

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Council**

**27<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

### **Report of the Chief Executive/Returning Officer – Mrs Karen Jones**

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All wards

#### **Appointment of Standing Deputy Returning Officer**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To appoint Rhys George (Electoral Services Manager) as the Standing Deputy Returning Officer.

#### **Background:**

The Returning Officer for elections is a statutory role that is fulfilled by the Chief Executive of the Council.

The Returning Officer is personally responsible for all aspects of electoral administration including nominations, the distribution of poll cards and postal ballots, the conduct of the poll and the counting of the votes. These responsibilities being prescribed in statute and Electoral Commission Guidance.

The Wales Electoral Co-ordination Board (WECB), co-ordinated by the Electoral Commission, has recommended that Returning Officers appoint a standing deputy – not least because there has been a significant turnover recently of Chief Executives/Returning Officers and other senior staff dealing with elections across Wales but also to ensure to good practice and safe contingency planning so that powers can be exercised in the absence of a Returning Officer.

The Constitution of Neath Port Talbot Council does not delegate the function of appointing a Standing Deputy Returning Officer to the Returning Officer and therefore a decision of Council is required.

**Financial Impacts:**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report

**Integrated Impact Assessment:**

There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment as this is a report in respect of governance arrangements only

**Valleys Communities Impacts:**

There are no valley community impacts

**Workforce Impacts:**

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report

**Legal Impacts:**

Under Section 35(1A) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Chief Executive is designated as the Returning Officer for the County Borough Council and Community Council purposes.

Different legislation designates [for example the Returning Officer (Parliamentary Constituencies) (Wales) Order 2007 and the National Assembly for Wales (Representation of the People) Order 2007] this role for Parliamentary Elections, Referendums, and Welsh Government Elections.

**Risk Management Impacts:**

Appointment of a Standing Deputy Returning Officer ensures that the Council adopts good practice and safe contingency planning so that powers can be exercised in the absence of a Returning Officer.

**Consultation:**

There will be no requirement for any consultation.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that Rhys George (Electoral Services Manager) be appointed the Council's Standing Deputy Returning Officer

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To identify and agree a Standing Deputy Returning Officer

**Implementation of Decision:**

The decision is proposed for implementation immediately

**Appendices:**

None

**List of Background Papers:**

None

**Officer Contact:**

Mrs Karen Jones  
Chief Executive  
Tel: 01639 763284  
Email: [chief.executive@npt.gov.uk](mailto:chief.executive@npt.gov.uk)