

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION PROCESS REVIEW TASK & FINISH GROUP: - WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2013/14 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT

NAMES OF MEMBERS

ELECTED MEMBER	DESIGNATION
Cllr Hornus	Chairman
Cllr Cohen	
Cllr Gibson	
Cllr K Gregory	
Cllr Hibbert	
SUPPORTING OFFICERS	DESIGNATION
Glenn Back	Democratic Services Manager
Mark Avis	Electoral Services Officer

DATE OF MEETING/ACTIVITY	KEY AGENDA ITEMS CONSIDERED/ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN	WITNESSES INVITED	PROGRESS TO DATE / CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED
Meeting 1 28 August 2013 @ 7.00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Election of Chairman b. Review of 2012 canvass and proposals for 2013 c. Update on Individual Electoral Registration (IER) d. Maximising registration schemes e. Communications Department – Public Awareness Strategy f. Establishing the Electoral Registration Process Review Task and Finish Group Work Programme – 2013/2014 	Glenn Back, Democratic Services Manager; Mark Avis; Electoral Services Officer Lyn Davey; Electoral Services Assistant Justine Wingate; Corporate Information and Communications Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite an additional £25k being earmarked for the new style canvass in 2012, overall the canvass budget for 2012 had been exceeded by just over £6k. The reasons for that were; Canvassers' wages costs and postage costs. But the positive side of the increased expenditure was that it directly resulted from the 8% increase in the overall registration rate. • It was noted that out of the 44,693 scanned postal responses 19,000 had no changes to them, meaning that 42%

			<p>of these paper returns could have been made via the internet or telephone registration confirmation facilities instead, thus reducing some of the expenditure. It was suggested that this could feature in a number of press releases outlining the benefits of completing the form earlier by using the internet, telephone and SMS registration confirmation facilities (to help keep the costs of the canvass down) but at the same time emphasise the importance of registering to vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposed 2013 canvass was approved and the budget position in 2013/2014 was noted, but any increases in canvassers wages would have a detrimental impact on the budget because there was very little spare capacity in the budget.• Members were briefed on the implementation plans for Individual Electoral Registration (IER).• The Group supported Electoral Services' initial bid for maximising registration during the canvass.• Members were briefed on proposals for a public awareness strategy in relation to electoral registration and the canvass.
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<p>Meeting 2</p> <p>5 November @ 6:30pm</p>	<p>a. Update on 2013/2014 canvass b. Public awareness strategy for IER c. IER resource planning and funding allocation d. Electoral Registration IER Bids (result of first and future bids).</p>	<p>Glenn Back, Democratic Services Manager; Mark Avis; Electoral Services Officer Lyn Davey; Electoral Services Assistant Justine Wingate; Corporate Information and Communications Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems were noted recruiting canvassers. It was agreed to re-advertise the vacancies on the Council's intranet for staff. Failing that existing canvassers will be asked if they could take on extra rounds but not if it had a detrimental effect on their existing allocated rounds. • Response rate to date was 56% which was a 6.6% reduction compared to the same point in the 2012 canvass. However, it was noted that comparing 2012 and 2013 canvasses was difficult, as the two canvasses were run at different times of the year. • The Group were updated on the draft public awareness strategy. Analysis of data available identified five wards that required targeted publicity. • From this the public awareness strategy was drafted which was designed to promote electoral registration in key target areas and with hard to reach groups but at the same time provide publicity on a district wide approach. • A copy of this draft public awareness strategy had been submitted to the Electoral Commission as part of its performance standards on IER that all Electoral Registration Officers had to
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			<p>complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members were given an update on IER resource planning and funding allocation.• Concerns were raised as apart from confirming individuals registration by letter and sending household enquiry forms (HEF) to one year carry forward electors and void properties, some parts of the register of electors could be up 10 months out of date come the combined Parliamentary & District/Parish elections in May 2015.• Officers and Members were concerned that come May 2015 resources would not be able to cope with a late influx of new registrations in the run-up to the registration deadline for the elections, should there be no interim mini canvass in January/February 2015.
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<p>Meeting 3</p> <p>January/February 2014 @6.30pm</p>	<p>a. Results of bids</p> <p>b. Results of canvass</p> <p>c. Update on IER</p> <p>d. Review of work programme</p>	<p>Glenn Back, Democratic Services Manager; Mark Avis; Electoral Services Officer</p>	

		Lyn Davey; Electoral Services Assistant	
Final meeting Date/time	a. Completion of final report b. Agreement of recommendations to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel	Glenn Back, Democratic Services Manager; Mark Avis; Electoral Services Officer Lyn Davey; Electoral Services Assistant	