

By: Ben Watts, General Counsel (County Returning Officer)

To: County Council – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Subject: The Returning Officer to submit the returns of persons elected to be County Councillors until 2025

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This report provides the formal return of those Councillors duly elected to the County Council for the period until May 2025

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1. The election for 80 out of the 81 County Council seats took place on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2021, with the results being announced on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2021. In my capacity as County Returning Officer, the formal return of Councillors is set out in the appendix to this report.
2. As Members will be aware, these were elections conducted in challenging circumstances and preparations were largely made during periods of lockdown across the County. The safe delivery of these elections was very much a team effort and whilst impossible to mention everyone, I would like to draw Member's attention to some of the significant numbers of people who helped make these elections possible:
  - a. The twelve Deputy Returning Officers, their Electoral Services Teams, polling station teams and count staff for the safe delivery of the KCC election particularly given the challenges presented by COVID and multiple polls being conducted simultaneously.
  - b. My KCC Deputy Returning Officer, Lizzy Adam, for her outstanding work, technical expertise and patience
  - c. The KCC Elections Project Team (Peter Healey, Siân Connelly, Rebecca Binstead, Jill Kennedy-Smith, Ryan Thomas, Joel Cook, Tristan Godfrey)
  - d. Rachel Kennard for the procurement of PPE used at Polling Stations and Count Venues across the county
  - e. Guidance and advice from our soon to retire Director of Public Health, Andrew Scott-Clark, which allowed me to make pragmatic and informed decisions
  - f. Support from the KCC Health & Safety Team (Flavio Walker (retired), James Johnstone, Jamie Callaway)
  - g. Melanie Cowley for co-ordinating the use of KCC buildings as polling stations
  - h. Support from across People and Communications including Lidor Lapid and Nathanael Munckton for turning our ideas into the Results Map that worked so well on election results day, Kristie Lawton for the KCC Election webpages and notices, Christina Starte and Andrew Bose for co-ordinating a myriad of different activity, Lucie Beer for social media messaging and Lucy Mayor and the team for media liaison.

- i. KCC Count Team who uploaded all of the results as they were announced meaning that the results map was updated in real time including Matthew Dentten, Anna Taylor, Andrew Tait, Jaime Palmer, Joanne Holmes, Hannah Lucey-Lamb, Léonie Harrington, Emily Kennedy, Kay Goldsmith, Theresa Grayell, and to Cantium Business Services for supporting KCC staff attending the count (VIP Support) and monitoring servers (Chris Beer and Carl Palmer)
  - j. Fiona Dawson for enforcement activity relating to campaign material on KCC property
  - k. Lee Manser for insurance queries relating to the election
  - l. Anne Brierley for support with KCC boundaries and demographic data
  - m. All of the KCC staff who worked in a polling station, at a count, or who enabled a KCC building or asymptomatic testing site to be used as a polling station
3. In accordance with the Council's governance, I will report in further detail on the election outcomes and provide a lessons learned report to inform future elections to the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee later in the year.

## **Recommendation**

**Members are asked to NOTE the formal return of Councillors duly elected to the County Council for the period until May 2025.**