

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer

Meeting/Date: Council – 17th May 2023

Executive Portfolio: Executive Leader

Report by: Elections and Democratic Services Manager

Ward(s) affected: All

Executive Summary:

Due to recent changes in electoral legislation with the implementation of the Elections Act 2022, this has placed further obligations on the Electoral Registration Officer and is likely to increase demand for urgent decisions by the Electoral Registration Officer. As a result, the Council are being asked to agree to the appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) with full powers for the Huntingdonshire area and approve a delegation to revoke or vary such appointments as appropriate.

Recommendation:

The Council is

RECOMMENDED

- (a) to appoint Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager, to act as Deputy Electoral Registration Officer with full powers; and**
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Electoral Registration Officer to revoke or vary appointments of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers as appropriate.**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer with full powers for the Huntingdonshire area to carry out the functions of the Electoral Registration Officer and be available to act in their absence.

2. WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY

- 2.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council has an obligation to appoint one of its Officers to act as the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO). At Huntingdonshire, the Managing Director has been appointed as ERO. It is considered best practice to also appoint a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer. This Officer is then able to act in the absence of the ERO to carry out their full range of statutory functions, some of which has strict legislative deadlines.
- 2.2 The ERO is not entitled to appoint their own deputy. The duty of appointing a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer is the responsibility of the Council. Currently the Council does not have an appointed Deputy ERO.
- 2.3 The ERO recommends to Council that Lisa Jablonska, Elections and Democratic Services Manager, is appointed as the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer with full powers, enabling her to act in the incapacity or absence of the ERO as necessary.
- 2.4 Electoral Commission guidance recommends appointing a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer who can carry out the duties and powers of the ERO if they are unable to act personally.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Section 8(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, requires the Council to appoint one of its Officers to act as Electoral Registration Officer. Under Section 52(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council may approve the appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer to perform and exercise any of the duties and powers of the ERO.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- 5.1 As a result of changes in electoral legislation with the implementation of the Elections Act 2022, this has placed further obligations on the Electoral Registration Officer and is likely to increase demand for urgent decisions by the Electoral Registration Officer. The Council are being asked to agree to the appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) with full powers for the Huntingdonshire area to perform and exercise any of the duties and powers of the ERO.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Electoral Commission – Running electoral registration, England August 2021

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