

Present:	Councillor Geoff Ellis (<i>in the Chair</i>)
Councillors:	Paul Gowen (<i>substitute for Naomi Tweddle</i>), Liz Maxwell, Adrianna McNulty, Ric Metcalfe, Edmund Strengiel, Pat Vaughan (<i>substitute Gill Clayton-Hewson</i>) and Loraine Woolley
Independent Person(s):	Chris Elkington
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor Ronald Hills and Councillor Gill Clayton-Hewson

1. **Confirmation of Minutes - 6 March 2017**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2017 be confirmed.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

3. **Appointment of Independent Person and Reserve Independent Person**

The Principal Democratic Officer presented a report which informed members that the Ethics and Engagement Appointments Panel had appointed Chris Elkington as the Council's Independent Person and Roger Vine as the Council's Reserve Independent Person for a three year term of office.

The Chair congratulated Mr Elkington and Mr Vine on their reappointments, adding that they were both valuable members of the Ethics and Engagement Committee.

The Ethics and Engagement Committee noted the report.

4. **Support to Elected Members - Ward Surgery Promotion**

The Principal Democratic Officer:

- a) presented a report to consider the manner in which the Council supported the promotion of elected members' ward surgeries through the provision of leaflets, as requested at the previous meeting of the Ethics and Engagement Committee.
- b) took into account the comments raised by members at the previous meeting of the Ethics and Engagement Committee, acknowledging that members regarded the provision of leaflets as an important way of ensuring that residents knew who their local members were and how to get in touch with them.
- c) was not proposing to remove the provision of leaflets to members, but requested that the Ethics and Engagement Committee considered the following ways in which the cost of leaflets could be reduced:
 - use of lower quality of paper
 - printing leaflets in black and white

- ensuring that leaflets were ordered at certain parts of the year in order that bulk orders could be placed to secure a cheaper price
 - placing leaflets in community spaces rather than delivering to properties in a ward
 - setting a limit on the number of leaflets each member or ward was entitled to
 - more utilisation of the Council's social media facilities and communications team to promote ward surgeries
- d) acknowledged that each ward was different with regard to the way in which surgeries were held and leaflets were used, particularly where a ward was represented by members from different political groups.
- e) invited members' questions and comments.

Discussion ensued on the ways in which the cost of leaflets could be reduced. It was agreed that changes to colour printing and the quality of paper was not likely to make a huge impact to the cost and that the leaflets should be of a reasonable quality to ensure that they portrayed professionalism. The Chair agreed that facilitating bulk orders through ordering leaflets three or four times a year, rather than upon request, would enable the Democratic Services team to submit orders in bulk and secure a much cheaper price. The Committee agreed with this approach and asked the Principal Democratic Officer to ensure that deadlines associated with placing orders in this manner be communicated to members.

Reference was made to the 'Your Lincoln' magazine which was delivered to all properties in Lincoln three times a year. It was noted that the member information section in the latest edition was not prominent enough, with a suggestion made that it should include photographs and contact details for all 33 City of Lincoln Council members. The Committee agreed with this point and the Leader of the Council committed to raise this with the Council's Communications team.

RESOLVED that the provision of leaflets for members be continued but that these be ordered at certain parts of the year, to be determined by the Council's Democratic Services team, rather than upon request in order to achieve a cheaper price for orders in bulk.

5. Code of Conduct: Cases Review

The Principal Democratic Officer:

- a) presented a report containing information on recent cases in relation to other local authorities' Code of Conduct.
- b) summarised the cases within the report, noting the particular areas which members may wish to consider.
- c) provided the Ethics and Engagement Committee with a copy of 'Setting the Standard' recently published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life and included a copy of its annual report for 2016/17.
- d) outlined that the Committee on Standards in Public Life intended to undertake a review of local government standards as part of its 2017/18 work programme, based around a consultation scheduled to be launched early in 2018.

- e) invited members' questions and comments.

It was noted that the year of the annual report referred to at paragraph 4.1 of the report should have read 2016-17, rather than 2017-18.

The Independent Person made the point that cases involving social media were becoming more and more prevalent across the country.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. Member Development and the People Strategy

The Principal Democratic Officer:

- a) presented a report which set out the options available to the Council in respect of member training in conjunction with the recently adopted People Strategy.
- b) acknowledged that, in order to meet the needs of the community, the Council needed to be committed to member development.
- c) highlighted that the current member development programme was set on an adhoc basis, with a range of sessions currently scheduled for the municipal year.
- d) highlighted that, through the People Strategy, the 'Your Performance Matters' strand was focussed on linking appraisals with objective setting to support the delivery of the Council's Vision 2020. It seemed appropriate to have the same process for members, given that they were ambassadors of Vision 2020 out in the community. Workshops for members were therefore being planning on Vision 2020, which would enable members to fully understand the projects associated with the Vision and help identify any training needs.
- e) reported that the Council was a member of East Midlands Councils, which delivered a comprehensive tailored development programme specifically to support members.
- f) highlighted that there would be opportunities for members to use the Netconsent software, which was an e-learning facility, should they have missed any face to face development sessions on certain topics.

RESOLVED that the principles set out in the report to link member development with delivery of the Council's Vision 2020 be supported.

7. Local Democracy Week

The Principal Democratic Officer:

- a) reported that Local Democracy Week this year was the week commencing 9 October 2017.
- b) highlighted that the Democratic Services team had in previous years invested some resource in engagement with local schools to support Local Democracy Week, but that this had not resulted in high levels of engagement.

- c) invited members' questions and comments.

The Chair was keen to build upon the keen interest that young people in particular had demonstrated at the Parliamentary General Election and felt that the Council should be seen to be doing something to attempt to engage with the City's young people as part of Local Democracy Week. Members agreed that a letter be sent to all Lincoln secondary schools by the Chair, encouraging engagement as part of Local Democracy Week.

RESOLVED that a letter from the Chair of the Ethics and Engagement Committee be sent to all secondary schools in Lincoln, outlining the principles of Local Democracy Week and offering visits from members of the Committee as part of the event.

8. Electoral Registration Update

The Principal Democratic Officer:

- a) provided an update on the Individual Electoral Registration system since its inception on 10 June 2014.
- b) reported that, following the 2016 canvass, the register was published on 1 December 2016 with a total electorate of 61,551. It was noted that further work had been undertaken to further maximise registration, which included:
- mapping of empty properties
 - issuing of household notification letters
 - use of social media
- c) reported that the electorate prior to the County Council elections in May 2017 stood at 62,479.
- d) reported that the electorate prior to the Parliamentary General Election in June stood at 66,841.
- e) reported that the maximising registration work would continue as part of the 2017 canvas, with the City of Lincoln's electorate standing at 66,214 as of 1 July 2017.

In response to a question as to why the electorate had dropped after the Parliamentary General Election, it was noted that this drop was consistent with previous General Elections and the EU Referendum. A number of deletions from the register throughout June, due to deaths or people moving house, for example, took effect in July's register hence the electorate being slightly lower when published on 1 July 2017 than the register used for the General Election in June 2017. Members also noted the significant increase in registration as a result of the General Election. The Principal Democratic Officer reported that approximately 2,500 applications were received on the deadline day for registration alone.

A question was raised as to instances of duplicate registrations for the General Election. It was noted that there had been numerous cases of applications submitted by people who were already registered, resulting in duplicate applications. The Principal Democratic Officer explained that these applications had not resulted in a person appearing on the register twice and would have been picked up as part of their processing due to the person already having been registered.

Discussion ensued on student registration and the fact that students were entitled to register on the electoral roll at their home address as well as at their student accommodation. It was noted that it was an offence for a person to vote more than once at the same election and that applications had to be processed at face value, with the onus on the elector as to where they decided to cast their vote.

The Principal Democratic Officer explained that the Electoral Commission was currently in the process of undertaking a number of pilot schemes via other local authorities across the country, one of which involved the use of photographic identification at polling stations.

A question was asked as to what the Council could do to assist its new tenants with registering to vote, suggesting that an application form or registration information could be made available to them as part of a welcome pack. The Principal Democratic Officer reported that £41,142 had been received by the government as part of its Individual Electoral Registration fund, which could be used to resource a number of projects to encourage registration. It was anticipated that student and Council tenant registration would be two areas of focus for such projects over the coming year.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. Work Programme Update

The Democratic Services Officer:

- a) presented the current Ethics and Engagement Committee work programme for consideration by members.
- b) invited members' questions and comments.

RESOLVED that the work programme be approved, subject to an update report on Local Democracy Week being included for the Committee's meeting scheduled to be held on 2 October 2017.