

**REPORT TO: TAYSIDE VALUATION JOINT BOARD – 26 AUGUST 2024**

**REPORT ON: ELECTORAL REGISTRATION**

**REPORT BY: ASSESSOR**

**REPORT NO: TVJB 22-2024**

## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks to update the Joint Board on the UK Parliamentary election on 4 July 2024.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Joint Board note the following:

- A UK Parliamentary election was called on 22 May 2024 for 4 July 2024.
- A planned inclusion of voter ID leaflets to be included with canvass material issued by the Board was set aside since government advertising fulfilled the requirement to publicise this new aspect of voting arrangements.
- The election was called at short notice over a holiday period and at a time when the availability of core electoral registration team members was negatively impacted by annual leave and sickness absence.
- Existing staff were already trained in the changes extending from the implementation of the Elections Act 2020 and were familiar with the revised practices as a result. Arrangements were put in place to train staff to carry out functions necessary to cover annual leave and sickness absence. Additionally, a sector of clerical staff not usually involved in the daily operations of electoral registration were trained to assist the core electoral registration teams in East and West Divisions. Also, central government provided “surge support” between 10 – 28 June 2024 to assist local Electoral Registration Officers should they be unable to process postal vote applications submitted through the Electoral Registration Portal themselves. However, the Board did not require this assistance.
- Although staff numbers were reduced in this period, a significant effort was made by staff involved to allow successful delivery of the election.
- There was a significant increase in both registrations and postal vote applications since the election was being held over a holiday period.
- Applications were received for 319 Voter Authority Certificates. 291 were approved and 28 remain outstanding as additional information is required to determine the applications. Only 1 application for a Temporary Voter Authority Certificate was received.
- There were 33 clerical amendments made which enabled registered electors to vote.
- 20 emergency proxies were determined of which 3 were in respect of the new provisions relating to voter ID.

- The delays in receipt of postal ballot packs have been reported widely. The data which the Board was required to send to the Returning Officers' third-party suppliers was sent within reasonable time limits to enable printing and issue according to the schedule initially prepared.
- The preparations were adequate to enable successful delivery of the tasks required.

### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The UK Government has provided a grant funding payment in relation to New Burdens funding for the Elections Act 2022. This funding is to reflect additional staff administration time, training, communication and engagement costs involved in implementing changes introduced as a result of the Elections Act. Funding of £118,926 for 2024/25 has been allocated to the electoral registration function in the Angus Council and Perth and Kinross Council areas. Clarification from Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has been received on possible apportionment of this funding to Returning Officers in Angus and Perth & Kinross. No apportionment should be made. Additional New Burdens Funding has been provided to Tayside Valuation Joint Board in June 2024. This amounts to £64,579 to support the implementation of the Elections Act at the UK Parliamentary General Election on 4 July 2024.

### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environment Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Equality Impact Assessment. There are no major issues.

### **5 CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Clerk and Treasurer to the Board have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

### **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 None.

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Interim Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer

**August 2024**