

## **TO THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE**

### **UPDATE ON INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION AND THE ANNUAL CANVASS**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. This report provides an update to Members on Individual Electoral Registration and the annual Canvass.

#### **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. Individual Electoral Registration will improve the accuracy of the register and help to counter fraud. Having a complete and accurate register is key to public engagement in the democratic process.

#### **BACKGROUND**

4. 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.

#### **INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION (IER) 1<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2015 – 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2016**

5. The last full register was published the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 and Doncaster's Electorate was 216,547. Despite removing the unconfirmed electors under IER the register had grown by 5,812 electors since the last fully published register on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014.
6. Since December 2015 registration has continued to increase and the register has been published and updated monthly and the current full electorate is now **224,249**. This is a 7,702 increase in registration which is believed to be due to public interest in the recent elections (particularly the EU Referendum). A full ward breakdown is attached at **Appendix A**.

#### **ANNUAL CANVASS**

7. In order to effectively deliver well-run electoral registration services, preparations are now beginning for the Annual Canvass to ensure that the current register is maintained and to maximise voter registration. Every year we must write to every household in the Borough to check that the information we hold on the Electoral Register is true and accurate and

maintain a response from every household. To help increase the response to the annual canvass and ensure the register is kept accurate we will be proactively undertaking new ways to ensure that people of Doncaster are kept on the Electoral Register and don't lose their right to vote. These will include:

- Telephone Canvassing
- Working with Care Homes
- Working with Schools/Colleges
- Social Media
- Home Movers through estate agents/new builders
- Working closer with internal partners eg: Council Tax, Childrens Services
- Car Park and Bus Ticket advertising

## **OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION**

8. Electoral Registration is a statutory duty and must be carried out in accordance with statutory requirements. This report is primarily for information only.

## **IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES**

9.

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.	An accurate and well planned Canvass improves accuracy, helps counter fraud and meets the necessary arrangements to ensure that the Council meets the Electoral Commission's Performance Standards.

## **RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS**

10. It was essential that the Council devoted sufficient resources to the challenge of running two major Elections so close together and continue to drive individual registration in order to ensure that the Council complies with its legal duties detailed below.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. 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**

12. The costs associated are carried out within existing budgets.

## **REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTRIBUTORS**

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## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Previous EDSC reports

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