

Wiltshire Council

Council

24 February 2015

Appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officers

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of the report is to recommend the formal appointment of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer(s) to act in the event of the personal absence of the Electoral Registration Officer.

Background

2. Each electoral registration authority must appoint an Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), and this is a separate function from the role of the Returning Officer. Under the Council's constitution, the appointment of the Returning Officer and the Electoral Registration Officer is reserved to full Council.

Main Considerations for the Council

3. The new Individual Electoral Registration system could potentially lead to more reviews of electors' registrations and appeals. It would therefore be prudent to have a Deputy or Deputies in place, so that if the authority of the officer person chairing any appeal sitting were to be challenged at the review, it could be demonstrated that formal authority is in place.
4. This is a specialist area of work, requiring an in depth knowledge of electoral registration law and practice. It is recommended that the posts of the Associate Director Legal and Governance and the Head of Electoral Services be appointed Deputy Electoral Registration Officers with effect from the date of the Council meeting.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

There are no equalities issues to consider affecting this proposal

Risk Assessment

5. This risk of challenge at electoral reviews is very small, but can be further reduced by the appointment of formal Deputy Electoral Registration Officers.

Financial Implications

6. There are no financial consequences arising from this proposal, as the duties would be absorbed in to the current duties of the Associate Director Legal and Governance and the Head of Electoral Services.

Legal Implications

7. Section 52(2) of the RPA 1983, states that any of the duties and powers of an Electoral Registration Officer may be performed and exercised by any deputy for the time being approved by the council which appointed the registration officer.

Recommendation

8. **The Council is recommended to appoint the Associate Director Legal and Governance and the Head of Electoral Services as Deputy Electoral Registration Officers with effect from the date of the Council meeting.**

Dr Carlton Brand
Corporate Director

Report Author: John Watling

Head of Electoral Services. Telephone 01249 706599.
John.watling@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Background Papers

None

Appendices

None

