

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held at  
The Jeffrey Room, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE.  
on Tuesday, 9 July 2013  
at 6:00 pm.

**D Kennedy  
Chief Executive**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes**  
(Copy herewith)
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
- 4. Deputations / Public Addresses**
- 5. Matters of Urgency which by reason of special circumstances the chair is of the opinion should be considered**
- 6. Individual Electoral Registration**  
(Copy herewith)
- 7. Exclusion of Public and Press**

THE CHAIR TO MOVE:

“THAT THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF SUCH CATEGORIES OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED BY SECTION 100(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS LISTED AGAINST SUCH ITEMS OF BUSINESS BY REFERENCE TO THE APPROPRIATE PARAGRAPH OF SCHEDULE 12A TO SUCH ACT.”

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 26 March 2013**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Patel (Chair); Councillor Parekh (Deputy Chair);  
Councillors Aziz, Begum, I. Choudary, Duncan, Golby and Oldham.

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive.

#### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2013 were approved and signed by the Chair.

#### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

There were none.

#### **5. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

There were none.

#### **6. REVISED TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR CRAFT EMPLOYEES**

The Head of Business Change presented a report seeking approval for the application of Northampton Borough Council's current pay and conditions of service to employees of the Council covered by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees (Red Book). The craft employees are employed by the Housing Service and the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Director of Housing were present to answer any questions members might have.

The Head of Business Change stated that the period for pay protection arrangements was 1 May 2013 to 30 April 2014, as set out in the report, and that the period referred to in the appendix (beginning and ending one month earlier) had been superseded since the Terms and Conditions of Service for Craft Employees had been updated.

It was noted that there was not agreement between the various trade unions representing the craft employees on the proposals. A number of meetings had been held with the trade unions since September 2012 but UNISON and UNITE had

chosen not to attend the meetings.

It was proposed to present the proposals directly to the craft employees. Simultaneously a s188 notice would be served on the trade unions to go through a formal 30 days consultation process. Ultimately, if no collective agreement was reached, then the Council could choose to terminate the existing terms and conditions for craft employees and issues new terms and conditions.

It was also noted that if, during the protected period, employees engaged in the training offered and moved to the higher position of multi task levels, there would be 82% gainers and 18% losers under the proposals;

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the proposals to change the conditions of the existing Craft workforce to the NBC conditions of service to employees of the Council covered by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Craft and Associated Employees (Red Book) be approved and adopted.
2. That the power to take any direct or indirect actions required to implement the revised terms and conditions and any other issues arising from this report be delegated to the Chief Executive as the Council's Head of Paid Service.
3. That the pay protection arrangements of one year, to run from 1 May 2013 until 30 April 2014, be approved and adopted.

The meeting concluded at 6:09 pm

Appendices:  
0



## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Individual Electoral Registration</b>
---------------------	--

**AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC**

<b>Committee Meeting Date:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2013
<b>Policy Document:</b>	No
<b>Directorate:</b>	Chief Executive/Borough Secretary

### 1. Purpose

---

1.1 To update the Committee about progress on Individual Electoral Registration (IER) and the actions Officers are taking to implement IER.

### 2. Recommendations

---

2.1 That the Council notes the changes taking place to registration processes and the work Officers are undertaking to implement the changes.

2.2 That the Committee notes the additional cost and resource required to implement the changes to Electoral Registration.

### 3. Issues and Choices

---

#### 3.1 Report Background

3.1.1 The register of electors is the Electoral Services foundation, providing a record of those people entitled to vote at various UK elections. At present, Electoral Services carry out an annual canvass each year by sending a registration form to each household. One person is responsible for completing this form and for registering every eligible person at that address.

3.1.2 On 31 January 2013, the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 gained Royal Assent requiring the move to a system of Individual Electoral Registration (IER). This will require each elector to register individually, rather

than via a household form as at the moment. It will also have other implications, such as moving the canvass to Winter 2013/14, more information can be found at the following link

[http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/154093/ERO-letter-support-on-IER-from-CO-EC-final.pdf](http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/154093/ERO-letter-support-on-IER-from-CO-EC-final.pdf)

- 3.1.3 Implementation of Individual Electoral Registration is now only one year away, scheduled for 1 July 2014.
- 3.1.4 IER is intended to tackle electoral fraud and result in a more accurate and complete register, requiring each person to confirm they live at a property rather than relying on one person to sign for the household.
- 3.1.5 The Association of Electoral Administrators (the organisation providing support and representation for election professionals) is supportive of IER and has been campaigning for a decade for its introduction, although it recognises that moving to the new system will require many changes, including changes to IT support systems. Consequently additional grant funding has been made available by Government to support this.
- 3.1.6 Data matching will be initially used to verify applications and this will be done by electronically matching council data to Department of Work and Pensions data.
- 3.1.7 Staff members have attended various training/update sessions to prepare for the changes and staff from electoral registration have, along with a County Working Group for IER, have attended a workshop run by their software supplier, which showed the complexity of the administration of IER, and some of their solutions to enable a smooth process. This was also a good forum for colleagues to discuss their plans for dealing with IER and raised some interesting issues, outlined below.
- 3.1.8 There will be a Confirmation Dry Run (CDR) on 30 July 2013, which will tell Local Authorities exactly the scale of the job in 2014. This is where all our data is sent securely to the Cabinet Office, who will then send it securely to the Department of Work and Pensions. The data is then matched against theirs and report sent back to us detailing which data matches and which does not, using a RAG system (Red, Amber, Green). If an elector is Green there is no problem, if Amber, most data matches but maybe the postcode is incorrect and needs checking. If they are Red, we need to check all of their data.
- 3.1.9 Already, the electoral services office are liaising with the Cabinet Office via working groups and email, maintaining a web portal which details our readiness for the Confirmation Dry Run, taking place on 30 July 2013.
- 3.1.10 The Borough Secretary will be reviewing the level of staffing support Electoral Services will need to properly and effectively support implementation of EIR. Currently the intention is to bring in a part-time, fixed term member of staff to support and help drive through the changes.

## **4. Implications (including financial implications)**

---

### **4.1 Policy**

None affected.

### **4.2 Resources and Risk**

- 4.2.1 The Government is committed to funding the costs of moving to Individual Electoral Registration, estimated to be £108.3 million. However, what happens after that is a source of concern. The costs of printing alone are expected to increase as multiple forms are required for different electors. In additions, due to the increase in administration costs, there will likely be increased staffing costs.
- 4.2.2 As detailed above in 3.1.6, the data matching could be very resource intensive, resulting in a need for increased staffing levels, taking longer than usual to register someone at an address. However, end result would be more accurate.
- 4.2.3 There have already been two workshops dedicated to IER and there are more planned. All members of the electoral team need to attend, it is not enough to cascade information as is usual. Obviously this means an increase in cost of attending, plus time out of the office, meaning day to day tasks may be delayed.
- 4.2.4 The Council has already received £9,233.64 from the Cabinet Office, £5,285.35 for the change implementation and £3,948.28 for the Confirmation Dry Run. The £5,285.35 is based on Northampton's percentage of the GB population of 0.3%.
- 4.2.5 IER will have an impact on resources not only in electoral services but IT who have been involved in ensuring readiness for the Confirmation Dry Run. They will also be involved thereafter in the maintenance of the system. It's unknown at the moment whether or not this will involve an increased workload.

### **4.3 Legal**

- 4.3.1 Non-implementation of IER is not an option. The Council are under a statutory duty to administer this. The Cabinet Office are monitoring progress very closely and as mentioned in 3.1.7 a web portal is being maintained by electoral services staff, detailing where we are in the process.

### **4.4 Equality**

- 4.4.1 The report does not address equality issues specifically but the basic intent of IER (or indeed registration in any guise) is to enable everyone who is entitled to register to vote in UK elections and exercise their democratic rights. Any actions will fully comply with the Council's equality duties.

#### **4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)**

4.5.1 N/A

#### **4.6 Other Implications**

4.6.1 None

### **5. Background Papers**

---

- 5.1 Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013
- 5.2 Letter from Chloe Smith MP – Minister for Political & Constitutional Reform
- 5.3 Electoral Registration Transformation Programme Report - Cabinet Office
- 5.4 Confirmation Dry Run Schedule – Cabinet Office Final Version 18.6.13

**Francis Fernandes/ Craig Barrett,  
Elections Officer  
0300 330 7000**