

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting18th July 2019

1. Title of Item/Report

Electoral Update

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that provided feedback from the Local Elections and European Parliamentary Election in May 2019 and an update on Electoral Registration. The lessons learned will be taken in account as part of planning for future electoral events.

The report highlighted what went well and lessons learned to enable the Returning Officer to plan for future polls.

Once again the elections team were placed under significant pressure between September 2018 and May 2019 delivering the local and Parish elections and then the European Parliamentary Election at short notice. Planning and preparation took place alongside the elections for the Stockton MYP, the Annual Canvass, postal vote refresh exercise and a Household Notification Exercise during February.

The statutory election period for the European Parliamentary election was underway before the polls for the Local Elections had been held. The risks associated with concurrent planning and administration of the polls under different legislation and guidance should not be underestimated. Alongside increased registration activity during the statutory period, the scale of the work is detailed below:

Local Elections

- 97 polling stations were booked
- Borough Elections – 155 Nominations (1550 assenters)
- Parish Elections - 124 nominations (248 assenters)
- 66 agents were appointed
- 447 staff were appointed to 1085 jobs
- 34,855 postal ballot packs were issued and 22,599 were receipted and opened and processed
- 1,834 postal votes were returned on polling day which included 227 in the final Royal Mail sweep which all had to be opened and

processed for verification as soon as possible after 10pm

- Turnout 33%

European Parliamentary Election

- 97 polling stations were booked
- 408 staff were appointed to 978 jobs
- 35,015 postal ballot packs were issued and 20,941 were receipted and opened representing an unprecedented 86% turnout of postal voters
- 1,609 postal votes were returned on polling day which included 180 in the final royal mail sweep which all had to be opened and processed for verification as soon as possible after 10pm
- Turnout 32%

Despite some issues, the 2019 polls at Stockton were delivered successfully. Clear leadership, effective team working and project management enabled a timely and planned approach to delivery including positive working relationships with partners and suppliers and thereby achieving successful election outcomes. Clear roles and good communications continued to contribute to this success and would stand the Council in good stead for future elections.

Regular meetings were held in the region and sub region particularly in the early planning stages. These meetings and good communication with the Electoral Commission and Association of Electoral Administrators continued to be invaluable in sharing ideas and best practice.

The next scheduled elections would be the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections and Tees Valley Mayoral Elections in May 2020. Stockton would again be the lead for these elections and preliminary planning work had commenced. It was proposed to hold the counts on Friday 8 May and Saturday 9 May however this may need to be reviewed following the decision to move the May Day Bank Holiday to the Friday to mark VE Day.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To provide feedback on the May 2019 polls.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None.

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None.

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight, Friday, 26 July 2019.

Proper Officer
22 July 2019