

# TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CABINET

25 June 2014

### Report of the Chief Executive

#### Part 1- Public

#### Executive Non Key Decisions

#### **1     USE OF THE URGENCY PROCEDURE TO APPROVE A NEW CAPITAL PLAN SCHEME TO SUPPORT THE INTRODUCTION OF INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION**

**In accordance with the Council's constitution this report seeks retrospective approval to the addition of a new Capital Plan scheme to purchase hardware necessary for the implementation of Individual Electoral Registration. Scheme costs are met in full by government grant.**

#### **1.1     Background**

1.1.1 Members will be aware that Individual Electoral Registration (IER) launched on 10 June 2014, introducing considerable change in the way in which residents will register to vote. This represents a new way of working at every level and in every part of the process.

1.1.2 Under the new statutory arrangements we are required to send a significantly increased number of forms to residents. In line with a Ministerial decision these forms will, on the most part, be printed on A3 paper rather than the current A4.

1.1.3 To support the implementation of IER it has been necessary to purchase a number of pieces of equipment to assist with the mailings out, and the processing of forms when they return. The Council's Management Team considered the hardware requirements on 18 March 2014, and agreed that these purchases are necessary and that they constitute a new capital scheme.

1.1.4 The report attached at **Annex 1** was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 June 2014, and that Committee recommended that the:

the purchases required for the implementation of Individual Electoral Registration documented [within the paper at Annex 1] are endorsed and Cabinet is invited to add the grant funded scheme to the Capital Plan.

#### **1.2     Legal Implications**

- 1.2.1 Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council is legally required to provide the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) with any resources required to enable her to complete the job of registering electors in accordance with the legislation. The implementation of Individual Electoral Registration represents a significant change in electoral registration processes, and the introduction of a large increase in the number, type and size of mailings the ERO must send out. As such, the hardware identified in this report is necessary for the delivery of IER.

### **1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.3.1 The purchase of new hardware at an effective annual cost of £5,700 per annum including maintenance represents good value for money compared to out-sourcing the mailing work, which would cost around £20,000 per year. In addition, the initial purchase of hardware has been funded by the Cabinet Office.
- 1.3.2 Consideration was given to sharing equipment with neighbouring authorities. However, the business processes and software in place in those organisations is significantly different to those in place at TMBC, and the timings of major mailings will coincide in all authorities, making the sharing of equipment and resources in this area unviable.

### **1.4 Risk Assessment**

- 1.4.1 There is a risk that, without the identified hardware, we would not be able to deliver IER.

### **1.5 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### **1.6 Recommendations**

- 1.6.1 That the purchases required for the implementation of Individual Electoral Registration documented as set out in Annex 1 are endorsed and the grant funded scheme be added to the Capital Plan.

Background papers:

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Nil

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Chief Executive