

LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

MINUTES of the meeting of the ELECTIONS COMMITTEE, which was open to the press and public, held on THURSDAY, 26 MARCH 2009 at LEWISHAM TOWN HALL, CATFORD, SE6 4RU at 7 p.m.

Present

Councillors Hall, Johnson, Paschoud, Peake and Robson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Britton

| <u>Minute No.</u> | <u>Action</u> |
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| 1 | <u>ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR</u> (page RESOLVED that Councillor Robson be elected Chair and Councillor Paschoud elected Vice Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2008/9. |
| 2 | <u>MINUTES</u> (page RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee, which was open to the press and public, held on 20 November 2007 be confirmed and signed. |
| 3 | <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS</u> (page None |
| 4/5 | <u>SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEW OF VOTER TURNOUT AND REPORT</u> (page and appendices at page Recommendation 1 Part of this recommendation had been implemented. A principle officer in the elections team has been made responsible for registration and participation. Two of the Council's graduate trainees had developed a draft Public Awareness Strategy and they had produced some ideas for enhancing registration. <u>Agreed</u> that the specifics of this recommendation be considered at the next meeting of this Committee in July. Recommendation 2 Officers circulated examples of a birthday card that had been |

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produced for circulation to 18 year olds in an effort to encourage newly qualified electors to vote.
Agreed to note the progress.

Recommendation 3

Agreed to note the progress.

Recommendation 4

The Head of Law said that comparing the council tax database with the Electoral Register would be difficult to administer because it would be costly and it would highlight all types of discrepancies that were not required. However, officers would be looking into the feasibility of the proposed work.
Agreed that officers should consider a wider scope than just the Council data base and report back to this meeting in July.

Recommendation 5

Agreed that more information is required.

Recommendation 6

Agreed that a copy of the reports be sent to all group leaders for them to consider within their respective parties.

Recommendation 7

The Advisor to the Young Mayor said that the recommendation was a positive suggestion but the current structure and resources may not support the idea at this stage and it was agreed that the citizen's panel needed to settle down before any new initiative was agreed.
Agreed that a report be submitted to the Mayor and Cabinet in a years' time.

Recommendation 8

The Head of Corporate Policy & Governance said that the 'Be a Councillor' campaign had been discussed by the Member Development Steering Group. It was considered that the selection process was well under way and the campaign was, therefore, too late for this year. It was suggested that members should be encouraged into wider areas of engagement; school governors, pct boards and civic engagements.
Agreed that the comments of the Steering Group be noted, and that members be encouraged into wider areas of engagement.

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RESOLVED that the report be noted and the decisions made be actioned. ED Res

6 POLLING PLACES – DESIGNATION OF ALTERNATIVE PREMISES – DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY. (Page and Appendix at page

Councillor Peake said that Councillor Edgerton had informed him that at the last election polling place DECCZ had been changed at the last minute and he asked for assurance that this would never happen again. The Head of Law said that she could not give such an assurance. The polling station was on the approach to Lewisham Station. Permission that had been granted to use this site as a polling station had been withdrawn at the last minute. The polling station relocated to Lewisham Town Centre. However, clear signposting to the new polling place was taken down by members of the public. An officer was sent to the site to re direct voters.

RESOLVED that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, following consultation with the respective local ward councillors and members of the committee, to designate alternative locations in the event of any polling place being unavailable at any election.

7 DOWNHAM WARD BY-ELECTION REVIEW (Page

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.45 p.m.

Chair