

NATIONAL DEMOCRACY WEEK

Legal and Democratic Services Advisory Committee - 28 June 2018

Report of Chief Officer Corporate Services

Status For Information

Key Decision No

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Anna Firth

Contact Officer Nicola Fletcher, Ext. 7188

Recommendation to Legal and Democratic Services Advisory Committee:

The report be noted.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The inaugural National Democracy Week is taking place from 2 to 6 July 2018. Monday 2 July is the 90th anniversary of the 1928 Equal Franchise Act which gave women the same voting rights as men.
- 2 As a part of National Democracy Week, a number of activities are being undertaken involving Councillors, the Member of Parliament for Sevenoaks, Sir Michael Fallon and officers from Electoral Services and other Council departments.

Events

- 3 On Monday 2 July 2018 a visit is being made to Orchard's Academy in Swanley and a short introductory video from Lizzy Yarnold will be shown, a series of presentations about democracy and electoral registration will be given and a mock poll will be held
- 4 On Monday 16 July 2018 a similar visit is being made to Knole Academy in Sevenoaks.
- 5 At the time of writing, the Council is also in discussions with a number of other schools in the District as to whether it will be possible for them to host additional sessions for them.
- 6 During the week, Electoral Services Outreach Canvassers will be visiting care homes to encourage residents to register to vote.

- 7 Officers from Communications will be carrying out a number of activities including issuing a news release, tweeting about registering to vote and using the hashtag #TalkDemocracy.

Other Options Considered and/or Rejected

None

Key Implications

Financial

Any activities undertaken as a part of National Democracy Week and associated projects will be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

Under legislation it is a requirement for every district council and London Borough to appoint an Electoral Registration Officer (ERO). Whilst the ERO is appointed by the council, the ERO's responsibilities are personal. The ERO is required to take steps to encourage participation by electors in the electoral process and met the performance standards set by the Electoral Commission.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users below.

Conclusions

This report sets out for Members information a selection of the activities which will be undertaken as a part of National Democracy Week in July 2018.

Members are recommended to consider the information provided within the report and note the actions which will be undertaken.

Appendices None

Background Papers None

Jim Carrington-West

Chief Officer Corporate Services