

5 November 2008

Electoral Matters



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## Report of George Garlick, Chief Executive

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### Purpose of Report

1. To recommend to the Council a number of key appointments for Electoral Services in line with Transitional Regulations to be issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and to report proposals for moving the date of local elections in 2009.

### **A LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION - ELECTORAL SERVICES - KEY APPOINTMENTS**

#### Background

2. The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) (No. 2) Regulations are currently being prepared by DCLG which, amongst other things, deal with a number of key appointments for Electoral Services.
3. The Draft Regulations (which are expected to be finalised sometime in November require every preparing council to appoint by not later than 30 November one of their officers to discharge:-
  - duties as Local Returning Officer for the European Parliamentary Election in June 2009
  - duties as Acting Returning Officer for a General Election (or a Parliamentary Election by-election) that might be called between 1 December 2008 and 1 April 2009
4. In addition, the Regulations will also provide that the person appointed in Paragraph 3 above will take up the duties as Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) on the reorganisation date and may take whatever steps he/she considers necessary (in conjunction with existing EROs) to prepare for the full assumption of this role.
5. The person appointed to these positions is referred to as the "Electoral Appointee".

#### Recommendation

6. Under the Corporate Director Resources in the Council's new management structure there will be a Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

7. Subject to the issue and content of the Final DCLG Regulations, the Council is recommended to appoint the Head of Legal and Democratic Services as Electoral Appointee for the purposes of the Regulations referred to above.

## **B LOCAL ELECTIONS DATE 2009**

### **Background**

8. Next year's local elections in England (Counties, except Cheshire, Durham and Northumberland, together with some existing unitary authorities) are currently scheduled for 7 May 2009, with the European Parliamentary elections due to take place four weeks later on 4 June.

### **Proposal to Combine Elections**

9. Following consultations with interested authorities, the Electoral Commission and Political Parties, the Government has announced that it will be seeking Parliament's approval to move the local elections to the same date as the European elections.
10. The necessary Parliamentary Order must be approved and made by 7 November.
11. Members are asked to note the position.

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