

## DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES WORKING GROUP

9 JULY 2018

Commenced: 4.00pm

Terminated: 4.30pm

Present: Councillors Cooney (In the Chair), Billington, J. Fitzpatrick, Fairfoull, M Smith, Ward and Warrington

Apologies: Councillor Kitchen

### 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

#### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 12 March 2018 be approved as a correct record.

### 2. 2018 LOCAL ELECTIONS

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director (Governance, Resources and Pensions) which outlined the administrative issues that had arisen during the 2018 Local Elections. It was explained that in determining the success of the administration of the elections it was important to be conscious of the Electoral Commission Performance Framework. In summary the Electoral Commission Performance Standards were:

- Performance Standard 1: Ensuring that planning for and delivery of the poll enables voters to vote easily and know that their vote will be counted in the way they intended;
- Performance Standard 2: Ensuring that planning for and delivery of the poll enables people who want to stand for election to find out how to get involved, what the rules are, and what they have to do to comply with these rules, and enables them to have confidence in the management of the process and the result.
- Performance Standard 3: Co-ordinating the planning for and delivery of the poll to ensure a consistent high quality experience for voters and those want to stand for election.

At the last assessment of Returning Officer performance Tameside had been assessed as performing above all the standards.

Members considered the following matters:

- Communications;
- Nominations process;
- Polling Stations;
- Postal Votes;
- Campaign issues; and
- Arrangements for the Count.

Members were informed that a statutory review of polling districts and polling stations had to be undertaken every five years. The next review must be stated and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020. The intention was to complete the review before the local elections in 2019. All Members would be involved in the consideration of options for their wards.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the update be noted;**
- (ii) That all staff who worked on the elections be thanked for their contribution to the efficient running of the elections and their contribution to the democratic process.**
- (iii) That the intention to start and complete the statutory review of polling districts and polling places before the 2019 Local Elections be noted.**

**3. PARLIAMENTARY BOUNDARY REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director (Governance, Resources and Pensions) that provided Members with an update on the 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies.

It was explained that the Boundary Commission had started the 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in 2016 and was required to report its final recommendations to Government in September this year. The Boundary Commission had written to the Council to set out its intentions regarding the presentation of the final report and completion of the review.

Members were informed that the Commission's work was governed by the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended). The 1986 Act set out certain requirements on the Commission in relation to the submission of its final report, and on the Government in relation to Parliament's consideration of the report and the laying of the draft Statutory Instrument that would implement the Commission's recommendations. In particular the Act set out the timescale for the report, and states that the Commission must submit the final report in relation to the current review of boundaries '*before 1 October 2018 but not before 1 September 2018*', i.e. in September of 2018

It was the Boundary Commission's intention to report its final recommendations to the Government on or shortly before 5 September. It was then a matter for the Government to decide when to lay the report before Parliament. Once the Government had laid the report before Parliament the Commission will publish its final recommendations on its website.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

**4. ELECTORAL COMMISSION BULLETIN**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director (Governance and Pensions) that provided Members with recent copies of the Electoral Commission news bulletin which set out current issues affecting the democratic framework for local government.

**RESOLVED:**

**That the report be noted.**

**CHAIR**