

APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER

Governance Committee - 9 November 2020

Report of: Chief Executive

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by:

- Council - 17 November 2020

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder: None

Contact Officer: Nicola Fletcher, Ext. 7188

Recommendation to Governance Committee:

It is recommended to Council that the Assistant Chief Executive is appointed Deputy Electoral Registration Officer for Sevenoaks District Council.

Recommendation to Council:

The Assistant Chief Executive is appointed Deputy Electoral Registration Officer for Sevenoaks District Council.

Reason for recommendation: Legislation allows District Councils to appoint an officer of the Council as a deputy to the Electoral Registration Officer to act in the absence of the Electoral Registration Officer.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Under section 8(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 the District Council must appoint an Officer to the position of 'Electoral Registration Officer'. This position is responsible for maintaining the Electoral Register for the area. The Chief Executive is appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer for Sevenoaks District Council.
- 2 Under section 52(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 the Council may appoint a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer who is able to perform and exercise any of the duties and powers of the Electoral Registration Officer.
- 3 One of the roles of the Electoral Registration Officer is to hold a hearing in respect of any reviews of registration or any objections received for an application to be included on the Register of Electors. Reviews and

objections can be made at anytime during the life of the Register. The objections may be in relation to an existing elector as well as new applications. For objections, the legislation provides that these hearings must be held no earlier than the third day and no later than the seventh day after the notice of objection was received. If a hearing is not held within this timescale then the Council will be in breach of the legislation.

- 4 The role of the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer is currently assigned to the Chief Officer Corporate Support (now Customer & Resources). However, following an organisational restructure the role of Deputy Electoral Registration Officer is to be assigned to the Assistant Chief Executive.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications to this appointment.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The appointment of the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer reflects the current organisational structure and will mitigate risks in the event that the Electoral Registration Officer is unavailable as his deputy will be able to undertake his duties.

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.

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council appoints a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer to reduce the risks of not being able to administer electoral register hearings within the statutory timescale as the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer will have the same powers.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

[Representation of the People Act 1983, Sections 8 and 52](#)

Dr Pav Ramewal
Chief Executive