



Doncaster Council

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

Date: Tuesday, 8th February, 2022

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Please Note: For those who are attending the meeting, please bring a face covering, unless you are exempt (face coverings can be removed once seated in the Chamber).

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Damian Allen
Chief Executive

Issued on: Monday 31st January 2022

Governance Services Officer for this meeting: Amber Torrington
Tel. 01302 737462

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 23rd November 2021. 1 - 4
- A. Reports where the public and press may not be excluded.**
5. 2022 Elections Update. 5 - 14
 6. Annual Canvass Outcome. 15 - 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, 23RD NOVEMBER, 2021

A MEETING of the ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICE on TUESDAY, 23RD NOVEMBER, 2021, at 10.00 am.

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Ian Pearson
Vice-Chair - Councillor Nick Allen

Councillors James Church, Gemma Cobby, Julie Grace, Jake Kearsley, Majid Khan, Thomas Noon and Andy Pickering

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Debbie Hutchinson and Emma Muddiman-Rawlins

7 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.

No declarations were reported at the meeting.

8 MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13TH JULY 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2021, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Members were provided with an update in relation to Voter ID Cards, stating that Cabinet office had notified that the cards would not be issued by Electoral Services. This responsibility would fall to another department/team to be determined. It was also noted that it was hoped that the ID cards would be in use in time for the Parliamentary Elections in 2024. A trial would take place prior to this. A further update would be provided to Committee in due course.

In relation to the Boundary Commission consultation, Members were advised that an update on the proposals would be provided early next year.

9 BY-ELECTION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING REFERENDUM UPDATE

The Electoral Services Manager provided members with detailed information and results of the Sprotbrough Neighbourhood Planning Referendum which took place on Thursday 15th July 2021.

The Neighbourhood Planning Referendum took place in the Central, East, Danum, Park and Stonecross Parish Wards.

It was noted that the outcome of the Referendum was in favour of using the Neighbourhood Plan for Sprotbrough to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area and the result was reported to Full Council on 23 September 2021.

Details of the High Melton Parish Council by-election which was held on the 5 November 2021 were also reported to Committee stating that as only one nomination was received, the election was uncontested and Martin Pick was automatically elected to the High Melton Parish Council.

RESOLVED that the reported be noted.

10 ANNUAL CANVASS UPDATE

The Committee were provided with an update on the number of key work streams being undertaken by the Electoral Services Team in relation to the Register of Electors and the Annual Canvass. It was noted that a revised version of the electoral register must be published by 1 December, following the conclusion of the annual canvass.

Details of the routes that are followed by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) were noted as follows:-

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.

Route 3 – These properties are defined as Care Homes and Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMO) all of which are required to provide an update on their current occupants. It was noted that almost all had responded, there was one outstanding.

The Electoral Services Manager provided Members with the statistics for each of the three routes and these were identified at paragraphs 13-15 of the report. Further proactive activity was also presented within paragraph 16 of the report. Members were advised that a further update on the canvass will be provided at the next meeting following its conclusion.

Following the update, the Electoral Services Manager answered a range of questions from Members including the following:-

- Councillor James Church asked whether the reform method had given the team any sense of whether it had worked much better and whether it had allowed them to concentrate more on Route 2 properties. In response, members were advised that this had been the case. In terms of this year, it has allowed the team to focus more on route 2 properties, identifying areas where previously they had been unable to get responses. It has helped the team to compare data and provide a better understanding of the background storey in relation to the properties.
- In response to a question regarding the number of staff employed to carry out the canvass, it was reported that there were 25 currently employed, which is a smaller amount on previous canvasses. However, there are less properties.

Whilst Covid has had an impact on the numbers, this was not only the reason. It was also noted that this was supplemental work to their primary employment and staff were paid on results.

- In response to a question relating to HMO's, Members were advised that HMO's would fall within Route 3 properties. It was noted that the team had built up good relationships over the years with key holders, which has enabled staff to enter properties much easier to gain the information from residents. Owners had also arranged to meet canvass staff at the building in order for them to gain access.
- The Chair, Councillor Pearson asked whether relationships had been built with landlords of HMO's. In response, it was advised that the team did not have those relationships with landlords. However, the team work closely with St Leger Homes who provided help with new tenant information. The Team also work closely with colleagues in the Council Tax team.

In conclusion, the Chair made a suggestion that the team explore building relationships with the number of large social landlords that operate within the borough.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CHAIR: _____

DATE: _____

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Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 8th February 2022

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

2022 ELECTIONS UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On Thursday 5 May 2022, the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (previously known as Sheffield City Region) will elect a Mayor for the second time, for a four year term. This report provides a detailed update to Members on the preparations for this upcoming election.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. N/A

RECOMMENDATION

3. The Committee is asked to note the report and make any additional comments in relation to the contents.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Having accessible and well organised elections is key to public engagement in the democratic process.

BACKGROUND

5. The South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) is a formal partnership of councils that shapes policy and leads on decision-making. Formed in 2014, the constituent members of the Mayoral Combined Authority are Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster councils. The councils of Bassetlaw, Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Derbyshire Dales and Bolsover are 'non-constituent' members.
6. The SYMCA Mayor is a major figure in the political life of the area. They act as an ambassador for the area; promoting it as a place to live, work, visit and invest in. The Mayor is Chair of the Mayoral Combined Authority and a member of the South Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). The

Mayor and the other Leaders of the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority work with the LEP, central government and other organisations in pursuing shared goals and delivering key strategic plans. The Mayor has certain public transport powers relating to how buses may operate in the future.

7. Further information regarding the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority or the role of the South Yorkshire Mayor is available via the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority web page <https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/Election>
8. Like Doncaster's elected Mayor the supplementary voting system is used, which means electors will have two votes in this election – one for their first choice candidate and one, if they wish to use it, for their second choice candidate
9. The terms of reference of this Committee provide for an overview of Electoral Services issues. Set out below is the current position in respect of recent and current activity.

Preparations for the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Election

10. Preparations are underway for the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Election taking place on Thursday 5 May 2022. Polling hours will be the usual 7.00am to 10.00pm.
11. Dave Smith, the Chief Executive of SYMCA is the Returning Officer for the election, with Damian Allen the Council's Chief Executive acting as Local Returning Officer for Doncaster.
12. The Verification and Count of all ballot papers will take place on Friday 6 May 2022 at Doncaster Racecourse. Arrangements for recruiting staff will commence early February for all positions on polling stations, postal vote opening and count. Electoral Services will work closely with the Council's Director of Public Health to ensure that staff and electors are Covid-secure and that we comply with good practice and any Covid restrictions which in place at the time.
13. All our usual Polling Stations have been contacted and we are beginning to receive completed booking confirmation letters along with our Covid-19 risk assessment questionnaires. Some have raised concerns and we are working closely with them to see if we can resolve the issues, in the meantime electoral services are carrying out searches within polling districts to see if there are any suitable replacements and back-ups.

Appendix A provides a draft list of polling stations currently under review and the proposed changes to our usual polling station or different from the one used last year. However, all polling stations have not been confirmed at this point and this list may change. Once suitable arrangements have been sourced members will be notified of the final proposals.

Any new polling stations will be highlighted on polling cards notifying those effected electors of a temporary change to their previous polling station on this occasion. The usual polling station finder on the Councils website will be updated with these changes. The 'find my polling station' app allows

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

14. The following Council web page has been updated with key information for electors; information will be updated regularly along with any notices once published:

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/south-yorkshire-mayoral-combined-authority-election>

15. A timetable of key dates is provided at Appendix B.

BY-ELECTIONS AND REFERENDUMS

16. High Melton Parish Council

Due to resignation a vacancy occurred and was advertised for a Parish Councillor in High Melton. Doncaster Council received the necessary request from at least ten electors within the Parish to fill the vacancy by election. Therefore, nominations open on Friday 11 February and close on Friday 18 February, if contested the election will take place on Thursday 17 March 2022.

At present there are 219 registered electors in High Melton of which 66 are postal voters. Should the election be contested there will be one polling station. The cost of this election will be charged to High Melton Parish Council.

Further information can be found on the Councils web page by visiting:
<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/high-melton-parish-council-by-election>

17. Rossington Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

The report of the Independent Examination of the Rossington Neighbourhood Development Plan prepared by Independent Examiner, Nigel McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI has been received and recommends that the Neighbourhood Plan should, subject to the recommended modifications, proceed to Referendum based on the Neighbourhood Area as approved by the Council (Rossington Parish Boundary). Further information on the Development plan can be found on the Councils Planning web page by visiting:

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/planning/rossington-neighbourhood-development-plan>

Therefore, the Rossington Neighbourhood Planning Referendum (NPR) is scheduled to take place on Thursday 17 March 2022, the information statement and supporting documents will be published on Monday 7 February 2022. There are currently 10,482 electors within the Neighbourhood Planning area, of which 2,880 are postal voters and there will be six polling stations across the area for electors to cast their vote in. The costs associated with the NPR are claimed back by the Planning Department from Central Government.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

18. 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

19.

Outcomes	Implications
<p>Doncaster Working: 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"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	
<p>Doncaster Living: 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"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
<p>Doncaster Learning: 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"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	

<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	
<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	<p>The Council has statutory duties to support elections.</p> <p>By ensuring the necessary arrangements are in place to deliver well-run elections and improving our reputation by meeting the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

20. Sufficient resources will need to be made available to administer the Election in order to ensure that the Council complies with its legal duties detailed above. Ensuring the necessary arrangements are in place to deliver well-run elections improve our reputation and meet the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SRF Date: 28/01/2022]

21. The arrangements detailed in this report are designed to ensure compliance with a range of statutory duties including:
- The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) (Amendment) Orders 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018 & 2019
 - Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006
 - Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000
 - Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: PH Date: 28/01/2022]

22. All costs associated with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Election are recharged to the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority. The maximum recoverable amount allocated to Doncaster is £417,841 and it is not expected to exceed this amount.

23. The cost of any Parish Council By-Elections are re-charged to the Parish Council and any Neighbourhood Planning Referendums are re-charged to Central Government by the Councils Planning Department.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

24. Human Resources implications have not been requested.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

25. Technology implications have not been requested.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

26. Health implications have not been requested.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: TB Date 28/01/2022]

27. 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

28. N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

29. Previous EDSC reports.

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

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Damian Allen
Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer

Usual Polling Station	Polling station used in May 2021	Proposed/Possible Polling Station 2022
Balby Waverley Academy, Douglas Road	Waverley Community Centre, Church Lane, Balby, Doncaster DN4 0UQ	Waverley Community Centre, Church Lane, Balby, Doncaster DN4 0UQ
Portable Unit, Junction of Carr Hill & St Catherine's Avenue	Balby Central Outreach Centre, Stevens Road, DN4 0LL	Portable Unit, Junction of Carr Hill & St Catherine's Avenue
Mary Woollett Centre, Danum Road	Doncaster Town Field Sports Club, Bennetthorpe, DN2 6AA	Doncaster Town Field Sports Club, Bennetthorpe, DN2 6AA
Hallcross Academy Lower School, St Michaels Road, DN4 5LT	Hallcross Academy Lower School, St Michaels Road, DN4 5LT	Lakeside Community Church, Booth Ave DN4 5JN
Intake Primary Academy, School Hall, Sidney Road, DN2 6EW	Harvest Fields Ministries, Evelyn Avenue, DN2 6LW	Harvest Fields Ministries, Evelyn Avenue, DN2 6LW
Plover Primary School, Coniston Road	Intake Community Library, Montrose Avenue, DN2 6PL	Intake Community Library, Montrose Avenue, DN2 6PL
Sandringham Primary School, Sandringham Road	Intake Community Library, Montrose Avenue, DN2 6PL	Intake Community Library, Montrose Avenue, DN2 6PL
Portable Unit, Junction of Jefferson Avenue & Chalmers Drive	The Hepworth Centre, Kingfisher Primary School, Coventry Grove, DN2 4PY	Copper Pipe Cafe, Barnby Dun Road, Doncaster DN2 4RG
Portable Unit, Junction of Langsett Court & Lakeside Boulevard	National College, For Advanced Transport & Infrastructure, Carolina Way, DN4 5PN	National College, For Advanced Transport & Infrastructure, Carolina Way, DN4 5PN
Castle Academy, Station Road	Elm Green Lane Community Centre, Elm Green Lane, DN12 3HS	Elm Green Lane Community Centre, Elm Green Lane, DN12 3HS
Portable Unit, Windmill Avenue	Sea Fish Restaurant, 18 Doncaster Road Conisbrough DN12 3AG	Sea Fish Restaurant, 18 Doncaster Road Conisbrough DN12 3AG
Portable Unit, Manor Farm Public House Car Park, Denaby Lane	Mexborough Church Hall, Church Street Mexborough, S64 0ER	Mexborough Church Hall, Church Street Mexborough, S64 0ER
Portable Unit, Windmill Avenue	Sea Bites Restaurant, 18 Doncaster Road Conisbrough DN12 3AG	Sea Bites Restaurant, 18 Doncaster Road Conisbrough DN12 3AG
Portable Unit, Nether Cantley Lane	Kilham Hall, Kilham Lane, DN3 3PF	Kilham Hall, Kilham Lane, DN3 3PF
Portable Unit, Bellerby Road	The Burghwallis Public House, Scorcher Hills Lane, DN6 9JT	The Burghwallis Public House, Scorcher Hills Lane, DN6 9JT

Usual Polling Station	Polling station used in May 2021	Proposed/Possible Polling Station 2022
Green Top Primary School, Middlebrook Lane	St Nicholas Church Hall, Stonegate, DN8 5NP	St Nicholas Church Hall, Stonegate, DN8 5NP
Portable Unit, Hatfield Road, Adjacent to the swing bridge	Thorne Old People`s Welfare Centre, Church Street, DN8 5BE	Portable Unit, Hatfield Road, Adjacent to the swing bridge
Stainforth Methodist Church, Church Road, Stainforth	Stanley Road Communal Hall, Stanley Road, DN7 5QQ	Stanley Road Communal Hall, Stanley Road, DN7 5QQ
St Johns Junior & Infant School, Sedgefield Way	Blessed English Martyrs R C Church, 62 Cemetery Road, S64 9PN	Blessed English Martyrs R C Church, 62 Cemetery Road, S64 9PN
Dunsville Primary School, Broadway, DN7 4HX	Dunsville Primary School, Broadway, DN7 4HX	The Flairpath Public House, High St, Dunsville, Hatfield, Dunsvile DN7 4BH Dunscroft Welfare, 124 Broadway, Dunscroft, Hatfield, Doncaster DN7 4HD

South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Election Timetable of Proceedings for Thursday 5 May 2022

Publication of Notice of Election/PERP	Monday 28 March 2022
Close of Nominations	4:00pm Tuesday 5 April 2022
Withdrawal of Candidate	4:00pm Tuesday 5 April 2022
Appointment of Election Agents	4:00pm Tuesday 5 April 2022
Publication of Notice of Election Agents	4:00pm Tuesday 5 April 2022
Publication of Statements of Persons Nominated	4:00pm Wednesday 6 April 2022
Last Date for Registration	Thursday 14 April 2022
Receipt of Postal Vote Applications	5:00pm Tuesday 19 April 2022
Publication of Notice of Poll	Tuesday 26 April 2022
Receipt of Proxy Vote Applications	5:00pm Tuesday 26 April 2022
Appointment of Poll and Count Agents	Wednesday 27 April 2022
First Day to Issue Replacement Lost Postal Ballot Papers	Thursday 28 April 2022
Last Day to Issue Replacement Spoilt or Lost Postal Ballot Papers	5:00pm Thursday 5 May 2022
Receipt of Emergency Proxy Vote Applications	5:00pm Thursday 5 May 2022
Day of Poll	7:00am to 10:00pm Thursday 5 May 2022

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Doncaster Council

Report

Date: 8th February 2022

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

ANNUAL CANVASS OUTCOME

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides an update to Members on the final outcome of the Annual Canvass and a detailed breakdown of the statistics for each Route.

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.

With the introduction of the canvass reforms in 2020, 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 ACTIVITY

6. The canvass commenced in June 2021 by incorporating a 'data step' at the outset of the process which enabled the ERO to understand 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.

7. **Route 1** - the matched properties route, this was used for properties where the data indicates no change in household composition as all electors registered at these properties matched against the national government database.

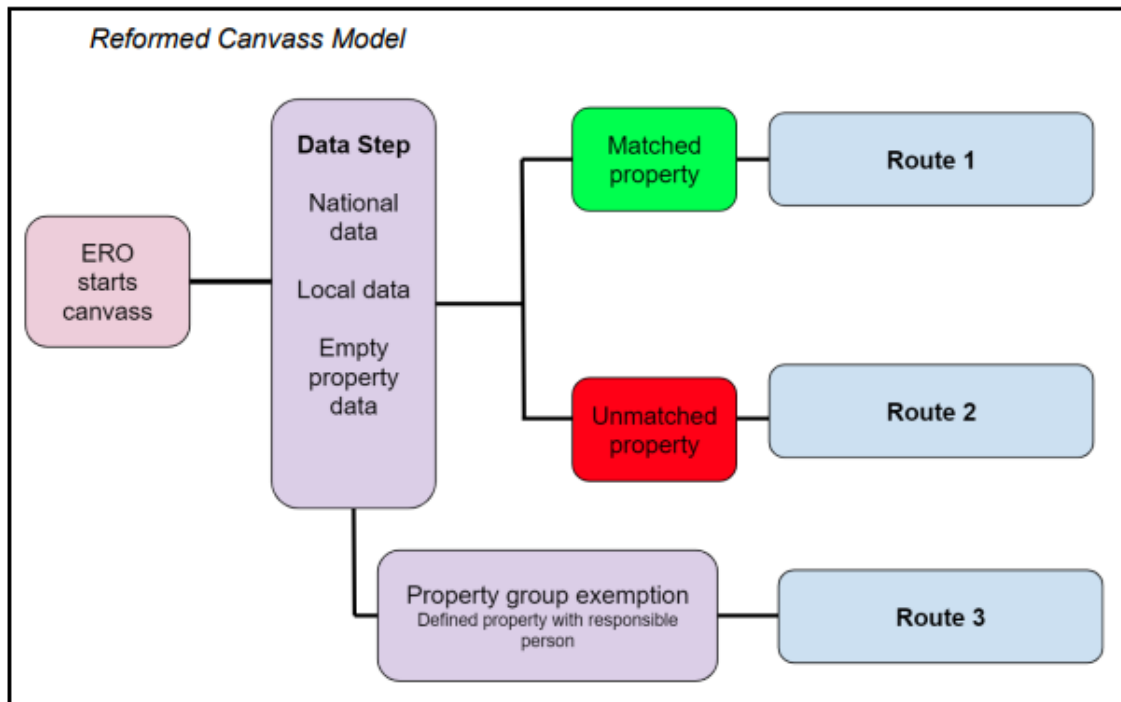
All properties in Route 1 were sent a notification letter advising them to make any necessary changes online or inform the ERO of their changes and as such we amended the electoral register accordingly. However, if all details were correct they need not respond and they were not chased several times like under the old canvass system.

8. **Route 2** - the unmatched properties route, this was used for properties where data matching has highlighted that there may be a change to all or some of the information the ERO currently holds for that property.

All those in Route 2 that have not been successfully data matched were contacted, however all these properties did require a response and any non-responders were chased and then personally canvassed via phone and/or personal visit.

9. **Route 3** - These properties are defined as Care Homes and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), all of which were required to provide an update on their current occupants.

The characteristics of these property types meant that the ERO could 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. Any properties where the ERO was unable to successfully obtain information about the property from a 'responsible person' those properties were moved to the Route 2 process.



STATISTICS

10. Route 1 - The National data matching process must take place between 1st June to 31st August 2021 and Electoral Services carried out the National data match download on 9th June 2021. At that time there was 140,966 properties and 225,197 registered electors in Doncaster. The outcome of the data matched 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. The Electoral Services Team continued to data match throughout the Canvass with a final total of 106,415 (75.49%) matched properties for Route 1.
11. Route 2 - These properties are the un-matched ones that do require a response. There are three stages taken for properties which fall under Route 2, each stage is taken until a response is obtained. Stage 1, we sent letters and e-mails to 28,674 properties of which 9,598 properties responded. Stage 2, we sent Canvass forms to the outstanding 19,074 and received a further 2,850 responses back. This left 16,226 properties still outstanding and requiring a personal door knock visit along with 5,820 HMOs moved to Route 2, providing a total of 22,046 properties outstanding for stage 3 a personal visit. Canvassers visited those outstanding properties to try and obtain a response or accurate update for the ERO. These properties are either empty, have a high turnaround of occupants or who generally do not respond. The Canvass staff managed to obtain a further 4,062 responses by carrying out personal visits and a further 6,501 responses were obtained through data mining, providing a final total of 23,011 (66.71%) responding properties, leaving 11,483 outstanding for Route 2.
12. Route 3 - These properties are defined as Care Homes and Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs), all of which were required to provide an update on their current occupants. Due to all properties not being personally canvassed during the last annual canvass due to Covid and being unable to

identify one person holding accurate information for HMOs it was decided that all Care Homes would remain under Route 3 and all HMOs would be moved into Route 2 in order for any non-responding HMOs to have a personal visit or more complex data mining.

Due to the high turnaround and the personal relationship we have built over the years with Care Home Managers the Electoral Services Team contacted the Care Homes directly again this year to establish that everything was as up to date as possible. Any that we were unable to receive a written response from received a personal visit. We achieved 100% response rate from the 57 Care Homes for Route 3.

13. With only two Canvasses carried out under the new reforms, it is difficult to compare the response rate of this canvass with previous years, especially as 75% of properties have not been required to respond. However, in previous years when all properties had been required to respond, the number of outstanding responses were much higher than the final response outcome for the past two years under the Canvass Reforms.
14. The overall response rate for all three Route properties including those who did not need to respond was 91.85% which is slightly down the previous years return, however, due to Covid a foot canvass was not carried out the previous year so is not a true comparison:

Year	Responses received at the end of Canvass	% of Responded properties at end of Canvass	Number of properties outstanding
2021	129,483	91.85%	11,483
2020	132,812	94.68%	7,468
2019*	117,000*	84.20%*	21,948*
2018	119,859	86.42%	18,836
2017	118,017	85.70%	19,698
2016	112,364	82.87%	23,230

*2019 Canvass was ended early due to snap Parliamentary election on 12 December 2019

15. The revised full annual Electoral Register was published on December 1st to meet the Electoral Registration Officer's statutory duty. The new Electorate as of 1st December 2021 is 227,875 electors which has risen by 2,678 electors since the start of the annual canvass. A detailed breakdown of the 1st December 2021 electorate by ward including postal vote breakdown is provided at **Appendix A** of this report.

PRO-ACTIVE ACTIVITY

16. In line with Cabinet Office and Electoral Commission guidance, the ERO carried out mitigating actions to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the electoral register. Therefore the Electoral Services team carried out the following mitigating actions:
 - Contacted electors via email, where an email address was held on the electoral register
 - Contacted electors via telephone, where a phone number was held on the electoral register
 - Data matching and data mining against Council records (Council Tax, Housing Benefit, customer services data etc)

- Reminder Canvass Forms (with pre-paid return envelopes, which were not previously sent) posted to non-responding properties where we hold no other form of contact details.
- Canvass forms (open and not enveloped) posted to properties when canvasser had visited several times and not been able to obtain a response in the hope that they read it and responded knowing it had been hand delivered.

ANNUAL ABSENT VOTE REFRESH

17. By 31 January each year the Electoral Registration Officer must write to each elector who has an absent vote (postal, proxy and postal proxy voters) who's signature on the postal identifiers register is more than five years old, informing them they must refresh their signature in order to maintain voting by post. This is known as the absent vote refresh and it takes place in January every year in all Local Authorities. Absent voters who have been granted a waiver are not affected by the refresh provisions, as they do not have a signature on the personal identifiers record. Letters and forms have been sent to 5,287 electors in Doncaster who are due to refresh theirs. Electors have six weeks to return their refreshed signature forms, a reminder is sent after 3 weeks. Should they not reply then the elector will lose their entitlement to vote by post and they will need to re-apply by completing a full fresh new postal vote application (including DOB) should they wish to remain a postal voter.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

19. 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

Outcomes	Implications
<p>Doncaster Working: 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"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	
<p>Doncaster Living: 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"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home 	

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

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

20. 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: 28/01/2022]

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

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: PH Date: 28/01/2022]

22. This work is funded from the Registration of Electors budget (NC003). The Cabinet Office usually provide an annual funding contribution, however this year they have advised due to the Canvass Reform, savings will be made and they will not be providing any funding. This is the case for almost every Council.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

23. Human Resources implications have not been requested.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

24. Technology implications have not been requested.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

25. Health implications have not been requested.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: TB Date: 28/01/2022]

26. 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

27. N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

28. Previous EDSC reports

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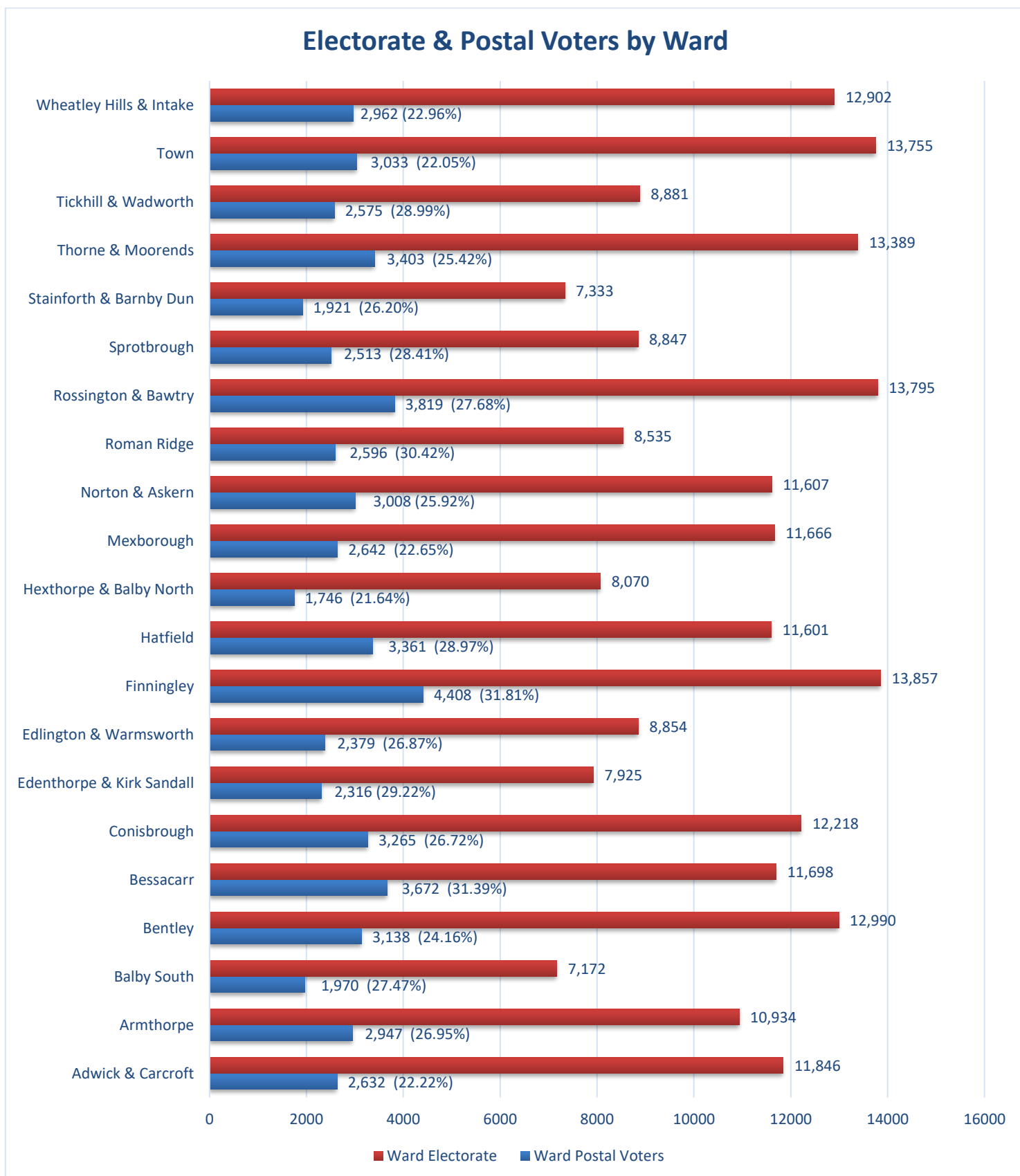
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Doncaster Borough Electorate - 1st December 2021

Total Electorate: 227,875

Total Postal Voters: 60,306 (26.46% of the electorate are postal voters).

The electorate and postal voters for each ward are broken down below with each ward % of postal voters



Borough Electorate - 1st December 2021

Total Electorate 227,875, broken down per ward by % of the full Electorate

