

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Council

DATE: 3rd February, 2009

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

MOTIONS SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 14

The following motions have been received in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14:-

1. **Motion (A) – Electoral Registration**

(Moved by Councillor Dale-Gough, seconded by Councillor Stokes)

“Since the Government brought in postal voting freely on demand, there has been electoral fraud perpetrated in many parts of the country by some members of all the major political parties, as we know in Slough.

We have therefore investigated what actions have been taken in other parts of the country where fraud has been experienced, to attempt to eradicate this problem, including discussions with the Slough Electoral Registration Officer.

We call upon The Council to resolve that -

‘In conducting the 2009 Annual Canvass:-

- (a) The Electoral Registration Officer issues blank Voter Registration Forms to each household.
- (b) A new Register of Electors is compiled and published from the forms submitted.
- (c) That the Electoral Registration Officer be requested not carry forward names where there has been no response from a household.
- (d) That any extra resources required by the Electoral Registration Department are allocated. (This may be the cost of seconding staff from other departments).’

This should ensure that those persons who no longer live in Slough are removed from the Electoral Register and only current eligible persons are included on the Electoral Roll.

It is accepted that this motion will have resource implications for Electoral Services.”

2. Motion (B) – Electoral Registration and Elections Training

(Moved by Councillor Bains, seconded by Councillor Swindlehurst)

“This Council notes that:

- The coming month sees the start of Criminal Court proceedings against a group of individuals already found by an Election Court to have been part of an organised postal vote fraud and personation offences in the Slough Local Elections 2007.
- The voting fraud scandal in Central Ward has undermined local residents’ confidence in the electoral process and in the security of postal voting, and has done untold reputational damage to our town.
- Concerns remain as to the adequacy of personal identifier checks and the overall security of the postal vote system nationally.
- The 2009 elections will be the first elections not already under way since the publication of the Slough Election Court judgement and it is important that we work to ensure electors can have confidence that the electoral practices of local political groups and parties are proper, and that the results of elections in this town have integrity and reflect the fair and free votes of genuine electors taking part in the polls.

As a result this Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Elections Office of Slough Borough Council to conduct a review of the Council’s elections administration arrangements and processes, to ensure the Council is making full use of the further powers granted in the 2006 Elections Administration Act – particularly the increased signature and identity checking powers.
- Review and enhance the training and briefing offered to prospective candidates, political parties, their volunteers and election agents - to ensure the relevant individuals are fully aware of the law and good/bad practice in the conduct of their campaigns, and to ensure that this training takes place earlier in the year, before campaigning gets under way, as well as being covered in the Council’s elections briefing at the start of the nomination process.”

3. Motion (C) – Fair Funding Campaign

(Moved by Councillor Plimmer, seconded by Councillor Munkley)

“In light of the current fiscal challenges, due to the recession and the ongoing issue of unfair funding, this Council resolves to:

- 1) Restart the media campaign to achieve Fair Funding for the people of Slough as the current situation is untenable.

- 2) Ask Cabinet to examine past Labour motions in the last four years, which are not currently implemented, if they are fiscally viable in light of the current fiscal situation of the Council.”