



Doncaster Council

Report

13th March 2018

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

ELECTORAL SERVICES UPDATE ON KEY ISSUES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

EXEMPT REPORT

2. N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

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

BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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

Preparations for the Combined Authority Mayoral Election

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

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

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

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

Stainforth & Barnby Dun

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

Norton & Askern

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

Hatfield

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

Sprotbrough

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

Bentley

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

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

Elected Members will be welcome to attend the Count as observers

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

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

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

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

8. This report is primarily for information only.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

- 9.

	Outcomes	Implications
	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; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better access to good fulfilling work• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish• Inward Investment	
	Doncaster Living: Our vision is for	

	<p>Doncaster's people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<p>The Council has statutory duties to support elections</p>

	residents to provide effective leadership and governance	
--	--	--

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

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

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

11. The arrangements detailed in this report are designed to ensure compliance with a range of statutory duties including:
 - The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Orders 2016, 2017 & 2018
 - Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000 Electoral
 - Registration and Administration Act 2013

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

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

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

13. N/A

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

14. N/A

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

15. N/A

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

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

CONSULTATION

17. N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

18. Previous EDSC reports.

REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS

Trina Barber
Electoral Services Manager
Legal & Democratic Services
Tel: 01302 734398
E-mail: Trina.Barber@doncaster.gov.uk

Jo Miller
Returning Officer/Electoral Registration Officer