

Report for: Corporate Committee 2nd of February 2023

Title: Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers

Report authorised by : Andy Donald – Chief Executive and Proper Officer

Lead Officer: Ayshe Simsek – Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:** Non key decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Following a review undertaken by the Electoral Registration Officer and Head of Electoral Services, it is apparent a number of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers need to be appointed. This will ensure there is capacity to undertake the full statutory duties of the Electoral Registration Officer.
- 1.2 Corporate Committee are asked to approve these appointments in line with their responsibility for elections.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To approve the following postholders as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers
- Head of Electoral Services (Gareth Harrington)
 - Deputy Head of Electoral Services (vacant post)
 - Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Governance (Fiona Alderman)
 - Chief People Officer (Dan Paul)

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The Council has a legal duty to appoint Deputy Electoral Registration Officers to ensure that the Council meets its democratic obligations for the delivery and management of elections and to ensure it meets its responsibilities for the discharge of registration duties under the Representation of the People Act 1983.

- 4.2 The Corporate Committee has Council responsibility for all functions relating to Elections, except for pilot schemes for local elections which is reserved for full Council.
- 4.3 The appointment of four Deputy Electoral Registration Officers provides a wider pool of resource and expertise to cover the required duties of this role as set out in paragraph 6.1.

Alternative options considered

- 5.1 No alternative options were considered as there is a duty to appoint to these positions under the Representation of the People Act 1983.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The Electoral Registration Officers (ERO) is responsible for compiling and maintaining the register of electors, undertaking an annual canvass of electors and ensuring electoral registration meets legislative requirements and Electoral Commission performance standards.
- Ensuring electoral registers are complete and accurate
 - Raising awareness of voter registration
 - Convening and conducting hearings, required by statute, where there is an objection to any act of including, or refusing to include, somebody within the register of electors
 - To provide any voter with an emergency Voter Authority Certificate

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1 Ensuring fair representation of residents and facilitating participation in democracy under the Representation of the People Act 1983.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

8.1 Finance

There are no finance implications as these appointments are legally required and relate to existing officer postholders who have these duties as part of their job descriptions.

8.2 Head of Legal and Governance

Corporate Committee is the Council's non-executive body and has duties for elections and has responsibility for these particular decisions as set out Schedule 1 of the 2000 Act namely:

- Duty to appoint an electoral registration officer at Section 8(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c. 2)(36).
- Power to assign officers in relation to requisitions of the registration officer at Section 52(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

8.3 Equality

There are no equalities implications arising from this report. Amongst the duties undertaken by the Electoral Registration Officers, are ensuring that equalities issues are addressed in the running of electoral registration and elections.

9. Use of Appendices

None

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None