

Public Document Pack

Elections Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Thursday, 19 July 2018.

Ian Thomas, Chief Executive
11 July 2018

Councillor John Paschoud	
Councillor Jacq Paschoud	
Councillor Peter Bernards	
Councillor Kevin Bonavia	
Councillor Stephen Penfold	
Councillor James Rathbone	

Elections Committee Agenda

Thursday, 19 July 2018

5.30 pm, Civic Suite, Lewisham Town Hall, London SE6 4RU

Civic Suite

Lewisham Town Hall

London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Sarah Assibey (Tel: 0208 314 9327)

Part 1

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Agenda Item 1

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
Report Title	ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR	
Key Decision		Item No. 1
Ward		
Contributors	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
Class	Part 1	Date: 19 July 2018

Recommendation

It is recommended that a Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee be appointed for the Municipal Year 2018/19.

Agenda Item 2

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
Report Title	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 1
Ward	n/a	
Contributors	Chief Executive	
Class	Part 1	Date: 19 July 2018

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

1 Personal interests

There are three types of personal interest referred to in the Council's Member Code of Conduct :-

- (1) Disclosable pecuniary interests
- (2) Other registerable interests
- (3) Non-registerable interests

2 Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined by regulation as:-

- (a) Employment, trade, profession or vocation of a relevant person* for profit or gain
- (b) Sponsorship –payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than by the Council) within the 12 months prior to giving notice for inclusion in the register in respect of expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member or towards your election expenses (including payment or financial benefit from a Trade Union).
- (c) Undischarged contracts between a relevant person* (or a firm in which they are a partner or a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest) and the Council for goods, services or works.
- (d) Beneficial interests in land in the borough.
- (e) Licence to occupy land in the borough for one month or more.
- (f) Corporate tenancies – any tenancy, where to the member's knowledge, the Council is landlord and the tenant is a firm in which the relevant person* is a

partner, a body corporate in which they are a director, or in the securities of which they have a beneficial interest.

- (g) Beneficial interest in securities of a body where:-
- (a) that body to the member's knowledge has a place of business or land in the borough; and
 - (b) either
 - (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person* has a beneficial interest exceeds 1/100 of the total issued share capital of that class.

*A relevant person is the member, their spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom they live as spouse or civil partner.

(3) Other registerable interests

The Lewisham Member Code of Conduct requires members also to register the following interests:-

- (a) Membership or position of control or management in a body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Council
- (b) Any body exercising functions of a public nature or directed to charitable purposes, or whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy, including any political party
- (c) Any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25

(4) Non registerable interests

Occasions may arise when a matter under consideration would or would be likely to affect the wellbeing of a member, their family, friend or close associate more than it would affect the wellbeing of those in the local area generally, but which is not required to be registered in the Register of Members' Interests (for example a matter concerning the closure of a school at which a Member's child attends).

(5) Declaration and Impact of interest on member's participation

- (a) Where a member has any registerable interest in a matter and they are present at a meeting at which that matter is to be discussed, they must declare the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity and in any

event before the matter is considered. The declaration will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the matter is a disclosable pecuniary interest the member must take no part in consideration of the matter and withdraw from the room before it is considered. They must not seek improperly to influence the decision in any way. **Failure to declare such an interest which has not already been entered in the Register of Members' Interests, or participation where such an interest exists, is liable to prosecution and on conviction carries a fine of up to £5000**

- (b) Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest they must still declare the nature of the interest to the meeting at the earliest opportunity and in any event before the matter is considered, but they may stay in the room, participate in consideration of the matter and vote on it unless paragraph (c) below applies.
- (c) Where a member has a registerable interest which falls short of a disclosable pecuniary interest, the member must consider whether a reasonable member of the public in possession of the facts would think that their interest is so significant that it would be likely to impair the member's judgement of the public interest. If so, the member must withdraw and take no part in consideration of the matter nor seek to influence the outcome improperly.
- (d) If a non-registerable interest arises which affects the wellbeing of a member, their, family, friend or close associate more than it would affect those in the local area generally, then the provisions relating to the declarations of interest and withdrawal apply as if it were a registerable interest.
- (e) Decisions relating to declarations of interests are for the member's personal judgement, though in cases of doubt they may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

(6) Sensitive information

There are special provisions relating to sensitive interests. These are interests the disclosure of which would be likely to expose the member to risk of violence or intimidation where the Monitoring Officer has agreed that such interest need not be registered. Members with such an interest are referred to the Code and advised to seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance.

(7) Exempt categories

There are exemptions to these provisions allowing members to participate in decisions notwithstanding interests that would otherwise prevent them doing so. These include:-

- (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)

Agenda Item 3

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
Report Title	MINUTES	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 2
Ward	n/a	
Contributors	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
Class	Part 1	Date: 19 July 2018

Recommendation

To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee, which was open to the press and public, held on 7 December 2018

MINUTES OF THE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday 7 December 2017 at 6.30pm

PRESENT: Councillor John Paschoud (Chair), Councillor Stella Jeffrey (Vice Chair),
Councillor Jacq Paschoud

Also Present: Kath Nicholson (Head of Law), Janet Senior (Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration), Jamie Baker (Electoral Services Manager)

Apologies: Councillors Brown

1. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were held as an accurate record.

2. Declarations of Interest

No interest were declared

3. Changes to polling places

Jamie Baker presented this report and appendix which proposes alternative venues for the polling for the local elections to take place. The committee discussed each venue appended and its suitability as a polling station. The Electoral Manager expressed that ideally a place will be chosen by the end of January 2018. In addition to the report, the following was discussed:

- 3.1. Ten Em Bee Sports Development Centre had an issue with lighting for voters and could be deterrent. The New Studio Club is recommended, and is just next door. The Committee were in agreement
- 3.2. Sandhurst Infants School is now reopen for refurbishment for voters to use as a polling station, however, St Andrews Church is just next door and cheaper to use. The Committee were in agreement.
- 3.3. Roseview Lounge in Ladywell is problematic as it is disruptive for vulnerable residents. It was suggested that it is moved to Prendergast Vale School which is on the ward boundary and being used as a polling place for DLC3 in Lewisham Central. Members suggested a move to St Mary's instead as using a double entrance at one venue for two polling stations would be difficult. Parking is also challenging around the school.
- 3.4. DLA4, The Portacabin on entrance to Hilly Fields, via Hilly Fields Crescent, is expensive and involves a lot of preparation. The Committee were in agreement to use Francis Drake Bowls Club which is immediately adjacent to where the portacabin is placed.

- 3.5. Moving to share the Church of the Good Shepherd or Brindishe School from St. Winifred's Infants School, (Hall) was suggested. Brindishe Lee was agreed.
- 3.6. Community Centre, (Fusion Table Tennis Area), Unit 2B is a poor quality venue for a polling station. Scotney Hall, Winslade Estate was agreed.
- 3.7. A move to Fusion Sports Centre at Forest Hill School from Our Lady and St. Philip Neri Primary School was suggested. Knights Academy however has a larger hall and more parking, so will be put forward for consideration.
- 3.8. Portacabin on High Level Drive to Sydenham High Junior School. The school has not yet facilitated a visit, and there is not a second option for the area. It is a small polling district and gets a high turnout.
- 3.9. Silverdale Hall is unavailable to use as the building is in poor repair and is scheduled for significant development works. It was suggested to use the Sydenham Centre, which is already a station. It is accessible and spacious. The Committee agreed.
- 3.10. A move from the Portacabin adjacent to allotments on Hafton Road to St Andrew's Church on Sandhurst Road and share with ECA5 was suggested. It is similar distance-wise. Walking distance is slightly longer so it was suggested that postal vote forms are sent to residents as an option along with notification of venue change.

RESOLVED the changes discussed are noted and endorsed.

4. Review of parliamentary constituencies boundaries

The Electoral Services Manager presented this report. The following was discussed. All parliamentary business is going ahead as planned. September 2018 is when they are due to present their findings to Parliament.

RESOLVED the committee endorse the draft response for submission.

5. Results of the annual electoral registration canvass

The Elections team undertook a thorough review of the last elections canvass and improved its delivery.

- 5.1. Technology was updated as mobile canvassing was used.
- 5.2. The response to online responses was increased by 10,000 which saves time and money. Emails were scheduled to be sent on the same day letters were received through the post.
- 5.3. Data mining helped identify an extra 5,000 people who were on other council records but not the register. Further work identified that the electoral register was often more current and reliable than the other data sources. Data mining bought about approximately £25k of savings – bought about due to matching

properties and names instead of printing and posting additional reminder forms.

- 5.4. The statistical results were: Total electorate = 199,030; HEF response rate = 87.22%; Total additions = 9,875; Total deletions = 17,346; Total amendments = 1,609

RESOLVED the Elections Committee noted the success of the 2017 annual canvass

6. Initial plans for the Mayoral and Local Elections on 3.5.18

The Electoral Service Manager gave a brief summary of the upcoming local elections

There will not be many changes from the last general election. The Mayoral Address Voting form will be sent to voters and will be changed to give more detail about the Council branding and the process of voting- the team are working with Communications to make the booklet more appealing.

Purdah begins on 27th March and all non-statutory business will be deferred.

Verification will be taking place overnight and the count process will begin the next morning.

The meeting finished at 7.35pm

Agenda Item 4

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE			
Report Title	Review of the 2018 Elections		
Key Decision	n/a		Item No.
Wards	All		
Contributors	Jamie Baker, Electoral Services Manager		
Class	Part 1	Date: 19 July 2018	

1. Summary

This report gives a review of the elections held in 2018 – the Mayoral and Local elections of 3 May and the Lewisham East parliamentary by-election of 14 June.

2. Purpose

To review the delivery of the elections and examine any lessons to be learned for future elections in Lewisham.

3. Recommendation

That the Committee make note of the report and provide their own observations and recommendations for future Lewisham elections.

4 Background

4.1 The Mayoral and Local elections were held on 3 May 2018. They were scheduled a long time in advance and the electoral services team had a long time to prepare.

4.2 There were 211 candidates for ward councillor and 7 candidates for the Mayor.

4.3 The team made a large number of changes, mostly small, to the delivery of these elections compared to those of 2014 (the last Mayoral and Local elections).

4.4 The most significant change from a candidate's point of view was the count, which was held at Knights Academy in Downham.

4.5 A parliamentary by-election was held in Lewisham East on 14 June. This was because Heidi Alexander resigned to become Deputy Mayor for London.

4.6 As there was very little notice for this election the administration was put under some stress but the performance was strong as before.

6. **Legal implications**

6.1 None.

7. **Equalities implications**

7.1 The delivery of elections is subject to the DDA and Equality Act provisions. In particular we must ensure there is equal access to voter registration and voting at elections.

7.2 This means that our polling places must be accessible and our postal voting processes do not unfairly discriminate against any particular group.

7.3 Our review identified a couple of polling places where the provision for people with mobility issues must be improved for future elections.

7.4 No other specific equalities issues have arisen.

8. **Financial implications**

8.1 The Mayoral and Local elections cost the council approximately £450k. This must be funded locally. The parliamentary by-election will be paid for by central government (once we have submitted full accounts).

9. **Crime and disorder implications**

9.1 The hustings event for the parliamentary by-election, held on 12 June, had to be cancelled due to a large protest (concerning a particular candidate). The electoral services review identifies this as an area to improve in future.

9.2 We must find a way to enable residents to meet and put questions to election candidates without fear of violence or intimidation.

10. **Environmental implications**

There are no environmental implications arising.

11. **Background documents**

See Appendix A – Elections 2018 – The Review

See Appendix B – Lewisham East By-election – The Review

Jamie Baker
Electoral Services Manager

Mayoral & Local Elections – May 2018

The Review

Summary

- All objectives were achieved, the elections were a resounding success

Election Team

- Performance was generally very good
- There were some issues with morning punctuality for some of the team. We need more consistency with this in the future
- Temporary staff were of a high quality, especially Louise and Julie
- At times we were overstaffed. It was useful to have the extra staff for contingency but we could have coped without 2 of them quite well
- Delegation of roles went well. The team are learning more about elections each year and taking on more responsibility. This area can be improved further, with responsibility for training and planning being delegated on occasion

Planning

- Written plans were in place for every element of the election. Often these were not read by the whole team but it is useful to have the plans to show that due diligence has been taken on all decisions
- The large timetable was used by the team, with the version placed on the wall giving a good visual indicator of progress
- Perhaps we could reference the plan more often in the project board meetings to tie planning to the discussions

Project Board

- It was useful to hold these meetings but at times there was repetition with team meetings
- The notes weren't always available quickly after the meetings, which meant that occasionally action points were not followed up as quickly as they could have been
- Having the RO present was valuable as it gave her a useful insight into planning progress

Printing

- The printing contractor performed well. We had no evidence of any mistakes with poll cards or postal votes
- The products were of high quality and arrived on time
- Another printer made a high profile mistake which justifies our decision that the printer we used is lower risk

Polling Staff Training

- This was well received with great feedback
- The roleplays were particularly useful and a good learning tool

- The online training seemed a challenge for a lot of council staff. Perhaps because the Learning Pool is rarely used as a tool. It was useful but we must find a way to make the reporting easier and access for external staff
- Daytime sessions were popular – continue with these
- The team all participated by acting as a trainer for a few sessions. They need to do this more regularly to improve their confidence and delivery
- The ballot paper account training was rushed – mainly because this is an area we usually perform well, however for the next sessions we should do more of this as many POs made mistakes
- The threshold for number of staff to attend can be increased to 40 and the number of sessions reduced accordingly

Presiding Officers

- The pool of potential POs has become smaller. Many had to be replaced and we struggled to find reserves
- We need to identify more and replace the people who are no longer performing as required
- Training for new POs should be introduced as separate sessions

Poll Clerks

- We had a large number of new poll clerks
- There aren't many concerns with the quality of their work but a large number didn't turn up to their initial training and had to book again. This causes increased admin work for the team – so perhaps we can improve the communication around training sessions and send more timely and regular reminders

Visiting Officers

- The new VOs performed well
- Having a VO supervisor helps funnel the enquiries and manage the problem solving very well. Troy worked very well with Annetal preventing the election team getting bogged down on facilities type issues
- Some VOs dropped out due to the money no longer being a sufficient incentive. Can we find more money to increase their fee?

Polling Stations

- Very few complaints from voters regarding the new venues. Only 1 in fact, regarding Trinity Primary School and the accessibility for older people from the furthest street
- There were 2 issues access related issues – a fall at Grinling Gibbons and a broken lift at St Winifred's
- The replacement for EWH6 was expensive but massively improved the reliability and reduced risk, which was money well spent
- Portacabins continue to be a logistical headache. Annetal and her team performed extremely well but this is high risk and resource intensive. Replacing portacabins remains a priority of the next polling district review

Postal Voting

- The response was not as great as last year but still relatively high for a local election
- The new format of holding sessions every other day worked well – there were always postal votes to open and Jo Banks could attend the office more regularly
- The bottleneck of the scanning was reduced this year – by using more accomplished scanner operators and being more urgent with the process
- The reconciling of figures at the end of the day could be improved, utilising the openers more so that the entire team can finish earlier

Comms

- There was low level interest throughout the election – difficult to judge whether our comms was effective or not
- The London-wide comms had good coverage and resulted in approximately 1,500 new registrations, not a bad return for £3k
- The email to postal voters was generally well received but did result in a large number of email responses. We didn't do the email to normal voters through fear of receiving an unmanageable number of responses. The turnout was higher than expected which suggests the email was not necessary anyway
- There were few complaints and few issues on social media
- The results went up as they were declared – as quickly as possible

Complaints from Voters

- The number of complaints was drastically fewer than last year. This is to be expected as the turnout and interest was lower
- There were far fewer reports of missing poll cards or postal votes. Either Royal Mail have improved or this is because there is less interest
- This is also evidence that the changes to how we respond to emails has improved – using templates has improved the quality and reduced follow-up emails and complaints

The CSC

- This was their first election answering our phones
- The loss of phones for a long period during the election did cause a problem. If it was a higher profile election there would have been much more significant fallout
- Generally the CSC staff performed well but there were issues with some poor responses from some staff
- Often it was due to a failure to follow the script or a lack of understanding of the service
- It was a good learning opportunity for them and they can only improve

Fitting Up – materials and sundries etc

- Wearside worked as a venue but was too far away. We weren't able to make regular inspections or contribute as a team
- The end result was good but there were some minor issues with some notices not being present in the double stations
- The ordering and delivery of sundries did cause some issues and unnecessary delay

- The new payments system should enable speedier payments to our suppliers to reduce delays. If not, we should consider using the credit card and paying for supplies up front. This would reduce risk of the delays causing issues

The Count Venue

- The size was good and the staff were very accommodating
- It would have been useful to have more spaces in the car park for VIPs and senior staff. This would improve accessibility (although no comments or complaints have been received about that)
- The catering was generally good but could have been improved – drinks weren't available throughout and we had to purchase additional water
- Going upstairs for the results declarations did work quite well. It would have been nice to have the results declared in the counting room, or have the results hall immediately next door, but again there were no negative comments and the process was well received
- A PA system for the counting hall is a must have. Shouting instructions and requests became a little difficult and did not present the well-prepared and professional image we were trying to display

The Count Process

- The verification went well apart from a bottleneck with the accountants
- It would have been preferable to have multiple accountants – 1 per lane at least, perhaps 1 per contest per lane
- The verification did however finish on target – 2am – and the counting was accurate
- The count itself started incredibly well. It was set up nicely and staff arrived on time in good order
- There were some issues with the count stationery – with paperclips and batch headers not being distributed evenly enough
- The mayoral count went extremely smoothly. A few wards slowed it down slightly and perhaps could have been quicker, but the finish time was on target again and the result was accepted with confidence
- The local counts started slowly but gained speed once people had shaken off the lethargy of their lunch and gotten used to the process
- The mixed votes checking went well but caused a slight delay with the accountants again. One way of solving this would be to have more accountants or pass on that role to count supervisors who each have their own laptop
- There were very few recounts and the variance was small. This was probably a result of decent training and daytime counting
- Communication between the senior count staff was good. Often the supervisors needed to ask questions midway through the count. Having senior staff on each lane able to answer all questions was incredibly useful
- The supervisors generally performed very well, along with the senior count staff. Communication was good and leadership was good. There was a definite improvement from 2017 with even more of the supervisor and senior staff being more confident with the process and fast with their decision making. This bodes well for the future as we're developing a strong team

Actions for Future Elections

1. Improve punctuality with all staff arriving by 9am every morning during the entire election period
2. Employ just 2 additional staff of a high standard, rather than 3 FTE
3. Continue with delegation of duties and enabling the team to learn more aspects of elections
4. Use the project plan as the basis for project board meetings
5. Ensure the timing of project board meetings allows the RO to attend
6. Continue with the same printing firm
7. Include a thorough exercise on BPAs for all PO training
8. Introduce a new training session exclusively for new POs
9. Identify more PCs to promote to PO
10. Consider if we can increase the VO fee – raise with AEA London branch
11. Postal vote opening – look for ways to make the reconciliation more efficient and less dependent on the postal vote manager
12. Re-establish relationships with the materials and fitting up suppliers to ensure speedy delivery in future
13. Take the council's own PA system to the count so we have a reliable system to hand
14. Improve the accounting process for the verification and the count to make it even more accurate, efficient and fast

Agenda Item 5

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE		
Report Title	The Polling District Review 2018-19	
Key Decision	n/a	Item No.
Wards	All	
Contributors	Jamie Baker, Electoral Services Manager	
Class	Part 1	Date: 19 July 2018

1. **Summary**

This report gives information on the polling district review.

2. **Purpose**

To advise the committee on the requirements for the review.

3. **Recommendation**

That the Committee make note of this report.

4 **Background**

4.1 It is a legal requirement for Lewisham to complete our next polling district review by 1 December 2019.

4.2 It is our view that the formal stages of the review should take place during the canvass of 2019.

4.3 We would produce the initial proposals for the start of July which would mark the start of the formal consultation period.

4.4 A terms of reference for the review, and methodology, would be produced beforehand to make it clear the steps that will be taken and the criteria for decision making.

4.5 At this early stage it would be useful to hear the thoughts of the committee on the outcomes they would like to see in the review. For example:

- I. What does the committee think about reducing the number of polling places?

- II. Shall we continue the use of schools? If not, what are the alternatives?
- III. What does the committee think about 'super' polling stations?
- IV. Which stations/wards require the most urgent looking at?

6. Legal implications

6.1 None.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 The delivery of elections is subject to the DDA and Equality Act provisions. In particular we must ensure there is equal access to voter registration and voting at elections.

7.2 Polling place provision is central to this. We need to ensure every polling place is fit for purpose: big enough; accessible; well-lit from outside; disabled parking available; central location so people can actually reach it on foot, etc

8. Financial implications

None.

9. Crime and disorder implications

None.

10. Environmental implications

None.

11. Background documents

None.

Jamie Baker
Electoral Services Manager

Lewisham East By-election Lessons Learned

Overall this election went extremely well. Very few issues arose and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Despite that, there are some things we can improve for next time.

1. Candidates

- a. We had a large number of candidates
- b. It wasn't easy to predict which parties would be interested
- c. Not all information was clearly displayed on the website
- d. **Recommendation.** We should consider having a separate area on the website for candidates and agents to make it easier for them to understand what they must do and who they should contact

2. Staffing

- a. Coming so soon after the May elections helped us. There was plenty of staff to choose from
- b. The tight deadlines we set for staff to respond didn't cause as many problems as we feared
- c. **Recommendation.** Look at our timetable for staffing the next election. Can we make the deadlines tighter, given this election has proven staff are able to respond quickly when asked to.
- d. **Recommendation.** Update the default staffing lists on Express

3. Polling stations

- a. The VO and RO visits identified a few stations where accessibility for people with mobility issues must be improved
- b. They also identified a station we don't want to use again
- c. The ballot boxes at some stations were sealed insecurely and had to be re-sealed later in the day. We can improve the instructions for next time
- d. **Recommendation.** Feed the results of these visits into our review of polling districts and places. Aim to either improve these stations or replace with new venues

4. The count

- a. The process was quick, with an early finish, and could have been even quicker
- b. The civic suite allowed for plenty of space. However, counting in 2 rooms does present a challenge for the supervision, especially for the accountants
- c. Counting in wards went well, however the distribution of postal votes could have been even better to prevent some wards finishing much sooner than others
- d. The results declaration was slick and presented Lewisham very well
- e. **Recommendation.** Test Sharepoint or other accounting solutions to identify where we can save even more time

ELECTIONS COMMITTEE			
Report Title	The Annual Canvass		
Key Decision	n/a		Item No.
Wards	All		
Contributors	Jamie Baker, Electoral Services Manager		
Class	Part 1	Date: 19 July 2018	

1. Summary

This report gives information on the upcoming annual electoral registration canvass in Lewisham.

2. Purpose

To advise the committee on the plans for the annual canvass.

3. Recommendation

That the Committee make note of this report and consider what more can be done to maximise the response rates to the forms.

4 Report

- 4.1 Timetable. We start with the first HEF (household enquiry form) being delivered to each property at the start of August. This will be by Royal Mail.
- 4.2 The forms will also be sent via email to around 60,000 residents. This method was used last year and saved us a considerable amount of money, as well as improving the response rate.
- 4.3 The second and third forms will be sent out via canvasser. They will know for a resident, and only deliver the form if they cannot catch somebody at home.
- 4.4 This is a change to how we've traditionally done the canvass. We are looking at ways to improve the canvass response from canvassing, so doing it early and doing it twice are our first 2 big changes this year.

- 4.5 Another big change is using our canvassers to undertake the deliveries. Usually we would use Royal Mail for every stage with canvassers just doing the door-knocking and delivery of final reminders. This will be a good test to see if canvassers can be used to deliver poll cards and postal votes.
- 4.6 Budget. We'd like to reduce the overall spend of last year. The approximate spend is around £170k (including all printing and postage etc, but not staffing). By maximising use of canvassers and email we hope to reduce the cost this time.
- 4.7 On top of that, we'll be looking at how we can improve our registration figures for the rest of the year – during the monthly updates. Current data shows that unless there is an election the registration rates remain very low, including during the canvass. This is the same across all London boroughs and is not a Lewisham phenomenon. We can however try to be innovative and lead the way in finding solutions to this problem.
- 4.8 Targets. The response rate last year was 87.22%. This was an increase of 15% on the previous year. We expect it will be hard to reach this same figure again because there are no scheduled elections so the 'hook' is not as great. Our target therefore is 85%.
- 4.9 Other targets: to canvass every single household by knocking on their door at least twice; add at least 5,000 new names to the register; remove at least 5,000 names from the register; collect more email addresses to improve future communication opportunities; improve data processing in the office.

6. **Legal implications**

- 6.1 None.

7. **Equalities implications**

- 7.1 The delivery of elections is subject to the DDA and Equality Act provisions. In particular we must ensure there is equal access to voter registration during the annual canvass.
- 7.2 The forms are prescribed, meaning we have little room for modifying them. We can however include a cover letter and wording on the outer envelope to improve their visibility and make it clearer what we are asking the residents to do.
- 7.3 We intend to be proactive with under-registered groups, where possible. Using data is one area where we were very good last year and where we

can improve even further. University data and info on disabled people is what we're aiming for this time. Both should be achievable and would considerably improve the ease with which these people can get registered.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1 The budget is around £170k, though falls under the annual electoral services budget. Any money saved here would likely be used later in the year chasing people to register.

9. Crime and disorder implications

None.

10. Environmental implications

There are no environmental implications arising.

11. Background documents

See Appendix C – canvass timetable

Jamie Baker
Electoral Services Manager

Annual Canvass 2018

Timetable - key dates only

Date	Day	Stage	Item
11-Jul	Wednesday	HEF Stage 1	Data to printers
31-Jul	Tuesday	HEF Stage 1	Email Forms
03-Aug	Friday	HEF Stage 1	Forms delivered
14-Aug	Tuesday	HEF Stage 1	Email Forms
20-Aug	Monday	HEF Stage 2	Data to printers
20-Aug	Monday	ITR Stage 1	Data to printers
21-Aug	Tuesday	HEF Stage 2	Email Forms
23-Aug	Thursday	ITR Stage 1	Email Forms
30-Aug	Thursday	HEF Stage 2	Forms delivered to Catford
31-Aug	Friday	HEF Stage 2	Forms collected by Canvassers
14-Sep	Friday	HEF Stage 2	Canvassers return - DEADLINE
17-Sep	Monday	HEF Stage 3	Data to printers
18-Sep	Tuesday	HEF Stage 3	Email Forms
19-Sep	Wednesday	ITR Stage 2	Data to printers
20-Sep	Thursday	ITR Stage 2	Email Forms
27-Sep	Thursday	HEF Stage 3	Forms delivered to Catford
28-Sep	Friday	HEF Stage 3	Forms collected by Canvassers
12-Oct	Friday	HEF Stage 3	Canvassers return - DEADLINE
17-Oct	Wednesday	ITR Stage 3	Data to printers
18-Oct	Thursday	ITR Stage 3	Email Forms
22-Oct	Monday	HEF Stage 4	Data to printers
23-Oct	Tuesday	HEF Stage 4	Email Forms
31-Oct	Wednesday	HEF Stage 4	Forms delivered
14-Nov	Wednesday	ITR Stage 4	Data to printers
15-Nov	Thursday	ITR Stage 4	Email Forms
19-Nov	Monday	ITR Stage 4	Forms delivered
30-Nov	Friday	END OF CANVASS	Publish the Register