

**Lessons Learned and Improvements for the 2016 Elections**

The Council has used the information from the 2015 elections to improve how it delivers its elections. A number of ideas will be tested over the forthcoming 2016 elections.

The biggest challenge which is faced will be ensuring that the changes, if successful will be equally robust at significant elections in the future.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By who</b>	<b>By when</b>
1	The Council will establish an office base at Stoneleigh Park, from 6.00pm on election day, with a phone line to enable queries to be answered easily	Electoral Services Manager	Agreement in place by April 2016 for both PCC election and EU referendum
2	Myton Fields will be the location for the Myton Road polling station where two portacabins will be available.	Electoral Services Manager	Agreed and in place for May 2016
3	The process to hand out ballot boxes will be simplified. Presiding Officers will have already completed their training on-line so any discussion will be limited to last minute issues and questions	Electoral Services Manager	3 May 2016
4	For significant elections the Deputy Returning Officers will have an additional support resource to assist with questions from their verification table and / or count clerks	Returning Officer	May 2019 election or any UK Parliamentary election which may be called.
5	Training will take place for all Verification and Count Clerks prior to the count at each election. This is likely to be on the evening of the count and the staff will be required to arrive 30 minutes earlier.	Elections Services Manager	Date for 2016 training to be confirmed at Project Board on 6 April 2016
6	The Elections Manager and Democratic Services Manager will be in a fixed location for the duration of the count to enable easy access to them	Returning Officer	5 May 2016

7	Candidate appointments for checking nomination forms will be operated via an electronic calendar	Electoral Services Manager	March 2017
8	Weekly and then daily progress meetings will take place in the run up to election day	Democratic Services Manager	4 April 2016
9	The team are looking at the potential to produce an on line video to demonstrate how to complete and return a postal vote for electors.	Electoral Services Manager	Awaiting final proof from printers. This will now be an infographic and will be in place for EU referendum and hopefully for PCC election.
10	A simple 'how to' guide for the elections system will be developed. Should additional resource be called upon, staff will have an easy to use reference guide.	Electoral Services Manager	15 April 2016
11	For 2020 Parliamentary election candidates' deposits will only be accepted if full payment / candidate details are received so that should the deposit have to be returned it will be easy to do so.	Electoral Services Manager	March 2020
12	Improved estimating for Parish/Town Council election costs	Electoral Services Manager	1 April 2016. An officer has been nominated from Finance to work on this project which will see improved estimates to Council's for inclusion in their 2017/18 budget process.

13	Issue Parish & Town Council election invoices in a more timely manner. (It should be noted that this cannot be completed until the accounts are closed for the election. The Election Accounts have to be closed within 6 months of the election)	Electoral Services Manager	An officer has been nominated from Finance to work on this project in future years..
14	A report has been considered and approved by Employment Committee to increase the permanent resource for the Electoral Services Team	Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer	Dates for recruitment?
15	The central verification did not work as effectively as anticipated. This process is being reviewed by the Head of Finance with a view to improving the process and ensuring appropriate staffing for this vital role	Returning Officer	. This will be completed by April 2016.
16	Proof reading of ballot papers and poll cards will be carried out away from the office by two officers verifying the documents.	Electoral Services Manager	Completed
17	The tender specification for the new elections print contract will include the requirement that the data files will not rebuilt into a new format.	Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer & Electoral Services Manager	Tender specification is in draft form. This requirement will be discussed with the Elections System Supplier to ensure this occurs.
18	The tender specification for the new print contract will state sub-contracting work is not allowed and the printers will need to show, transparency of where data is in terms of printing and despatch.	Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer & Electoral Services Manager	Tender specification is in draft form.
19	Ensure written confirmation of postal vote despatch and figures from the Councils supplier.	Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer & Electoral Services Manager	Agreed and in place for 2016

20	In future, increased resources will be allocated to making up ballot boxes, with each set of boxes being checked to ensure the correct seals are included within them and the correct set of paperwork and equipment.	Elections Project Board	A new lead has been agreed and the structure for delivering this aspect will be approved on 31 March 2016.
21	In future for Ward based elections the Council will use the Electoral Commission guidance for ratio of counters to electors and increase this as appropriate if there is more than one election being held at the same time.	Electoral Services Manager	March 2017
22	Overseas voters –A member of staff will focus on this and the continuing adding of people onto the register during the election. The revised team plan will detail individual responsibilities approved which will be communicated to the team	Electoral Services Manager	April 2016
23	Overseas postal voters not receiving their postal vote. This was a national issue with vast numbers of postal votes not arriving on time. The electoral commission and cabinet office have advised that anyone overseas should have a proxy vote rather than a vote by post. The Council is also now required to have an Overseas Mail Business account for these and that Overseas Postal Votes are issued first as a priority.	Electoral services Manager	Overseas Mail Business account is now in place.
24	Handling increased telephone call volumes. Request for additional Resources on a temporary basis is being considered by CMT. In tandem, web pages will be promoted as the first point of contact for customers.	Project Team	Project Board to consider 6 April 2016.
25	A simple step by step procedure for verifying ballot box content, which will be introduced for May 2016	Electoral Services Manger	Completed
26	Facilities Management at the verification	Project Team	
27	Polling station changes in Kenilworth. Two additional polling stations will be at the Kenilworth Centre and Heath of England Revival Church & Training Centre in Farmer Ward Road.	Electoral Services Manger	Completed

28	Chase Meadow Community Hall was not big enough for parliamentary election. The larger meeting room will be used in future.	Electoral Services Manger	Completed
29	Brunswick Healthy living centre cannot be used as Chris White MP has moved his office into the building. The Council will be using three Portacabins in the locality to provide these polling stations.	Electoral Services Manger	Completed
30	Count layout plans will be confirmed no later than two weeks before election day. They will be printed and deposited with all Deputy Returning Officers, central verification lead, postal vote lead and project team.	Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer	Completed
31	When planning an election with neighbouring Council's, agreements that they will confirm to WDC when and what data is uploaded to WDC printers.	Electoral Services Manger	January prior to an election where WDC manages the election for neighbouring councils'
32	Review storage of elections equipment with view to splitting over two sites as well as review of resilience of IT system and backups if Council HQ was lost. as part of risk management process.	Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer	2018
33	A fundamental review of the project plan and the process flow will be undertaken before the County Council elections in 20xx to allow for any lessons to be learned from the forthcoming PCC and EU Referendum elections.	Returning Officer	October 2016