

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2020

A MEETING of the ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE was held at the CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on TUESDAY, 17TH MARCH, 2020, at 10.00 am.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors Steve Cox and Pat Haith.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sean Gibbons, Mark Houlbrook, Kevin Rodgers, Derek Smith and Sue Wilkinson.

12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY

No declarations were made at the meeting.

13 MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2019 AND 27 JANUARY 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 26th November 2019 and 27th January 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

14 ELECTORAL SERVICES UPDATE ON KEY ISSUES REPORT

The Committee received a report which provided an update on preparations for the Police and Crime Commissioner Election on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

In presenting the report, the Head of Service - Litigation and Regulatory, confirmed that much had changed since the report was published, with all elections being postponed until May 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This would make 2021 a particularly challenging year, due to the need to hold Mayoral, Borough and Parish Council elections all at the same time, in addition to the Police and Crime Commissioner election.

In the meantime, having sought advice, the Edenthorpe Neighbourhood Planning Referendum due to be held on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 would still be going ahead, as the Government's emergency legislation in relation to the postponement of elections would not be introduced in time. Additional precautionary measures would be taken, such as the provision of hand sanitisers in the two Polling Stations. *[Note: Following this meeting, the Planning Referendum was subsequently cancelled due to the pandemic.]*

After Members had noted, with regard to the vacancy at Stainforth Town Council, that only one nomination had been received and therefore the election was uncontested and the candidate automatically elected, it was

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

15 RESULTS OF THE UK PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION 2019

The Committee received a report which outlined the results of the UK Parliamentary General Election held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019. A summary of the results, including the number of votes for each candidate, the rejected votes and the percentage turnout, was set out at Appendix A to the report.

It was reported that the calling of the General Election had come at a difficult time for the Electoral Services Team, when they were heavily engaged in the Annual Canvass and preparing to publish the revised Electoral Register. It also fell in the run-up to Christmas and at a time when some areas of the Borough were still beset by the November floods. Furthermore, the regular count venue at Doncaster Racecourse had been unavailable, so the alternative venue of the National College for High Speed Rail had been secured.

During subsequent discussion, Members of the Committee congratulated and thanked the Electoral Services Team and all staff involved for their efforts and excellent work, particularly given the short notice given in having to prepare for this election. Members felt that the alternative count venue had worked well under the circumstances and, as ever, it had been very smooth and efficient operation.

RESOLVED to note the contents of the report.

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

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