

**MEETING**

**GENERAL FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE**

**DATE AND TIME**

**THURSDAY 9TH JUNE, 2016**

**AT 7.00 PM**

**VENUE**

**HENDON TOWN HALL, THE BURROUGHS, LONDON NW4 4BQ**

**TO: MEMBERS OF GENERAL FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE (Quorum 3)**

Chairman: Councillor Joan Scannell  
Vice Chairman: Councillor Wendy Prentice

Councillor Richard Cornelius    Councillor Alison Moore    Councillor Ammar Naqvi  
Councillor Barry Rawlings    Councillor Daniel Thomas

**Substitute Members**

Councillor Geof Cooke    Councillor Tom Davey    Councillor Adam Langleben  
Councillor David Longstaff    Councillor John Marshall    Councillor Charlie O-Macauley

In line with the Constitution's Public Participation and Engagement Rules, public questions or comments must be submitted by 10AM on the third working day before the date of the committee meeting. Therefore, the deadline for this meeting is 10AM on Monday 6 June 2016. Requests must be submitted to Sarah Koniarski 020 8359 7574 [sarah.koniarski@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.koniarski@barnet.gov.uk)

**You are requested to attend the above meeting for which an agenda is attached.**

**Andrew Charlwood – Head of Governance**

Governance Service Contact: Sarah Koniarski 020 8359 7574  
[sarah.koniarski@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.koniarski@barnet.gov.uk)

Media Relations Contact: Sue Cocker 020 8359 7039  
[sue.cocker@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:sue.cocker@barnet.gov.uk)

**ASSURANCE GROUP**

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

Item No	Title of Report	Pages
1.	Absence of Members	
2.	Disclosable Pecuniary interests and Non Pecuniary interests	
3.	Report of the Monitoring Officer (if any)	
4.	Public Question and Comments (if any)	
5.	Members Item (if any)	
6.	Independent Investigation into Election Problems in Barnet on 5 May and the Council's Response	1 - 54
7.	Any Item(s) that the Chairman Decides to be Urgent	

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## GENERAL FUNCTIONS COMMITTEE

9 June 2016

<b>Title</b>	<b>Independent Investigation into Election Problems in Barnet on 5 May and the Council’s Response</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Interim Chief Executive
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	Yes
<b>Key</b>	Yes
<b>Enclosures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix A: Mr Mark Heath’s Barnet Elections Investigation – final report and appendices</li> <li>• Appendix B: EU Referendum Timetable</li> </ul>
<b>Officer Contact Details</b>	John Hooton, Interim Chief Executive

### Summary

- This report overlays the final report and recommendations of Mr Mark Heath – the Returning Officer for Southampton – who has conducted an independent, external investigation into the problems experienced at Polling Stations in Barnet on the morning of 5 May.
- In view of the need to understand what went wrong and put in place changes ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June, Mr Heath’s investigation was necessarily focused on the issues that led to incorrect electoral registers being sent to Polling Stations on 5 May. The Terms of Reference of Mr Heath’s investigation are set out in this report.
- Mr Heath’s report finds that it was human error that caused incomplete registers to be printed and then distributed to the Polling Stations. Subsequently, inadequate checking and escalation processes failed to pick up this error.
- In response to Mr Heath’s findings and recommendations, which have been accepted, this report sets out the process changes and improvements that have already been, or will be, implemented ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June.
- Following the referendum, it has been recommended by Mr Heath that the Interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer initiate a review of the way in which elections in Barnet

are delivered and how the electoral services function operates, to produce suitable recommendations on resources, future management, support arrangements, operating practices, compliance issues and responsibility/accountability for the electoral services function.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That the Committee notes Mr Heath's report and the recommendations put forward for implementation ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June.**
- 2. That the Committee notes that the interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer has accepted all of the recommendations in Mr Heath's report, and the status of the council's implementation of these recommendations.**
- 3. That, in line with Mr Heath's recommendation, the Committee notes the intention of the interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer to initiate a review of the way in which elections in Barnet are delivered and how the electoral services function operates. Terms of Reference will be brought back to this Committee on 29 June and will include the points set out in the motion at Annual Council. The final report and recommendations will be brought to this Committee before the end of the year.**

### **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

1.1 It is a statutory requirement that the process of administering and running elections is held entirely separately from politicians. During the London Mayor and GLA elections on 5 May, voters in Barnet experienced problems with voting during the morning of the elections as a result of incomplete electoral registers being sent to the 155 Polling Stations across the borough. An independent, external investigation was launched quickly, to identify what went wrong and implement changes ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June.

#### **The statutory requirement for the process of administering and running elections**

- 1.2 Elections have to be conducted outside the normal political processes. This is both a legal and common sense requirement.
- 1.3 The duties of a Returning Officer are separate from the duties held by that individual as a local government officer. A Returning Officer is not responsible to the local authority but is a separate legal entity to that of the Council which appointed him/her and is directly accountable to the courts as an independent statutory office holder.
- 1.4 The Returning Officer is not fettered by the Council's normal procedures in terms of conducting the election or subject to direction or instruction from members of the Council in respect of the discharge of the responsibilities falling to the statutory office. This reflects the position enshrined in statute that an independent officer is responsible for the proper conduct of the election "without fear of favour".

## **The appointment of the independent investigator – Mr Mark Heath**

- 1.5 The interim Chief Executive sought independent advice from London Councils on candidates to lead the investigation. London Councils recommended Mr Mark Heath, the Returning Officer for Southampton, because of his experience in running elections for more than 20 years as a Returning Officer.
- 1.6 Mr Heath, a solicitor, was selected due to his election experience. Mr Heath also serves on several Government and Electoral Commission groups on electoral law, policy and practice. Mr Heath has been responsible for all the elections run in Southampton for over 20 years, including council and parliamentary elections. He is the Regional Returning Officer for the South East Region of the UK and was responsible for the conduct of the 2009 and 2014 European Parliamentary Elections and the AV Referendum in 2011 in the South East. In addition, Mr Heath is the Police Area Returning Officer for Hampshire and as such has been responsible for the conduct of Hampshire's Police and Crime Commissioner elections in 2012 and 2016.

## **Electoral Commission Performance data for Barnet's Electoral Functions**

- 1.7 The problems which arose at Barnet Polling Stations on 5 May were unacceptable and lessons must be learned.
- 1.8 In terms of previous elections performance in Barnet, Mr Heath's report sets out the Electoral Commission performance data for Barnet which he looked at to provide context for the performance of the borough's election function. The report states that Barnet have met all (except one) of the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer performance standards since 2009. The only exception relates to timing of despatch of poll cards at the 2012 GLA elections where, because of inconsistencies in guidance provided by the Commission and the GLRO, different date parameters were given in respect of poll card deliveries.

## **Investigation Terms of Reference**

- 1.9 The Terms of Reference of Mr Heath's investigation were to examine:
- How incorrect electoral registers were provided to polling stations at the start of the Mayoral and GLA elections on Thursday 5 May 2016
  - an assessment of the number of voters affected and the overall impact
  - how the error was addressed on the day of the poll, including;
  - the involvement of the Greater London Returning Officer
  - the advice and guidance provided by the Electoral Commission
  - the arrangements that will be put in place so that this does not happen again
  - any steps that will be taken specifically for the EU referendum in June, including liaison with the Chief Counting Officer and the Regional Counting Officer
  - any relevant recommendations, for example on process improvements.

- 1.10 Due to the need to identify what went wrong and implement changes ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June, and bring the findings back to this Committee ahead of that, the investigation was time-constrained and necessarily focused on these issues.
- 1.11 As part of the investigation, voters who experienced problems at polling stations on 5 May were invited to provide feedback via the council's website or over the phone. The feedback was used by Mr Heath to inform his final report and recommendations.

### **Information provided to Mr Heath and who he consulted**

- 1.12 As Mr Heath's report sets out, his investigation consulted a range of different people through various means including phone calls, written statements, background evidence and face to face interviews. A range of documentation was supplied to Mr Heath from the Barnet elections team, including written evidence from Barnet Presiding Officers. Mr Heath was also provided with a dossier of the responses collected from voters who were impacted on the day, submitted via the council's website or over the phone.
- 1.13 Mr Heath also spoke to a number of other individuals, bodies and organisations to obtain information relevant to this investigation, namely representatives of the Cabinet Office (as the Government department responsible for Elections); the Electoral Commission; the Greater London Returning Officer's Office; the Chief Counting Officer and the Regional Counting Officer for London for the EU Referendum; the Returning Officer at Camden; the Managing Director of the company that supplied the electoral management system to Barnet (Xpress); and the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA).
- 1.14 Mr Heath has also confirmed that he was passed information by Mr Andrew Dismore, the London Assembly Member for Barnet and Camden, which included copies of correspondence received from members of the public and a summary spread sheet. This was taken into account in the investigation.

### **Indication of number of voters impacted**

- 1.15 Mr Heath's report sets out an indication of the number of voters impacted on 5 May. As the report makes clear, the information collected by Presiding Officers is not definitive but is the best indication of at least the scale of impact.
- 1.16 The spread sheet included as an appendix to Mr Heath's report shows that around 500 incidents were logged by Presiding Officers, which Mr Heath has used to conclude that the scale of the issue and the impact would appear to have been in the hundreds rather than the thousands as was initially reported.

### **Mr Heath's recommendations and the status of the council's response**

- 1.17 Mr Heath's final report and recommendations is attached at Appendix A. Mr Heath's report finds that it was human error that caused incomplete registers to be printed and then distributed to Polling Stations. Subsequently, inadequate checking and escalation processes failed to pick up this error.

1.18 The recommendations which Mr Heath puts forward are separated into those which require implementation before the EU referendum on 23 June and those to be taken forward after 23 June.

1.19 The interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer has accepted all of Mr Heath's recommendations. This section of the report sets out the council's response to the recommendations and the status of the actions that have already been – or will be – implemented before 23 June. It also makes clear the intention to conduct a full review of the way in which elections in Barnet are delivered and how the electoral services function operates, which will begin post 23 June.

## **Recommendations for 23 June**

### **Recommendation 1**

1.20 The Regional Counting Officer (London) should identify a suitable Returning Officer to support the Barnet Counting Officer in overseeing the conduct of the EU referendum on 23rd June.

### **Council response and status**

1.21 The interim Chief Executive has been in liaison with London Councils and the Regional Counting Officer and it has been agreed that John Barradell, Chief Executive of the City of London Corporation, will provide support to the Barnet Interim Chief Executive from week commencing 30 May. Mr Barradell will be based in Barnet for the equivalent of 1 day a week.

### **Recommendation 2**

1.22 The Counting Officer (and the Returning Officer identified to oversee as set out above) should work with the Regional Counting Officer (London) who will set his requirements as to additional oversight, supervision, the content of risk and project plans and other requirements as he sees fit.

### **Council response and status**

1.23 The interim Chief Executive has been in liaison with Mr Barry Quirk, the Regional Counting Officer for London. It has been agreed that Mr Quirk's team will meet on site with himself, Mr Barradell and Barnet elections team, to review the preparation for the EU referendum.

### **Recommendations 3, 4 and 5**

1.24 For the avoidance of doubt, rigorous and multiple checks must be made at all stages of the process and there must be a robust escalation process in place.

1.25 Appropriate arrangements must be made to enable Presiding Officer to check the contents of their ballot boxes and advise the elections office in case of issue, such reports must be appropriately recorded, escalated where necessary and followed up.

1.26 The Counting Officer must be informed of any issues that he should be made aware of (in accordance with a new systemic escalation procedure) at once.

### **Council response and status**

- 1.27 In relation to 5 May elections, the location for the collection and checking of the ballot boxes was changed from the North London Business Park to the 'BEST Hub' in Colindale. The change of venue was widely communicated to the Elections Project Team and Presiding Officers. However, some of the detailed implications for the change in venue on the checking processes were not widely appreciated.
- 1.28 For the referendum the individual polling station registers will be checked against the correct GLA elections register for accuracy and completeness by the Head of Electoral Services following printing and initial checks by the Electoral Registration Manager.
- 1.29 Presiding Officers (POs) will also be given additional information about their individual polling station register and trained on a process to enable them to check their specific polling station register (using provided data on the electoral franchise and appropriate markers relevant to that election).
- 1.30 For the EU referendum – and future elections - the collection of ballot boxes, ballot papers and other polling materials by POs will be brought forward so that it does not happen the day before polling day. It will be brought forward by 24 hours when compared to the previous elections, in order to give more time for checking and for any issues to be identified and reported. For the referendum, POs will collect all items on Tuesday 21 June and be asked to report any concerns or issues by midday on Wednesday 22 June. Any concerns raised by POs will be escalated to the Head of Electoral Services and the Counting Officer within one hour of being received.
- 1.31 The processes outlined above will be fully documented by the Head of Service and signed off before implementation by the Barnet Returning (Counting) Officer, the LBB Monitoring Officer.

### **Recommendation 6**

- 1.32 The Counting Officer shall ensure that robust systems are in place regarding communications between Presiding Officers, Polling Station Inspectors and the elections office on polling day.

### **Council response and status**

- 1.33 The Head of Electoral Services will ensure that there are (at least) two discrete systems in place that are capable of texting messages directly to all POs and Polling Station Inspectors simultaneously, in case the need for specific message to all POs is required at any time on polling day or the day before.
- 1.34 These are currently anticipated to include: 1) business-tariff mobile telephones with 'group-texting' capabilities (pre-loaded with all PO mobile phone numbers) 2) a web-based marketing SMS service that can send simultaneous text messages to pre-set mobile phone numbers. *[Also being investigated are the pupil's parent-texting services currently utilised by a number of Barnet schools and the Emergency Planning Messaging service used to escalate information in cases of civil emergency.]*



1.35 In addition, the number of trained Polling Station Inspectors will be increased from the usual 12, to a minimum of 15 to enable assistance to be more locally available for polling stations.

1.36 The Elections Call Centre and public helpline will be available with calls going directly to agents (and not an automated answering and messaging system) from 6:30am on polling day with a minimum of 10 agents available to take calls.

#### **Recommendations 7 and 8**

1.37 Xpress (the Election management Software supplier) should send out an appropriate communication to all Xpress users making them aware of the issue that occurred in Barnet on 5<sup>th</sup> May and the checks that should be taken to ensure this is not repeated on 23rd June.

1.38 The Chief Counting Officer should send out a similar communication to all Counting Officers (whether users of Xpress or not) so all are aware of the issue and can undertake additional appropriate checks to ensure all are printing full registers for Polling Stations.

#### **Council response and status**

1.39 This has been communicated to Xpress and they have confirmed that this will be implemented. The Chief Counting Officer will also send out a similar communication to all Counting Officers.

#### **Recommendation 9**

1.40 The Chief Counting Officer should ensure that the Regional Counting Officer (London) has sufficient resources so as to support Barnet in whatever way he deems appropriate.

#### **Council response and status**

1.41 The Barnet Returning Officer has been in dialogue with the RCO London to ensure sufficient resources are in place.

#### **Recommendations for post-23 June**

#### **Recommendation 10**

1.42 Xpress should consult with other Councils to establish what changes, if any should be made to remove the possibility of re-occurrence.

#### **Council response and status**

1.43 Mr Heath has confirmed that he taken this up with the Managing Director of Xpress, who has agreed to take this forward.

#### **Recommendation 11**

1.44 The Returning Officer should initiate a review of the way in which elections are delivered and how the electoral services function operates with a view to producing suitable recommendations on resources, future management, support arrangements, operating practices, compliance issues and responsibility/accountability for the electoral services function.

#### **Council response and status**

- 1.45 The interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer will initiate a review of the way in which elections in Barnet are delivered and how the electoral services function operates and will cover the issues set out by Mr Heath.
- 1.46 The review will be taken forward post 23 June and will involve external challenge, as well as taking account of the other advice put forward by Mr Heath. Terms of Reference will be brought back to this Committee on 29 June, and will include the points set out in the motion at Annual Council. The final report and recommendations will brought to this Committee before the end of the year.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Following the problems experienced by voters in Barnet on 5 May, it was essential to move quickly to put in train an independent, external investigation into what went wrong and what needed to be remedied ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June. The interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer sought independent advice from London Councils on who should lead the investigation. Acting on this advice, the interim Chief Executive appointed Mr Mark Heath to lead the investigation.
- 2.2 Mr Heath's report and the recommendations he has put forward have been reached independently. The interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer accept all of Mr Heath's recommendations. As this report sets out, changes have already been put in place against the recommendations for action before 23 June, and a full review of electoral services will be taken forward post-23 June.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 An investigation into the problems of 5 May was clearly needed. The alternative option would have been to conduct the investigation in house. However, this was not considered due to the need for an experienced, independent investigator to give credibility to the investigation, determine what went wrong and put forward recommendations. It was essential that this was an independent investigation to give confidence to the council, Members and voters.
- 3.2 Another alternative would have been for the independent investigator to have been drawn from outside local government, for example by appointing a QC. However, given the need for a rapid review to inform the EU referendum, it was considered that an experienced local government returning officer would be better placed to review and make recommendations to that timescale.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 All of Mr Heath's recommendations have been accepted. This report sets out how a number of the recommendations have already been implemented, and this will continue ahead of the EU referendum on 23 June to ensure the process is robust. The wider review into electoral services will begin post-23

June, with Terms of Reference brought back to this Committee on 29 June and final report before the end of the year.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

5.1.1 It is a council Corporate Priority to ensure fairness in decision making. In line with this, it is essential that electoral processes are robust and fair to all in Barnet. In response to Mr Heath's investigation, this report sets out the changes that have been made and the further work which will be undertaken to ensure future elections in Barnet are conducted appropriately.

### **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 All actual and necessary costs of the EU referendum are met by the Cabinet Office and so it is not anticipated that any additional resources will be required for the EU referendum. However, the cost of local elections are met by the Council and so any recommendations coming out of the planned wider review may lead to increased costs. The Council is obliged to meet any additional requirements the Returning Officer considers necessary.

5.2.2 Increases in on-going costs in relation to local elections will be reported and agreed as part of the detailed review brought back to GFC later this year.

5.2.3 The cost of the 5 May elections investigation will be finalised once the investigation has been completed, the findings have been reported to the General Functions Committee and the input of the independent investigator is no longer required. This one-off cost will be met from the risk reserve.

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 Not applicable.

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 Under paragraph 3 of the European Union Referendum Act 2015 (the 2015 Act), the Counting Officer is the person who, by virtue of section 35 of the 1983 Act is the returning officer for the Council elections. The Returning Officer role carries with it a personal responsibility.

5.4.2 The Council Constitution, Responsibility for Functions, Annex A sets out the terms of reference of the General Functions Committee, which include responsibility for 'Elections in general.'

5.4.3 This report concerns a key decision, being one which is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in accordance with section 6.5 of the Responsibility for Functions in the Council Constitution.

5.4.4 The recommendations set out in this report are considered to be urgent as the consideration of the independent investigator's findings and implementation of any recommendations arising must take place immediately in order for the action plan to be implemented in advance of the EU Referendum on 23 June 2016. The Chairman of the General Functions Committee and Interim Chief Executive have both agreed that the report is urgent.

5.4.5 In accordance with section 6.10 of the Responsibility for Functions, this report may not be referred up to the committee's parent body (Council) as it is classified as urgent for the reasons stated in paragraph 5.4.4 of this report.

## **5.5 Risk Management**

5.5.1 This report notes the recommendations made by the independent investigation. The point of the investigation was to identify what went wrong and learn from it, and so the actions detailed in the recommendations are designed to identify and minimise any risks.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups

5.6.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

5.6.3 While it was clearly unacceptable that any registered voter should have been denied the opportunity to vote, there is no evidence that the problems on 5 May disproportionately affected any of the groups protected under the Equality Act.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

5.7.1 The Electoral Commission were consulted on Mr Heath's appointment and the Terms of Reference of the investigation. These were also set out publicly via the council's website. As part of the investigation, voters who were impacted were invited to submit their feedback via the council's website or over the phone.

## **5.8 Insight**

5.8.1 Not applicable.

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**  
None

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# **LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET: ELECTION ISSUE**

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**Prepared for John Hooton  
Interim Chief Executive, London Borough of Barnet**

**May 2016**

Mark R. Heath  
Returning Officer  
Southampton

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. I was appointed on 10<sup>th</sup> May in my capacity as a Returning Officer to be the external independent investigator into the events around the elections that took place in Barnet on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016. It should be noted that my appointment was on that basis, namely as an independent individual and not in any representative capacity.
- 1.2. The terms of reference, which were agreed by Barnet with the Electoral Commission are set out in Section 2 of this report.
- 1.3. The elections on 5<sup>th</sup> May in Barnet received national attention due to the fact that some electors were unable to vote at the start of polling due to incomplete registers at Polling Stations. The electoral process should never be the story, but in Barnet it was.
- 1.4. This was very serious. The act of disenfranchisement is the removal of a fundamental right. For that to happen as a direct result of the system (and people) who's role it is to enfranchise and run elections raises legitimate, significant and serious concerns.
- 1.5. The report lays out what happened. In summary it was human error that caused incomplete registers to be printed and then distributed to the Polling Stations.
- 1.6. Subsequent inadequate checking and escalation processes which could have prevented this failed to do so.
- 1.7. I have made a number of recommendations, some of which relate specifically to the EU Referendum on 23<sup>rd</sup> in section 10 of this report.

## 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CONDUCT OF THE INVESTIGATION

- 2.1 I was appointed on 10<sup>th</sup> May in my capacity as a Returning Officer by the Chief Operating Officer of the London Borough of Barnet to review areas of concern arising from the conduct of the elections in Barnet on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016.
- 2.2 My terms of reference were to review / examine the following issues:
- how incorrect electoral registers were provided to Polling Stations at the start of the Mayoral and GLA elections on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016
  - an assessment of the number of voters affected and the overall impact
  - how the error was addressed on the day of the poll, including:
    - the involvement of the GLRO;
    - the advice and guidance provided by the Electoral Commission; and
  - the arrangements that will be put in place so that this does not happen again
  - any steps that will be taken specifically for the EU Referendum in June, including liaison with the CCO and London RCO
  - any relevant recommendations, for example on process improvements.
- 2.3 For the avoidance of doubt, I should make it clear that this report focusses on these issues. Any issues relating to the conduct of individual members of staff will need to be addressed in accordance with the Council's HR policies and procedures and is outside the scope of this report.
- 2.4 Given the forthcoming EU Referendum on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, I was asked (given the terms of reference) to report the outcome of my investigation and findings in a timely fashion so that any matters particularly pertinent to the forthcoming Referendum could be actioned.
- 2.5 In terms of conducting the investigation, the following methodology was used. I identified 5 relevant people to interview face to face. I sought a range of documentation from Barnet, was supplied with that and I have taken that into account. I also spoke to a number of other individuals, bodies and organisations to obtain information relevant to this investigation, namely representatives of the Cabinet Office (the relevant Government department responsible for Elections), the Electoral Commission, the Greater London Returning Officer's Office, the Chief Counting Officer and the Regional Counting Officer for London for the EU Referendum, the Returning Officer at Camden, the MD of the company that supplied the electoral management system to Barnet (Xpress) and the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA).
- 2.6 Presiding Officers were invited to give feedback to me, and I was supplied with the feedback from the 12 that did so all of which I took into account (I consequentially interviewed one Presiding Officer as their evidence was I felt particularly important).
- 2.7 I was supplied with a dossier of information obtained by Barnet from electors. I was grateful for that, read it all, and took it into account.
- 2.8 I was also supplied by Mr Andrew Dismore, the London Assembly Member for Barnet and Camden with copies of correspondence he had received from members of the public and a summary spreadsheet. Again, I was grateful for that, read it all and again took it into account.

- 2.9 I am grateful to all assisted me. All gave their time freely, no one was reticent or held back even though some were reliving events that they probably would have preferred not to. But all were clear that the facts needed to be established and lessons learnt.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

*This section of my report provides some background to the electoral landscape, and the situation in Barnet, and is included to assist in understanding the detail of the issues that arose in Barnet on May 5<sup>th</sup> and my recommendations.*

#### **Returning Officers**

Each Council is required to appoint one of its officers as the Returning Officer for the purposes of running elections. The Council which has appointed that officer is required to provide the officer with sufficient resources to conduct the election and to pay the costs thereof.

The Returning Officer may appoint deputies to assist with the conduct of the election. Such deputies may be appointed with “full powers” (i.e. the power to undertake any duties which are formally the responsibility of the Returning Officer) or with “limited powers” (i.e. the powers specifically identified in the form of appointment).

The Returning Officer plays a central role in the democratic process. Their role is to ensure that the election is administered effectively and that, as a result, the experience of voters and those standing for election is a positive one.

The duties of a Returning Officer are separate from the duties held by that individual as a local government officer. A Returning Officer is not responsible to the local authority but is a separate legal entity to that of the Council which appointed him/her and is directly accountable to the courts as an independent statutory office holder.

While the Returning Officer can appoint one or more persons to discharge any or all of the Returning Officer’s functions, the Returning Officer cannot delegate their personal responsibility for delivering the election.

The Returning Officer is not fettered by the Council’s normal procedures in terms of conducting the election or subject to direction or instruction from members of the Council in respect of the discharge of the responsibilities falling to the statutory office. This reflects the position enshrined in statute that an independent officer is responsible for the proper conduct of the election “without fear or favour”.

#### **Management arrangements for Electoral Services in Barnet**

The Elections Office is responsible for the various logistical issues relating to the arrangements for polling day such as booking venues for use as Polling Stations, equipping those Polling Stations, recruiting and appointing staff.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, the management arrangements for electoral services at the Council were through a line management arrangement which started with the Chief Executive (Returning Officer). Reporting to him was the Assurance Director, to her the Head of Electoral Services and to him the Electoral Registration Manager. There are then a number of Electoral Services Officers, some of whom focus more on electoral registration, but with them all able to work on registration / election duties as required

After May 5<sup>th</sup>, the Chief Operations Officer was appointed as Interim Chief Executive and at annual council on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May also as Returning Officer. As a result, he will be the Counting Officer for the EU Referendum on 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

### **Staffing - training/briefing sessions**

It is good practice for Polling Station staff to receive training and/or briefing on their role and responsibilities. Quite correctly, this did take place in Barnet for this election. This is, of course, particularly true for such staff undertaking a role for the first time. This practice is firmly recommended in the Electoral Commission's guidance and is covered in some detail in terms of arranging and delivering that training. In addition, the Commission produces a range of materials to support the training including "A Handbook for Polling Station staff". This includes reference to the need for Presiding Officers to check that they have the correct equipment and supplies including (amongst other things) that they have the correct register.

### **Project Planning and Risk Management**

Attention to detail is critical to good electoral administration. This should include a structured and methodical approach to project planning and risk management. To quote the Electoral Commission:

*"Running an election is a complex logistical operation with statutory obligations and personal liability for the Returning Officer, involving considerable financial and physical resources, and delivered against extremely tight and inflexible timescales."*

### **Resources for Electoral Services**

To operate effectively, a function of this nature needs to be properly resourced with well-trained staff who have a sufficient level of knowledge and expertise. This equally applies to those who have management responsibility for the service. Additionally, at key times of the year, such as the lead in periods for elections, adequate support arrangements need to be in place.

### **Checking**

It is a cardinal rule in electoral administration to "check, check and check again". Human beings make mistakes. People who work in elections offices are humans and make mistakes. We all do. But a robust regime of checking (ideally each time by different people) will reduce if not remove that risk.

### **Escalation**

When issues are raised or things go wrong, in any organisation or process there needs to be a place – and a system – for addressing that. Escalation needs to be proportionate, but a systemic process needs to be in place

## **The EU Referendum**

### **The Chief Counting Officer (CCO)**

The Chair of the Electoral Commission, Jenny Watson, is the CCO with responsibility for the management of the EU Referendum. The CCO is personally responsible for certifying the overall result of the Referendum. The CCO has the power to give general or specific directions to COs relating to the discharge of their functions in the Referendum, including directions requiring COs to take specified preparatory steps or to provide any information that they have or are entitled to have.

### **Regional Counting Officers (RCO)**

The CCO has appointed an RCO for each electoral region in Great Britain. The RCO (London) is the Returning Officer and Chief Executive at Lewisham. The RCO is responsible for co-ordinating the planning and administration of the poll across their electoral region and for managing the collation of the local totals into a total for the electoral region, which will be fed into the UK-wide result.

## Counting Officers (CO)

In Great Britain, the appointment as Counting Officer flows automatically from the appointment as local government Returning Officer. For the purposes of the Referendum in Great Britain, the local authority area is known as the voting area.

The CO is responsible for ensuring that the Referendum is administered effectively in their voting area and that, as a result, the experience of voters and campaigners is a positive one.

The CO is personally responsible for the conduct of the Referendum in their voting area including:

- provision and equipment of Polling Stations
- printing of the ballot papers
- appointment of Polling Station staff
- conduct of the poll
- management of the postal vote process
- the verification and counting of the votes
- transmission of the local totals to the RCO

The duties of a CO like those of a Returning Officer are separate from the COs duties as a local government officer. COs are not responsible to the local authority but are directly accountable to the courts as an independent statutory office holder

## The Law Commission's review of Electoral Law

The world of elections is complex. Elections will always raise issues, such as voters believing they should have been on the register, postal voters saying they haven't had their postal vote etc. Such is a normal election, if there is such a thing. The Returning Officer has powers to correct clerical errors where they arise, and of course sometimes they do. Sometimes the issue is not of the system's making however. So it is important to be clear that running an election everywhere brings with it issues, conflicts and challenges.

The legal framework adds to the complexity. Such complexity makes the task of running a "successful" and indeed lawful election that much more complex.

The Law Commission's "Electoral Law: Summary of Interim report" (February 2016) sums to situation up briefly:

9. *Electoral law is complex, voluminous and fragmented. After 1997, many more types of election and local Referendums were created, while recourse to national Referendums grew. Each type of election or Referendum is generally governed by its bespoke legislation. ....*
- 10 *More than 17 statutes and some 30 pieces of secondary legislation govern the area of electoral law that is considered by this reform project. Some of their content is repeated, almost word for word, from the "classical" law which is contained in the Representation of the People Act 1983 ("the 1983 Act"), which governs UK Parliamentary elections and some aspects of local government elections in England, Wales and Scotland.*
- 11 *All of the newly created elections use a voting system other than first past the post, for which the classical law contained in the 1983 Act was designed. Accordingly, some of the classical law had to be adapted to account for the different voting system. We call efforts to adapt a classical rule to a new voting system "transpositions". These have not been consistent, even for elections which use the same voting system. This greatly contributes to the problems of volume and complexity.*
- 12 *This poses problems not only for those consulting the law, but also for implementing new or changed policies. Introducing a new election requires replicating every aspect of the existing electoral law, while introducing new*

*policy requires many different pieces of legislation for each election type. This is undesirable when, in fact, a large number of rules are shared by all elections. It is not a good and efficient use of Government and Parliamentary resources to draft, and to scrutinise the same change of policy, or new policy, in up to 19 pieces of primary and secondary legislation. Nor is it helpful to those who use electoral law to have such a plethora of sources, and the inevitable differences that creep into the detail of electoral administration of particular electoral events.”*

### **Performance data for Barnet’s Electoral Functions**

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 gave the Electoral Commission powers to set standards of performance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers in Great Britain.

To quote the Electoral Commission:

*Prior to the development of this performance standards framework, information on the performance of EROs and ROs had not been collected or analysed consistently nationwide, and there was no mechanism available to assess the performance of EROs and ROs. By setting these standards, the Commission is now able to collect performance information from EROs and ROs in order to assess progress against the key objectives of ‘complete and accurate electoral registers supported by a well-run electoral registration process’ and ‘well-run elections’.*

The Electoral Commission publish on-line an annual assessment of the performance of Returning Officers in Great Britain. Their report assesses how well Returning Officers deliver elections each year and shows comparative data:

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/find-information-by-subject/performance-standards/performance-in-running-elections-and-referendums>

Similarly, the Electoral Commission publishes on-line annual assessments of the performance of the Electoral Registration Officers in Great Britain. This report assesses how well Electoral Registration Officers deliver their duty to maintain accurate and complete electoral registers and shows comparative data:

<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/find-information-by-subject/performance-standards/performance-in-running-electoral-registration>

I reviewed this data for Barnet to provide a context as to their past performance of the election function and electoral registration function using this data, given that this is data compiled by the body (the Electoral Commission) tasked with making that assessment.

Barnet have met all (except one) of the Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer performance standards since 2009. The only exception relates to timing of despatch of poll cards at the 2012 GLA elections where, because of inconsistencies in guidance provided by the Commission and the GLRO, different date parameters were given in respect of poll card deliveries. As a result, Barnet failed to meet the Commission’s performance standard but did meet the requirements of the GLRO.

#### 4. HOW WERE INCOMPLETE REGISTERS AT POLLING STATIONS?

- 4.1 On 29th April 2016, an officer in the election services team at Barnet printed off the electoral registers for placing in ballot boxes ready for collection by Presiding Officers on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May for polling day on 5<sup>th</sup> May.
- 4.2 All election offices and Returning officers make use of electoral management systems (software packages) to assist in the delivery of the electoral process, both elections and electoral registration. Barnet uses Xpress Software Solutions (Xpress) as do many other Councils / Returning Officers.
- 4.3 The officer accessed the relevant part of the Xpress to print the registers to be supplied to Polling Stations, and then opted to access an option enabling certain voters to be removed from the register.
- 4.4 Not all registered voters can vote in all elections. In these elections in Barnet, overseas voters could not vote.
- 4.5 There are two options: those voters can be removed from the register to be supplied to Polling Stations. Alternatively, if this option is not exercised, they will appear crossed through (and hence still unable to vote) but visible on the face of the register.
- 4.6 In my experience, the more common practice is to include all types of electors in the registers supplied to Polling Stations, but simply have crossings through for those that are not eligible to vote in a particular election. I believe this practice helps Polling Station staff, as it is easier to explain to someone that they are not eligible to vote (name crossed through for good reason) than to try to explain why they do not show on the register at all
- 4.7 The decision to remove overseas voters from the register did not of itself create the problem.
- 4.8 But in opening this screen and exercising the option to enable certain voters to be removed from the register, the system / screen then provided a further option, namely "Only include the above (i.e. exclude standard electors and only include the electors marked)".
- 4.9 The Officer ticked this box as a result of which "standard" or ordinary electors were not included in the printed registers and only those in the list of marked voters (now excluding overseas) were printed. Therefore the only electors who were included on the registers supplied initially to Polling Stations were:
- New Electors
  - Over 70 Electors
  - Lords
  - Euro(local)
  - Overseas Lord
  - Postal Voters
  - Young Electors
  - Crown Servants
  - Service
  - Euro(Local + Euro)
  - Voluntary Mental
  - Proxy Voters
- 4.10 The registers were then put aside ready for inclusion in the ballot boxes. They were not checked by anyone else in the elections office.
- 4.11 When the ballot boxes were collected by Presiding Officers on the evening of Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May (the day before Polling Day), the logistical arrangements



for collection had changed, with the result that Presiding officers were unable to check the contents then and there as fully as they had in previous years. They were told they did not need to check the ballot box contents as that had been done by the staff in the elections office. The focus of that check had been – is there a register in the box rather than is it the correct register. Whilst documentation such as the ballot papers had been checked, the Registers had not been checked other than there was one in the ballot box. On collection, the Presiding Officers saw the elections staff and showed them all one by one their contents and signed off that they had the correct contents in their ballot boxes.

- 4.12 Despite this, one Presiding Officer on the Wednesday night did check his register and had sufficient concerns to call in. In normal circumstances, the Presiding Officer would have contacted their designated Polling Station Inspector, but due to health / family circumstances, the Polling Station Inspector was not available. Accordingly a member of the elections team – the same person who had printed the registers – took on that role and took the call.
- 4.13 The Presiding Officer raised the issue but was advised that the register was correct and not incomplete. The issue was not escalated further. The Presiding Officer was so concerned that they raised the issue again early the following morning (Polling Day), and did after some discussion receive a replacement complete register before 7:00AM.
- 4.14 The remaining incomplete registers were opened by Presiding Officers on the morning of May 5<sup>th</sup> prior to opening their Polling Stations.

## 5. RECOVERY

- 5.1 On arrival at the elections office at 6:00AM on 5th May, a senior member of the elections team was advised of the telephone call between a Presiding Officer and a member of the elections team the previous night. The senior officer was also advised that the Presiding Officer had called again that morning.
- 5.2 Following a discussion in the office, it was agreed that the elections officer would take a fresh register to that Presiding Officer which the officer did (and in doing so look at what the Presiding Officer had concerns about). This was done.
- 5.3 The elections officer called from the Polling Station to confirm that electors did appear to missing from the printed copy originally supplied.
- 5.4 By this point it was 7:00 AM, Polling Stations had opened and calls were coming in from Presiding Officers about electors not on the register. The Senior Member of the team, having heard several calls of the same nature realised that there was major issue. As a result he said that Presiding Officers should be instructed that if an elector had a Poll card, they should record the elector number and issue a ballot paper. Presiding Officers would need to call in and check for those without Poll Cards.
- 5.5 The senior officer then started to print fresh registers, call in staff to assist and advised the Returning Officer of the problem and what he was doing about it at 7:19 AM. He also arranged for fresh registers to be taken to the closest Polling Stations for checking. This was done and confirmed. As a result, the activity in the office focussed on the production and delivery of fresh registers to all Polling Stations. The Returning Officer arranged for additional staff to deliver the registers and also advised the election agents of situation and plan.
- 5.6 By 7:45, the issue was in the media, and information was given to the Barnet Communications Team to both address the queries and clarify what was being done. By 8:00 AM, members of the team were in contact with the Electoral Commission and the GLRO. Part of the conversation with the Commission related to the possibility of using the emergency proxy regime and a way of enfranchising those who had not been able to vote earlier in the day, and would not personally be able to return to their Polling Station that day. Subsequently, that was confirmed by the Commission, and subsequently the communications team arranged for appropriate publicity to be given on this option. This was taken up by around 38 voters.
- 5.7 In parallel, the Returning Officer sought advice from Leading Counsel, advising him of the issues and steps taken / proposed to be taken. Leading Counsel advised that he considered the steps taken were correct and there was nothing further that could or should be done within the law. The Returning Officer had identified the problem, and was ensuring correct registers were supplied to the stations. He agreed with the approach of allowing those with Poll Cards to vote. This reflected also the legal advice obtained by the GLRO.
- 5.8 The time when fresh registers were delivered to each of the polling stations can be seen in Appendix 1.

## 6. IMPACT AND NUMBERS

- 6.1 Once the issue was clear to officers in the elections team, as well as taking steps to address the issue, Presiding Officers were requested to compile information on the situation. This included :
- What voters who attended were told
  - Whether those who were on the register were allowed to vote
  - Were those not on the register allowed to vote with a polling card and if so from what time
  - What information the Presiding Officers managed to collect as to those they turned away (including numbers)
  - The time that Presiding Officer received a “correct” register
  - Any other problems / issues
- 6.2 That information was compiled (unedited) into a spreadsheet for me. I have attached that as Appendix 1.
- 6.3 This information is not definitive, of course, but is the best indication of at least the scale of the impact.
- 6.4 I have also attached at Appendix 2 turnout figures for 2012 as compared to 2016.
- 6.5 No one would suggest that the impact of events of 5<sup>th</sup> May was anything but very serious. Disenfranchising even one person is unacceptable.
- 6.6 However the scale of the issue and the impact would appear to have been in the hundreds rather than the thousands as was initially reported.

**7. THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE GREATER LONDON RETURNING OFFICER (GLRO)**

- 7.1 The GLRO is appointed by the GLA and has overall responsibility for coordinating the elections across Greater London. The GLRO is a senior officer of the GLA, independent of the Authority and the Mayor in respect of their electoral functions.
- 7.2 Barnet first contacted the GLRO at 8:17AM after which there was a fairly constant stream of calls and updates. This included direct contact between Barnet's Returning Officer and the GLRO.
- 7.3 From the chronology supplied by the GLRO's office, I consider that the GLRO was advised of the issue, what was being done, and when in a timely and appropriate fashion. The Deputy GLRO advised me that they felt the same
- 7.4 Barnet advised the GLRO that they were seeking Leading Counsel's advice as to their options but especially around emergency proxy votes. The GLRO also sought advice from Leading Counsel. I consider that this was entirely appropriate given the GLRO's role
- 7.5 In my opinion, the GLRO was involved in a timely and effective manner.

## **8. ELECTORAL COMMISSION**

- 8.1 The Electoral Commission were first made aware that there was an issue at 7.03 AM on 5<sup>th</sup> May as a result of a call made by a member of the public to their offices
- 8.2 They then spoke with one of the senior officers at Barnet and obtained details of the problem, and the intended actions
- 8.3 The Commission's initial advice was clear and reflected the decision that had been made in the elections office – get fresh registers out to Polling Stations as soon as you can. They were also in agreement with the approach relating to the use of poll cards to enable voters with them to vote.
- 8.4 The Commission were kept in touch with events as they developed.
- 8.5 During this time, the Commission suggested the possibility of using the emergency proxy provision as a way of enfranchising those who had not been able to vote earlier in the day, and would not personally be able to return to their Polling Station that day. The Returning Officer agreed, and subsequently the communications team at Barnet arranged for appropriate publicity to be given on this option. This was taken up by around 38 voters.
- 8.6 From the chronology supplied by the Commission, I consider that they were involved in a timely and effective manner. The Commission advised me that they felt the same
- 8.7 In my opinion, the Electoral Commission were involved in a timely and effective manner. I also believe their advice and guidance was robust and appropriate.
- 8.8 Given the issues that arose, I would suggest a more comprehensive checklist for Presiding Officers may be useful in the context of reviewing their Handbook for Polling Station Staff, if that is practicable and deliverable.

## **9. FINDINGS IN RELATION TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

I would wish to make some general points before turning to my specific findings as against the Terms of Reference I was set.

### **Planning and Risk Register**

There was a project plan and risk register. In talking to the Electoral Commission, they felt that the standard over recent years as to the overall quality of planning was high. From my inspection it is clear that the relevant documentation was bespoke and reflected local issues and circumstances. However, whilst there was a plan and risk register, it clearly did not address the issues that occurred and so did not work.

For the Referendum, it is essential that the issues identified in this report are addressed in the risk register and project plan. Going forward, robust planning and risk management arrangements addressing the key basic activity (such as checking) must be put in place.

### **Checking**

This was clearly not done to an adequate level in the case of these elections with the consequential result. This approach needs to be built into all the future arrangements for electoral administration.

The printing of the registers was not checked within the elections office. The changed logistical arrangements for ballot box collection meant that Presiding Officers were told they did not need to check their contents of their ballot boxes as the office had done that.

Presiding Officers provide an essential part of the checking process. They should not only check that they have the right number of “things” in their ballot box , but should also look through those things and ensure they are correct (ballot papers, register etc).

This sort of basic activity is an essential part of the back office process of running elections. This needs to be built into the planning and risk registers and done.

### **Escalation**

The initial call from the Presiding Officer should have (as a matter of process) been passed immediately to someone other than the person who printed the registers for consideration. There is also a need to ensure that matters raised such as this are escalated to the Returning Officer and Head of Electoral Services. There needs to be a systemic approach to escalation, robust and clear to all.

### **The Involvement of the Returning Officer**

The Returning officer was first made aware of this issue at 7:19 AM on 5<sup>th</sup> May. In my view he should have been made aware of the call to the elections office on the 4<sup>th</sup> May (Wednesday night) from the Presiding Officer. Even on Polling Day, he should have been called first thing and alerted to the issue then.

### **Resources**

The starting point of any discussion of resources for running elections is the legal framework which is clear. The Council which has appointed that Returning Officer is required to provide the Returning Officer with sufficient resources to conduct the election.

It is therefore a matter for the Returning Officer to state their needs.

There was a specific issue in these elections relevant to this issue that is pertinent. The normal practice at Barnet is that the Presiding Officers when they collect their ballot boxes check their contents then and there. For this election they did not. A factor in the decision not to do that was that the room that they had allocated for this task this year was not big enough to enable them to do that.

What was introduced this time was that the elections office staff checked that all the contents going into the ballot boxes was there for every station. This was communicated to the POs when they attended their training sessions.

Whatever the practice is for the collection of ballot boxes, the Presiding Officers must check the contents. If the practice at Barnet is that they are checked when they are picked up so that any issue can be raised with officers, then the space / rooms must be allocated to enable that to happen.

Going forward, the Returning Officer must enable Presiding Officers to carry out this important check. Many indicated that on opening their documentation on Thursday morning they were immediately aware that their registers were thinner than they would have expected.

There are other ways of enabling Presiding Officer to check and feedback any issues in advance of Polling Day, and many distribute their ballot boxes on the Tuesday, giving a full day for feedback (and to consider and address any issues).

The Returning Officer will wish to reflect on the best arrangements for Barnet, but also review the arrangements with pace so that for 23<sup>rd</sup> June, Presiding Officers can undertake this important role.

### **Xpress Software Solutions**

As already mentioned, all election offices and Returning officers make use of electoral management systems (software packages) to assist in the delivery of the electoral process, both elections and electoral registration. Barnet uses Xpress as do many other Councils / Returning Officers.

There is no suggestion that the technology failed. The system printed what it was instructed to print and was not an issue in this election for the other 236 local authorities using the Xpress system, nor has it been before.

I have discussed with the Managing Director of Xpress the possibility of removing the "include/exclude option" completely. However, the extent to which this option is used by other councils is unclear and making changes to a very important part of the system this close to the Referendum when it will be used by all 237 Xpress clients is not advisable. Even with extensive testing, there is always a risk of error that could affect every Polling Station register, generating a much larger issue than that experienced on 5th May. In the circumstances, the prudent approach is to provide clear advice about the impact of using the Include/Exclude option and the need to check the printed registers before sending to the Polling Stations. Crucially, in checking the printed copies of the Polling Station registers it is important to ensure that the printed elector numbers run consecutively as this is a clear indication that all electors have been included.

Subsequent to 23<sup>rd</sup> June, Xpress will canvass all users to better understand the current use of the "include/exclude" option and establish if it can be presented in an alternative form. .

## Findings in relation to Terms of Reference

- 1. How incorrect electoral registers were provided to Polling Stations at the start of the Mayoral and GLA elections on Thursday 5th May 2016**
  - a. It was human error that caused incomplete registers to be printed and then distributed to the Polling Stations.
  - b. Subsequent inadequate / non-existent checking processes which could have prevented this failed to do so.
  
- 2. An assessment of the number of voters affected and the overall impact**
  - a. Information compiled by Barnet gives a number of between 500 – 600 Voters. However, there is no way of knowing how many of those turned away did return later in the day
  - b. Given the variables that could impact on this figure, it is perhaps safer to say that in terms of scale, the numbers affected would appear to have been in the hundreds rather than thousands
  
- 3. How the error was addressed on the day of the poll**
  - a. I have laid out in my report what was done to address the error on the day.
  - b. In my view, the recovery was in the circumstances effective
  - c. A quick decision was made to re print and whilst delivery took some time, having personally driven around Barnet at 7:00AM on a Thursday morning, getting the registers out across all Polling Stations by 10:30AM was no mean feat.
  - d. There were issues in relation to communications between the elections office, Polling Station Inspectors and Presiding Officers. Communications on the morning of May 5<sup>th</sup> between these three groups was (at best) difficult and at times impossible. Given the issues raised at Polling Stations, Presiding officers were trying to call their Polling Station Inspectors. When unable to do so (as the Inspectors were calling their Polling Stations / the elections office) Presiding officers tried to contact the elections office. At the point of crisis, the system overloaded. Few of us have ever experienced such a situation, but the need to be able to give a message out to all Presiding Officers quickly is clearly of paramount importance. There is a need to have a fresh look at this, one option may a group text system. But the arrangements need revisiting. I should add that I doubt many other Returning officers have a sufficiently robust regime in place that could cope with the events experienced in Barnet on May 5<sup>th</sup>. They may wish to reflect upon this in their planning
  - e. There were also issues on the morning of 5<sup>th</sup> May for voters who tried to contact the elections office and rang the Council. They met recorded messages based on standard scripts which, given the circumstances did not address the issues the voters were facing and probably inflamed feelings / frustrations. In a situation like this, the ability to quickly change the script / recorded messages and provide more immediate 1:1 contact over the phone should be available.
  
- 4. The involvement of the GLRO**
  - a. As set out in my report, I believe that the GLRO was involved in a timely and effective manner (as does the GLRO)
  
- 5. The advice and guidance provided by the Electoral Commission**
  - a. As set out in my report, I believe that the Electoral Commission was involved in a timely and effective manner (as do the Commission). I also believe their advice and guidance was robust and appropriate.



- 6. The arrangements that will be put in place so that this does not happen again**
- a. I have laid out some recommendations both for the 23<sup>rd</sup> June and also beyond designed to avoid this happening again
  - b. That starts with the arrangements for 23<sup>rd</sup> June but also requires I believe after 23<sup>rd</sup> June a review by the Returning Officer as laid out in my recommendations
  - c. Xpress Software solutions will also ensure clear messaging goes out to all users before 23<sup>rd</sup> June and after 23<sup>rd</sup> June actively investigate the possibility of removing the functionality that enabled the printing of the incomplete registers
- 7. Any steps that will be taken specifically for the EU Referendum in June, including liaison with the CCO and London RCO**
- a. I have laid out some recommendations specifically for the 23<sup>rd</sup> June
  - b. It is clearly of critical importance that the Counting Officer at Barnet, the Regional Counting Officer (London) and the Chief Counting Officer work very closely between now and 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Having spoken to them all, I have no doubt that this will happen
  - c. I was struck by the attitude of the elections team, and not only their appreciation of the failings on 5<sup>th</sup> May, but their determination to address those and have robust arrangements ready for 23<sup>rd</sup> June. They are already well on their way to picking up many of the points I have highlighted.
  - d. It is however I believe inevitable that they and the process in Barnet leading up to and on 23<sup>rd</sup> June will come under intense scrutiny. The events on 5<sup>th</sup> May must have taken its toll on the staff (although I saw no evidence of that). Taking those factors into account, alongside the need to have and be able to re-assure the electorate in Barnet that the process for 23<sup>rd</sup> will be robust, I believe that additional capacity and oversight (oversight is a crucial aspect of this formulation) for 23<sup>rd</sup> June is necessary.
  - e. For that reason, I am recommending oversight and additional capacity is brought in as determined by the Regional Counting Officer(London).
- 8. Any relevant recommendations, for example on process improvements**
- a. These are set out in my recommendations and within the report.
  - b. I would however wish to emphasise the following areas that need addressing:
    - i. The process of checking / compliance within the elections team requires complete review, revision and codification. It must be clear to all and robust.
    - ii. There needs to be a systemic approach to escalation that is again clear to all and robust, and withstands last minute changes in personnel.
    - iii. The method of operation must ensure that the Returning Officer is involved at the earliest opportunity
    - iv. The Returning Officer should arrange for the preparation of a training and development plan for all staff with responsibilities for the electoral services function

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **For 23<sup>rd</sup> June:**

1. The Regional Counting Officer (London) should identify a suitable Returning Officer to support the Barnet Counting Officer in overseeing the conduct of the EU referendum on 23<sup>rd</sup> June.
2. The Counting Officer (and the Returning Officer identified to oversee as set out above) should work with the Regional Counting Officer (London) who will set his requirements as to additional oversight, supervision, the content of risk and project plans and other requirements as he sees fit.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, rigorous and multiple checks must be made at all stages of the process and there must be a robust escalation process in place
4. Appropriate arrangements must be made to enable Presiding Officer to check the contents of their ballot boxes and advise the elections office in case of issue, such reports must be appropriately recorded, escalated where necessary and followed up.
5. The Counting Officer must be informed of any issues that he should be made aware of (in accordance with a new systemic escalation procedure) at once.
6. The Counting Officer shall ensure that robust systems are in place regarding communications between Presiding Officers, Polling Station Inspectors and the elections office on polling day
7. Xpress (the Election management Software supplier) should send out an appropriate communication to all Xpress users making them aware of the issue that occurred in Barnet on 5<sup>th</sup> May and the checks that should be taken to ensure this is not repeated on 23<sup>rd</sup> June.
8. The Chief Counting Officer should send out a similar communication to all Counting Officers (whether users of Xpress or not) so all are aware of the issue and can undertake additional appropriate checks to ensure all are printing full registers for Polling Stations.
9. The Chief Counting Officer should ensure that the Regional Counting Officer (London) has sufficient resources so as to support Barnet in whatever way he deems appropriate

### **Post 23<sup>rd</sup> June:**

10. Xpress should consult with other Councils to establish what changes, if any should be made to remove the possibility of re-occurrence.
11. The Returning Officer should initiate a review of the way in which elections are delivered and how the electoral services function operates with a view to producing suitable recommendations on resources, future management, support arrangements, operating practices, compliance issues and responsibility/accountability for the electoral services function.

**NOTE:**

I do not wish to fetter how the review is undertaken, but I would offer some observations (rather than recommendations) on the review:

- The review would benefit from external challenge
- The Review this needs to take account of a range of concerns and issues relating to the operation of the election function in Barnet that I have been made aware of. I make no comment on the merits of those concerns. They may / may not have substance. No election is ever run without issues. It is the nature of an election. Issues arise that need addressing by the Returning Officer and his team. The electoral process is highly constrained by a legislative framework within which the Returning Officer must operate. But in my view these concerns need addressing. I would suggest that any review should facilitate the raising of concerns that predate this matter and fell outside my Terms of Reference. It needs to “clean the house / purge....”
- The review needs to clearly be led by the Returning Officer and reflect both their statutory role and the right of the returning officer to council resources
- The Returning Officer should as part of the review arrange for the preparation of a training and development plan for all staff with responsibilities for the electoral services function which shall be implemented, to include training on the use of the EMS(Xpress).
- The communication methods and channels between the elections office, Polling Station Inspectors and Presiding Officers (and vice versa) must be improved and function in situations such as that experienced on 5<sup>th</sup> May. For example, a group texting system may be an option.
- There are clearly some points raised by the facts of this matter that need to be addressed for 23<sup>rd</sup> as well as going forward. Printing of key documents, use of the EMS(Xpress) and checking are the key ones.
- I would also suggest a more comprehensive checklist for Presiding Officers may be useful. It may be worth discussing this with the Electoral Commission in case they are prepared to lead on this in the context of reviewing their Handbook for Polling Station Staff.

## 11. CONCLUSION

- 11.1 I would like to thank particularly all those to whom I spoke and those who supported me and my work from Barnet for their courtesy and assistance.
- 11.2 Unfortunately, this is not the first review of elections I have undertaken leading to a report of this nature. In an ideal world, this sort of activity should be unnecessary. The conduct of an election is a complex process and, by its very nature, requires almost total compliance with the law and with good practice guidance. In reality, that does not always happen.
- 11.3 It would be remiss of me not to recognise the work of many on 5<sup>th</sup> May to address the issue. The Presiding Officers in Polling Stations bore the brunt and given the communication difficulties that occurred, did I believe a sterling job in very difficult circumstances.
- 11.4 Looking to the future, this report contains recommendations some of which specifically relate to the forthcoming EU Referendum. A recurring theme throughout has been the need to restore confidence in the electoral process. I consider it essential that, if that objective is to be achieved, it will be necessary to move forward on the recommendations within this report without delay in so far as they relate to the Referendum, and thereafter pursue the other recommendations.
- 11.5 Attention to detail is critical to good electoral administration. The recommendations which I make relating to a comprehensive review include reference to operating practices and compliance. In my view, this needs to be implemented to ensure that the Council and its officers are not exposed to similar problems in the future and that the electoral system in Barnet operates with the rigour which the electorate are entitled to take as a given.
- 11.6 By definition, I have been asked to look at something that went very wrong. There was much that I saw read and heard that was good. I was particularly aware that the senior officers were very aware that something very serious had gone wrong and as a result fundamental review and change (neither of which would necessarily be easy or comfortable) was required. That is a positive step, and I wish them well on that journey.

Mark R Heath  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2016

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
1	Problem with register	16 on register allowed to vote	9 not on register, 8:15am	2 people said they would return later	8:15	no other issues	2
2	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	Most people were not on the register.	Only those with polling cards were allowed to vote between 7.15 and 8.15am	Took mobile number for one person, contacted her and she returned to vote. 6 people stormed off.	8.35am	No pencils	6
3	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	Most people were not on the register.	Only those with polling cards were allowed to vote between 7.15 and 8.15am	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	8.35am	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	
4	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	Most people were not on the register.	Only those with polling cards were allowed to vote between 7.15 and 8.15am	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	8.35am	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	
5	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	First ones were not on register	no info provided	only 1 person	9:30	no other issues	1
6	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	Yes - contact details in log book	14 not on register	14 not on register, contact details in log book. 1 went home to collect poll card	9:37	no other issues	13
7	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	None were on register before 8.30	100 approx with cards but unlisted, 160 calls to elections in 2 hours	none turned away	9:20	no other issues	
8	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	None were on register before 8.30	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	none turned away	9:20	no other issues	
9	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes		none turned away	9.25am	no issues	
10	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	no	happy to come back	9.40am	no issues	
11	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes		2	9.10am	no issues	2
12	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	no	10	9.30am	no issues	10

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?		
13	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes		yes able to vote, kept all details on separate notepad	3/4 people - said they would return later and happy to come back	8:40am	none	
14	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	yes		8	8.40am	no issues	8
15	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes			2	9.10am	no issues	2
16	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes			2	9.10am	no issues	2
17	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:18 AM		6 were unable to vote but 4 have since returned. There were no contact details for 2	10:30am	no other issues	2
18	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	8:00am		none but did ask several voter to go home and collect their polling card	10:00am	no other issues	
19	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	8:00am		none but did ask several voter to go home and collect their polling card	10:00am	no other issues	
20	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:00		none	7:50am	did not allow voters to post ballot papers in ballot box until register arrived.	
21	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:00		1 unable to vote and did not have their contact details	7:50am	no other issues	1
22	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:10am		2 were unable to vote and did not get their contact details	8:10am	no other issues	2
23	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:10am		none	8:10am	no other issues	

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
24	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:15am	none	10:15am	no other issues	
25	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:15am	none	10:15am	no other issues	
26	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:00am	none	9:00am	no other issues	
27	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:00am	none but 2 voters could not wait	9:00am	no other issues	2
28	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:00am	none but a couple of voters could not wait	9:00am	staff did not have the register it was at polling station 27	2
29	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:15am	none but 3 voters could not wait	9:15am	no other issues	3
30	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:30am	15 and unable to take contact details	9:30am	no other issues	15
31	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	Yes, from approx just after 7am. All able to vote - 61 with poll cards and a few without poll cards	5 people - name and adress only on log	10:10am	Number of formal complaints require a response. Cllr - offered help. Media query from daily mail 11:45am	5
32	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7-7:20am	13 turned away, left their names	10:15am, transferred to main register no issues	no other issues	13
33	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7-7:20am	Approx 3, no names left	10:15am, transferred to main register no issues	no other issues	3

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
34	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes but very few people	yes - no one was turned away with or without a poll card - approx 50. Phoned office - got electors number so could vote	2-3 people within first 15 minutes left without giving names	9am	None	3
35	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	From about 7:30am kept a list	3 at most, asked to come back, 1 has been back	9am	none	2
36	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:19am	6 but 3 were able to come back an vote	8:55am	no other issues	3
37	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:19am	6 and did not take any contact details	8:55am	no other issues	6
38	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:30am	10 voters unable to vote and Cllr took details to ask voter to come back	10:00am	Angry lady who was not happy with where the teller was stationed. Noted on logbook	10
39	Told they were not on the register, tried calling various numbers for help - couldn't get response. After 7.15 (PSI) spoke to P.O. and they started to issue ballot papers if polling cards.	yes	7:15am	2 advised to come back with poll card later. No details taken.	9:30am	no other issues	2
40							
41							
42	sorry you are not on the list, advised to contact the election office and come back later	yes	7:38am	8 people unable and 7 called who came back or will come back. They took contact details and called them back	8:40am	no other issues	1
43	sorry you are not on the list, advised to contact the election office and come back later	yes	07:20am	10 unable to vote and advised to come back later but unable to get details as too busy	8:35am	no issues	10
44	your name is not on the list we will contact the elections office to verify that you can vote, you can either wait or come back later	yes	Yes from 7:20 onwards	No phone numbers were taken but 4 people turned away, 3 of those have since returned to vote	9:00am	no other issues	4
45	your name is not on the list we will contact the elections office to verify that you can vote, you can either wait or come back later	yes	Yes from 7:20 onwards	No phone numbers were taken but 4 turned away	9:00am	no other issues	4



Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
46	polling card would be needed then ballot paper could be issued. Called the office	yes	no info provided	5 people went away, by-election list was complete so it was used. 2 people were confirmed with the officer and they then voted.	9:30am	no other issues	5
47	polling card would be needed then ballot paper could be issued. Called the office	yes	no info provided	5 people went away, by-election list was complete so it was used. 2 people were confirmed with the officer and they then voted.	9:30am	no other issues	5
48	Error on list - Initially issued local by-election ballot paper but return later for mayoral. Then if they were on the by-election list, issued paper	If on local register then paper issued	74 not on list but issued	5 approx, no contact details	9:45 AM	Problem of a person told he could vote by email but was not on the list - phoned officer, no paper could be issued	5
49	you are not on the register so cant vote and you should return later	yes	no info provided	15 unable to vote, no record was kept	9:45am	no other issues	15
50	you are not on the register so cant vote and you should return later	yes	no info provided	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	9:45am	no other issues	
51	Used list for by-election as long as listed ballot paper	yes	15 not on register, before 9.40	none turned away	9:40	no other issues	
52	Tried to call office but busy	yes		2 people could not vote, 1 person who was not registered came back later. No contact details	9:20	no other issues	1
53	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	
54	sorry you are not on the list contact the election office and come back later	yes	7:20am	15 were unable to vote and told to return later. No details taken as too busy	9:00am	no issues	15
55	your name is not on the list, please contact the elections office or come back later.	yes	7:54am	10-25 were unable to vote and so far 10 have come back or have said that will come back. No details were taken as too busy	9:00am	no issues	15
56	your name is not on the list, please wait or come back later as we contact the elections office to verify that you can vote.	yes	8:00am	5 were not on the list and 2 were unable to wait so did not vote. No details taken	9:20	no issues	2
57	your name is not on the list, please wait or come back later as we contact the elections office to verify that you can vote.	yes	8:00am	5 were not on the list and 3 were unable to wait so did not vote. No details taken	9:20	no issues	3
58	Not on the list cant vote, can't give ballot paper	Not known - occasion didn't arise	7.23am	List kept but not provided	9:45	Just voter: Cllr	
59	Not on the list cant vote, can't give ballot paper	Not known - occasion didn't arise	7.23am	List kept but not provided	9:45	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
60	Not on register, could vote with a poll card. No card, PO called the office to verify	Yes	A little after 7am (Advised by centre)	Not many, approximately 2 - No list	8:30/8:45am	no other issues	2
61	Card ok - issue ballot and record on register. People told to come back	Yes	A little after 7am (Advised by centre)	All who were advised to come back did	8:30/8:45am	Member of Labour party - comms. 2 people voted with no card and not on the list - checked later and they were on list	
62	Not on list - gave contact for registration	Yes (1 out of 15)	No voting until 7.27am	List on old register	8:50	no other issues	
63	Not on list - gave contact for registration	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	No voting until 7.27am	List on old register	8:50	no other issues	
64							
65	Check with centre to see what to do, nothing could do	yes	7:10am	12, list kept	9:05	no other issues	12
66	Assumed new voter - helpline called, new list coming	yes	7:15am	6 people walked. No record	9:05	no other issues	6
67	Can't verify - advised without card to come back later on in evening (7-7.25am, 4/5 people)	yes	7:25am	List kept for some - estimated 20 in total until 9am	9:05	Emergency proxy required by 1 voter - referred to centre	20
68	20 voters told register not correct, can't vote until new list arrives	yes	7:25am	20 approx, 2/3 came back, 2 couldn't come back	9:05	no other issues	18
69	Names not on list - get in touch with centre	yes	7:46am	No list kept, numbers estimated but not provided	9am	no other issues	
70	Took names, umbers of people who couldn't wait - call back for new register, cards provided for phone line	yes	7:30am	Some - they are logged (not provided)	8:30/8:40am	no other issues	
71	Can't vote if no card,not on list can't vote, then if they had a card they could vote	yes	7:15am	No list	8:33am	no other issues	
72	they were asked to come back, problem with the register or call elections office	yes	yes - after 7.22am	10	9.10am	None	10
73	they were asked to come back, problem with the register or call elections office	yes	yes - after 7.22am	7	9.10am	None	7
74	there was problem with the register	yes	no not until 8.50am	20 - 4/5 returned to vote	8.50am	couldn't contact elections office (Early in day)	15
75	there was problem with the register, accepted poll cards from 7.22am	yes	yes - after 7.22am	9 - 3 returned to vote	8.45am	couldn't contact elections office (Early in day)	6
76	there was a technical error, please call office after 7.22 they added manually to the register	yes	yes - from 7.22am	3	9.30am	couldn't contact elections office (Early in day)	3
77	there was a technical error, please call office after 7.22 they added manually to the register	yes	yes - from 7.22am	3	9.30am	couldn't contact elections office (Early in day)	3
78	indicated that there was an error	yes	yes - after 7.22am	4 - 3 returned to vote	9am	130 attempts to contact between 7 - 9	1
79	indicated that there was an error	yes	yes - after 7.22am	6 - 4 returned to vote	9am	130 attempts to contact between 7 - 9	2
80	indicated that there was an error, call elections office	yes	yes - after 7.22am	10 - half returned	9.05am	issued a vote to a postal voter - earlier in the day	5
81	indicated that there was an error, call elections office	yes	yes - after 7.22am	10 - half returned	9.05am	no issues	5
82	technical issues -provide their poll cards	yes	yes - after 7.22am	2 turned away but came back later to vote	9.10am	no issues	
83	problems with the register - PSI was there at 7am	yes	yes - after 7.22am	2	9.30am	no issues	2

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
84	problems with the register - PSI was there at 7am	yes	yes - after 7.22am	1	9.30am	no issues	1
85	problems with the register - PSI was there at 7am	yes	yes - after 7.22am	2	9.30am	no issues	2
86	indicated that there was an error, call elections office	yes	yes - after 7.22am	5 - all returned	9.30am	no issues	
87	indicated that there was an error, call elections office	yes	yes - after 7.22am	4 - 2 returned	9.30am	no issues	2
88	technical issues - invited people to come back	yes	yes - after 7.22am	0	9.30am	no issues	
89	technical issues - invited people to come back	yes	yes - after 7.22am	0	9.30am	no issues	
90	At 7.05 voters attended station. Polling cards were shown but not on station register. Called ER for advice line engaged. Called PSI approx. 7.15am advised that if polling card was presented to issue ballot papers. If no polling card then person had to be verified via phone to ER office. Once this was done ballot papers issued.	No info provided	yes	2 people without cards could not wait for verification and left but later returned and were given ballot papers as new list had been delivered.	9:30am	None	
91	At 7.05 voters attended station. Polling cards were shown but not on station register. Called ER for advice line engaged. Called PSI approx. 7.15am advised that if polling card was presented to issue ballot papers. If no polling card then person had to be verified via phone to ER office. Once this was done ballot papers issued.	No info provided	yes	5 Voters who could not wait for verification by phone had their details taken and left. They were then phoned after 9.30 and advised that the updated register was available. All those 5 returned to vote.	9:30am	None	
92	Couldn't issue ballot, come back later today, open until 10pm. List of contacts ring back/turned away names and address	yes	No, until 9:15am (new list)	List kept but not provided	9:15am	no other issues	
93	7.00am first voters told that if name not on register then unable to issue ballot papers. 7.05am Called PSI advised to call ER office for instruction. 7.17am information received that all with poll cards can be issued ballot papers	No info provided	yes	Approx 15 voters with no cards told to come back if possible as they could not wait for verification. No details taken of voters. Unknown if 15 returned later.	9:30am	None	15
94	7.00am first voters told that if name not on register then unable to issue ballot papers. 7.05am Called PSI advised to call ER office for instruction. 7.17am information received that all with poll cards can be issued ballot papers	No info provided	yes	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	9:30am	None	
95	Approx. 7.05am first voter arrived not on list but with polling card. 7.10am conversation with ER confirmed that ballot papers to be issued to those with cards. Those with no cards need to be verified by ER via phone before ballot paper issued.	No info provided	yes	6 voters could not wait so left the station but it is believed that at least 2 returned later to vote.	9:20am	None	4
96	Approx. 7.05am first voter arrived not on list but with polling card. 7.10am conversation with ER confirmed that ballot papers to be issued to those with cards. Those with no cards need to be verified by ER via phone before ballot paper issued.	No info provided	yes	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	9:20am	None	

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
97	From 7.05am ant voter with a card but not on register was given a ballot paper. All voters who attended without polling cards asked to produce ID like driving license and were then given ballot papers.	No info provided	yes	2 voters had no card and no ID were not given ballot papers but returned later with polling card	9:15am	None	
98	your name is not on the list we will contact the elections office to verify that you can vote.	yes	yes from 8:00am	13 voters turned away and 4 returned. Yes contact details provided on a errors list.	9:00am	none	9
99	your name is not on the list we will contact the elections office to verify that you can vote.	yes	8:00am	15 unable to vote and one has since returned. Yes contact details provided on a errors list.	9:00am	none	14
100	To call the centre, poll card can vote	yes	7:05am	No list - estimated 6-10 turned away - no vote	Shortly after 9:00am	none	10
101	Names not on register, call main office to check	yes	7:15/7:20am	Record of those allowed to vote with card	8:35am	None	
102	First voters attended at appox 7.05am continually trying to call ER for instruction. 7.20 called PSI instructed to issue ballot papers to all with poll cards. All without poll cards had to be verified by phone with ER before issuing ballot papers	No info provided	yes	A number of voters left as they were unable to wait for phone check. Approx. 6 left no details taken of these voters	8:50am	None	6
103	First voters attended at appox 7.05am continually trying to call ER for instruction. 7.20 called PSI instructed to issue ballot papers to all with poll cards. All without poll cards had to be verified by phone with ER before issuing ballot papers	No info provided	yes	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	8:50am	None	
104							
105							
106	The lists were incomplete. Not updated. If they didn't have a poll card they couldn't vote then. Difficult to manage without information.	yes	yes	Everyone that attended either voted then or they came back	9:40	Phone numbers were rubbish	
107	The lists were incomplete. Not updated. If they didn't have a poll card they couldn't vote then. Difficult to manage without information.	yes	yes	Everyone that attended either voted then or they came back	9:40	Phone numbers were rubbish	
108	Assured residents to bear with us and to bring poll card. Noted there was a fault, didn't know they could use cards	yes	yes	12 were turned away, 8-10 came back	9:20	none	4
109	Assured residents to bear with us and to bring poll card. Noted there was a fault, didn't know they could use cards	yes	yes	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	9:20	none	
110							
111	2 people didn't have a poll card and weren't on the register - told to ring the office and come back	yes	yes - 40 people	2 people told to ring the office and come back	8:50	none	2

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
112	Told them there was an error, need to ring for advice. Staff needed to call office, spoke to PSI for advice	None that visited were on the list	No one without cards was able to vote, as they didn't know what to do. Phones were no use	Around 20-25 people were turned away. Some details were taken and they were contacted	10:15 (Cllr supplied a register from December 2015 at 8.30am, this was helpful)	Not enough people. Ballot boxes hard to ... (illegible word here, sorry!)	25
113	Told them there was an error, need to ring for advice. Staff needed to call office, spoke to PSI for advice	None that visited were on the list	No one without cards was able to vote, as they didn't know what to do. Phones were no use	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	10:15 (Cllr supplied a register from December 2015 at 8.30am, this was helpful)	Not enough people. Ballot boxes hard to ... (illegible word here, sorry!)	
114	That the PO required advice on how to deal with voters	yes	7:30am - people without a card left	20 people in total, none left details, they didn't vote. 1 left details and was contacted	10:30	none	20
115	7.05 told by PSI to issue ballot papers to all who had polling cards. All without polling cards asked to wait for verification by phone.	No info provided	yes	2 people left due to not being on the list but stated they would come back later, 1 voter left and said he could not return	10:20	none	1
116	7.05 told by PSI to issue ballot papers to all who had polling cards. All without polling cards asked to wait for verification by phone.	No info provided	yes	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	10:20	none	
117	At 7am had no idea what was going on - need to call for information. PSI said to encourage people to go home and get poll cards, told open until 10pm. Hand wrote names, addreses, poll numbers	yes	7:20	5 left without voting	10:20	BBC Reporter, informed comms, very confused. Phone number doesn't work well.	5
118	At 7am had no idea what was going on - need to call for information. PSI said to encourage people to go home and get poll cards, told open until 10pm. Hand wrote names, addreses, poll numbers	yes	7:20	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	10:20	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	
119	At 7am had no idea what was going on - need to call for information. PSI said to encourage people to go home and get poll cards, told open until 10pm. Hand wrote names, addreses, poll numbers	yes	7:20	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	10:20	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	
120	There were oproblems with the list, if they had polling cards they were issued ballot papers	yes	Yes, via speaking with PSI	4-5 people were not able to vote. They returned and voted	10:15	There was a BBC reporter who interviewed Cllr - he said it was a 'cock-up'. PO spoke with Comms. Number dosen't work. Resident filmed PO at 7:10-15, because there was a delay.	
121	you have to ring the elections office to confirm that on register - can either waitor come back later	yes	07:30am	9-10 people unable to vote but did not take a record	8:55am	no other issues	10
122	you are not on the register, ring the election office - asked to wait or come back later	yes	7:45am	9 unable to vote, logged their details and phoned them back. 8 issued with papers and voted	9:00am	no other issues	1

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
123	sorry not on register and given elections office contact	yes	07:40am	some contact taken and staff attempted to call them back	9:00am	no other issues	
124	7.00 – 7.10 voters not on list asked to wait while instructions obtained from ER. 7.10am called PSI confirmed that ballot papers could be issued to those with polling cards. All those without polling cards needed to be verified via phone by ER office	No info provided	yes	11 people could not wait so left. No details taken but believed 2 returned later	9:15am	no other issues	9
125	7.00 – 7.10 voters not on list asked to wait while instructions obtained from ER. 7.10am called PSI confirmed that ballot papers could be issued to those with polling cards. All those without polling cards needed to be verified via phone by ER office	No info provided	yes	(as above, joint polling station - separate figures not provided)	9:15am	no other issues	
126	not on the register so cant vote and told to contact office	yes	7:20am	no recored but 2 were turned away	9:20am	no other issues	2
127	suspected that there was an incorrect register and asked people wo wait to confirm if could vote with just the polling card	yes	7:15am	kept a list of those unable to vote	9:15am	no other issues	
128	you can vote with the polling card due to a problem with the register	yes	7:00am	1 who did not have their card but has come back and since voted	9:30am	no other issues	
129	you can vote with the polling card due to a problem with the register	yes	7:00am	1 who did not have their card but has come back and since voted	9:30am	no other issues	
130	name not on register, contact the elections office. Can come back later	no - no one could vote when they opened	7:45am	15 people were unable to vote and some have since returned	9:10am	no other issues	15
131	taken aside by staff who explained there was an error and most went home to get card and others gave details to officer. All bar one have returned and voted	yes	7:10am	details kept of those not on the list	09:30am	chanel 4 reporter turned up and told to contact Comms team	
132	they were told to come back once officer spoke to election office. All bar one have since returned to vote.	yes	7:05 AM	none turned away	before 10:00am	no other issues	
133	they were told to come back once officer spoke to election office. All bar one have since returned to vote.	yes	7:05 AM	none turned away	before 10:00am	no other issues	
134	there was an error so come back later	yes	unknown	8 turned away and told to come back with polling card, no record kept	9:45am	wrong number for the election office.	8
135	PSI at station were told to manually enter the voters details onto the register	yes	7.15am	None	9.55am	no issues	
136	PSI at station were told to manually enter the voters details onto the register	yes	7.15am	None	9.55am	no issues	
137	Called PSI and confirmed to added manually to register	yes	7.30am	2 turned	9.55am	no issues	2
138	Explained not on register - called PSI and confirmed to added manually to register	yes	7.30am	2 turned away but came back later to vote	10.30am	no issues	2
139	Explained not on register - called PSI and confirmed to added manually to register	yes	7.30am	none	10.30am	no issues	
140	Explained not on register - called PSI and confirmed to added manually to register	yes	7.30am	none	10.30am	no issues	
141	phoned ERO added manually	yes	7.03am	none	9.39am	no issues	
142	called office - added manually	yes	7.10am	none	10am	no issues	
143	called office - added manually	yes	7.10am	none	10am	no issues	

Polling Station	What were voters who attended first thing being told?	Where those on the register you had, allowed to vote?	Were those not on the register you had, allowed to vote with a polling card? If so from what time approx?	Record of those turned away if you have one, with contact details if you have them or estimate of number turned away?	Time: approx received register?	Any other problems/issues raised with you in relation to this and by whom?	
144	called and told to manually enter on register	yes	7.30am	13 had contact and this was completed.	9.41am	Cllr	13
145	contacted office and added electors manually	yes	7.30am	5 turned away - 4 contacted after	9.50am	no issues	5
146	Told that they couldn't vote and then any will poll cards added manually	yes	7.45-8am	4 turned away	9.15am	no issues	4
147	Told that they couldn't vote and then any will poll cards added manually	yes	7.45-8am	5 turned away	9.15am	no issues	5
148	Asked to come back later - then manually entered on register	yes	7.30am	5 turned away - 2 contacted	10am	No issues	5
149	were not on list not able to vote	No couldn't mark register until 9.30am			10.15am	no issues	
150	were not on list not able to vote	No couldn't mark register until 9.30am			10.15am	no issues	
151	FULL LIST SUPPLIED BY at 6.40am						
152	asked to return later	yes	7.50am	approx 8	10am	no issues	8
153	asked to return later	yes	7.50am	approx 20	10am	no issues	20
154	not on list	yes	8.40am	approx 6-7	10.05am	no issues	7
155	not on list	yes	8.40am	approx 6-7	10.05am	no issues	7
							<b>565</b>
							minus 38 proxy
							527

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**GLA 2016 - LBB Turnout by Ward**

London Borough of Barnet Ward	Electorate	Voted	Turnout %
	Not including Postal Voters in Ward	Mayoral Contest	
BRUNSWICK PARK	9545	3957	41.5%
BURNT OAK	8900	3002	33.7%
CHILDS HILL	9245	4067	44.0%
COLINDALE	9512	3266	34.3%
COPPETTS	9390	4073	43.4%
EAST BARNET	9259	3876	41.9%
EAST FINCHLEY	9017	4529	50.2%
EDGWARE	8293	3795	45.8%
FINCHLEY CHURCH END	8662	4296	49.6%
GARDEN SUBURB	8248	4458	54.0%
GOLDERS GREEN	8034	3562	44.3%
HALE	8884	4013	45.2%
HENDON	8563	3588	41.9%
HIGH BARNET	9324	4833	51.8%
MILL HILL	9965	4452	44.7%
OAKLEIGH	9510	4273	44.9%
TOTTERIDGE	7824	3692	47.2%
UNDERHILL	9263	4156	44.9%
WEST FINCHLEY	8159	3842	47.1%
WEST HENDON	8332	3255	39.1%
WOODHOUSE	9440	4218	44.7%
<b>LBB In-Station Voters</b>	<b>187369</b>	<b>83203</b>	<b>44.4%</b>
<b>LBB Postal Voters</b>	<b>46441</b>	<b>32655</b>	<b>70.3%</b>
<b>LBB Total:</b>	<b>233810</b>	<b>115858</b>	<b>49.6%</b>

**GLA 2012 - LBB Turnout by Ward**

London Borough of Barnet Ward	Electorate	Voted	Turnout %
	Not including Postal Voters in Ward	Mayoral Contest	
BRUNSWICK PARK	9689	3391	35.0%
BURNT OAK	9230	2579	27.9%
CHILDS HILL	9621	3399	35.3%
COLINDALE	9312	2728	29.3%
COPPETTS	9766	3359	34.4%
EAST BARNET	9403	3265	34.7%
EAST FINCHLEY	9266	3757	40.5%
EDGWARE	9128	3423	37.5%
FINCHLEY CHURCH END	8797	3592	40.8%
GARDEN SUBURB	8561	4067	47.5%
GOLDERS GREEN	8542	3139	36.7%
HALE	9328	3378	36.2%
HENDON	9594	3245	33.8%
HIGH BARNET	9429	4103	43.5%
MILL HILL	10157	3701	36.4%
OAKLEIGH	9811	3694	37.7%
TOTTERIDGE	8350	3342	40.0%
UNDERHILL	9238	3215	34.8%
WEST FINCHLEY	8767	3384	38.6%
WEST HENDON	8865	2877	32.5%
WOODHOUSE	9596	3458	36.0%
<b>LBB In-Station Voters</b>	<b>194450</b>	<b>71096</b>	<b>36.6%</b>
<b>LBB Postal Voters</b>	<b>47990</b>	<b>32994</b>	<b>68.8%</b>
<b>LBB Total:</b>	<b>242440</b>	<b>104090</b>	<b>42.9%</b>

## Timetable for the referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union: 23 June 2016<sup>1</sup>

Regulations confirming the date of the referendum have now been approved by the UK Parliament and the date has been set for the 23 June 2016.

This timetable below sets out the key deadlines which now apply to the referendum, including timings for the designation of lead campaigners (boxes shaded in green) and the Commission's public awareness activity (in the boxes shaded in red) ahead of the 23 June.

This timetable is based on the European Union Referendum Act 2015 and the European Union Referendum (Conduct) Regulations 2016. This timetable also reflects the Chief Counting Officer's (CCO's) directions which have been issued along with this timetable and can be found [here](#).

Certain days are disregarded in calculating the timetable – Saturdays, Sundays, any bank holiday in the UK and any day appointed for public thanksgiving in the UK are disregarded in the calculation of all deadlines which are based on working days, while bank and public holidays in Gibraltar are only disregarded in the calculation of certain deadlines.

Where bank and public holidays in Gibraltar are **not** taken into account in the calculation of a deadline, this is specified in the 'working days before poll' column of the table below. The bank holidays relevant to this timetable are:

- the UK Spring Bank Holiday on 30 May 2016
- the Gibraltar Bank Holiday for the Queen's Birthday on 13 June

Timetable dates which apply only to Northern Ireland appear in boxes shaded in blue with italic text. Some deadlines do not apply to Northern Ireland. Where this is the case, this is explicitly stated.

### **Public awareness campaign**

The public awareness campaign will launch around five-and-a-half weeks before polling day, and will span three phases.

The first, running for two weeks, will coincide with the delivery of the voter information booklet to all households. It will encourage voters to look out for their booklet and register by 7 June. The second will follow this, and run for

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<sup>1</sup> This timetable applies only to the UK

around a week up until the registration deadline, telling people that they should have received a booklet, and to register.

The third phase, running from registration deadline day until polling day, will tell people they should have received a booklet. This, like the previous two phases, will direct people to [aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://aboutmyvote.co.uk) or to the call centre for more information.

## Timetable

<b>Event</b>	<b>Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)</b>	<b>Date</b>
Application period for designation as lead campaigner opens	N/A	Friday 4 March
Application period for designation as lead campaigner closes	N/A	Thursday 31 March
Statutory deadline for designation of lead campaigners	N/A	Thursday 14 April
Launch of public awareness campaign	Between five and six weeks	Sunday 15 May
Launch of first phase of public awareness campaign	Between five and six weeks	Monday 16 May
Door-drop of public information booklet begins		
Publication of notice of referendum	Not later than 25 days; on the date specified by the CCO	Tuesday 17 May
Delivery of poll cards to electors	As soon as practicable after the publication of the notice of referendum; within a period of five working days starting with the day after the last date for publication of the notice of referendum	Between Wednesday 18 May and Tuesday 24 May
Despatch of postal votes to overseas addresses	Within a period of five days starting with the day which is four days after the last date for publication of the notice of referendum; must not be issued so as to be received before 28 calendar days before the poll	Between Monday 23 May and Friday 27 May

<b>Event</b>	<b>Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)</b>	<b>Date</b>
Publication of first interim referendum notice of alteration (excluding Northern Ireland)	19 days	Wednesday 25 May
Postal votes delivered to electors at UK addresses	Within a period of five days starting with the day which is eight days after the last date for publication of the notice of referendum; must not be issued so as to be received before 28 calendar days before the poll	Between Friday 27 May and Friday 3 June
Phase one of public awareness campaign ends	Three-and-a-half weeks	Saturday 28 May
Phase two of public awareness campaign begins	Three-and-a-half weeks	Sunday 29 May
Deadline for the notification of appointment of referendum agents	16 days (noon)	Noon on Tuesday 31 May
Publication of notice of poll and situation of polling stations	Not later than 15 days	Not later than Wednesday 1 June
<i>Deadline for receiving new postal vote, postal proxy and proxy vote applications, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes (Northern Ireland only)</i>	<i>14 days (5pm) (Gibraltar bank and public holidays are not disregarded)</i>	<i>5pm on Friday 3 June</i>
Phase two (and all registration messaging) of public awareness campaign ends	13 days (Day before registration deadline)	Monday 6 June
Phase three of public awareness campaign begins	12 days (day of registration deadline)	Tuesday 7 June

<b>Event</b>	<b>Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)</b>	<b>Date</b>
Deadline for receiving applications for registration	12 days (Gibraltar bank and public holidays are not disregarded)	Tuesday 7 June
Deadline for receiving new postal vote and postal proxy applications, and for changes to existing postal or proxy votes (excluding Northern Ireland)	11 days (5pm) (Gibraltar bank and public holidays are not disregarded)	5pm on Wednesday 8 June
<i>Deadline for receiving new applications to vote by post or proxy on the grounds of health or employment as a constable or by the Counting Officer (Northern Ireland only)</i>	<i>6 days (5pm)</i>	<i>5pm on Wednesday 15 June</i>
Deadline for receiving new applications to vote by proxy (not postal proxy or emergency proxies) (excluding Northern Ireland)	6 days (5pm)	5pm on Wednesday 15 June
Publication of second interim referendum notice of alteration (excluding Northern Ireland)	Between 18 days and 6 days	Between Thursday 26 May and Wednesday 15 June (inclusive)
Publication of final referendum notice of alteration	5 days	Thursday 16 June
Deadline for notification of appointment of polling and counting agents	5 days	Thursday 16 June
First date that electors can apply for a replacement for lost postal votes (excluding Northern Ireland)	4 days	Friday 17 June

<b>Event</b>	<b>Working days before poll (deadline if not midnight)</b>	<b>Date</b>
<i>Last time for receipt of spoilt postal votes in time for postal votes to be re-issued (Northern Ireland only)</i>	1 day (5pm)	5pm on Wednesday 22 June
<b>Polling day</b>	<b>0 (7am to 10pm)</b>	<b>7am to 10pm on Thursday 23 June</b>
Phase three of public awareness campaign – and all activity – ends	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 23 June
Last time for re-issue of spoilt or lost postal votes (excluding Northern Ireland)	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 23 June
Deadline for emergency proxy applications (excluding Northern Ireland)	0 (5pm)	5pm on Thursday 23 June
<i>Last time to alter the register due to clerical error or court appeal (Northern Ireland only)</i>	0 (7pm)	7pm on Thursday 23 June
Last time to alter the register due to clerical error or court appeal (excluding Northern Ireland)	0 (9pm)	9pm on Thursday 23 June