



Doncaster Council

Report

12 July 2022

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

2022 ELECTION RESULTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides members with detailed information and results of the following Elections, By-Elections and Referendums:
 - Rossington Neighbourhood Planning Referendum held on 17 March 2022.
 - High Melton Parish Council By-election held on 17 March 2022.
 - Wheatley Hills and Intake ward By-Election held on 31 May 2022.
 - South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (previously known as Sheffield City Region) held on 5 May 2022.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. This report is for information only. 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 and referendums are 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. Elections are a significant project, which are delivered by a small core team and large scheduled elections are supported by hundreds of individuals both internally across the Council and externally, who undertake various duties such as working at polling stations, processing postal votes and the counting of votes.

Rossington Neighbourhood Planning Referendum - 17 March 2022

6. A Neighbourhood Planning Referendum took place in the Rossington area, (Rossington Parish Boundary polling districts JC, JD, JE, JF, JG and JH). The eligible electorate was 10,840 electors of which 2862 were postal voters and of those, 1,039 postal votes (36.30%) were returned and personal identifiers correctly verified. A further 11 postal votes were rejected due to signature or date of birth not matching and those electors have been notified accordingly.
7. On polling day 150 (1.88%) electors cast their vote in the six polling stations, adding that to the postal votes, gave a total of 1,189 ballot papers verified and a total turnout of 10.97%.
8. The outcome of the Referendum was in favour of using the Neighbourhood Plan for Rossington to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area. A full breakdown of the results can be found below:

Results

9. The 'Question' asked in the referendum was:

Do you want Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Rossington to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

	Number of Votes
Number of votes cast in favour of a 'YES'	1,058
Number of votes cast in favour of a 'NO'	124

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:	Number of ballot papers
A want of an official mark	0
B voting for more than one answer	1
C writing or mark by which voter could be identified	0
D unmarked or void for uncertainty	6
Total	7

Electorate: 10,840	Ballot Papers Issued: 1,189	Turnout: 10.97 %
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High Melton Parish Council By-Election – 17 March 2022

10. Due to a 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.
11. The eligible electorate was 220 electors of which 71 were postal voters and of those, 47 postal votes (66.20%) were returned and personal identifiers correctly verified, no postal votes were rejected for personal identifiers not matching.
12. On polling day 63 (42.28%) electors cast their vote in the polling station, adding that to the postal voters gave a total of 110 ballot papers verified and a total turnout of 50%.

13. There were two candidates and David Jones was duly elected Councillor for High Melton Parish Council; a full breakdown of the results can be found below:
14. Results

Name of Candidate	Description (if any)	Number of Votes*
ALDREN Rebecca		39
JONES David		71 elected

Rejected Votes: 0	Electorate: 220	Ballot Papers Issued: 110	Turnout: 50 %
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Wheatley Hills & Intake By-Election – 31 March 2022

15. Due to resignation of a sitting Councillor a vacancy occurred for a Borough Councillor for the Wheatley Hills and Intake ward. A By-Election was called by two local government electors to fill the vacancy by holding an election. This report provides a detailed update to Members on the election and results.
16. There was an eligible electorate of 12,933 electors of which 2,879 were issued with Postal Votes and 1,264 (43.90%) were returned and personal identifiers correctly verified. A further 7 postal votes were rejected and those electors have been notified accordingly.
17. On polling day 536 (5.33%) electors cast their vote in the ten polling stations across the ward, added to the 1,264 postal votes gave a total of 1,800 ballot papers verified and a total turnout of 13.92%.
18. There were five candidates and Yetunde Elebuibon was duly elected Councillor for the Wheatley Hills and Intake ward; a full breakdown of the results can be found below:
19. Results

Name of Candidate	Description (if any)	Number of Votes
ANGUS Michael Lindsay	The Conservative Party Candidate	419
BUDDEN Andy	Yorkshire Party	356
ELEBUIBON Yetunde	Labour Party	827 elected
ROZENFELDS Jennifer Joanne	Green Party	135
SOUTHALL Dean Peter	Liberal Democrats	60

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:		Number of ballot papers
A	want of an official mark	0
B	voting for more Candidates than voter was entitled to	1
C	writing or mark by which voter could be identified	0
D	unmarked or wholly void for uncertainty	2
Total		3

Electorate: 12,933	Ballot Papers Issued: 1,800	Turnout: 13.92 %
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South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Election – 5 May 2022

20. 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.
21. Like Doncaster's elected Mayor the supplementary voting system was used, which means electors had two votes each at this election – one for their first choice candidate and one, if they wish to use it, for their second choice candidate.
22. There were 150 Polling stations used for this Election across the whole of Doncaster. Postal vote opening sessions returned to our usual venue of the Mary Woollett Centre and our usual count venue Doncaster Racecourse Exhibition Hall was used for the Verification and Counting of votes on Friday 6 May.
23. The total number of staffing positions allocated for these elections across all roles was approx. 700 in total. To avoid polling staff risking catching Covid-19, Polling and Count staff were trained remotely via Microsoft teams which once again proved successful and also created more interaction than the usual face to face training previously used pre covid.
24. Although Covid-19 restrictions were significantly reduced before these Elections, staff and voters health and safety remained a priority. Therefore, every Polling Station undertook a risk assessment and was equipped with plastic "sneeze" screens which were placed between polling staff and electors entering to vote. Staff were provided with face masks but were not required to wear them, individual hand sanitiser and hand sanitiser for voters. Those voting were not required to wear face coverings or socially distance in polling stations although not enforced we did recommended it.
25. There was an electorate of 228,596 of which 58,786 were postal voters. On polling day 17,190 (10.13%) electors cast their vote in the 150 polling stations across Doncaster and 28,315 (48.17%) voted by post. A further 508 postal vote packs were rejected due to the personal identifiers (signature and/or date of birth) not matching. A total of 45,505 ballot papers were verified giving a total turnout of 19.91% for the Doncaster area. The total electorate for the whole combined authority area was 1,003,993 giving a total overall turnout of 264,720 (26.37%).
26. Due to no candidate receiving more than 50% of the first preference votes, the count went to the second stage. All four Councils provided their totals to the Combined Authority Returning Officer who collated the results and Oliver James Coppard was duly elected as the Combined Authority Mayor.

27. Combined Results

Candidate Name	Candidate Description	Number of First Preference Votes	Number of second Preference Votes	Total Votes
BETTNEY, David	Social Democratic Party	10,177		
BILTCLIFFE, Simon David William Watson	Yorkshire Party	34,857		
COPPARD, Oliver James	Labour and Co-operative Party	112,517	30,959	143,476
OTTEN, Joseph (known as Joe)	Liberal Democrats	28,093		
WATKINSON, Clive	The Conservative Party Candidate	43,129	14,218	57,347
WHYMAN, Rebecca Louise (known as Bex)	The Green Party	32,322		

28. For a full breakdown of Doncaster's totals and rejected votes or the results for any of the elections/referendum are published on the Council's website:-
<http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/election-results-for-doncaster>

29. Hatfield Town Council – Dunscroft Ward

Due to a resignation a vacancy occurred and was advertised for a Town Councillor in Hatfield – Dunscroft Ward. Doncaster Council received the necessary request from at least ten electors within the Dunscroft Ward to fill the vacancy by election. Therefore, nominations open on Friday 22 July and close on Friday 29 July, if contested the election will take place on Thursday 25 August 2022.

At present there are 5,007 registered electors in Hatfield – Dunscroft Ward, of which 1,369 are postal voters. Should the election be contested there will be two polling stations into one double polling place. The cost of this election will be charged in full to Hatfield Town Council.

Further information can be found on the Councils web page by visiting:
<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/the-council-democracy/hatfield-town-council-dunscroft-ward-by-election>

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

30. Elections and Referendums are a statutory function and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

31. This report is primarily for information only.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

32.

	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 and deliver elections</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

33. Ensuring the necessary arrangements are in place to deliver well-run elections improve our reputation and meeting the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: SF Date: 29/06/2022]

34. 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, 2014, 2018
 - The Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2014, 2015, 2018
 - Representation of the People Acts 1983, 1985 and 2000
 - Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013
 - The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012, 2013, 2014
 - The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: PH Date: 29/06/2022]

35. The costs associated with the Rossington NPR are claimed back by the Planning Department from Central Government. The cost of Parish by-

elections are claimed back from the Parish/Town Council. The costs associated with local Borough By-Elections are expected to be contained within existing budgets. The costs associated with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority Election are claimed back in full from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

36. Human Resources implications have not been requested.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

37. Technology implications have not been requested.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

38. Health implications have not been requested.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: TB Date: 28/06/2022]

39. The Council has a duty to ensure Elections and Referendums 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. The Council has worked hard to ensure that voting is accessible to all. A full Polling Places review was carried out in 2019 and full risk assessment reviews in 2021 to ensure all Polling Stations are compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. All Polling Stations were supplied with tactile voting devices, large print elections stationery and magnifiers to assist the visually impaired. Ramps were provided to ensure access by wheelchair users and those with mobility issues. Presiding Officers were given guidance at their training session and provided with a handbook on how to assist electors to vote in the unlikely event that they were unable to access the Polling Station. Electors are also able to apply for a Postal Vote if they were unable to attend a polling station. Electoral Services continually review arrangements and look to improve these where possible.

CONSULTATION

40. N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

41. Previous EDSC reports.

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