



# Doncaster Council

## 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:** Council Chamber, Civic Office, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU

**Date:** Tuesday, 13th July, 2021

**Time:** 10.00 am

### **PLEASE NOTE THE VENUE FOR THIS MEETING**

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**Note:** Due to current restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, there will be very limited capacity in the public gallery for observers of the meeting. If you would like to attend to observe in person, please contact Governance Services on 01302 737462 / 736723 / 736716 / 736709 to request a place, no later than **12.00 noon on Monday, 12th July, 2021**. Please note that the pre-booked places will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis and once pre-booked capacity has been reached there will be no further public admittance to the meeting. For those who are attending the meeting, please bring a face covering, unless you are exempt.

### **BROADCASTING NOTICE**

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**Damian Allen  
Chief Executive**

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Issued on: Wednesday, 7 July 2021

Governance Services Officer for this meeting: Andrea Hedges  
Tel. 01302 736716

## Items for Discussion:

- |  | <b>Page No.</b> |
|--|-----------------|
| 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 2nd February, 2021.  | 1 - 6           |
| <b>A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.</b>  |                 |
| 5. 2021 Election Results - (To Follow).  |                 |
| 6. Annual Canvas.  | 7 - 12          |
| 7. 2023 Parliamentary Boundary Review.   | 13 - 20         |
| 8. Urgent Action Taken in Accordance with Council Procedure Rule 36 - Temporary Appointment of Members to Cantley-with-Branton Parish Council. | 21 - 24         |

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

**Chair** – Councillor Ian Pearson

**Vice-Chair** – Councillor Nick Allen

Councillor James Church	Councillor Majid Khan
Councillor Gemma Cobby	Councillor Emma Muddiman-Rawlins
Councillor Julie Grace	Councillor Thomas Noon
Councillor Debbie Hutchinson	Councillor Andy Pickering
Councillor Jake Kearsley	

# Agenda Item 4.

## DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 2021

A MEETING of the ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE was held at the MICROSOFT TEAMS - VIRTUAL MEETING on TUESDAY, 2ND FEBRUARY, 2021, at 10.00 am.

#### PRESENT:

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

Councillors Pat Haith, Mark Houlbrook, Majid Khan, Andy Pickering, Kevin Rodgers, Derek Smith and Sue Wilkinson.

#### APOLOGIES:

An apology for absence was received from Councillors Jane Kidd

#### 10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

#### 11 MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee meeting held on 24 November, 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### 12 ANNUAL CANVASS UPDATE REPORT

Trina Barber, the Electoral Services Manager presented a report which updated the Committee on a number of key work streams being undertaken by the Electoral Services Team, in relation to the Registration of Electors and Annual Canvass, since the Committee's last meeting in November, 2020.

The report outlined the position at the end of the annual canvass 2020, and provided a breakdown of the postal votes and the electorate by ward as at 1st December, 2020, which were attached to the report at Appendices A and B, respectively. The Electoral Services Manager highlighted that since the publication of the report, there had been some changes to the electoral register, due to some electors had been removed from the register, and the Electoral Services Team were still in the process of contacting those people.

It was noted that since completion of the annual canvass, some Care Homes, including private care homes and multiple occupancy properties, had been added to the Register. The Electoral Services Team had achieved a 93% response return rate from Care Homes and multiple occupancy, which fall under Route 3 of the Canvass.

The Electoral Services Manager reported that this year was the first time that the canvass had been carried out under the new Reforms. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic no door canvassing took place to chase up returns, however, with telephone canvassing and data matching, an overall response rate of 94.68% had been achieved, which was higher than that in previous years and in line with neighbouring authorities.

In reporting on completion of the canvass, it was noted that in common with other local authorities, funding support from the Government had reduced from previous years, as it was expected that the Reforms would reduce the cost of the Canvass. However, due to technical issues with the Gov.uk e-mail system more letters had to be posted out than anticipated causing an expected cost. It was noted that in response to the Cabinet Office, the Electoral Services Manager had submitted a bid to obtain additional funding, and would inform the Committee of the outcome at the next meeting.

Following the presentation of the report, the Electoral Services Manager answered a number of questions from Members on the following issues:-

- In response to a query as to whether the Council had in previous years been successful in receiving additional funding from the Government for the annual canvass and whether the Council would be successful this year, the Electoral Services Manager advised that in the past, Doncaster had been successful in applying for funding. She explained that the application process was protracted and was heavily scrutinised by the Cabinet Office and hoped that the Council would again be successful this year.
- In reply to a question as to whether the reason for the increase in the response rate from this year's canvass, was due to people having to stay at home during lockdown, the Electoral Services Manager stated that because the canvass reform had only been introduced this year, it was difficult to say with any certainty, if this was the case. However, it would be possible to benchmark and compare against next year's figures.
- Further to questions in relation to capturing people moving into newly built properties to register to vote, the Electoral Services Manager explained that she works closely with the Planning Department regarding any new proposed housing developments in the Borough and was notified when new houses are built. The Electoral Services Team then write to the new homeowner, asking them to complete and return the form to register names on the electoral register. The Electoral Services team also work closely with the Council Tax department as part of this work.
- In reply to a question as to whether the Electoral Services Team would be sending out reminder letters prior to the May election to the 7,500 outstanding properties (harder to reach groups and newly built properties), the Electoral Services Manager confirmed that household notification letters had been sent out to those people who had not responded, informing them of the upcoming election, and asking them to complete a registration form.
- Further to a query, the Electoral Services Manager confirmed that there were a minority of people who did not want their names to be put on the electoral

register with varying reasons, but she gave assurances that the Electoral Services Team endeavoured to encourage people to register. She confirmed that for reasons permitted by law, requests were sometimes received from external and internal agencies, to access details on the electoral register, to prevent fraud. It was noted that failure to register can have an adverse effect on credit ratings.

- In reply to a question regarding how the Electoral Services Team engaged with and kept track of those harder to reach groups who were constantly on the move, including the boating and travelling communities, the Electoral Services Manager explained that although they may travel outside of the Doncaster area if they came back to their main residence, they remained on the register. In relation to empty properties, the Electoral Services Team worked with the Council Tax department to try and establish which properties were empty.

The Committee, in welcoming the report, commended the Electoral Services Manager for an excellent report, and were pleased to observe that Doncaster had achieved a 94.68% response rate in the annual canvass, which compared favourably to that of other neighbouring authorities.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## 13 2021 ELECTIONS UPDATE

The Committee considered a report which updated Members on the upcoming elections scheduled for 6th May, 2021.

In presenting the report, Scott Fawcus, Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services, confirmed that the elections scheduled on 6th May, 2021, as detailed in paragraph 6 of the report, were to take place unless the Council was notified otherwise by the Government. He reported that the elections would be Covid compliant involving social distancing, restrictions on the number of people entering Polling Stations at any one time and the use of PPE by members of staff and electors. Due to Covid-19, it was expected that there would be an increase in postal vote applications. The Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services further reported that there was some challenges booking Polling Stations due to some previously used premises now being used as testing and vaccination centres. It was noted that meetings were taking place with the Council's Assets Team, to address this issue. During the next few weeks, the Electoral Services Team would be recruiting staff to work on the elections, the majority of whom would be Council staff. Jobs would include processing of postal votes, working at Polling Stations and working on the count. The Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services confirmed that the count for each election would be held at the Doncaster Racecourse.

Discussion followed, during which a Member asked whether the Electoral Services Team had received guidance from the Government with regard to the requirements/practicalities on how the elections would operate, in particular, highlighting the difficulties of obtaining signatories to stand as a candidate and canvassing during lockdown. The Electoral Services Manager advised that she had recently met with the Cabinet Office, who were working with Ministers on the requirements in relation to the nomination process, campaigning, possible changes to

the restrictions, and if the country was still in lockdown at the time of the elections, what the requirements would be.

In relation to the Mayoral election, clarity was sought whether a political party having a candidate standing in the Mayoral election, would receive a free mail drop for circulation of the candidates booklet to every household. The Electoral Services Manager confirmed that whilst posting out of the booklet was free, the political parties had to pay a contribution towards the costs for the printing of the booklet. In relation to the Police and Crime Commissioner election, information would be provided on the Police and Crime Commissioners website and Barnsley Council's website as lead authority and it would be linked from the Electoral Services website.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the date of when candidates would need to obtain the necessary forms for the local elections and the closing date for submission of the forms, it was confirmed that the Electoral Services Team had a timetable of key dates. It was noted that the receipt of nominations opened on 23rd March, 2021, and the date for the closure of nominations was 4.00pm on 8th April, 2021. The Electoral Services Manager advised that the Electoral Services Team had given earlier notification of the nomination dates for the election this year than previously, due to the number of elections taking place at the same time. It was expected that there would be a large number of nominations forms to process, given the number of elections being held in the Borough. The Electoral Services Manager informed Members that as soon as confirmed guidance was received from Government regarding nominations, this would be sent out to all Members. Information regarding the key election dates and links to the nomination papers from the Electoral Commission, were also available on the Elections website by accessing the web-link, as outlined in the report.

Following a further question, the Electoral Services Manager confirmed that following discussions with colleagues at Barnsley Council overseeing the election for the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, it had been agreed that nominations for this election would also open a week earlier on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March rather than the last deadline date for the publication of the notice which was 29th March, 2021. It was noted that the dates for opening nominations would differ slightly across the country. Furthermore, the Cabinet Office had requested notification from all local authorities regarding notice of election dates, so they were aware when nominations were to commence, in the hope that they were able to let all local authorities know if the election was to proceed, which would also avoid the need for candidates having to incur costs on printing election materials, such as leaflets. The Association of Administrators and the Electoral Commission had also requested Cabinet Office inform Election teams as early as possible if the elections were to be delayed.

Further to a query regarding the venue for the postal vote verification, it was noted that the Mary Woollett Centre was being used as a testing centre for Covid-19. Therefore an alternative venue would be used, possibly Floor 4 of the Council's Civic Office building. In light of the Coronavirus pandemic and the additional pressures being placed on the Council's services having to deal with concurrent emergencies, such as the recent flooding in the Borough and the added risk of people going to vote with the new variant of Covid-19, Members expressed strong concerns regarding the safety of the public and staff at the election. In view of this, the Chair sought Members views as to whether they felt that the election should take place at this present time. Following further discussion, Members raised concerns about the new Covid-19 variants and that candidates would not be able to campaign effectively, in the lead up to the

election. It was also felt that some parties may, against Government advice, deliver leaflets to the public to achieve a political advantage.

Given the current situation with the Covid-19 pandemic and the uncertainty at this time, Members unanimously held the view that unless the infection rate fell dramatically, it was not safe to hold the elections in May, and that a recommendation should be made to Council that, the Chair of Council should write to the Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution, and the Secretary of State for Housing Communities and Local Government requesting that the elections should be postponed until the Autumn, 2021.

The Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services pointed out that the next meeting of Council was not until the beginning of March, and that a decision on whether the election should be held needed to be made before that Council meeting. He suggested that the Chief Executive could be asked to write to the Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution, and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government expressing this Committee's views that given the current situation with Covid-19 and for reasons of public safety, the elections should be postponed until a later date.

An alternative proposal was put forward by a Member that an Extraordinary meeting of Council should be convened prior to the meeting of Council in early March. Given the timescales involved, it was subsequently agreed that the Chief Executive write to the Minister for State for the Constitution and Devolution, and the Secretary of State for Housing, asking that the elections be postponed until the Autumn.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the report on the 2021 Elections Update, be received and noted; and
- (2) in light of the current national restrictions in England, the emerging situation around the Covid-19 pandemic and in order to reduce further transmission of the Covid-19 infection, to ensure the safety and well-being of the public attending polling stations and staff running the elections, preserving the integrity of the democratic process, and being mindful of the additional pressures currently faced by local authorities, that the Chief Executive write to the Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution, and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government requesting that the Elections scheduled on 6th May, 2021, be postponed until the Autumn of 2021.

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

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

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## Doncaster Council

### Report

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

#### **ANNUAL CANVASS**

##### **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 the preparations for the start of the 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.

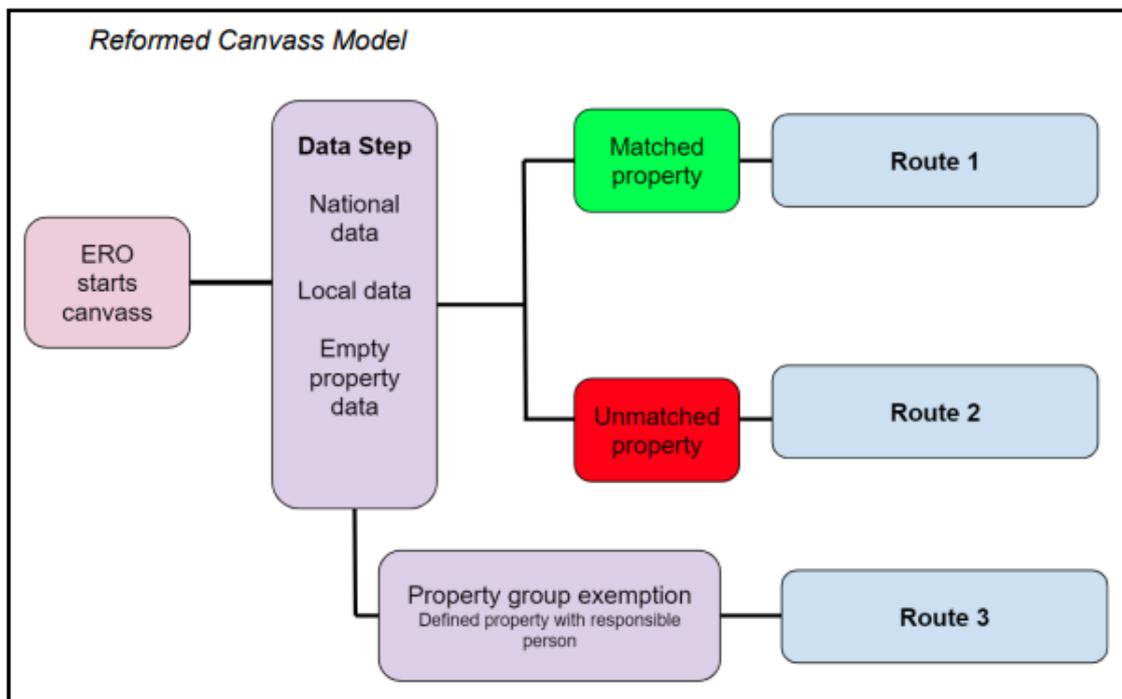
##### **BACKGROUND**

5. Each year the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) has a duty to carry out a full annual review of the Electoral Register by contacting all residential addresses to establish if the information currently held on the Electoral Register is complete and accurate, this is called the Annual Canvass. The purpose of the canvass is to identify everyone who should be on the electoral register. This means identifying citizens who should be registered but are currently not, as well as identifying electors who are no longer at a property and should therefore be removed from the register. A revised version of the electoral register must be published by 1 December, following the conclusion of the annual canvass.
6. With the introduction of the canvass reforms last year, only properties where all the electors cannot be matched against national and/or local data are

required to respond. The overall aim of canvass reform is to deliver a more efficient system by which Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) can maintain their electoral registers with no negative effect on citizens, or on the accuracy and completeness of the registers.

## ANNUAL CANVASS

7. The canvass will incorporate a 'data step' at the outset of the process. This will inform the ERO, based on the data available, which properties are likely to have an unchanged household composition, based on matching data on the electoral register against national Government data and, where relevant, locally held data sources. Local datasets are available to the ERO under their existing powers, provided by Regulations 23, 35 and 35A of the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001.
8. The ERO will then follow one of two routes for each property:  
**Route 1** - the matched properties route, this will be used for properties where the data indicates no change in household composition.  
**Route 2** - the unmatched properties route, this will be used for properties where data matching has highlighted that there may be a change to the information the ERO currently holds for the property.
9. Throughout June Electoral Services carried out the National Government data match and then attempted to match any remaining unsuccessful properties using local Council data such as Council Tax and Customer Services. This resulted in a total of 104,590 (74.20%) properties successfully matching and put into Route 1 and 36,319 unmatched properties put into Route 2.
10. All those electors in Route 1 properties will be contacted during the canvass to allow them the opportunity to inform the ERO if there are any changes. However, if all details are correct when we contact them they need not respond and they will not be chased several times like under the old canvass system.
11. All those in Route 2 that have not been successfully data matched will also be contacted, however all these properties will require a response and any non-responders will be chased and then personally canvassed via phone and/or visit.
12. All Route 1 and Route 2 properties will have been contacted via letter and/or e-mail by the end of July.
13. A third route, **Route 3** - the defined properties route, will be available for property types which do not fit clearly within Routes 1 and 2. The characteristics of these property types mean that the ERO can more effectively and efficiently obtain information on residents using an alternative approach, where they are able to identify a 'responsible person' to provide the information in respect of all residents. Examples of these property types are care homes and student halls of residence. Should the ERO be unable to successfully obtain information about the property from a 'responsible person' they will need to canvass these property types using the Route 2 process.



### Statistics

14. The National data matching process must take place between 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021 and Electoral Services carried out the National data match download on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021. There are currently 140,966 properties and 225,197 registered electors in Doncaster and 101,701 (72.15%) properties and 192,885 (85.65%) electors successfully matched from the initial National data matching download for Route 1. Electoral Services managed to match a further 2,889 properties and 25,180 electors using the Councils local datasets and will continue to request data to establish further matches at Route 1. At present, we are currently at 104,590 (74.20%) of matched properties for Route 1 at the start of the Canvass.

### **OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

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

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

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

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

- 17.

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</li> </ul>	

<p>flourish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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</li> </ul>	<p>The Council has statutory duties to support elections and Electoral Registration.</p>

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

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

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SRF Date: 02/07/2021]**

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

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: PH Date: 02/07/2021]**

20. This work is funded from the Registration of Electors budget (NC003). The Cabinet Office also provides an annual funding contribution which we have not yet received or had an indication of the expected amount.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

21. Human Resources implications have not been requested.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

22. Technology implications have not been requested.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

23. Health implications have not been requested.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: TB Date: 01/07/2021]**

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

## **CONSULTATION**

25. N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

26. Previous EDSC reports

## **REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

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

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## Doncaster Council

### Report

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

#### **2023 PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. On the 8 June 2021 the independent Boundary Commission for England released their initial proposals for new constituency boundaries using data from the Parliamentary Electorate as of the 2 March 2020. There is an 8 week consultation (8 June to 2 August 2021) on the initial proposals during which anyone can view and comment on them. This is the first of three rounds of consultation before recommendations for new Parliamentary boundaries are presented to Parliament in July 2023.

#### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

3. The Committee is asked to note the report for information. Any comments or recommendations are to be made to the Boundary Commission for England direct using their online portal: [www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk)

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

4. The initial proposals as they stand mean that some Doncaster wards will move from one Doncaster Constituency into a different Doncaster constituency. Some Doncaster residents could have significant changes by no longer having a Doncaster Member of Parliament and sharing a Rotherham MP that will cover wards between Rotherham and Doncaster and some will share a Doncaster MP with wards within North Lincolnshire.

#### **BACKGROUND**

5. The Boundary Commission for England has the task of periodically reviewing the boundaries of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England.

They are currently conducting a review on the basis of rules most recently updated by Parliament in 2020. These latest rules retain 650 constituencies for the UK Parliament as a whole, and require constituencies that they propose or recommend to comply with strict parameters. In particular, the Commission is required to ensure that the number of electors in each constituency is more equal; in doing so, the number of constituencies in England will increase from 533 to 543. Accordingly, every recommended constituency must have an electorate as at 2 March 2020 that is no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062.

6. The Parliamentary Electorate as of the 2 March 2020 was used to prepare the boundary commissions proposals. Ordinarily, the boundary review would have used statistics relating to the regular 1 December reference date but in light of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Parliamentary Constituencies Bill has been amended to allow the independent boundary review to be based on verified versions of electoral registers from 2 March 2020 and not from 1 December 2020. This removes any risk of using data potentially affected by the impacts of the coronavirus and ensuring the review is based on the most accurate reflection of the UK electorate available.
7. Parliamentary Boundary Commissions are an 'arms length' public body. This means they are 'sponsored' by a UK Government department (Cabinet Office). However, Government Ministers and officials have no direct input or control over the substantive work of the Commissioners in the reviewing of constituencies and development of proposals and recommendations for change: decisions on those matters are taken by the independent Commissioners, working within a legislative framework of rules established by Parliament. The Chair of the Commission is the Speaker of the House of Commons, but by convention he or she does not participate in the conduct of a constituencies review or formulation of the Commission's recommendations. The Deputy Chair therefore, leads the Commission in the conduct of the review. The Deputy Chair must be a serving Judge of the High Court, and is selected and appointed by the Lord Chancellor. The Deputy Chair is supported by two other Commissioners, whose appointments are made following an open public appointments selection process.
8. Members of the public are encouraged to visit [www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk) to view maps showing the proposed new boundaries and provide feedback before the consultation closes on 2 August 2021. People can comment on anything from where the proposed new boundary lines are to the names of the constituencies. There will be a further two rounds of consultation in 2022. Following the conclusion of all three consultation periods, the Commission will look at all the evidence received before forming its final recommendations. The Returning Officer will be making a response about operational issues arising from the proposed changes but Councillors and/or political parties should make their own representations if they wish to do so.

## **WHAT THIS MEANS FOR DONCASTER**

9. Accordingly, every recommended constituency must have an electorate as at 2 March 2020 that is no smaller than 69,724 and no larger than 77,062.

10. On 2 March 2020 Doncaster's three Parliamentary Constituency Electorates were all within the requirement size as follows:

<b>Current Constituency</b>	<b>2 March 2020 Electorate</b>
Don Valley	75,425
Doncaster Central	71,228
Doncaster North	72,355

11. The Boundary Commissions proposals mean that Doncaster will still have three constituencies, however one will no longer only contain Doncaster wards and we will take in three wards from North Lincolnshire, Axholme Central, North and South (18,416 electors), this means those three wards would have a Doncaster Constituency/MP to now cover that area and we would receive ballot papers from North Lincolnshire Council for those three wards when a parliamentary election takes place. North Lincolnshire Council will have responsibility of verifying both postal votes and polling station ballot papers before delivering them to Doncaster's (Acting) Returning Officer. This will likely cause time implications for the counting of votes and declaration of results due to the length of time it may take North Lincolnshire Council to verify and then transport those ballot papers from their Count venue to Doncasters.

12. Two Doncaster wards Conisbrough and Edlington & Warmsworth (20,565 electors) will be given to Rotherham and those two wards would have a Rotherham MP, we would therefore provide ballot papers to Rotherham council from those wards when a parliamentary election takes place but Doncaster would have responsibility to verify both Postal Vote and Polling Station ballot papers before delivering them to Rotherham's (Acting) Returning Officer.

13. Below is a breakdown of the proposals for the three Doncaster constituencies and Rotherham Councils constituency to include two Doncaster wards:

14. **Doncaster East and Axholme CC** (*proposed constituency name*)

- In Humberside and South Yorkshire they have changed a constituency that crosses the county boundary which is Doncaster and North Lincolnshire by combining the Isle of Axholme area of North Lincolnshire unitary authority with wards from the east of the Borough of Doncaster.
- The Thorne & Moorends ward is currently divided between the existing Doncaster North and Don Valley constituencies, and they propose this ward be included wholly within the proposed Doncaster East and Axholme constituency:

<b>Doncaster East and Axholme CC</b>		<b>Electorate: 70,113</b>
Finningley	Doncaster	13,806
Hatfield	Doncaster	11,576
Rossington & Bawtry	Doncaster	13,549
Thorne & Moorends	Doncaster	12,766
Axholme Central	North Lincolnshire	6,077
Axholme North	North Lincolnshire	6,436
Axholme South	North Lincolnshire	5,903

15. **Doncaster North CC** (*proposed constituency name*)

- The Stainforth & Barnby Dun ward is currently divided between constituencies and they propose that the existing Doncaster North constituency boundary be realigned to follow the ward boundaries, and include the whole of the Stainforth & Barnby Dun ward.

<b>Doncaster North CC</b>		<b>Electorate: 71,739</b>
Adwick le Street & Carcroft	Doncaster	11,505
Bentley	Doncaster	12,442
Mexborough	Doncaster	11,438
Norton & Askern	Doncaster	11,524
Roman Ridge	Doncaster	8,565
Sprotbrough	Doncaster	8,992
Stainforth & Barnby Dun	Doncaster	7,273

16. **Doncaster Town CC** (*proposed constituency name*)

- They propose a Doncaster Town constituency that resembles the existing Doncaster Central constituency but without any part of the Stainforth & Barnby Dun ward.
- The proposal also contains all of the Tickhill & Wadworth ward to the south, which is currently divided between constituencies.

<b>Doncaster Town CC</b>		<b>Electorate: 75,007</b>
Armthorpe	Doncaster	10,475
Balby South	Doncaster	6,813
Bessacarr	Doncaster	11,476
Edenthorpe & Kirk Sandall	Doncaster	7,937
Hexthorpe & Balby North	Doncaster	6,679
Tickhill & Wadworth	Doncaster	8,823
Town	Doncaster	11,001
Wheatley Hills & Intake	Doncaster	11,803

17. **Rotherham**

**Rawmarsh and Conisbrough CC** (*proposed constituency name*)

- They propose to group the remaining Borough of Doncaster wards (Conisbrough, and Edlington & Warmsworth) with the Borough of Rotherham wards to a Rotherham Constituency and propose the constituency be called Rawmarsh and Conisbrough:

<b>Rawmarsh and Conisbrough CC</b>		<b>Electorate: 70,272</b>
Conisbrough	Doncaster	12,240
Edlington & Warmsworth	Doncaster	8,325
Bramley & Ravenfield	Rotherham	7,207
Hooper	Rotherham	9,504
Kilnhurst & Swinton East	Rotherham	6,204
Rawmarsh East	Rotherham	6,879
Rawmarsh West	Rotherham	6,880
Swinton Rockingham	Rotherham	6,336
Swinton Rockingham	Rotherham	6,697

## THE FULL REVIEW

18. For further information and to view the Boundary Commissions initial proposals and maps for the constituency boundaries:

Yorkshire and the Humber region visit:

<https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/2023-review/yorkshire-and-the-humber/>

Background information and full proposals visit:

<https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk>

There are also paper copies of the documents and maps available for public inspection in the Civic Office one stop shop reception, Waterdale, Doncaster, DN1 3BU.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

19. The Boundary Commission are promoting and encouraging the use of a specifically-designed consultation website as the primary tool for displaying these proposals, and receiving comments on them to help them shape the new constituencies. Any comments or recommendations on these initial proposals are to be made between 8 June to 2 August 2021 to the Boundary Commission for England direct using this link:  
[www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk)
20. You can also follow the Boundary Commission on their social media channels, [@BCEReviews](https://twitter.com/BCEReviews) on Twitter and on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/BCEReviews](https://www.facebook.com/BCEReviews)

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

21. All of the above are statutory requirements of the Boundary Commission. This report is primarily for information only, any comments or recommendations are to be made to the Boundary Commission for England direct using their online portal: [www.bcereviews.org.uk](http://www.bcereviews.org.uk)

## IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

22.

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</p>	

<p>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>	

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

23. The Council has a duty to ensure that the final approved Parliamentary Boundaries are successfully implemented. Should these initial proposals be approved, close working relationships between electoral services teams for Doncaster, Rotherham and North Lincolnshire will be needed to administer the Parliamentary Elections in order to ensure that all three (Acting) Returning Officers comply with their legal duties detailed above.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SRF Date: 01/07/2021]**

24. There are comprehensive statutory provisions covering the delivery of Boundary changes.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: PH Date: 01/07/2021]**

25. At this stage it is unknown if there will be any financial implications for Doncaster Council. Any costs should be managed within the registration of electors budget on cost centre NC003. Any budget pressure that may arise as a result should be identified as soon as possible.
26. Parliamentary Boundary Commissions are 'arms length' public bodies. This means they are 'sponsored' by a UK Government department (Cabinet Office), but are outside of direct Ministerial control. The sponsor department provides funding and other resources (staff, accommodation, IT infrastructure, and often other 'back office' support), and monitors that those resources are being utilised appropriately and efficiently

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

27. Human Resources implications have not been requested.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

28. Technology implications have not been requested.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

29. Health implications have not been requested.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: TB Date 30/06/2021]**

30. The Council has a duty to ensure that the final approved Parliamentary Boundaries are successfully completed to ensure eligible electors are able to freely vote in the correct constituencies ensuring freedom of expression and political debate by exercising their vote.

## **CONSULTATION**

31. N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

32. <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk>

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



## Doncaster Council

### Report

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13<sup>th</sup> July 2021

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

#### **URGENT ACTION TAKEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 36 – TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CANTLEY WITH BRANTON PARISH COUNCIL**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report confirms action taken in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 36 (Urgent Decisions) in May 2021 to appoint Councillors Jane Cox and Steve Cox on a temporary basis to Cantley with Branton Parish Council for the purpose of attending a meeting to establish a quorum and enable the Parish Council to make the necessary appointments to its membership.

#### **EXEMPT REPORT**

2. N/A

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

3. The Committee is asked to note the urgent action taken in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 36 by the Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021, in consultation with the Chair of the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee (EDSC), as outlined in this report.

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

4. Where a Parish Council is inquorate the EDSC may make appointments to the Parish Council on a temporary basis to enable it to carry out its business. Doncaster Council's Constitution allows for this function to be delegated to the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Resources or the Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services.

## **BACKGROUND**

5. Only one nomination was received in the Uncontested Parish Council Election on 6th May 2021 in relation to Cantley with Branton Parish Council. Under these circumstances, the usual practice would be for the Parish Council to co-opt to the outstanding vacancies. However, as there was only 1 member on the Parish Council and 3 members are required to establish a quorum, the Parish Council was therefore not able to make the necessary co-options.
6. The legislation and the Council's Constitution provides for these circumstances and allows Doncaster Council to appoint members on a temporary basis to the Parish Council to enable it to carry out its business. This function is delegated to the EDSC, the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer (Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services).
7. As there was no meeting of the EDSC scheduled until 13th July 2021, the Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services consulted with the Chair of EDSC and agreed to take this decision under the Council Procedure Rule 36 urgency provisions.
8. Guidance on this issue recommends that consideration should be given to appointing the relevant ward Member(s) to any such vacancies as they have a democratic link and understanding of the local area. Following consultation with the Chair of EDSC, it was recommended that Councillors Jane Cox and Steve Cox from the Finningley Ward (which includes Cantley with Branton within its boundary) be appointed to the Parish Council for this purpose. These appointments were made on a temporary basis for the purpose of enabling the Parish Council to make the necessary co-options and were to cease with immediate effect once the Parish Council had re-established a quorum.
9. Subsequently, at its meeting held on 11th June 2021, Cantley with Branton Parish Council was able to appoint 6 co-opted members on to its membership and therefore re-gained a quorum to allow it to conduct its business.

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

10. Option 1 - To do nothing. The Parish Council would not have been able to function effectively and represent local residents.
11. Option 2 - Make the relevant appointment to the Parish Council by appointing local ward Councillors. This was the preferred option. Local ward Councillors already serve the residents of Cantley with Branton as part of their ward Councillor duties. Once the Parish Council was quorate it was able to co-opt to its outstanding vacancies and discharge its functions.

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

12. The urgent action described in this report contributed towards the 'Connected Council' outcome 'Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance', by ensuring that effective governance arrangements were in place at Cantley with Branton Parish Council.

## **RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS**

13. Had this urgent action not been taken, Cantley with Branton Parish Council would not have been able to convene any formal meetings and therefore discharge its functions.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials SRF Date 21.06.21]**

14. The legal powers that supported this action are contained in the following legislation:

### **Representation of the People Act 1983 Section 39(4)b**

If a parish or community council is not properly constituted because an election is not held or is defective or for any other reason, the district council ....may by order make any appointment or do anything which appears to them necessary or expedient for the proper holding of such an election or meeting and properly constituting the council.

### **Local Government Act 1972 Section 91**

Where there are so many vacancies in the office of parish or community councillor that the parish or community council are unable to act, the district council...may by order appoint persons to fill all or any of the vacancies until other councillors are elected and take up office.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

15. Financial implications were not sought for this information report.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

16. Human Resources implications were not sought for this information report.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

17. Technology implications were not sought for this information report.

## **HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

18. Health implications were not sought for this information report.

## **EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

19. There are no specific equality implications associated with this report. The Ward Members appointed to the Parish Council represent all residents within the area including those with protected characteristics.

## **CONSULTATION**

20. Consultation was carried out with the Finningley Ward Members and the Chair of the EDSC in taking the action outlined in this report.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

CPR 36 Decision Record/Report and Order dated 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

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