



ELECTORAL REGISTRATION WORKING PARTY

Date: THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 7.30 pm

**Committee Room 8
Civic Suite
Lewisham Town Hall
London SE6 4RU**

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MEMBERS

Councillor Kevin Bonavia	L
Councillor John Coughlin	(G)
Councillor Joe Dromey	L
Councillor Alan Hall	L
Councillor Stella Jeffrey	L
Councillor Roy Kennedy	L
Councillor David Michael	L
Councillor Jacq Paschoud	L
Councillor Jonathan Slater	L
Councillor Paul Upex	L

Members are summoned to attend this meeting



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

ORDER OF BUSINESS – PART 1 AGENDA

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Lewisham



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

The public are welcome to attend our committee meetings, however occasionally committees may have to consider some business in private. Copies of reports can be made available in additional formats on request.

Agenda Item 1

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION WORKING PARTY		
Report Title	ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 1
Ward	n/a	
Contributors	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
Class	Part 1	Date: 8 September 2016

Recommendation

To appoint a Chair of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2016/17.

Agenda Item 2

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION WORKING PARTY			
Report Title	Minutes		
Key Decision			Item No. 2
Ward			
Contributors	CHIEF EXECUTIVE		
Class	Part 1	Date:	

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Minutes of the meeting of the Working Party, which was open to press and public, held on 23 June 2015 (copy attached) be confirmed and signed.

MINUTES OF THE ELECTORAL REGISTRATION WORKING PARTY

23 June 2015 at 8.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Alan Hall Stella Jeffrey, Roy Kennedy (Chair), John Paschoud and Jonathan Slater.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Joe Dromey and Jim Mallory

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. **Presentation from Bite the Ballot**

The Chair welcomed Oliver Sidorczuk from Bite the Ballot to the meeting.

Mr Sidorczuk gave a presentation to the Working Party on the work Bite the Ballot had done to drive up voter registration and electoral awareness amongst young people.

The Working Party thanked Mr Sidorczuk for his presentation.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

5. **Update on IER**

The Working Party considered a report which provided an update on the implementation of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) and the Council wide initiatives undertaken to date, and planned for the future to maximise registration in Lewisham.

By May 2015, the total electorate in Lewisham had increased from approximately 189,000 in December 2014 to around 198,760 which was an increase of approximately 5.2%. 77% of applications to register to vote were made online, and online registration was most popular with young people and overseas voters. As at 1 May 2015 the total number of electors on the electoral register who remained unconfirmed under IER was approximately 8.2% of the total electorate.

There was concern regarding the fall in the number of young attainers on the electoral roll nationally. Since February/March 2014 the number had fallen by around 47%, attributed by the Electoral Commission to the lack of a comprehensive canvass in 2014. The Electoral Commission believed the full

HEF canvass in 2015 may redress this somewhat. Household notification letters that were sent by Lewisham Electoral Registration officers in February 2015 did not particularly attract attainers, possible due to the emphasis on the upcoming general election, for which attainers would for the most part have been too young to vote. The Electoral Commission was encouraging Electoral Registration Officers to update their engagement strategy to now focus on young attainers.

The Working Party thanked the Young Mayor and his team, and the young people on work experience placements in the Council, for their hard work during the election period. Councillor Bonavia suggested that at a future Council meeting that there be a formal item to thank them for their efforts.

The Chair raised a concern that there needed to be more resources going in to ensure that the number of unregistered electors continued to reduce. The Chair proposed an additional recommendation, that a fully costed plan for additional work, including canvassing of households be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Party, with a view to it being presented at a future meeting of the Mayor and Cabinet. The Working Party were in agreement with the additional recommendation.

The Head of Law clarified that there had not been any concerns regarding resources and officers during the election period and that a significant amount of work had been successfully undertaken to drive awareness of the election and to encourage voter registration.

Councillor Bonavia noted the financial implications in the report, and the Head of Law explained that there were additional costs associated with the General Election which were not recoverable, for example the dedicated call centre set up by the Council to handle registration queries was not considered an election expense. The rest of the costs would be reimbursed by HM Treasury.

RESOLVED that

- a) the presentation be noted; and
- b) a fully costed plan for additional work, including canvassing of households, be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Party.

6. **IER across the UK**

The Principal Policy and Projects officer presented a report to the Working Party on under-registration across the UK.

The Chair thanked the Principal Policy and Projects officer on behalf of the Working Party for the work undertaken on the report.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Meeting closed at 9.50 p.m

Agenda Item 3

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION WORKING PARTY		
Report Title	Declarations of Interest	
Key Decision		Item No. 2
Ward		
Contributors	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
Class	Part 1	Date: 8 September 2016

Declaration of Interests

Members are asked to declare any personal interest they have in any item on the agenda.

Personal interests

There are two types of personal interest :-

- (a) an interest which you must enter in the Register of Members' Interests*
- (b) an interest where the wellbeing or financial position of you, (or a "relevant person") is likely to be affected by a matter more than it would affect the majority of inhabitants of the ward or electoral division affected by the decision.

*Full details of registerable interests appear on the Council's website.

("Relevant" person includes you, a member of your family, a close associate, and their employer, a firm in which they are a partner, a company where they are a director, any body in which they have securities with a nominal value of £25,000 and (i) any body of which they are a member, or in a position of general control or management to which they were appointed or nominated by the Council, and (ii) any body exercising functions of a public nature, or directed to charitable purposes or one of whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy, including any trade union or political party where they hold a position of general management or control).

If you have a personal interest you must declare the nature and extent of it before the matter is discussed or as soon as it becomes apparent, except in limited circumstances. Even if the interest is in the Register of Interests, you must declare it in meetings where matters relating to it are under discussion, unless an exemption applies.

Exemptions to the need to declare personal interest to the meeting

You do not need to declare a personal interest where it arises solely from membership of, or position of control or management on:

- (a) any other body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) any other body exercising functions of a public nature.

In these exceptional cases, unless your interest is also prejudicial, you only need to declare your interest if and when you speak on the matter.

Sensitive information

If the entry of a personal interest in the Register of Interests would lead to the disclosure of information whose availability for inspection creates or is likely to create a serious risk of violence to you or a person living with you, the interest need not be entered in the Register of Interests, provided the Monitoring Officer accepts that the information is sensitive. Where this is the case, if such an interest arises at a meeting, it must be declared but you need not disclose the sensitive information.

Prejudicial interests

Your personal interest will also be prejudicial if all of the following conditions are met:

- (a) it does not fall into an exempt category (see below)
- (b) the matter affects either your financial interests or relates to regulatory matters - the determining of any consent, approval, licence, permission or registration
- (c) a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think your personal interest so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

Categories exempt from being prejudicial interest

- (a) Housing – holding a tenancy or lease with the Council unless the matter relates to your particular tenancy or lease; (subject to arrears exception)
- (b) School meals, school transport and travelling expenses; if you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or a school governor unless the matter relates particularly to the school your child attends or of which you are a governor;
- (c) Statutory sick pay; if you are in receipt
- (d) Allowances, payment or indemnity for members
- (e) Ceremonial honours for members
- (f) Setting Council Tax or precept (subject to arrears exception)

Effect of having a prejudicial interest

If your personal interest is also prejudicial, you must not speak on the matter. Subject to the exception below, you must leave the room when it is being discussed and not seek to influence the decision improperly in any way.

Exception

The exception to this general rule applies to allow a member to act as a community advocate notwithstanding the existence of a prejudicial interest. It only applies where members of the public also have a right to attend to make representation, give evidence or answer questions about the matter. Where this is the case, the member

with a prejudicial interest may also attend the meeting for that purpose. However the member must still declare the prejudicial interest, and must leave the room once they have finished making representations, or when the meeting decides they have finished, if that is earlier. The member cannot vote on the matter, nor remain in the public gallery to observe the vote.

Prejudicial interests and overview and scrutiny

In addition, members also have a prejudicial interest in any matter before an Overview and Scrutiny body where the business relates to a decision by the Executive or by a committee or sub committee of the Council if at the time the decision was made the member was on the Executive/Council committee or sub committee and was present when the decision was taken. In short, members are not allowed to scrutinise decisions to which they were party.