

Appendix 8

Best Value Action Plan - Elections

Recommendation	Current Status	Action	Assigned to	Timeframe
1. Planning and Management Capacity				
Joint working with partner agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project group established including relevant Council services; Met Police (Tower Hamlets & Scotland Yard); and Electoral Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint project group to meet fortnightly January – April 2015, more frequently as required immediately prior to election. 	John Williams/ Louise Stamp	January 2015 and ongoing
Enhance management expertise and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting Returning Officer (ARO) supported by Head of Electoral Services (to be DARO) and CMT/Council managers as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of experienced external resource as consultant to oversee key aspects of the plans including verification/count and postal voting Nomination of dedicated Facilities Management resource AEA professional count service to support planning work. 	John Williams/ Louise Stamp Keith Fraser Louise Stamp	By end February 2015 March 2015 March/April 2015
Performance Standards monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tower Hamlets has been selected by the Electoral Commission as one of the authorities for detailed monitoring in connection with national RO performance standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full information provided to the Commission in relation to election planning and contingency/risk register. 	John Williams	27 February 2015 and further milestones to May 2015
2. Integrity Measures				
Enhancement of integrity measures around registration and election, clear statement of standards of conduct required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local protocol used in May 2014 under review Enhanced '6+' targeted registration checks on addresses, using tablets to update register. Also enhanced Police resource on polling day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision and strengthening of local protocol, to enhance the Electoral Commission's own revised Code for 2015 Joint RO/Police bid to Cabinet Office funds available to 17 high risk authorities to address integrity 	John Williams Louise Stamp	26 February 2015 20 February 2015
Efficient reporting and effective investigation of any allegations/concerns re: fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint planning group to agree reporting arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of dedicated e-mail account for any complaints of possible fraudulent activity. One working day turn round and referral if necessary to Police SPOC 	Louise Stamp	March 2015
3. Staffing and Training				
Adequate numbers of quality assured staff at polling stations, count, PV openings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment underway – Presiding Officers, to be followed by Poll Clerks, Count Supervisors and Assistants, Visiting Officers and Postal Vote Opening Assistants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff required to confirm that they are not a member of any political party. Polling station staff where possible to work at a PS that is not in constituency where they live. 	Seema Shahnaz Seema Shahnaz	Feb – May 2015 Feb – May 2015

Staff fully trained on process and all potential scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training material under review and programme of dates set. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced mandatory training before taking up roles. To include practical role-play scenarios. • Polling staff to be trained alongside Police Officers who will be on duty at their PS. • Count training enhanced including 'dress rehearsal' in situ approx. 3 hours before the start. 	<p>Louise Stamp</p> <p>Louise Stamp</p> <p>John Williams/ Louise Stamp</p>	<p>April 2015</p> <p>April 2015</p> <p>April/May 2015 015</p>
4. Verification and Count				
Eliminate delays whilst continuing to ensure integrity of the count. Enhance procedures including response to Electoral Commission recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the verification and count developed, building on EC report and improvements introduced at Blackwall & Cubitt Town ward election (July 2015), and have been published for consultation. • Count venue for both constituencies to be ExCel Centre, E16. Verification to start immediately after close of poll. Projected declaration time (based on 70% turnout) by 4.30 a.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced security measures inc photo ID checks at entry; non-Council security staff; non-transferable security wristbands • Attendees to be required to sign Code of Conduct as condition of entry. • CCTV operational in the venue • Additional staff to be used, in particular a higher ratio supervisors:count assistants. • Full review of count procedures and paperwork in consultation with external resource/AEA • In the event that the general election is combined with a TH mayoral election (see 'risk management' below), the mayoral count will be held over until 8th May, p.m. 	<p>Louise Stamp</p> <p>Louise Stamp</p> <p>Louise Stamp Louise Stamp/ Seema Shahnaz</p> <p>John Williams/ Louise Stamp</p> <p>John Williams/ Louise Stamp</p>	<p>April 2015</p> <p>7 May 2015</p> <p>April 2015 March/April 2015</p> <p>April 2015</p> <p>7/8 May 2015</p>
5. Polling Districts and Polling Places				
Efficient and convenient division of constituencies into polling districts; accessible and suitable polling places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places completed by 31 January. Final list of polling places published and shared with Police for planning purposes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polling Stations to be agreed with a view to security and convenience of the voting process, and efficiency at the count. • Register to be amended in accordance with new PDs 	<p>John Williams/ Louise Stamp</p> <p>John Williams/ Louise Stamp</p>	<p>March 2015</p> <p>March 2015</p>
Ensure integrity of the process and good order at polling stations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures and instructions under review, including addressing any issues raised after May 2014 elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint training for Presiding Officers and Police/PCSOs • CCTV/bodycams in use at polling stations • Police/PCSOs on duty throughout the day including accompanying PO/ballot box at the close of poll to the count venue. • Investigation of marked 'clear' areas outside polling stations • Investigation of additional poll clerk to 	<p>Louise Stamp</p> <p>Louise Stamp/ MPS</p> <p>MPS</p> <p>John Williams</p>	<p>April 2015</p> <p>7 May 2015</p> <p>7 May 2015</p> <p>April/May 2015</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'meet and greet', assist with order. Continuation of RO instruction re: staff to speak only English in PS 	John Williams/ Louise Stamp John Williams	April/May 2015 7 May 2015
6. Postal Voting				
Efficient and convenient despatch of postal voting packs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contracts in place with secure print contractor (FDM – experienced company) for the production of PV packs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Royal Mail to deliver packs. Discussions to be held regarding measures to ensure security, all packs delivered through individual doors etc 	John Williams/ Louise Stamp	March 2015
Ensure integrity of the process and good order at postal vote opening sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures and instructions under review Seven PV opening sessions have been arranged between 21 April and 7 May. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scanning 100% of personal identifiers. Dedicated DARO to oversee PV openings. Training for all involved in adjudication on EC forensic handwriting guidance. Review procedures and restrictions on PV opening observers' conduct. 	Louise Stamp John Williams John Williams John Williams	April 2015 March/April 2015 April 2015 March/April 2015
7. Candidates and Agents Meetings				
Ensure full understanding of the process and rules; brief re: Code of Conduct etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARO has kept communication with all known agents locally, including planning updates and consultation on key issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three Candidates and Agents meetings to be held. To cover the process, election offences, code of conduct, polling station and count arrangements, adjudication etc 	John Williams/ Louise Stamp	26.02.15 01.04.15 (prov); Mid- April 2015
8. Communications Plan				
Ensure effective communication of key messages re: election and in particular security/integrity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft plan developed by Comms team inc. objectives, key messages, audiences and proposed activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicity to be co-ordinated with partner agencies East End Life & other channels to include clear messages re: secrecy (inc. in community languages, graphic material) 	John Williams/ John McDermott	Feb – May 2015
9. Pre-election Guidance				
Ensure full understanding of the rules, compliance with Code of Recommended practice for LA Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance material under review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised guidance to be issued to Members and officers in advance of the pre-election period 	John McDermott/ Meic Sullivan- Gould	March 2015
10. Risk Management				
Ensure all potential risks identified and contingency measures put in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed contingency planner/risk register has been prepared and will be maintained and updated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks, contingencies, milestones and key actions to be updated weekly. Contingency planning takes into account possible outcome of Election Petition Trial to hold mayoral election combined on 7 May 2015 or shortly afterwards. 	John Williams/ Louise Stamp	Feb – May 2015