



Agenda

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 007a - Civic Office Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

Date: Tuesday, 26th November, 2019

Time: 10.00 am.

Items for Discussion:

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 9th July 2019. 1 - 6
- A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.**
5. Preparations for Parliamentary General Election. 7 - 12

Damian Allen
Chief Executive

Issued on: Monday 18 November 2019

Governance Services Officer for this meeting: Jonathan Goodrum, Senior
Governance Officer. Tel. 01302
736709

6. Elections, By-Elections and Neighbourhood Planning Referendums Update. 13 - 18
7. Annual Canvass - Progress Report. 19 - 26

MEMBERS OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE (11)

Chair – Councillor Phil Cole

Vice-Chair – Councillor Nick Allen

Councillor Sean Gibbons	Councillor Pat Haith
Councillor Rachel Hodson	Councillor Mark Houlbrook
Councillor Majid Khan	Councillor Jane Kidd
Councillor Kevin Rodgers	Councillor Derek Smith
Councillor Sue Wilkinson	

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 4.

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 9TH JULY, 2019

A MEETING of the ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE was held in Room 007A - CIVIC OFFICE on TUESDAY, 9TH JULY, 2019, at 10.00 am.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors Pat Haith, Rachel Hodson, Mark Houlbrook, Kevin Rodgers, Derek Smith and Sue Wilkinson.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sean Gibbons.

1 PERSONAL REFERENCE

In opening the meeting, the Chair stated that he wished to place on record his thanks to the outgoing Members of the Committee for the contributions they had made during their tenures on the Committee. The Chair also welcomed Councillors Rachel Hodson, Majid Khan (absent), Jane Kidd (absent), Kevin Rodgers and Derek Smith as new Members of the Committee.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

There were no declarations reported at the meeting.

3 MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY AND 1ST MAY 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 5th February and 1st May 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 ELECTION RESULTS - EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION HELD ON THURSDAY 23RD MAY 2019

The Committee received a report which provided a detailed update on the results of the European Parliamentary Elections held on Thursday 23rd May 2019. The Electoral Services Manager explained that, due to the uncertainty surrounding the UK's exit from the European Union, these Elections had been called at relatively short notice, with confirmation that they were going ahead only having been received on 7th May 2019.

In summarising the turnout figures, the Electoral Services Manager confirmed that the numbers of people casting votes at polling stations and those who had voted by post had been of similar numbers (both in the region of 33, 500). It was noted that letters had been sent to those electors whose postal vote packs had been rejected, informing them of the rejection and the reasons why.

The Electoral Services Manager drew the Committee's attention to Appendix A to the report, which gave a full breakdown of Doncaster's totals and turnout, along with a breakdown of the total result and details of the six elected MEPs for the Yorkshire and Humber region. She added that further breakdowns by each individual local authority could be found on the Leeds City Council's website.

General discussion followed, during which Members asked a range of questions and made various comments on the running of these Elections.

Arising from a query on the statistics in relation to rejected ballot papers, the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services explained that the proportion of rejected papers was a very small percentage given the contentious nature of the national debate that had been continuing in the lead up to the Elections. He added that it was apparent that the vast majority of rejected ballot papers had been purposely spoiled by voters, rather than being caused by confusion over how many parties to vote for or any other reason.

In reply to a comment with regard to the requirement for European voters to complete a second form in order to be eligible to vote, the Electoral Services Manager outlined the measures that had been taken by the Council to ensure that as many European voters as possible were able to participate in the European Parliamentary Elections. This had included sending out letters to every effected voter (approximately 10,000), and also publicising on the Council's website and via other platforms and forums. In addition, the Council's contact centre staff had also been trained to be able to assist people and explain the process. There had been a very quick turnaround time for sending the relevant forms out to voters within the timeframe available, but a large number of forms had been returned in time.

After the Committee had congratulated the Council's Electoral Services Team, and the wider staff involved, on the successful running of the Elections, especially in the light of having to make the necessary arrangements at short notice, it was

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report and to place on record this Committee's thanks to all staff involved in the conduct of the European Parliamentary Elections.

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The Electoral Services Manager tabled, for Members' information, an update sheet comprising graphs which showed the Borough's electorate statistics by ward at 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 and percentage of postal voters by ward. The Committee noted that it would receive further updates through the year, as the annual canvass was progressing.

The Electoral Services Manager then outlined the timeframe for the annual canvass and confirmed that the deadline for people to respond to the initial Household Enquiry Form (HEF) was the end of July. It was noted that 21,000 responses to the HEF had already been received through electronic response. Reminder letters would be sent out in August, giving people a further month to respond. This would then be followed by telephone and door knock canvassing. Other awareness raising activities carried out by the Electoral Services team included working closely with schools and colleges to publicise the registration process with young people in order to increase the number of attainers on the Register ready for when they reached voting age.

In reply to questions, the Electoral Services Manager outlined the additional electorate/register data that could be circulated to Members if they so wished. This could be provided by way of detailed breakdowns per polling district, ward and the whole Borough showing statistics under various categories, such as the numbers of streets, properties, electors, attainers (16/17 year olds), over 76 year olds, postal voters, proxy voters, service and overseas voters.

After Members had discussed the various factors that could potentially influence the registration figures, such as population movements in and out of the Borough, and influxes of students, it was

RESOLVED that the update be noted.

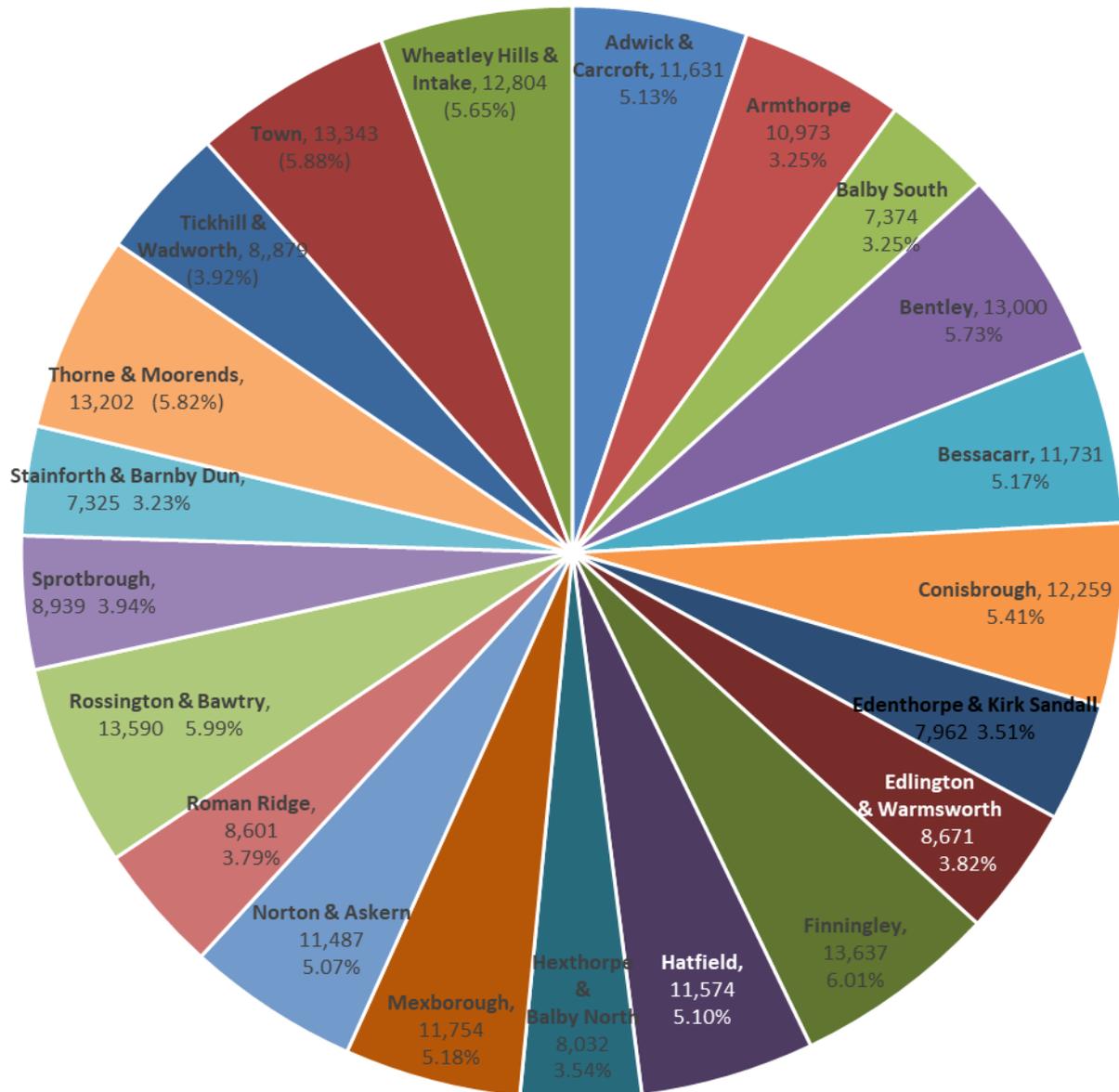
CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**Electorate Statistics by Ward 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019**

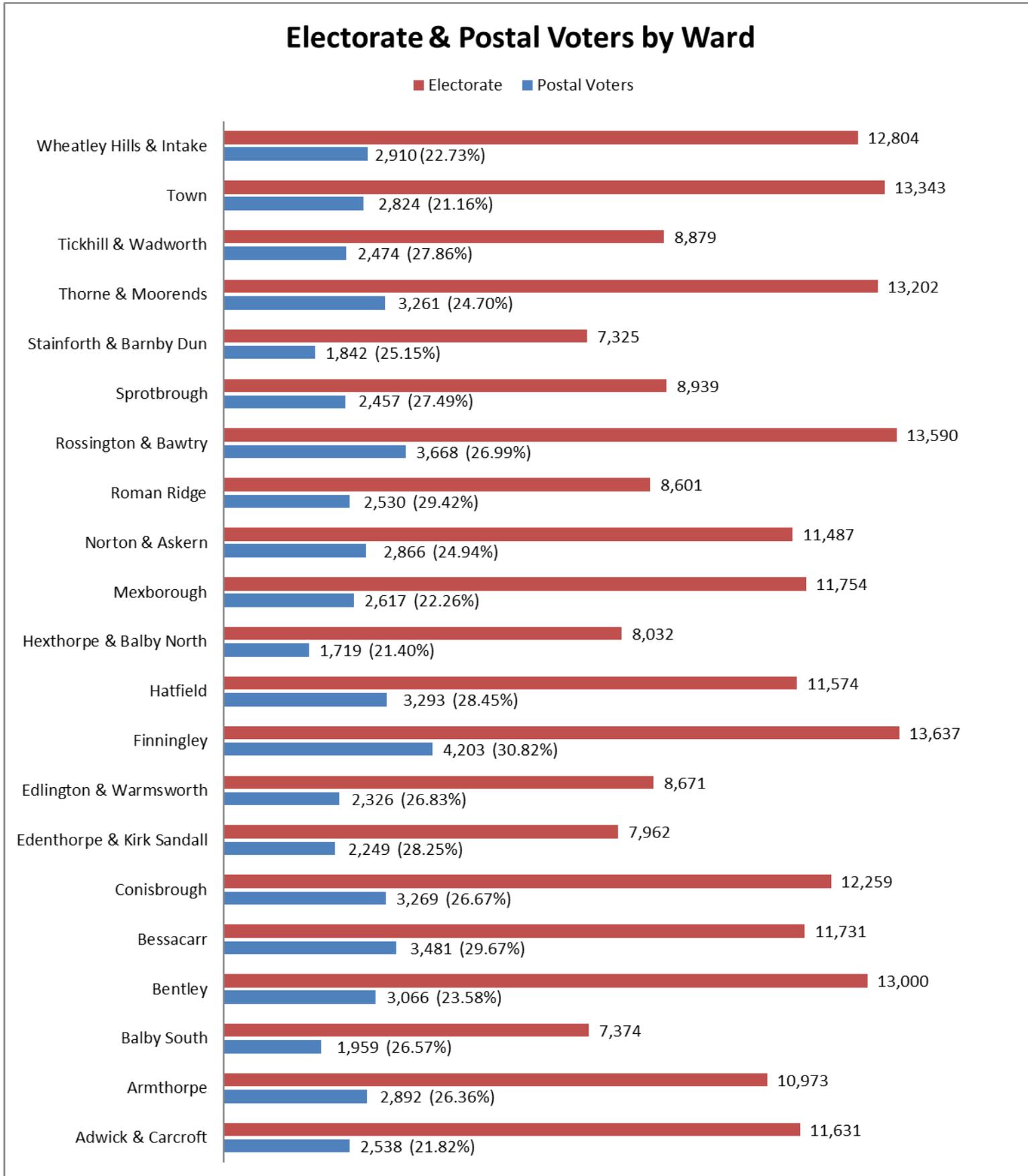
Total Electorate: **226,768** (1<sup>st</sup> December: 225,136)  
 Ward % of full Electorate



- |                           |                     |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| ■ Adwick & Carcroft       | ■ Armthorpe         | ■ Balby South             | ■ Bentley                |
| ■ Bessacarr               | ■ Conisbrough       | ■ Edenthorpe              | ■ Edlington & Warmsworth |
| ■ Finningley              | ■ Hatfield          | ■ Hexthorpe & Balby North | ■ Mexborough             |
| ■ Norton & Askern         | ■ Roman Ridge       | ■ Rossington & Bawtry     | ■ Sprotbrough            |
| ■ Stainforth & Barnby Dun | ■ Thorne & Moorends | ■ Tickhill & Wadworth     | ■ Town                   |
| ■ Wheatley Hills & Intake |                     |                           |                          |

Total Electorate: 226,768

Total Postal Voters: 58,444 (25.77% of the electorate are postal voters, % per ward broken down below)





## Doncaster Council

### Report

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26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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

#### **PREPARATIONS FOR PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides an update to Members on the preparations for the parliamentary general election to be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The report also updates members on the ongoing review of polling districts and polling places and outlines some changes that have been made in preparation for the parliamentary election.

#### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. The Committee is asked to note the report.

#### **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. Comprehensive reviews ensure that there are appropriate polling districts and polling places available which contributes to the smooth and efficient operation of elections. This is key to ensure residents of the Borough are able to vote when an election occurs.

#### **BACKGROUND**

5. The terms of reference of this Committee provide for an overview of Electoral Services issues. A Parliamentary General Election has been called for the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and preparations are well underway for the conduct of that election in the 3 parliamentary constituencies in Doncaster.

6. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires local authorities to undertake a full review of polling places and polling districts (“the review”) every four years. The Act requires the current review to be started and completed between the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 and the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020.
7. Set out below is the current position in respect of preparations for the election and an update on the review.

### **Parliamentary General Election Preparations**

8. Preparations for the Parliamentary General Election are now at an advanced stage. The Electoral Register was published on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The Returning Officer has scheduled regular meetings with the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, Electoral Services Manager, Head of Communications and other key officers.
9. Polling stations have been booked and confirmed with the following 11 new polling stations identified. These new polling stations will be highlighted on polling cards notifying electors of a change to their previous place.
  - Doncaster Central  
Polling Districts CF and CH - Town Field Pavilion has been designated as the new polling station, replacing Town Field Primary School and the International Centre, respectively. The former is to avoid the need to use a school and a suitable alternative venue is available. The latter is a change as the original venue is to close. These may be recommended as permanent changes at the conclusion of the review.
  - Don Valley  
Polling District GJ - The Community Centre on Reresby Walk temporarily replaces the Community Centre on Hickleton Street where repairs are currently being undertaken.  
Polling District JC - St Michael’s Church replaces St Michael’s Primary School. The venue replaces a school where a suitable alternative venue is available. This may be recommended as a permanent change at the conclusion of the review.  
Polling District KE – Holy Trinity & St Oswald’s Church replaces St Oswald’s Academy. The venue replaces a school where a suitable alternative venue is available. This may be recommended as a permanent change at the conclusion of the review.  
Polling Districts LC and LD – Kinsbourne Green Communal Hall replaces Broadwater Drive Communal Hall which is no longer available. This may be recommended as a permanent change at the conclusion of the review.
  - Doncaster North  
Polling District RC – Stainforth Youth Centre temporarily replaces Stainforth Methodist Church which is not available for this election.  
Polling District SF - Mexborough Library replaces Mexborough Family Hub as the library is thought to be a more suitable venue. This may be recommended as a permanent change at the conclusion of the review.

Polling District TC – All Saint’s School, Hooton Pagnell replaces a portable unit at the Pickburn Arms Public House which has closed and is no longer available. This may be recommended as a permanent change at the conclusion of the review.

Polling District TO – Goldsmith Community Centre replaces the Levett School as the Community Centre is a more suitable venue. This may be recommended as a permanent change at the conclusion of the review.

10. Recruitment is well underway for the necessary staff to work on the election. There is a requirement to recruit 34 staff for each postal vote session, 172 Presiding Officers, 233 Poll Clerks, and approximately 300 members of staff to work on the election count. Wherever possible any staff that we employ on polling stations will not be engaged on the Thursday evening verification/count.
11. There will be a separate election count for each of the 3 parliamentary constituencies in Doncaster. The verification and counts will both take place on the night of the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019.
12. Unfortunately the normal count venue of Doncaster Racecourse is not available. However, the Elections Team have secured an excellent alternative venue for the count.

### **The Polling Places Review**

13. The review involves an evaluation of each existing/proposed venue against issues such as accessibility, voter convenience and availability for polling (including at short notice). The Elections Team commenced the current review in September 2019 and the original intention had been to present the final findings of the review. However, due to decision to hold a General Election at short notice it has not yet been possible to conclude the review.
14. The work undertaken on the review to date and the requirement to prepare for the imminent parliamentary election has led to the identification of a number of new polling venues for this election, as set out in paragraph 9 above. The proposed changes have been shared with members as part of a consultation exercise. Some of these changes may be recommended as permanent changes when the review is complete. The review will be completed by the deadline of the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and a report setting out the findings and recommendations will be presented to this Committee shortly thereafter.
15. There will be a polling station finder on the Council’s website and the details will be included 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.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

16. The review is a statutory function and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

17. This report is primarily for information only.

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

18.

| Outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Implications |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <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 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 residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul> | <p>The Council has statutory duties to support elections</p> |

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

19. 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: 16/11/19]

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

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AT Date:18/11/19]

21. The costs of the general election are reclaimed from central government and so are not expected to be an additional pressure on the Council’s budget. Therefore, it is important that accurate cost information is supplied to the Elections Team so that all eligible costs can be reclaimed.

The Election Claims Unit have allocated initial advances totalling £375k and a final reconciliation and claim will be submitted post election. Estimates of cost range between £500k and £600k but due to the short notice of the election and time of year definite cost projections are difficult to make. It is not clear when this funding will be received but is likely to mean a financial year-end adjustment.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

22. Human Resources implications have not been requested.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

23. Technology implications have not been requested.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

24. Health implications have not been requested.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SRF Date 16/11/19 ]**

25. 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**

26. N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

27. Previous EDSC reports.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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**Damian Allen**  
**Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer**



## Doncaster Council

### Report

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26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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

#### **ELECTIONS/BY-ELECTIONS/REFERENDUMS UPDATE**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides Members with a detailed update and the results of the Bawtry Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.
2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

3. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

#### **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. Neighbourhood Planning Referendums allow local communities to influence and take more control of decisions around planning in their areas.

#### **BACKGROUND**

5. Elections and Referendums are significant projects, which are delivered by a small core team with polling stations supported by internal staff from across the Council.

#### **Bawtry Neighbourhood Planning Referendum**

6. The Council's fifth Neighbourhood Planning Referendum took place in Bawtry on Thursday 12th September 2019. The purpose of this report is to provide the results of the referendum.

There was an eligible electorate of 2,765 electors of which 750 had requested Postal Votes. 352 postal votes (46.93%) were returned and personal identifiers correctly verified. A further 3 postal votes were rejected and those electors will be notified accordingly. As well as those Postal Votes issued there was one polling station on polling day which 97 (4.81%) electors visited to vote.

In total 490 electors cast their vote, of which 0 were rejected making a turnout of 17.72%.

The outcome of the Referendum was in favour of using the Neighbourhood Plan for Bawtry to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area and the result was reported to Full Council on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019. A full breakdown of the results can be found at **Appendix A** of this report.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7. Elections and Referendums are statutory functions 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.

| Outcomes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Implications |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <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</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |              |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>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 residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul> | <p>The Council has statutory duties to support elections</p> |

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

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

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SRF Date: 12/11/19]

11. 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
  - The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AT Date: 12/11/19]

12. The Council's Planning Department pay for the costs associated with a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum, which is then claimed back from Central Government.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

13. N/A

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

14. N/A

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

15. N/A

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SD Date: 12/11/19]**

16. The Council has a duty to ensure Elections and Referendums 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 and Election/Referendum declaration of results.

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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**Damian Allen**  
**Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer**

# DECLARATION OF RESULT OF POLL

## DONCASTER COUNCIL

### Bawtry Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2019

I, Katrina Barber, being the Deputy Counting Officer at the Neighbourhood Planning Referendum for the Bawtry area held on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019, do hereby give notice that the number of votes recorded at the said Referendum is as follows:

| Question in Referendum                                                                                                                                           |                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| “Do you want Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Bawtry to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?” |                 |
|                                                                                                                                                                  | Number of Votes |
| Number of votes cast in favour of a ‘YES’                                                                                                                        | 411             |
| Number of votes cast in favour of a ‘NO’                                                                                                                         | 79              |

| The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows: | Number of ballot papers |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| A want of an official mark                           | 0                       |
| B a vote for more than one answer                    | 0                       |
| C writing or mark by which voter could be identified | 0                       |
| D being unmarked or void for uncertainty             | 0                       |
| Total                                                | 0                       |

Electorate: **2765**

Ballot Papers Issued: **490**

Turnout: **17.72 %**

I do hereby declare that more than half of those voting have voted in favour of using the Neighbourhood Plan for Bawtry, to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

Dated: Friday 13<sup>st</sup> September 2019

Katrina Barber  
Deputy Counting Officer

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## Doncaster Council

### Report

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26<sup>th</sup> November 2019

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

#### **ANNUAL CANVASS – 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 Registrars to obtain death lists, anyone changing their name and capturing those upcoming 16 year olds.

## **Annual Canvass**

6. The annual canvass commenced in July 2019, at that point there were 139,051 properties in Doncaster and an electorate of 226,768. We received 78,401 (56.41%) responses to the initial Household Enquiry Form (HEF) without any prompting. Those responses came via the internet, post, text or telephone. HEF reminders were issued in August then a further 2<sup>nd</sup> stage reminder was issued in September leaving approx 37,000 properties left to canvass. During September to October we carried out telephone canvassing as well as canvassers out door knocking the remaining outstanding non-responding properties. The new Register of Electors was published on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to coincide with the UK Parliamentary Election being held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019
7. Throughout the canvass approx. 19,573 'Invitation to Register' (ITR) forms for new applicants to be added to the electoral register have been issued, these include any electors who may have moved. We have received 14,538 new registrations; these also include those people who have moved from one property to another within the borough. There are also 298 electors whose applications are either awaiting verification from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or which we are trying to obtain further information for, in order to get them on the electoral register.
8. We will be doing what we can to encourage all of the above to turn into actual verified electors by doing a telephone canvass and personal visits to any non-responding HEF and ITR forms and processing the information instantly and sending it to DWP for verification. Any queries returned from DWP will be investigated quickly to try and turn them to a verified elector.
9. A full breakdown by return method in comparison to 2016, 2017 and 2018 can be found at **Appendix A** of this report.
10. To help increase the response to the annual canvass and increase the number of electors on the electoral register Electoral Services are currently being proactive by:

### **Telephone Canvassing**

Following the success of previous years we are undertaking a Telephone Canvass alongside the door knock canvass. This enables us to contact those hard to reach areas/electors. We are now focussing on an ITR canvass to chase up the non-responding electors to try and obtain the information there and then over the phone; we also have a dedicated phone line for electors to call us back with their information should they not have it to hand at the time of the call.

### **Care Homes & HMO's**

We have dedicated Canvass Team Leaders which are canvassing every care home and housing with multiple occupancies (HMO) within the borough by arranging an appointment with the Care Manager and/or Building Manager to build up a close working relationship to ensure we are kept up to date on the frequent residential changes. Only people residing at a property may register at a property for example landlords and carers may not register at a property unless they actually live there.

### **Targeting hard to reach/unapproachable areas**

Where necessary extra support and time has been given to selective areas such as foreign nationals that may not understand how to complete the form. We have now obtained forms in 25 different languages. SLHD have provided access to high rise flats and buildings. We have also targeted hard to reach areas by telephone.

### **School/Colleges**

We are working with Schools and Colleges through their social media links by providing schools with adverts and information to put on their social media to try and increase the number of attainers ready for when they reach voting age. We currently have approx. 1,885 attainers on the register, at the start of the annual canvass there were 2,402.

### **Social Media**

Social media updates are sent out via facebook and twitter through 'My Doncaster' pages to provide information to Doncaster residents from the Electoral Commission and Cabinet Office and encouraging them to respond to the HEF and register online.

11. The work undertaken during the annual canvass contributes to the annual Electoral Register that was published on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The Electorate as at 4th November 2019 stood at 226,658.

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

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

## **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

13. This report is primarily for information only.

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

- 14.

| <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;<br><br><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 Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                     |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <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 residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul> | <p>The Council has statutory duties to support elections</p> |

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

15. 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: 12/11/19]**

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

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AT Date: 12/11/19]**

17. The Cabinet Office has provided the Council with £75,317 for this financial year (2019/20) towards the cost of Individual Electoral Registration. Any costs in excess of this amount will be met from existing budgets.

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

18. N/A

#### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

19. N/A

#### **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

20. N/A

#### **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SD Date: 12/11/19]**

21. 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**

22. N/A

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

23. Previous EDSC reports.

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APPENDIX A

2019 Canvass Statistics

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Total Properties</u> | <u>Total Retn</u> | <u>Total% Retn Rate</u> | <u>Outstanding Forms</u> | <u>Retns by Post</u> | <u>% by post</u> | <u>Phone</u> | <u>Web</u> | <u>SMS</u> | <u>Changes</u> | <u>ERS Retn Total</u> | <u>% ERS</u> | <u>2018 Total Retn</u> | <u>2018 Total% Retn Rate</u> | <u>2017 Total Retn</u> | <u>2017 Total% Retn Rate</u> | <u>2016 total returns</u> | <u>2016 total % return rate</u> |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|------------|------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8-Jul       | 139,051                 | 21,111            | 15.18%                  | 117,940                  | 52                   | 0.04%            | 5,795        | 7,575      | 7,658      | 1,115          | 21,028                | 15.12%       | 14,549                 | 10.49%                       |                        |                              |                           |                                 |
| 16-Jul      | 139063                  | 44,428            | 31.96%                  | 94,566                   | 13,338               | 9.60%            | 8,517        | 11,714     | 10,773     | 4,516          | 31,004                | 22.29%       | 39,367                 | 28.38%                       | 37,138                 | 26.99%                       | 41,785                    | 31.00%                          |
| 22-Jul      | 139062                  | 60,724            | 43.69%                  | 78,262                   | 26,426               | 19.00%           | 9,321        | 13,101     | 11,734     | 6,899          | 34,156                | 24.56%       | 59,230                 | 42.70%                       | 63,950                 | 46.47%                       | 52,035                    | 38.35%                          |
| 29-Jul      | 139062                  | 78,401            | 56.41%                  | 60,661                   | 41,457               | 29.81%           | 9,876        | 14,339     | 12,501     | 11,238         | 36,716                | 26.40%       | 66,815                 | 48.16%                       | 72,156                 | 52.43%                       | 69,902                    | 51.55%                          |
| 5-Aug       | 139066                  | 80,788            | 58.13%                  | 58,197                   | 43,011               | 30.95%           | 10,040       | 14,715     | 12,772     | 11,865         | 37,527                | 26.99%       | 76,692                 | 55.28%                       | 79,144                 | 57.51%                       | 71,852                    | 52.98%                          |
| 12-Aug      | 139072                  | 86,465            | 62.21%                  | 52,517                   | 43,411               | 31.21%           | 10,999       | 17,125     | 14,636     | 12,813         | 42,760                | 30.74%       | 78,046                 | 56.25%                       | 81,490                 | 59.17%                       | 77,571                    | 57.19%                          |
| 19-Aug      | 139099                  | 90,452            | 65.08%                  | 48,529                   | 44,967               | 32.35%           | 11,454       | 18,369     | 15,345     | 13,259         | 45,168                | 32.47%       | 86,976                 | 62.70%                       | 85,192                 | 61.86%                       | 90,206                    | 66.50%                          |
| 26-Aug      | 139255                  | 98,275            | 70.71%                  | 40,702                   | 51,724               | 37.22%           | 11,588       | 18,885     | 15,622     | 16,578         | 46,095                | 33.11%       | 92,990                 | 67.03%                       | 91,366                 | 66.34%                       | 94,176                    | 69.45%                          |
| 2-Sep       | 139253                  | 100,058           | 72.00%                  | 38,917                   | 52,739               | 37.95%           | 11,700       | 19,316     | 15,820     | 17,280         | 46,836                | 33.63%       | 101,163                | 72.92%                       | 96,496                 | 70.07%                       | 95,658                    | 70.54%                          |
| 10-Sep      | 139260                  | 101,404           | 72.96%                  | 37,579                   | 53,691               | 38.63%           | 11,750       | 19,542     | 15,919     | 17,729         | 47,211                | 33.90%       | 102,300                | 73.74%                       | 98,734                 | 71.69%                       | 99,017                    | 73.02%                          |
| 16-Sep      | 139260                  | 101,819           | 73.26%                  | 37,164                   | 53,855               | 38.75%           | 11,782       | 19,678     | 15,996     | 17,866         | 47,456                | 34.07%       | 102,990                | 74.24%                       | 100,374                | 72.88%                       | 99,952                    | 73.71%                          |
| 26-Sep      | 139262                  | 103,628           | 74.56%                  | 35,355                   | 55,146               | 39.68%           | 11,848       | 19,972     | 16,135     | 18,661         | 47,955                | 34.43%       | 103,446                | 74.57%                       | 101,149                | 73.45%                       | 103,806                   | 76.55%                          |
| 1-Oct       | 139267                  | 105,611           | 75.99%                  | 33,372                   | 56,957               | 40.98%           | 11,874       | 20,060     | 16,173     | 18,761         | 48,107                | 34.54%       | 105,619                | 76.14%                       | 102,039                | 74.09%                       | 105,194                   | 77.58%                          |
| 7-Oct       | 139266                  | 106,512           | 76.64%                  | 32,469                   | 57,627               | 41.46%           | 11,906       | 20,190     | 16,234     | 19,231         | 48,330                | 34.70%       | 108,597                | 78.29%                       | 103,789                | 75.36%                       | 106,152                   | 78.29%                          |
| 15-Oct      | 139274                  | 110,004           | 79.16%                  | 28,964                   | 59,840               | 43.06%           | 12,078       | 20,857     | 16,641     | 20,497         | 49,576                | 35.59%       | 111,631                | 80.48%                       | 107,678                | 78.20%                       | 109,621                   | 80.83%                          |
| 21-Oct      | 139273                  | 112,513           | 80.96%                  | 26,454                   | 61,921               | 44.56%           | 12,138       | 21,073     | 16,746     | 21,270         | 49,957                | 35.86%       | 117,291                | 84.57%                       | 111,352                | 80.87%                       | 112,364                   | 82.87%                          |
| 28-Oct      | 139,268                 | 116,552           | 83.88%                  | 22,405                   | 65,501               | 47.14%           | 12,189       | 21,309     | 16,857     | 22,952         | 50,355                | 36.15%       | 119,637                | 86.26%                       | 117,305                | 85.19%                       |                           |                                 |
| 04-Nov      | 139,323                 | 117,000           | 84.20%                  | 21,948                   | 65,706               | 47.29%           | 12,221       | 21,462     | 16,908     | 23,154         | 50,591                | 36.31%       | 119,859                | 86.42%                       | 118,017                | 85.70%                       |                           |                                 |

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