

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

**RESULTS OF THE COMBINED LOCAL AND MAYORAL ELECTIONS AND THE UK  
PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides members with the results of the combined all-out Local Government and Mayoral Elections held on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and the UK Parliamentary General Election held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. 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?**

3. 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 both local and central government.

**BACKGROUND**

4. Elections are significant projects, which are delivered by a small core team supported by hundreds of individuals both internally across the Council and externally, who undertake various duties such as postal vote opening, working at polling stations and the counting of votes.

**COMBINED LOCAL AND MAYORAL ELECTIONS – 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017**

5. This is the second time Doncaster has had all-out Council Borough elections for all 55 seats, the last was in 2015. However this is the first time that all-out Council elections and the Mayoral Election have been held together and this will be the pattern going forward from now on. There were 6 Mayoral Candidates and a total of 142 local candidates across the 21 wards.

The Electorate for the combined elections was 221,789 of which 60,067 postal votes were issued to electors in a combined pack and votes were cast as follows:

**Mayoral**

On polling day 29,519 electors cast their vote in the 173 polling stations across Doncaster and 35,585 voted by post. (A further 615 postal vote packs were

rejected due to the personal identifiers not matching). A total of 65,104 ballot papers were verified giving a total turnout of 29.35% for the Mayoral Election.

A summary of the result is set out at **Appendix A** of this report. It was the first time in 15 years of Mayoral Elections in Doncaster that a Mayoral candidate received more than 50% of the first preference vote with no second preference count required.

### **Local**

On polling day 29,530 electors cast their vote in the 173 polling stations across Doncaster and 35,565 electors voted by post (615 postal vote packs were rejected due to the personal identifiers not matching). A total of 65,095 ballot papers were verified giving a total turnout of 29.35% for the Local Election.

Members present at the counts will appreciate that a significant feature of the all-out elections was the need to utilise counting sheets rather than simply allocating single vote ballot papers to the relevant candidate. The elections were successfully delivered with a very significant contribution made by individuals and teams throughout the Council. A number of positive comments have been made by Candidates, Agents and staff in relation to the election process and, specifically, the verification and counts.

A summary of the 21 ward results is set out at **Appendix A** of this report. The results, including the number of votes for each candidate, the rejected votes and the % turnout, are also published on the Council's website:

<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/election-results-for-doncaster>

## **UK PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION – 8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017**

6. On the 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017 the Prime Minister announced that she planned to call a snap General Election on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017. At that time the core elections team were well underway with the planning and organising of the combined Local and Mayoral elections that would take place on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 (the same day the writs were due to be received for Doncaster's three constituencies). This meant that timetables for both elections, planning and preparations would overlap and immediately after completing both the mayoral and local counts, nominations would open for the Parliamentary candidates. Despite the extra pressures, both the combined elections on the 4<sup>th</sup> May and the General election on the 8<sup>th</sup> June were highly successful.

The combined eligible electorate for all three constituencies was 218,085 of which 61,737 were postal voters and were broken down as follows:

### **Don Valley**

Of the 73,990 eligible electors, 28,061 cast their vote in the 57 polling stations across Don Valley and of the 22,605 postal votes issued, 18,021 electors completed and returned their postal votes (a further 189 postal vote packs were received and rejected due to the personal identifiers not matching). A total of 46,082 ballot papers were verified giving a total turnout of 62.28% for the Don Valley Constituency.

### **Doncaster Central**

Of the 71,718 eligible electors, 27,396 cast their vote in the 52 polling stations across Doncaster Central and of the 20,078 postal votes issued, 15,750 electors completed and returned their postal votes (a further 204 postal vote packs were received and rejected due to the personal identifiers not matching). A total of 43,146 ballot papers were verified giving a total turnout of 60.16% for the Doncaster Central Constituency.

### **Doncaster North**

Of the 72,377 eligible electors, 27,336 cast their vote in the 64 polling stations across Doncaster North and of the 19,054 postal votes issued, 15,052 electors completed and returned their postal votes (a further 207 postal vote packs were received and rejected due to the personal identifiers not matching). A total of 42,388 ballot papers were verified giving a total turnout of 58.57% for the Doncaster North Constituency.

A summary of the results is set out at **Appendix B** of this report. The results, including the number of votes for each candidate, the rejected votes and the % turnout, are also published on the Council's website:

<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/election-results-for-doncaster>

During the run up to the General Election there was an increase in registration, postal vote and proxy applications. This created significant extra work for the elections team especially due to the amount of duplicate registrations received from electors re-registering when they were in fact already registered. In the final days to register from Friday 19th May to the close of registration on Monday 22nd May we received 5,636 on-line registrations, of which 2,016 were duplicates. Of these registrations 1,827 registered after 6.30pm on Monday evening, the deadline day and more than half of those that evening 1,259 were duplicates. This is very time consuming for the core elections team who must manually go through many of these duplicate registrations to ensure they are in fact a duplicate registration – for example should someone put in a middle name or initial that they haven't used before the system will flag them for a manual check and they cannot be 100% matched as an exact duplicate. The elections team ensured every duplicate was checked and processed postal vote/proxy applications as quickly as possible to ensure that everyone who applied by the statutory deadlines were able to cast their vote on Thursday 8th June.

## **FUTURE UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND BY-ELECTIONS**

### **7. THORNE MOORENDS TOWN COUNCIL – THORNE TOWN WARD**

Due to a recent vacancy advertised, an election was called by ten electors for the vacancy within Thorne Moorends Town Council – Thorne Town Ward to be filled by an election. There are three Candidates and the Election will take place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017 with the Verification and Count taking place the following day on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July at the Civic Office. The cost of this election will be charged to the Town Council.

8. A vacancy was also advertised and called by ten electors for the Hatfield Town Council – Dunscroft Ward. However, there was only one nomination received, therefore the election was uncontested and the candidate was automatically

elected.

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

9. 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 PRIORITIES

10.

	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	We will provide strong leadership and governance, working in partnership.	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.

## RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

11. Sufficient resources were needed to run two Elections so close together and to continue to drive individual registration in order to ensure that the Council complies with its legal duties.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

- Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006
- Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000
- Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13. The costs of the combined Mayoral and local government elections are at a cost to the Council. The cost of the UK Parliamentary General Election is claimed back in full from the Government.

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