour de Yorkshire passing through.

#### Norton & Askern

- Polling District PK – After two visits to the area there is no other option available than to use a portable unit on this occasion replacing Fishlake Viallage Hall due to the access restrictions and a road closure into the polling station during Tour de Yorkshire passing through.

### Hatfield

- Polling District LD – Broadwater Drive Communal Hall (which is used for polling district LC and will now become a double station on this occasion) has been designated as the new polling place replacing East Doncaster Development Trust due to the access restrictions and a road closure into the polling station during Tour de Yorkshire passing through.

### Sprotbrough

- Polling District TH – St James' Church has been designated as the new polling place replacing The Stables which is now closed and up for sale.

### Bentley

- Polling District NF – Jet Social Club has been designated as the new polling place replacing St Phillip & St James Church due to the Bishop attending and unable to re-arrange his visit.

The usual polling station finder on the Councils website will be updated with these changes. The 'find my polling station' app allows electors to search for their polling station by typing in their post code or address and not only will details of their polling station pop up they will be given a map and directions on how to get there from their home address. The 'find my polling station' app address is also provided to all electors on their polling cards.

Elected Members will be welcome to attend the Count as observers

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

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

7. Elections are statutory function and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

8. This report is primarily for information only.

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

- 9.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li><li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li><li>• Inward Investment</li></ul>	
	<b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for	

	<p>Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and</li> </ul>	The Council has statutory duties to support elections

	residents to provide effective leadership and governance	
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## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

10. Ensuring the necessary arrangements are in place to deliver well-run elections improve our reputation and meet the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards. Sufficient resources will need to be made available to run this Election and to continue to drive individual registration in order to ensure that the Council complies with its legal duties. Due to the Tour de Yorkshire taking place on polling day a close working relationship between the Electoral Services and the Tour de Yorkshire team are ongoing to try where possible to keep disruption to polling stations and electors to a minimum.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 2/3/18]

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

- The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Orders 2016, 2017 & 2018
- Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000Electoral
- Registration and Administration Act 2013

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials AT Date 05/03/18]

12. Sheffield City Region will provide funding to the Council for the costs of this election (and is expected to include the cost of the Mayoral booklet). The maximum amount allocated to Doncaster is £424k and the costs are not expected to exceed this amount based on the costs of previous elections.

## HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

13. N/A

## TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

14. N/A

## HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

15. N/A

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials TB Date 01/03/18]

16. The Council has a duty to ensure Elections are well managed to allow all eligible electors to freely vote by secret ballot ensuring freedom of expression and political debate by exercising their vote.

## CONSULTATION

17. N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

18. Previous EDSC reports.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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

**Timetable of Proceedings for  
Combined Authority Mayoral Election  
Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018**

PERP	from Tuesday 27 March 2018
Publication of Notice of Election	Tuesday 27 March 2018
Receipt of Nominations	Wednesday 28 March 2018 to 4:00 pm Friday 6 April 2018
Withdrawal of Candidate	4:00 pm Friday 6 April 2018
Appointment of Election Agents	4:00 pm Friday 6 April 2018
Publication of Notice of Election Agents	4:00 pm Friday 6 April 2018
Publication of Statements of Persons Nominated	by 4:00 pm Monday 9 April 2018
Last Date for Registration	Tuesday 17 April 2018
Receipt of Postal Vote Applications	5:00 pm Wednesday 18 April 2018
Publication of Notice of Poll	Wednesday 25 April 2018
Receipt of Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Wednesday 25 April 2018
Appointment of Poll and Count Agents	Thursday 26 April 2018
First Day to Issue Replacement Lost Postal Ballot Papers	Friday 27 April 2018
Receipt of Emergency Proxy Vote Applications	5:00 pm Thursday 3 May 2018
Last Day to Issue Replacement Spoilt or Lost Postal Ballot Papers	5:00 pm Thursday 3 May 2018
Day of Poll	7:00 am to 10:00 pm Thursday 3 May 2018
Counting of Votes and Declaration of Results	Friday 4 May 2018
Return of Election Expenses	Friday 8 June 2018

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### Report

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**13<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

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

#### **INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION – PROGRESS REPORT**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides an update to Members on a number of key work streams being undertaken by the Electoral Services Team in relation to the Register of Electors and Annual Canvass.

#### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. 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?**

4. Ensuring the Electoral Register is as up to date as possible and carrying out proactive electoral activity is key to public engagement to ensure residents are registered to enable them to vote when an election occurs.

#### **BACKGROUND**

5. Each year the Council has a duty to review its Electoral Register to ensure it is up to date by carrying out a full review and annual canvass, before publishing a new revised Electoral Register on the 1<sup>st</sup> December each year. As well as the annual canvass, ongoing Individual Electoral Registration proactive initiatives are needed to capture people moving properties, working with coroners to obtain death lists, capturing those upcoming 16 year olds or anyone changing their name.

## Annual Canvass

The annual canvass commenced in August 2017, at that point there were 137,706 properties in Doncaster and an electorate of 225,595. We received 79,144 (57.51%) responses to the initial Household Enquiry Form (HEF) without any prompting. Those responses came via the internet, post, text or telephone. A total of 58,562 HEF reminders were issued in September then a further 37,344 2<sup>nd</sup> stage reminders were issued in October. During September to November we carried out telephone canvassing as well as canvassers out door knocking the remaining outstanding non-responding properties.

Throughout the canvass approx. 13,073 'Invitation to Register' (ITR) forms for new applicants have been issued, these include any electors who may have moved. There were also 7,712 electors who we are currently investigating to ensure they should be removed from the register.

The final response to the 'Household Enquiry Form' was 118,017 (85.70%) properties. Which is slightly up on the past two years; a full breakdown by return method in comparison to 2015 and 2016 can be found at appendix A of this report.

## Current Electoral Proactive Activity

6. A proactive approach is required throughout the year and not just during the canvass period in order to maintain an accurate and complete register, ensuring as far as possible that all eligible persons are on the register and that all non-eligible persons are removed. To ensure this is achieved we are currently carrying out the following initiatives:

### Household Enquiry Letter (HNL)

A HNL is a letter detailing all residents which live at a property and asks if any of the information is incorrect to contact electoral services to update the electoral register or go on-line and register to vote. 19,735 HNLs were sent out in February to any new properties added to the Electoral Register since 1<sup>st</sup> December and all those non-responding properties to the annual canvass HEF.

### 'Invitation to Register' (ITR) Canvass

There are still approx. 3,201 names on the Electoral Register which are not yet fully registered. In order for them to register we still require their personal identifiers; national insurance number and date of birth. They have received three reminder letters and the next stage will be to carry out personal visits to their property.

### Home movers

Working with the Council Tax department we are contacting any new home movers and encouraging/reminding them to remember to change their address on the Electoral Register.

### Contact Centre and one stop shop reception

The Contact Centre and the one-stop-shop in the Civic Office are asking customers if they are on the electoral register and advising them to register to vote for the upcoming election. They have a web based version of the electoral register which allows them to check if someone is registered, apply

for postal vote or register them there and then. This is encouraging people to register and help raise awareness of the upcoming election taking place on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

7. As of the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 the full electorate was 222,937 and a full electorate breakdown by ward is provided at Appendix B.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

8. Electoral Registration is a statutory function and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

9. This report is primarily for information only.

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

10.

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li><li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li><li>• Inward Investment</li></ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li><li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li><li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li><li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li><li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li></ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Every child has life-changing</li></ul>	

	<p>learning experiences within and beyond school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	The Council has statutory duties to support elections

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

11. Every effort is made to drive Individual Electoral Registration to ensure the Council meets the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards and complies with its legal duties.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 2/3/18]

12. There are comprehensive statutory provisions covering the delivery of electoral registration activity.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials AT Date 05/03/18]

13. The Cabinet Office provided the Council with £59k for 2017/18 towards the cost of Individual Electoral Registration. Electoral Services also completed an application for a further £41k of funding (Justification Led Bid) which is awaiting Ministers approval. However, the Cabinet Office has indicated it

will likely be approved. These allocations are expected to allow a break-even position for the registration of electors for 2017/18.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

14. N/A

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

15. N/A

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

16. N/A

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials TB Date 01/03/18]**

17. The Council has a duty to ensure all eligible electors can register to vote easily and are provided with several ways in order to do so. Registration information is also available in alternative languages by video (YouTube) on the Council Web page and also in Braille.

## **CONSULTATION**

18. N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

19. Previous EDSC reports.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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**Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer**

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HEF return breakdown by method in comparison to 2015, 2016 and 2017

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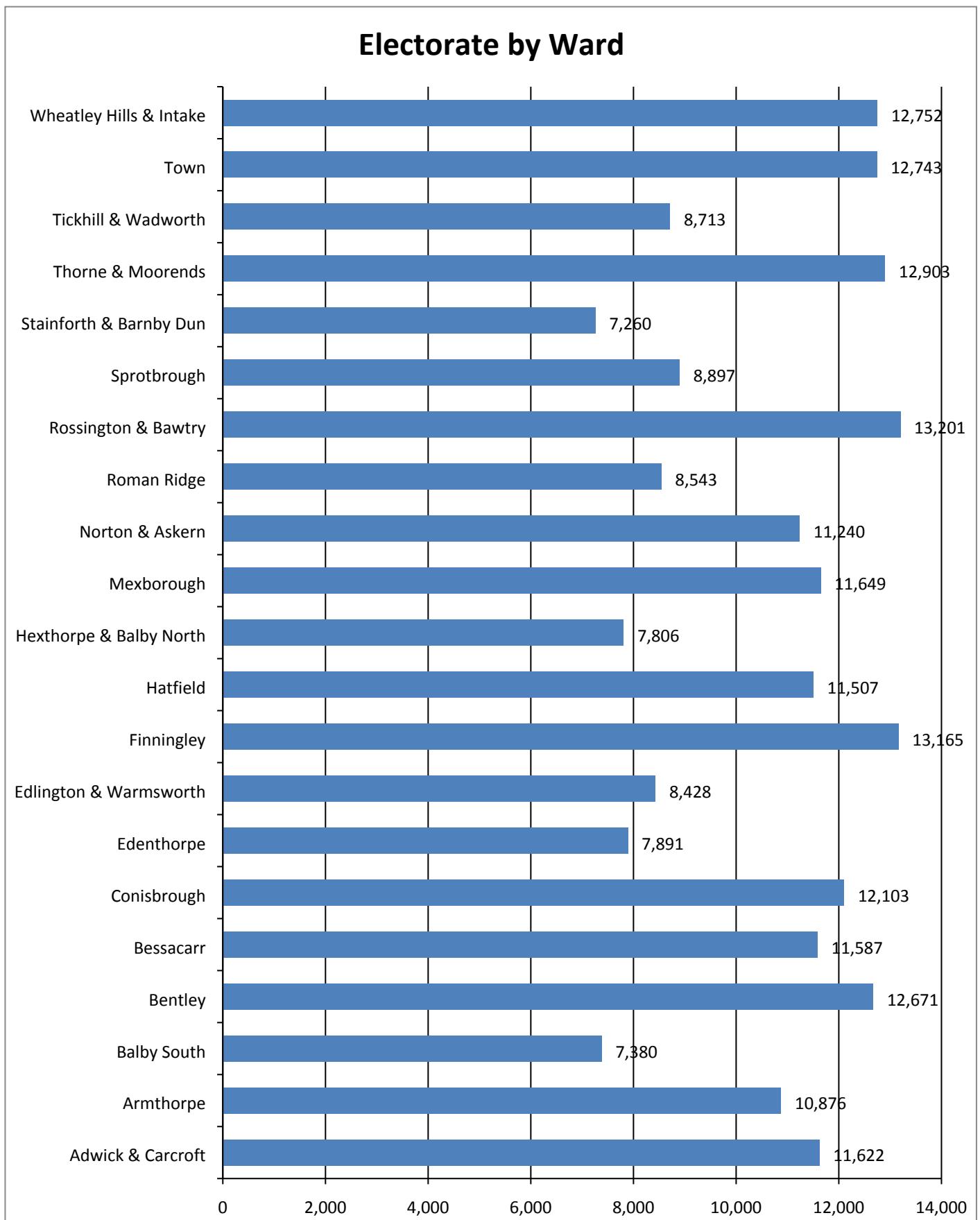
<u>Date</u>	Total Properties	Total Retn	Total% Retn Rate	Outstanding Forms	Retns by Post	Phone	Web	SMS	Changes	ERS Retn Total	% ERS	2016 total returns	2016 total % return rate	2015 total returns	2015 total % return rate
14-Aug	137706	37,138	26.99%	100,485	10,783	7,636	9,755	8,932	3,037	26,323	19.11%				
21-Aug	137705	63,950	46.47%	73,672	33,018	8,787	11,682	10,342	9,262	30,811	22.37%	41,785	31.00%		
29-Aug	137717	72,156	52.43%	65,465	38,503	9,372	13,008	11,131	10,719	33,654	24.35%	52,035	38.35%	50,609	37.49%
4-Sep	137720	79,144	57.51%	58,473	43,575	9,739	13,956	11,683	13,291	35,378	25.68%	69,902	51.55%	52,273	38.70%
11-Sep	137770	81,490	59.17%	56,229	45,014	9,934	14,375	11,963	13,975	36,272	26.32%	71,852	52.98%	58,109	43.03%
18-Sep	137772	85,192	61.86%	52,525	45,275	10,649	15,804	13,256	14,566	39,918	28.97%	77,571	57.19%	59,378	43.97%
25-Sep	137774	91,366	66.34%	46,350	48,590	11,158	17,112	14,205	16,355	42,475	30.82%	90,206	66.50%		
2-Oct	137775	96,496	70.07%	41,220	52,747	11,297	17,591	14,469	18,311	43,357	31.46%	94,176	69.45%		
9-Oct	137776	98,734	71.69%	38,984	54,379	11,394	17,886	14,627	19,109	44,356	32.19%	95,658	70.54%		
16-Oct	137779	100,374	72.88%	37,344	55,501	11,472	18,164	14,760	19,701	44,396	32.22%	99,017	73.02%		
23-Oct	137814	101,149	73.45%	36,570	55,895	11,525	18,369	14,870	20,019	44,764	32.48%	99,952	73.71%	83,018	61.45%
30-Oct	137813	102,039	74.09%	35,679	56,455	11,562	18,541	14,982	20,371	45,585	33.08%	103,806	76.55%	84,220	62.37%
6-Nov	137823	103,789	75.36%	33,929	57,497	11,641	18,911	15,226	20,779	45,778	33.21%	105,194	77.58%	85,745	63.50%
13-Nov	137810	107,678	78.20%	30,020	60,482	11,774	19,382	15,495	21,864	46,651	33.85%	106,152	78.29%	88,748	65.72%
20-Nov	137,810	111,352	80.87%	26,346	62,704	11,991	20,136	15,935	23,079	48,062	34.87%	109,621	80.83%		
27-Nov	137,812	117,305	85.19%	20,393	67,819	12,084	20,591	16,155	25,763	48,487	35.18%	112,364	82.87%	96,659	71.58%
30-Nov	137,884	118,017	85.70%	19,698	68,438	12,098	20,645	16,176	25,884	38,919	35.49%				

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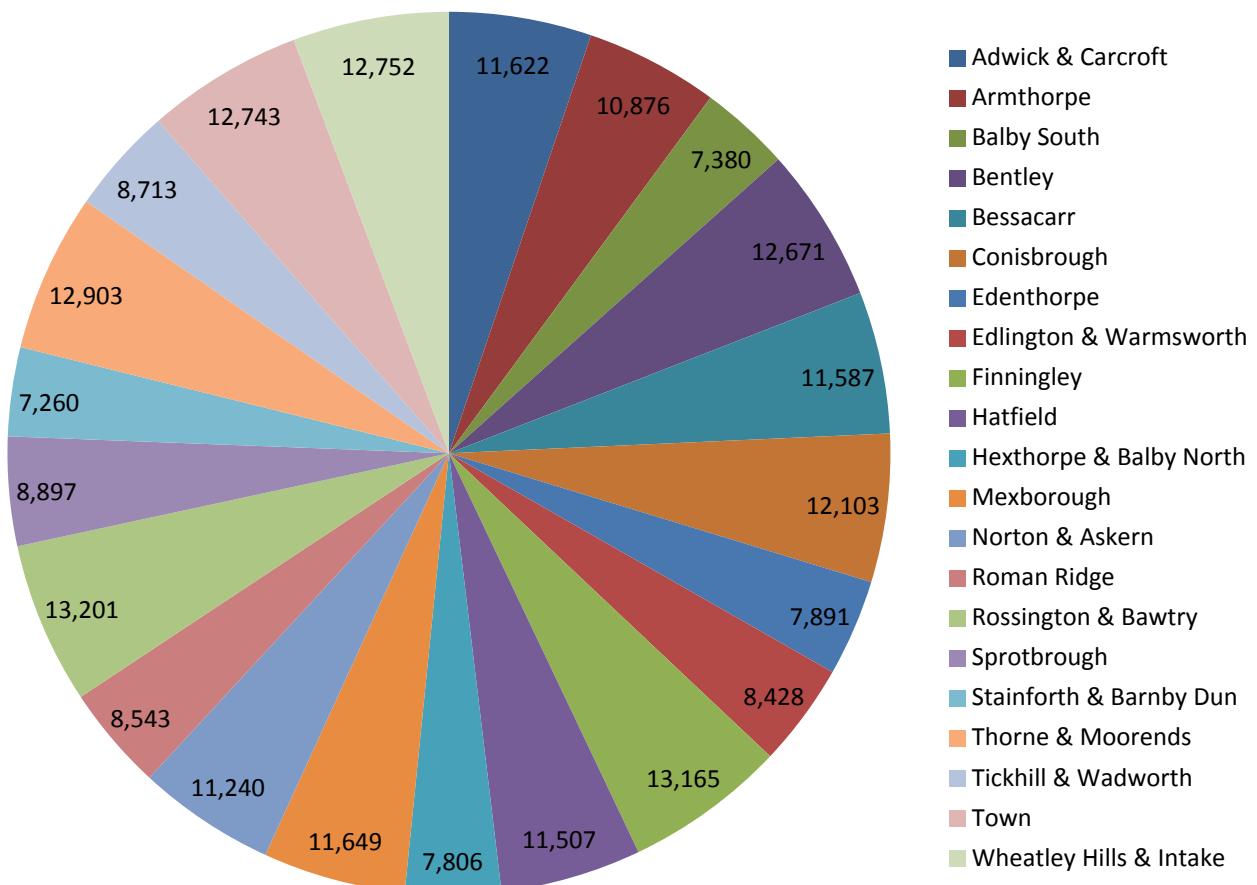
Individual Electoral Registration (IER) Current Register 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018

## Register breakdown

Total Electorate: 222,937



## Electorate by Ward





### Report

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13<sup>th</sup> March 2018

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

#### **BY-ELECTION UPDATE**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. Due to the sad recent death of Cllr Tony Cordon a vacancy occurred for a Ward Councillor within the Armthorpe Ward. A By-Election was called by two local government electors to fill the vacancy by holding an election. This report provides a detailed update to Members on the election and results.

#### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. This report is for information only.

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

4. Having accessible and well organised elections is key to public engagement in the democratic process. Elections are the cornerstone of our democratic process and are important to all of our residents. Elections give the electorate the opportunity to hold politicians to account and shape the future direction of national and local government.

#### **BACKGROUND**

5. Local Government Election – Armthorpe Ward

A vacancy occurred due to the death of a sitting Councillor and a by-election was held for the Armthorpe Ward on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018. There were two nominations received and Frank John Tyas was elected as a Councillor for Armthorpe; the results were as follows:

## Results

Name of Candidate	Description (if any)	Number of Votes
Tyas, Frank John	Labour Party	1431 Elected
Williams, Martin	Independent	466

There was an eligible electorate of 11,172 electors of which 2,941 had Postal Votes issued and 1,418 (48.21%) were returned and personal identifiers correctly verified. A further 14 postal votes were rejected and those electors will be notified accordingly. As well as those Postal Votes issued there were five polling stations on polling day where 484 (5.88%) electors visited to vote.

In total 1,902 electors cast their vote, of which 4 were rejected for voting for more than one candidate and 1 for being unmarked, marking a turnout of 17.02%.

### Bawtry Town Council

A vacancy was also advertised and called by ten electors for Bawtry Town Council. However, there was only one nomination received, therefore the election was uncontested and the candidate (Paul Muxlow (Independent)) was automatically elected.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

6. Elections are statutory function and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

7. This report is primarily for information only.

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

- 8.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li><li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li><li>• Inward Investment</li></ul>	
	<b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for	

	<p>Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> </ul>	The Council has statutory duties to support elections

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	
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## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

9. Ensuring the necessary arrangements are in place to deliver well-run elections improve our reputation and meeting the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 2/3/18]

10. 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 [Officer Initials AT Date 05/03/18]

11. All costs associated with this Election are at a cost to the Council which is expected to be around £10,000. This was an unexpected election and so will add to the estimated overspend for elections in 17/18. Additional on-going budget will be provided in 18/19 to help avoid future overspends.

## HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

12. N/A

## TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

13. N/A

## HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

14. N/A

## EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials TB Date 01/03/18]

15. The Council has a duty to ensure Elections are well managed to allow all eligible electors to freely vote by secret ballot ensuring freedom of expression and political debate by exercising their vote.

## CONSULTATION

16. N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

17. Previous EDSC reports.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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