

	<p style="text-align: center;">General Functions Committee</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 March 2017</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Annual Electoral Registration Report 2016</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>John Hooton – Electoral Registration Officer for the London Borough of Barnet</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Annual Electoral Registration Report</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Officer Contact Details</p>	<p>John Bailey – Head of Electoral Services john.e.bailey@barnet.gov.uk 0208 359 3008</p>

Summary

The annual Electoral Registration report provides an overview on the status of the Register of Electors in Barnet as at 1 December 2016 and on the work done by officers on behalf of the Council's Electoral Registration Officer.

Recommendations

1. That the General Functions Committee considers and comments on this first annual Electoral Registration report.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 So that the General Functions Committee has oversight of the Register of Electors and of the work done by officers on behalf of the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) of the Council.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 N/A

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 N/A

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 That the Electoral Services Team will continue to deliver the work required to ensure that the ERO complies with his statutory duties on behalf of the Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Council has a responsibility to protect the public purse through proper administration and control of the public funds and assets to which it has been entrusted. By having oversight of the work being done on behalf of the borough's Electoral Registration Officer, the General Functions Committee can ensure that appropriate resources are being made available to the ERO and that they are used in an appropriate and cost effective manner. Ensuring that the Register of Electors is as complete and accurate as possible allows all eligible residents to have their say in the democratic processes conducted within the borough.

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

- 5.2.1 The Council has a duty to provide the ERO with the resources needed to discharge his statutory functions, and any expenses properly incurred by an ERO in the performance of their functions must be paid by the local authority that appointed them. The budget for this is in the Elections Service.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The local authority must appoint an ERO and must provide the resources needed by them to discharge their statutory functions. These functions include the duties of the ERO that are set out in legislation, and any further duties imposed by a direction of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has a power to direct EROs in the discharge of their functions. The Secretary of State can only exercise this power of direction in accordance with a recommendation of the Electoral Commission.
- 5.3.2 The ERO has a duty under Section 9A of the Representation People Act 1983

(as amended by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013) to take all necessary steps to comply with his duty to maintain the electoral register, and to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, persons who are entitled to be registered in the register (and no others) are registered in it

- 5.3.3 The Council's Constitution under Responsibility for Functions, Appendix A - The General Functions Committee's terms of reference, details the functions of the Committee including:
- Elections in general

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 The on-going work of the Electoral Registration Service ensures that the ERO and the Council meet their legal obligations.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.5.1 Pursuant to section 149 of the Equality Act, 2010, the council has a public sector duty to have due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advancing equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; promoting good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The, relevant, 'protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to elimination discrimination

- 5.5.2 Effective processes and activities with regards registering residents in compliance with relevant electoral legislation ensures that all eligible individuals are able to exercise their democratic rights in the manner in which they choose.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.6.1 None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 At the meeting of the General Functions Committee held on 9 November 2016 the Committee received the independent review, undertaken by Dr Dave Smith, into Barnet's 'Elections and Electoral Registration Services'. An accepted recommendation of the Smith review was for an annual report on Electoral Registration to be presented to the Committee.