

DRAFT

**Review of the London Elects Programme for
the Greater London Authority Mayoral and
Assembly Elections 5 May 2016**

July 2016

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The scale and complexity of the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections represent a major challenge:-
- the electorate is 5.8m and there are four votes across three ballot papers using three different electoral systems
 - they are delivered by working across the administrative boundaries of London and the hierarchy of a Greater London Returning Officer (GLRO), Constituency Returning Officers (CROs) and then Borough Returning Officers (BROs)
 - there is a legal requirement to send a booklet to every registered voter
 - some aspects of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Election Rules are incongruent with other elections
 - the staffing and wider resource needs are considerable . Some 12000 staff are involved in 4000 polling stations across London , at the three count centres and at City Hall
- 1.2 The planning and delivery of the Elections therefore requires effective coordination and meticulous planning. For the 2016 Elections, the preparatory work was managed by a team of staff from across the GLA, working together behind the scenes for over two and a half years. Polling for the Elections was held on 5 May 2016 The ballot papers were transferred from the polling stations to three count centres across London for counting, with the constituency-level results being submitted to the central site at City Hall. The Constituency Assembly Member results were declared at the relevant count centre, while the results for the Mayor and London Member results were calculated and declared at City Hall.
- 1.3 The delivery of the Mayoral and London Assembly elections is very much a partnership between GLA staff and staff in the 32 boroughs and the City: without them, it would not be possible to deliver the elections. Boroughs manage voter registration and absent voting; they ran polling stations; and they staffed the count centres.
- 1.4 This report sets out how this work was delivered and provides some initial thoughts on issues to be considered for 2020. It should be emphasised that, in order to provide some early information to assist the Assembly's current review, this report has been produced internally by GLA officers within a short period following the May Election. We have therefore had only limited opportunity to discuss the approach to planning and managing the Election with partners ; and we are aware that some of these have their own reviews underway which are yet to conclude. The GLRO would want to take partners' views into account in reaching conclusions about future arrangements .

Key achievements

- 1.5 In summary, the programme's key achievements include:
- the new London Elects programme management model was successfully established . Staff worked in a co-ordinated way across multiple workstreams and teams towards a common goal

- Six million booklets were printed and distributed within budget and earlier than at previous elections, with a phased approach to target postal voters first
- The nominations process for candidates was managed very smoothly and resulted in twelve Mayoral candidates, a record number, and with the subscribers to Mayoral nomination papers checked 'in-house' for the first time
- The marketing campaign reached an estimated 99% of Londoners, within a reduced budget
- Guidance for all aspects of the GLA elections was streamlined and produced earlier than in 2012 as a combined set of documentation through joint working with the Electoral Commission
- Through early discussions with Cabinet Office, we were clearly sighted on the upcoming legislative changes allowing the impact of these, particularly on the ballot paper design, to be managed
- Training materials were provided for over 12,000 staff working in polling stations on the elections across London. Around 1,500 borough staff were trained for the count
- Excellent working relations with boroughs elections staff were developed and maintained. The use of a shared googledrive enabled the sharing of information in real time across boroughs for the first time
- Over 12 million postal and polling station ballot papers for an electorate of 5.8m people were printed and distributed to Boroughs
- Printed materials, posters and advertising poles to help voters were centrally procured and produced for use in around 4000 polling stations across London
- A wide pool of staff was involved, bringing additional skills and capacity; around 205 GLA staff worked on the election including a pool of 120 volunteers who were successfully briefed and allocated to roles
- The counting training venue, three count venues and City Hall were procured, managed and equipped smoothly and effectively
- Despite concerns raised by a couple of boroughs, the Cabinet Office model was implemented for Maximum Recoverable Amounts and revised claims forms for returns will provide a very valuable base for future GLA elections
- Over 604 journalists covering the elections from across the world were accredited and the technical access required was facilitated
- An online polling station finder was developed and deployed, helping an estimated 80,000 electors
- The social media team provided a frontline service for London Elects, answering queries quickly and personally. Social media was well used to maintain the profile of the elections and react to stories
- The turnout was the highest that there has ever been for a GLA election at 46% - significantly higher than many predicted but within the contingency planning assumptions by London Elects

1.6 Two significant issues occurred over the polling and count days:

- Incorrect electoral registers were distributed by the London Borough of Barnet to polling stations in the borough. The replacement registers were issued by 10:30am on polling day but not before some electors had been

turned away. The Election Review Group has taken evidence from Barnet's senior officers about this

- An IT problem occurred with the consolidation of the results at City Hall. It was later established that this was due to a fault in the ecounting software code used to consolidate the results. On the night, it meant that the raw count data was to be interrogated and a manual calculation of the results carried out, which has since been double checked and confirmed. This delayed the announcement of the results until 11:30pm for the 11 London Members and until 00:18am for the Mayor of London. The Election Review Group has already taken oral and written evidence from the GLRO, IntElect, and Internal Auditors about this issue.

2. The Approach

- 2.1 Based on recommendations from the Assembly's 2012 Elections Review Panel, the Head of Paid Service reviewed the resourcing requirements for the London Elects team and for the delivery of the 2016 elections. Specifically the review looked at options to embed the London Elects team within the GLA, drawing on existing resources to support the elections function. A commentary of the recommendations from the 2012 Elections Review Panel is included in appendix 1.
- 2.2 As a result, and following consultation with the Mayor and Assembly, a fundamental new approach was implemented. The 2016 GLA elections were delivered by a programme team with workstreams drawn from across the GLA rather than as a discrete, separate unit. The new arrangements were designed to draw on the skills and knowledge within the GLA and with staff working on elections within their usual roles. This aimed to increase resilience by not using staff on fixed term contracts who then left the GLA following the election.
- 2.3 Jeff Jacobs, Head of Paid Service, was appointed as Greater London Returning Officer on 13 September 2013. The GLRO is personally responsible for the GLA elections, with a number of partners responsible for delivering much of the activity. Mark Roberts was appointed as the Deputy Greater London Returning Officer (DGLRO).
- 2.4 As shown in appendix 2, the following workstreams were established and a workstream lead appointed:
- Programme Manager – (Lesley Rennie)
 - Election Legislation and Rules (Tom Middleton, then Tim Somerville), supported by TfL Legal (Crispin Owen/Mike Lancaster)
 - Marketing and Web (Emma Strain)
 - Media (initially called Communications and Press) (Alison Bell)
 - Count (Mark Roberts) – working with IT (David Munn)
 - Venues (Simon Grinter) – working with IT (David Munn)
 - Training and Human Resources (Juliette Carter)
 - Finance, fees and charges (Doug Wilson, then Tom Middleton)
 - Borough Liaison – added at a later date (Nabeel Khan)

- 2.5 Each workstream lead was responsible for developing and documenting the plans for their delivery requirements including assessing the required staffing and budget resources, building on transition workshops and previous documentation. They were responsible for the decision making forms, procurements, stakeholder management and joint working across streams.
- 2.6 Elections Advisers, appointed on call off contracts to provide specialist elections advice if required, were only needed on a few occasions, totaling three days.
- 2.7 Workstream leads met as the Elections Working Group under the chairmanship of the GLRO to provide updates on their work, review progress against the plans and to discuss cross cutting issues. Regular meetings were also held between the DGLRO, the Programme Manager and representatives of each workstream.
- 2.8 It had originally been planned to establish a GLA Elections Board, to provide senior and peer oversight involving external partners. However, a Borough-led permanent London Elections Management Board (LEMB) consisting of representatives of London Borough Chief Executives, the GLRO/DGLRO, Elections Managers, Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission was established, to co-ordinate all London elections. It was therefore agreed that this Board would be used to consult and secure London-wide engagement in the strategy and direction of the GLA's election programme. Discussions were also held with CROs and BROs and through the Chief Executives London Committee (CELC) on which the GLA Head of Paid Service sits as a member
- 2.9 Transition from the previous discrete GLA/ London Elects unit to the programme team model consisted of a number of elements
- Handover from the 2012 London Elects team was managed using a transition plan developed by the programme manager to transfer the knowledge from the incumbents to the new workstream leads. Over a
 - period of six months, this involved a series of thematic briefings, detailed discussions and follow up meetings with the new programme workstream leads and their teams. Familiarisation with the documentation from 2012 was encouraged as part of this process
 - An ecounting demonstration was delivered to a number of workstream leads at the ecounting contractor's offices in Milton Keynes
 - Shadowing the 2014 European and Local Elections and the 2015 General Election afforded the programme staff opportunities to observe electoral practice, including:
 - nominations
 - briefing candidates and agents both before and after nominations
 - polling stations
 - counts
 - calculating maximum recoverable amounts
- 2.10 A version of the programme plan was tested by Internal Audit and then again as part of the performance standards submission to the Electoral Commission

and received positive feedback. The programme timeline was reported in layers which consisted of:

- success measures (added following Audit Recommendation)
- key milestones by topic
- the full programme timeline
- a two month forward look (extracted from the programme timeline for each working group)
- workstream timelines

- 2.11 The GLRO decision process required a form to justify the expenditure, signed by the GLRO. There was no delegation of expenditure of the elections budget, and all spending was to be authorised via this form. Towards the polling day, a level of delegation was introduced to facilitate the required decisions. Consideration should be given as to whether spending decisions up to a given value are delegated to senior workstream leads in 2020.
- 2.12 Fluctuation of electorates was a feature throughout the programme and had to be factored in to the planning of all workstreams. It was greater than usual due to the implementation of Individual Elector Registration (IER). This implementation was initially run in parallel with the previous registering system. The legislation provided for the parallel process concluding by December 2015 with an option to extend it to December 2016; the option was not exercised. The process had allowed boroughs to build a picture of the likely numbers of previously registered electors who had not registered using the new process and as a result would be deleted in December 2015. There were vast differences across London in the numbers to be deleted.
- 2.13 The problem from a planning perspective was that it was not possible to tell very far in advance how many people would be removed from the register in December 2015 and then how many would seek to be registered in the lead up to the election. It was concluded that registration figures as at September 2015, which had 5.9 million voters would be used for planning purposes as it provided some contingency. Significant ongoing increases in postal voters needed to be considered when deciding on the number of postal ballot papers to print

3. Stakeholder Engagement and Borough Liaison

- 3.1 Engaging key stakeholders was at the heart of the programme. Careful consideration was given to who the key points of contact were, what existing opportunities and meetings existed and how these could be best used.
- 3.2 One of the key lessons from 2012 was that borough engagement needed to improve as issues had been caused by a conflict of elections approaches and miscommunication.
- 3.3 Working with Boroughs
- 3.3.1 Working with boroughs was initiated in 2014 by the DGLRO and the Programme manager; a new borough liaison workstream was established to

progress this further. Borough liaison team members were assigned to each venue on count day and proved indispensable as a key interface between borough Election Services Managers (ESMs) in the lead up to the count and supported the GLA and borough teams on count day.

3.3.2 The 2016 team worked collaboratively with elections managers and returning officers. Information was openly shared and communicated and borough staff were consulted on all aspects of the programme. As well as contributing to smooth and practical planning, benefits from this relationship building proved valuable up to and including count day.

3.3.3 The approach included:

- presentations to and discussions with ESMs via the London Branch of the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA) over a period of two years in the lead up to the elections. These meetings, both the formal sessions and the conversations held around them, were essential in developing confidence in the new programme
- holding a number of meetings with boroughs representatives to seek feedback and discussion on specific areas of practice; this evolved into a Reference Group where boroughs were invited to send representatives to discuss and consult on specific topics
- providing a set of London Elects contacts to boroughs, including central points of contact for the programme (the DGLRO, the programme manager and the Borough Liaison team) as well as direct contact with the relevant leads. Direct contact was encouraged to prevent bottlenecks and to facilitate effective discussions
- the marketing team created a dedicated marketing inbox for boroughs, and an easy to use order form for printed materials to streamline the process.
- requests for data and information from boroughs were coordinated and collated by the borough liaison team
- use of Google Drive to share documents and gather data from boroughs was useful. Work to resolve initial teething problems meant that it was a valuable pan-London repository of information. As with all messaging from London Elects, it was initially set up with a single point of contact at each borough. Responding to feedback, contact points were expanded so all the relevant staff in each could be briefed and access information
- a regular London Elects Update newsletter was used to summarise the activity and all the emails that had been sent by workstreams
- introductory meetings were held with the CRO/BRO and the Elections Managers from each of the 14 constituencies attended by the DGLRO, the relevant Venue Director and the programme manager. These were followed by borough liaison team meetings with ESMs to discuss detailed feedback and items such as the planned approach to e-count training, marketing and communications, peripherals. The resulting action notes and log of live issues log were invaluable in programme leads in identifying gaps in planning and in responding to borough questions and expectations
- a final briefing was held at City Hall attended by CRO/BROs and their elections managers. It required a careful preparation to ensure it covered all the required content at the suitable level of detail. A presentation and question and answer session was delivered by the GLRO/DGLRO/

Programme Manager and IntElect then the table top exercise was repeated as a demonstration and test of the contingency plans

- procurement of polling stations notices, Tactile Voting Devices and a mail sweep was centrally managed by the GLA

3.3.4 As election day approached the flow of data and information requests increased. It was inevitable that at times there would be multiple requests to boroughs and while this approach can be refined further, it worked well for the most part due to better information sharing.

3.3.5 Further work should be done with boroughs and their EMS providers EMS providers to ensure the systems support the unique GLA elections.

3.4 Cabinet Office (Legislative changes)

3.4.1 The GLA works within the legal framework set down by Parliament. The Cabinet Office is the lead department for liaison. Early discussions established that changes made to elections rules for the 2014/2015 elections were likely to be brought into force for the GLA elections. They covered the timing of nominations, the ballot papers and polling station notices. In the end, they didn't come into force until February 2016 which was not conducive to good planning but was managed satisfactorily for the most part as a result of the prior discussions.

3.4.2 The exception to this was the proposed changes to the ballot paper design. Due to the long lead in time to prepare the ecounting software to read the ballot paper, a decision needed to be taken in March 2015 on the design to be used at User Acceptance Testing (UAT) in November 2015. The Electoral Commission had commissioned research into ballot paper design, and the reporting timeline of this meant that the proposed changes were not able to be enacted prior to the General Election pre-election period.

3.4.3 Ongoing discussions with the Electoral Commission and Cabinet Office, allowed a shared understanding on the approach to be agreed. A design which was suitable for ecounting and, wherever possible, reflected the potential legislation was agreed and was used at UAT.

3.4.4 A number of discussions around the official mark concluded in the use of a microprinted shape being used on the ballot paper. If a ballot paper was suspected of being duplicated, examination of the microprinting allowed the real ballot paper to be distinguished.

3.4.5 These legislative changes could be planned for. Other potential ones were logged on the risk register, such as lowering the voting age to 16 (included in some of the party manifestos for the 2015 General Election).

3.5 Electoral Commission and performance standards

3.5.1 The Electoral Commission leads on electoral practice. A series of regular meetings between the Electoral Commission and the DGLRO and Programme Manager facilitated a clear understanding of the new London

Elects approach and afforded opportunities for discussions on electoral practice.

3.5.2 In 2012 the Electoral Commission required detailed reporting on their Performance Standards. For 2016 the performance standards had been streamlined. They were not a 'neat fit' for the GLA elections given the shared roles and responsibilities of the GLRO, CROs and (while not recognised in legislation) BROs. A more constructive approach to reporting was planned with the Electoral Commission, supplemented by ongoing conversations. It was agreed that:

- London Elects would report on the matters that fell in the direct remit of the GLRO via a spreadsheet completed and submitted to the Electoral Commission
- The CROs would be asked to confirm in writing to the GLRO that their planning met the requirements of the performance standards. Project plans and risk registers were also submitted to London Elects

4. Training and Human Resources

4.1 The workstream covered two elements – resourcing the programme across the GLA (both the programme support staff and volunteers who worked on key elements of delivery) and supporting boroughs in providing high quality and consistent training to polling station staff.

4.2 Resourcing

4.2.1 There was a need to identify and train sufficient staff from the GLA with the right skills to work on the elections programme. Workstream leads needed to consider and plan the resources that they required. It was assumed that, where possible staffing would be met within existing headcount and following review of the requirements, it was concluded that the following were needed:

- a central resource pool of volunteers
- Workstream sub-groups to ensure joined up working across overlaps
- Early communication and planning with staff
- Teams at count centres

4.2.2 In total around 205 GLA staff worked on the elections to varying degrees. These were split broadly as follows:

- 85 staff who worked on the workstreams – a mix of full and part time alongside their regular roles, over different periods of time
- Approximately 120 volunteers some deployed on specific events

4.2.3 Some of the key roles (e.g. the Venue Directors) were identified and allocated early on. The highest numbers of staff were required on Friday 6 May, allocated to a shift. The majority of the roles and shifts were not finalised until February.

4.2.4 The pool of volunteers was used for the following roles:

- Tasks on count day at the Count Centres and City Hall
- Nominations process

- User Acceptance Testing of the e-counting process
 - Ballot tray building (along with external Team London volunteers)
- 4.2.5 The training for count day staff comprised briefings / training sessions, access to an ecounting video and orientation on 5 May. More detailed sessions were run for some of the more senior roles.
- 4.2.6 To manage key events, such as the nomination subscriber checking and staffing the count centres, staff were redeployed from their existing roles.
- 4.2.7 GLA volunteers allocated to work across all three count centres were selected for their roles through discussions with the resourcing manager and the events team manager. They were competent and proactive and all were an asset on site when things got busy. The feedback from volunteers has been overwhelmingly positive, as has the feedback about the volunteers from those responsible for delivering the elections on the day. The approach also has organisational development benefits; it was a good test of matrix team working, it built cross directorate relationships and staff liked working on something different to their day-to-day role. Criteria were set out to pay honoraria to staff who worked or were on call for long hours and there was some eligibility for time off in lieu to be agreed with managers.
- 4.2.8 As the elections had not been delivered as a programme embedded in the GLA before, it was difficult to assess the required resource for the new programme which resulted in an underestimation of level of staffing required; ultimately, staff were found/put the hours in and delivered a successful election. Having successfully designed and tested this staffing structure, it is now clearer what roles are needed to deliver elections. This will mean that in future, fuller information can be provided to volunteers and they can be allocated earlier in the process allowing more time for preparation and training. Assessment of the level of resource required for the programme roles will also be needed, to decide how this will be staffed going forward.
- 4.3 Polling Staff Training
- 4.3.1 The training team aimed to support boroughs in providing high quality and consistent training to Presiding Officers and Polling Clerks working on the GLA Elections 2016, an estimated training audience in excess of 12,000 people. A small working group of borough representatives, coordinated by London Elects developed the training strategy and resources and conducted quality assurance. AEA meetings were used to engage with and consult with other borough elections staff.
- 4.3.2 The strategy followed the same training approach as in 2012, providing central materials for boroughs to tailor and cascade. Shadowing in polling stations at the general election 2015 helped to inform the development work. E-learning was considered as a delivery option and excluded for cost and sustainability reasons. A 'train the trainer' programme, with a focus on developing training delivery skills amongst borough staff was an option, but did not proceed due to little interest from boroughs.

- 4.3.3 The working group cascaded the materials with the boroughs through face to face briefings in mid-February. This covered the core materials, emphasised key learning points specific to the GLA Elections, and prepared them for delivering the training. 93% of respondents who provided feedback on the training rated it as being 'very good or excellent' overall.
- 4.3.4 Each borough was responsible for identifying and training their own presiding officers and polling clerks, using the core materials. The training audience was in the region of 400-500 staff per borough (150 presiding officers and 350 polling clerks). The boroughs had discretion to determine the best approach and groupings for training.
- 4.3.5 For quality assurance, GLA staff volunteers and the Learning and Organisational Development team attended a sample of training sessions in 26 of the 33 boroughs using a checklist and standard evaluation form to review the training. 96% of respondents to the evaluation request rated the training 'very good or excellent' overall.
- 4.3.6 Delivery of the training took place between February and May. Boroughs were asked to provide their training schedule and final materials to the GLA for quality assurance purposes. The toolkit included a standard evaluation form for return to GLA. This was not always used but evaluation data was returned from eleven boroughs, covering 3,165 respondents. 97% respondents to the evaluation request rated the training 'very good or excellent'.
- 4.3.7 In addition to the core training cascade, the working group arranged a training workshop for borough elections staff with the three main elections management systems providers used across London. This was a chance to work through some of the more complex handling issues related to postal votes, proxy votes, cancelled papers etc, and was identified as a valuable way to address consistency issues.
- 4.3.8 The general approach to polling station staff training worked well:
- shadowing the general election was invaluable in understanding how polling stations work, the role of the polling station staff, and the issues that needed to be covered in the training
 - the borough working group ensured good engagement with elections experts, and that material was well designed and covered the issues relevant to Polling station staff
 - the cascade materials (with core and optional slides) helped to ensure a consistent approach to training deliver while allowing flexibility and discretion to adapt materials to suit local circumstances
 - where survey monkey was used for evaluation, it provided quick and accurate analysis of the training feedback
 - using GLA volunteers to carry out quality assurance of borough training enabled review of the training delivery and provided a learning opportunity for GLA staff.

4.3.9 Options for improvements to be considered include making it more interactive and developing further central training resources. Revised materials will need to pick up learning from this and future elections.

5. Legislation and Rules

5.1 The Legislation and Rules workstream covered:

- advising on rules and protocols
- working with the Electoral Commission to prepare and communicate the statutory timetable update the core guidance for candidates, agents and electoral administrators
- preparing and publishing elections notices
- leading on email correspondence with the public and supporting accurate public information over the telephone and social media, including contributing to sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- managing interactions with candidates and agents, providing information, guidance and responding to queries, and managing two briefings
- managing all stages of the nominations process – developing the packs, running the process, reviewing nomination papers received and advising the GLRO on their validity
- advising the marketing & web workstream on the Mayoral manifesto submissions and the booklet generally
- advising on the calculation of the elections results, drafting the results declaration procedure and publishing final results statements and data

5.2 Legal advice was provided by two lawyers in the TfL Legal shared service. The workstream drew heavily on legal advice throughout, both to inform its own work and in commissioning advice to support others' work. The GLA retained the services of a QC, Timothy Straker, to provide expert input. This advice was at turns valuable, illuminating and reassuring. His presence on count day was essential.

5.3 From January 2016 the level of legal support increased significantly; to help answer questions from prospective candidates and agents; to assist with work to prepare nomination guidance and forms; and then for the nomination process itself, which involved a TfL lawyer as a full time team member.

5.4 Guidance development with the Electoral Commission

5.4.1 The aim was to streamline the suites of guidance for candidates and agents and for electoral administrators. Though cobranded, the Commission 'owned' the guidance and process for reviewing it, with London Elects input. Initial reviews of the 2012 guidance were carried out by the Commission and London Elects, followed by consultation with third parties and internal Commission checking and legal review. Final London Elects comments were reflected prior to publication on the Commission's website and via links on londonelects.org.uk

- 5.4.2 Guidance for candidates and agents and for electoral administrators was clearer and more integrated than in 2012. Most was published and available as soon as stakeholders needed it, particularly for candidates and agents.
- 5.4.3 The visions the Electoral Commission and London Elects had for the joint guidance were not always aligned: London Elects wanted the Commission to go further than it was willing to in streamlining the guidance. Getting there was not always as smooth as it might have been but there was some productive joint working and the guidance benefitted from the different perspectives and knowledge of the Electoral Commission and London Elects.
- 5.4.4 Where content was not covered in the cobranded administrator guidance, separate documents were prepared. Adjudication guidance was drafted and consulted on with the boroughs, the Electoral Commission and Tim Straker QC. The examples were broadly the same as in 2012 with a couple of additions and clarified references to the legislation. It was generally well received. For 2020, it would be helpful if this was prepared earlier so as to be available at all stages of the training and any User Acceptance Testing.

5.5 Directions

- 5.5.1 The GLRO has a power of direction over the delivery of the elections; it was preferred wherever possible to take a consensual approach with minimal resort to this power. Following consultation with the Cabinet Office, Electoral Commission and boroughs, three directions were issued initially in January 2016, on:
- preparing and providing to London Elects planning documents
 - adding a line to poll cards flagging to voters the web address for the elections booklet
 - the need for CROs to inform the GLRO of any requests for a recount to aid consistency

A fourth direction was subsequently added on the time of opening of ballot boxes to commence the count.

- 5.5.2 These were supported by a Memorandum of Understanding, promoting cooperation between the GLRO, CROs and BROs.
- 5.5.3 The directions issued were broadly welcomed and the decision to minimise their number and rely instead on less formal routes was vindicated: there are no obvious areas where an additional decision would have been of benefit.

5.6 Statutory timetable and notices

- 5.6.1 The statutory timetable was developed by the Electoral Commission, liaising with London Elects. It was published early on a provisional basis and dates were then confirmed once the legislation was settled.
- 5.6.2 Notices were published in an accurate and timely manner. Accuracy was supported by using the GLA's elections management system (EMS), an internal checking process and, in some instances, by consulting boroughs on drafts.

- 5.6.3 It is worth noting, however, that the GLA's EMS must be reviewed ahead of 2020. Too much manual manipulation of the notices it produced was required and at times the system was buggy. It also did not dovetail with the new approach to checking Mayoral subscribers, described below.
- 5.6.4 The checking processes for the statement of persons nominated (SoPN) compared information against more than one source and this proofing process supported accurate ballot papers. The SoPN information was fed into booklet and relevant sections of the website – again accurately due to internal checking processes.
- 5.7 Public email, phone and social media correspondence
- 5.7.1 The London Elects staff involved in public communications met regularly to identify trends and issues and flag future developments
- 5.7.2 Arrangements were put in place for the Head of Paid Service's Corporate Management Team (CMT) Support Team to monitor the main London Elects inbox supported by the workstream lead and with, where necessary, queries directed to relevant London Elects staff. An initial set of internal FAQs was created to help answer email queries. These were updated periodically, taking account of to social media FAQs. Further, this time, public FAQs were created for polling and count days and automatic replies used to direct those emailing London Elects staff to the relevant webpage.
- 5.7.3 Although low overall, email correspondence volumes increased from early March 2016, peaking in mid to late April at a rate of about 25 emails each day. This highlights the importance of a scalable approach, with knowledgeable staff on hand. At busy times the CMT Support Team responded to emails and this arrangement worked well, with timely, comprehensive responses. Accuracy was promoted through the FAQs and consistency in the staff answering the queries.
- 5.7.4 Though it worked well, more could be done for 2020 to take a coordinated approach to responding to public queries by email, phone and social. Short, regular meetings of staff involved in providing information to the public through all channels were useful in facilitating planning and sharing learning. To manage emails better and promote understanding about the elections, for 2020 programme staff should consider making greater and earlier use of FAQs on the website. Potentially this could be combined with an auto-response directing those with queries to the FAQs. It would also be useful to maintain logs of calls pick up themes to inform the FAQs.
- 5.7.5 Though still a small number overall, a notable proportion of emails received were about the second choice vote in the Mayoral election. Some were from electors who were unclear about the rules and whether or not they were obliged to make a second choice vote. Others complained that by not explicitly saying a second choice vote was not required, some voters would therefore assume they had to make one.

- 5.7.6 In 2012 the voting instructions on the website and in the booklet had included a sentence to the effect that a voter did not have to make a second choice vote for their first choice to count. This sentence was removed for 2016 on the advice of the Electoral Commission as, having conducted research, they were of the view it encouraged voters not to think about their second choice vote. This issue also arose in relation to polling station training.
- 5.7.8 Voters are entitled to have clear information about their vote(s) and the approach they can and cannot take to make a valid vote and it is suggested this should be raised with the Commission again.
- 5.8 Mock election
- 5.8.1 As part of the preparations, a mock election was run by role playing the stages of the elections timetable. The aim was to improve familiarity with the main elements of the statutory elections timetable, test the GLA Elections Management System (EMS) and to identify gaps in knowledge and process.
- 5.8.2 It was a helpful exercise: it focussed minds, was a useful learning experience to get ready for the statutory nomination period and flushed out issues around form templates and checklists that were addressed for the nominations period
- 5.9 Candidate and agent liaison and nominations
- 5.9.1 A contact list of potential candidates was developed, based on those expressing an interest in standing to London Elects or in the media and also by using the 2012 list of contacts. Prospective candidates and agents were also encouraged to register with London Elects on the London Elects and GLA websites.
- 5.9.2 The people on the resulting mailing list were sent invitations to the briefings and updates at key points which kept lines of communication open and provided useful information. Productive relationships were formed and candidate queries were responded to quickly and comprehensively throughout.
- 5.9.3 Positive feedback was received on the first briefing session and on the pack of guidance and other information handed out. The City of London's ESM and a colleague from the Electoral Commission both attended and presented and/or took queries.
- 5.9.4 Mayoral and London-wide Assembly nomination forms and guidance were reviewed and overhauled, including a legal check. They were better structured and the supporting notes were clearer and properly integrated with the Commission and London Elects' suite of guidance. Forms could be, for the most part, completed electronically. Packs were sent out to about 25 different parties and independents (often two packs: Mayoral and London-wide Assembly).

- 5.9.5 Constituency Assembly Member nomination forms were updated in parallel and provided to boroughs, together with information to promote a broadly common approach to nominations.
- 5.9.6 The nomination period, covering both the informal and formal checks, required logistical planning, including managing appointments effectively and ensuring a joined-up approach between the nomination and booklet review processes. In all, there were over 50 nomination and booklet appointments and it was a big team effort, with London Elects staff from across the programme and other GLA staff working together over the three weeks. This helped see a record number of Mayoral candidates onto the ballot paper. This required significant resource and while some different approaches could reduce the workload; future London Elects staff should not underestimate the scale of the task.
- 5.9.7 During informal nomination week, the London Elects team reviewed and gave informal feedback on candidates and agents' nomination papers. It was invaluable as it helped candidates and their agents understand the process and address identified issues; and it helped build relationships between them and London Elects. It also allowed us to test our processes in advance of the formal submissions.
- 5.9.8 The eligibility of the 330 subscribers on each the Mayoral nomination form was checked by London Elects, rather than sending the papers to boroughs. This had been tested as part of the mock election, using registers provided by the boroughs. Subscribers could be checked quickly, allowing feedback for candidates and agents at the end of their informal or submission appointment. It also removed a burden that had previously been placed on boroughs. In all, only three names had to be double checked with boroughs. The checking was resource intensive; both to prepare the registers and the actual checking
- 5.9.9 Staff from the volunteer pool and from the Governance team were involved working on a rota basis and overseen by workstream leads. Team spirit played a great role – each team member was punctual, conscientious and committed in this important task requiring speed, accuracy and judgement.
- 5.9.10 This process relied to a significant extent on the Excel solution. If this is repeated, expertise needs to be identified well in advance to set up the system, whether in Excel or possibly integrated with a new EMS solution. Reverting to checking the signatures via the boroughs is also an option to explore.
- 5.9.11 Some informal checking of nomination papers was done electronically via email, at the behest of agents. This should be explored and perhaps encouraged further for 2020 as a supplement – but not replacement – to face to face meetings with candidates and agents, which are essential.
- 5.9.12 After nominations, confirmed candidates and agents were invited to a second briefing. This was less well attended and the timing and purpose should be reviewed. A final update email was sent to candidates and agents ahead of the count. Accreditation, deposits and expenses returns formed the

remainder of the liaison with candidates and agents and this is covered elsewhere in this report.

5.9.13 London Elects received a high number of recurring queries from candidates and agents which included:

- commonly used names
- crossing out and amending subscribers to the Mayoral nomination paper and how the GLRO would determine the paper's validity if it were subscribed by more than 10/330 subscribers
- publishing candidate, agent and subscriber names and addresses
- generally on what grounds the GRLO might reject a nomination

5.9.14 The questions were mainly covered by the formal guidance but there would be merit in capturing responses, in consultation with the Electoral Commission and the AEA, into an FAQ shared in advance. This would require care to be taken that the document does not replace the candidate's responsibility for their own legal advice.

5.10 Registers

5.10.1 A number of prospective candidates – especially independents who unlike parties cannot request registers until nominations open – found it difficult to get hold of the electoral registers, to which they were entitled, from some boroughs. The guidance was explicit about this entitlement, which was reinforced with boroughs at an AEA meeting. Capacity issues no doubt contributed but it would seem more needs to be done to stress the need to promptly and, where appropriate, positively respond to requests for registers.

5.11 Results

5.11.1 The count day problem with the ecounting software that led to a delay in the final results is covered in section 10.

5.11.2 The declaration of results process had been revised for 2016 and this needs further refinement for future elections to ensure all parties are clear on an agreed process including the CROs, the Borough Communications teams, the London Elects media team, the social media team, any ecounting provider and the Events team. This needs to be concluded far enough in advance to ensure it is consistent in information leaflets and briefing materials.

5.11.3 London Elects staff acted as the central point of liaison between City Hall and CROs, monitoring count process and facilitating timely consultation on local results. The CRO was given the provisional results and while they were consulting the candidates and agents at the count centre, London Elects staff were consulting those at City Hall. Once confirmation had been given of the consultation being concluded, the CRO then declared Constituency Assembly Member results and gave public notice of the London-wide Assembly Member and Mayor of London local total number of votes for that constituency.

5.11.4 From 6 May, the website has had a clean, graphical representative of the elections results. This is supplemented by a results factsheet, the final

Mayoral second preference matrix, clean PDFs of each Constituency result and a ward level breakdown of results and turnout. Ecounting the votes meant that again, richer and more granular voting data were published.

- 5.12 The Legislation and Rules workstream operated effectively with relatively limited resource and learning from the scope of the work will help aid planning and contingency for 2020.

6. Fees and Finance

6.1 The fees and finance workstream covered:

- Setting the Maximum Recoverable Amount (MRA) for each Constituency
- Collecting and returning Deposits from the Mayoral and London Wide Candidates
- Retaining the Elections expenses returns and declarations from Agents and Candidates
- Managing the budget

6.2 The overall budget for the election had been reduced by £2million from the previous election cycle, which meant there was pressure to find savings.

6.3 MRA

6.3.1 The MRA calculations provide the boroughs with a control figure to be held accountable against. However, the figures provided in the MRA are in essence a guide as the GLA is responsible for all actual and necessary costs for the effective and efficient running of the elections that are incurred by the Constituency Returning Officer.

6.3.2 In 2012, the MRA was set by allocating spend against a number of budget heads for each constituency which was problematic as it limited the flexibility of each to manage their budget and required them to worked to fixed costs which were not always appropriate for each individual area.

6.3.3 Work had been carried out by the Cabinet Office to change their approach for the 2104 European Elections and, subsequently the 2015 General Election, by assessing the costs of previous elections, adding an uplift to reflect cost of living increases and changes to the electorate. That sum was then allocated for boroughs to spend against, without being tied to budget subheadings.

6.3.4 The GLRO decided to take a similar approach to the MRA for the GLA elections based on the 2012 Election claims. However, it did not prove possible to calculate a single level of increase from 2012 that could be applied across all 14 constituencies. Figures for the costs of the 2014 European Elections and the 2015 General election showed significant variations in cost increases between London Boroughs. These related to variations including the cost of polling stations, particular security issues, changes to Council services and staffing requirements.

- 6.3.5 Each Constituency Returning Officer was asked to prepare an estimate of the costs for delivering the 2016 GLA elections based on the 2012 election and taking account of the cost increases identified for the European and General elections. These estimates showed a wide range in the level of increase in costs when compared against 2012. Whilst it was accepted that costs in some areas had undoubtedly increased, the GLRO made clear that it was not going to be possible to allocate additional funds prior to the election where the estimates were significantly higher than the average increase and disproportionately higher than the 2012 costs. Any expenditure over the MRA would be considered when CROs submitted their claims after the election and the GLRO made it clear to CROs that, as legally required, claims for costs that were necessary for the efficient and effective running of the elections would be met.
- 6.3.6 The MRA payments were made in two stages to the lead boroughs in all 14 constituencies. The first payment was made on the 1st April 2016. The original arrangement was to pay 75% upfront, as is the usual practice. However, it was argued by boroughs that they needed more than that upfront to cover costs. In the past, income tax was not paid over to HMRC until later in the financial year which meant that the second payment of 25% broadly covered that cost. However, in 2014 Real Time Information was introduced requiring that tax to be paid straight away, resulting in all costs for the election being paid out months in advance of accounts being settled. This required councils to subsidise elections pending the balance being paid. It was therefore agreed that increase the advance payment should be increased to 90%. The second and final balancing payment will be made once the claims have been analysed and signed off.
- 6.3.7 Guidance and a claim form for the constituencies to record expenditure incurred during the election process were amended to make them more straight forward to complete, reducing the level of detail that they contained, while still providing clear information to assess the validity of the payments. This will be a useful baseline for 2020. Drafts were shared with a number of boroughs for consultation on the approach and feedback was reflected in the final form.
- 6.3.8 The review of the approach to MRAs is not yet complete as the claim forms are not due to be submitted to the GLA by CROs until November 2016.
- 6.3.9 The level of work required to set the MRA for the 2016 election was greater than anticipated. The approach to setting the MRA for the 2020 Election will need to be agreed in advance with the Borough, following a detailed review of the 2016 returns.
- 6.4 Deposits
- 6.4.1 As part of the nominations process, London Elects collected the Mayoral and London-wide candidate deposits. The lead borough in each constituency was responsible for collecting constituency candidate deposits.

6.4.2 Guidance was issued to the candidates and agents on how to pay the deposits. Arrangements and procedures were put in place for deposits to be made in cash, bankers draft or by electronic transfer.

6.4.3 Following the conclusion of the polls, London Elects are required to return mayoral deposits to candidates who polled over 5% of the total votes and to London wide candidates polling over 2.5%. Three Mayoral deposits and six London Wide deposits were returned to candidates. London Elects collected forfeited deposits relating to constituency candidates from lead boroughs.

6.5 Candidate Expense Returns

6.5.1 By law, returning officers at elections are required to retain candidate spending returns and declarations and associated invoices/receipts for costs incurred by candidates for a period of two years following receipt. Agents were notified of the requirements to submit returns; for London Elects, this constitutes Mayoral and London-Wide candidates, while the lead boroughs manage the process for the constituency candidates. The GLA is not responsible for making checks in relation to the submitted returns that are submitted as this is with the candidates. As required, copies of the spending returns will be sent to the Electoral Commission. Arrangements have been made and advertised so that during the time that the records are held, interested parties may make an appointment to view and copy spending returns.

6.6 Budget management

6.6.1 Management of the budget, reporting and payments was undertaken by the Head of Office of the Corporate Management Team. The budget was reduced by £2m from 2012 and the budget was allocated as follows:

Workstream	Budget £	Spend to date £
E-counting	4,000,000	3,582,498
Training Programme	80,000	23,088
Election Count Centres	800,000	600,211
Borough Disbursement	9,600,000	9,785,364
Ops Central Printing	30,000	21,888
Tactile Voting Devices	55,000	0
Totem Poles	40,000	0
Election Website	17,000	15,200
Election Booklet	1,900,000	1,841,285
Elections PR & Events	50,000	0
Elections Advertising	375,000	342,652
Elections Research	3,000	3,200
Election Design	0	2,275
Election General (incl salaries)	420,000	280,585
Election Contingency	190,000	0
Mayor's Life Insurance	450,000	292,560
Income	-150,000	-228,000
Elections - Legal Fees	140,000	175,802
	18,000,000	16,738,608

6.6.2 The major area of pressure on the budget will relate to the MRA claims made by the CROs for the delivery of the elections in the boroughs, as the final level of these will not be known until the submission deadline of November 2016.

6.6.3 The overall day to day management and monitoring of the budget was successful. The interaction between budget manager, business accountant, GLRO, DGLRO and workstream leads was open and transparent, meaning potential over/under spends and risks were identified at an early stage.

7. Marketing and Web

7.1 The Marketing and Web workstream managed:

- Development and delivery of a marketing campaign to raise awareness of the election
- Social media management including social media customer service
- Procurement, design, printing and distribution of booklets
- Updating and maintaining the London Elects website, including the live counting data feed on results day and publication of results

- Printing statutory and other materials for boroughs – leaflets, polling station items, accessible materials etc.

7.2 Marketing campaign

- 7.2.1 The GLRO has a responsibility to provide apolitical, factual information to Londoners about the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections so that they know when, where and how to vote. This was supported by a marketing campaign which was planned and delivered in a strategic manner through the GLA's contracted media buying agency (MEC). It was cost effective throughout as well as balanced, reaching London voters across various populations, demographics and communities proportionately across London. The marketing plan and each channel were reviewed using analytics to optimise performance, maximise reach and ensure best value for money. The paid for media campaign was live from 10 March at a cost of around £268,000. We also worked with our Transport for London colleagues to use their advertising assets, which had a media value of £384,208.
- 7.2.2 At the point of booking adverts in local media, it was stressed that none should be placed next to politically sensitive content. This was breached in a number of cases and compensation of £28,000 was negotiated and used to deliver further activity.
- 7.2.3 Google paid search was used to target keywords for users searching for elections in the Greater London. While it required some compromise on search terms, it was beneficial to work closely with the Electoral Commission this. Sitelink extensions were also used to direct traffic.
- 7.2.4 Design was managed in-house throughout, which provided an opportunity for significant cost-savings. This design was also used in the booklet, web and polling station materials tying all the elections visuals together. The timescales allocated for developing and testing the concepts was tight and the sign-off process involved a number of interested parties across the programme.
- 7.2.5 As in 2012, we provided boroughs with the campaign artwork so that they could use it for their own advertising which was a cost-effective strategy for a strong, integrated campaign that increased our reach further. When briefed on it, this was broadly well regarded by borough representatives. However, boroughs also wanted to advertise registration deadlines by adding copy to the artwork. As a result some boroughs customised their artwork to a greater degree than agreed and the information was difficult to read and the call to action was less clear. London Elects sought to sign off the amendments to materials but this did not always happen, resulting in local variations.
- 7.2.6 Overall the marketing campaign was highly effective and was delivered on time and on a reduced budget from 2012, enabled by maximising use of free advertising space on the Transport for London network. The final reach of the media plan was approximately 98.99% of Londoners. This represented strong value for money and showed that the plan was successful at gaining exposure. In total there were over 1.1m visits to the London Elects website, a

51% increase compared to 2012 and the marketing awareness campaign led to 209,000 of these visits. The above approach should be repeated, but with work starting earlier on developing concepts, a more streamlined decision process and working with the boroughs from an earlier stage to understand and meet their advertising requirements.

7.3 Social media

7.3.1 Social media was a core channel for sharing information amongst a pan-London audience in a transparent, quick, friendly and impartial way. In the months preceding the election, a social media playbook and an extensive list of FAQs for social media, email and phone were developed and shared with the wider London Elects team. As part of the wider marketing campaign, we created and published a variety of content on Twitter and Facebook using #LondonVotes. London Elects was one of the first UK organisations to Periscope (live stream) declarations on count day.

7.3.2 From two weeks before election day, social media cover was provided from 8am - 11pm, staffed by experienced communications professionals at all times, ensuring tweets were transparent, dealt with quickly and without error. Someone was needed on hand to formally approve replies to anything unexpected.

7.3.3 On count day, the social media operation was very successful, covering social media for the duration of polling (7am to 10pm) and from the beginning of the count (8am) to the declaration (1am the following day). Based in a shared space, the team of nine were able to answer questions from Londoners quickly and efficiently. The essence of the action taking place in the three count centres was captured by the social media reporters based there. The content was regularly praised by Londoners and was featured in liveblogs such as The Guardian, Twitter Moments and BBC London. Results were put out as quickly as possible once declared and five results were live streamed via Periscope and shared via Twitter graphics for all.

7.3.4 Social media may well evolve significantly over the next four years so early planning, an overall re-evaluation of channels and the associated staffing will be necessary. For example, there was not much engagement with Facebook and this may not be relevant for 2020, whereas live streaming was popular. Changes like this should be planned for.

7.3.5 Further work to develop the pre-approved responses would be beneficial and as it becomes a news source, consideration should be given to how news and the results will be released on social media. Boroughs should be involved earlier to ensure they know which social media channels are being used and key messages.

7.4 London Elections booklet

7.4.1 London Elects is required by statute to deliver a personally addressed booklet to every elector in London. It is a guide to the elections and in 2016 10 of the 12 Mayoral candidates chose to submit (at cost) a mini-manifesto. It also

included a full list of London Assembly candidates and guidance on how to vote.

- 7.4.2 Initially procurement was attempted using the Crown Commercial Services Print Management framework on recommendation of TfL Procurement, which included the incumbent print management supplier; soft market testing was used to check appetite to bid. Only one bid, of inadequate quality was received so an accelerated OJEU process was then conducted.
- 7.4.3 Financial Data Management (FDM) was selected as the successful bidder in November 2015. They ran the process smoothly and effectively meeting all of the key deadlines, delivering the booklet on time and to schedule. They managed the design (along with London Elects design service), borough data collation, print and distribution of the booklet. There was an excellent working relationship and while there could have been more sharing of process improvements, there were good lines of communication, resulting in clear feedback and responsiveness. FDM were also selected as the provider for the accessible materials, covered below.
- 7.4.4 The statutory requirements need to be clearly understood. The content other than the manifestos was reviewed, with copy written in plain English.
- 7.4.5 It was decided to plan for 6m booklets on a maximum of 48 pages (to hold 6-16+ candidates) which would be enough copies of the booklet for every registered voter plus spares at a cost of 33p per booklet. This approach meant that the booklet could cater to any number of Mayoral candidates, although the pre-ordering of paper limited the flexibility on page options and this could be done differently. To accommodate the confirmed 10 mini-manifestos in a 32 page booklet we removed superfluous copy which was not legally required and rejigged copy across four pages.
- 7.4.6 RNIB guidance was followed on minimum 12 point font size. The space available to us on the envelope was maximised by branding the back of it for the first time to increase impact when it arrived through letterboxes.
- 7.4.7 Elector data was required from boroughs for posting the booklets and the collation of this was managed by FDM over three milestones, which aligned to the publication of registers to ensure that as many booklets as possible could be dispatched in a timely manner. Following the final date a supply of booklets was provided to boroughs for electors who registered after this date.
- 7.4.8 Candidates and agents were provided with guidance explaining the process for providing content for inclusion in the booklet. Informal and formal appointments for review, feedback and submission of this were scheduled, co-ordinated with the Mayoral candidate nomination meetings where possible. Sending pre appointment emails requesting to see the mini-manifesto ahead of meeting helped make the meetings more productive. Using checklists and formalised feedback forms then following up appointments with an email to candidates/agents clarifying the feedback helped manage the time well and provided a log to ensure there was no misunderstanding. All feedback was signed off by wider London Elects team and Legal to ensure that there was

one agreed London Elects view which meant that at times support felt quite thinly spread. For any feedback/ content where the legality was unclear, such as references to the EU referendum and quotes, clarification from the retained QC was sought.

- 7.4.9 The GLA election rules forbids mini-manifestos that: reference other candidates; are indecent, obscene or offensive; are for commercial gain or contain advertising; would be likely to amount to the commission of an offence in their publication. London Elects had for previous elections drawn up a list of additional rules that the GLRO had the power to apply to the mini manifestos. These rules covered things such as typography and design and use of photographs and quotes. These additional rules need to be reviewed prior to the 2020 elections to ensure they can be justified and the reasons for making them are clear to candidates and agents.
- 7.4.10 The booklet was available online at Londonelects.org.uk from 7 April as it was sent to print. Tracking was set up to monitor the booklet downloads, resulting in a total of 86,077 downloads of the booklet (38,749 unique).
- 7.4.11 The delivery schedule was planned based on sending the booklet to print as soon after close of nominations as possible, which maximised the opportunity for the booklets arriving with electors in a timely manner. Dispatch was split with postal voters being sent first, followed by polling station electors, on a borough by borough basis. Efficient time management meant this progressed ahead of schedule. Daily updates on distribution were shared with relevant boroughs. All boroughs but one aligned with this process and sent postal voting packs following the booklet dispatch.
- 7.4.12 FDM gave Royal Mail advanced warning on the large volume of deliveries to expect which helped to manage deliveries. A very small proportion of voters received their booklet late, likely to be due to the natural element of risk with all post.
- 7.4.13 Queries were managed by fully briefing GLA's Public Liaison Unit (receiving calls on the telephone number at back of booklet), social team and London Elects email support team prior to the first booklet arriving.
- 7.4.14 Accessible versions of the booklet were produced, alongside accessible materials that were produced for polling stations. This included booklet large print, booklet audio (download online and CD), booklet and letter braille, polling station leaflet braille, polling station voter information leaflet and letter braille. The longer lead in time was not fully planned for which put pressure on times.
- 7.4.15 Learning should be sought from other elections and the Electoral Commission on their approach to accessible materials. Clarity on the order form is needed to describe each accessible material to reduce the risk of boroughs over ordering.
- 7.4.16 The result was that London Elects printed 6m booklets, mailing a total of 5,792,722 32-page booklets to registered electors across London on schedule

before 5 May. An additional 10,000 booklets were delivered to boroughs to distribute to public places and to those who were later in registering. Qualitative research has provided positive feedback on the final booklet and recommendations for future improvements

7.4.17 However, as in 2012, there were significant issues with the procurement of the booklet due to following the advice of TfL Procurement to use the framework route which was not fit for purpose. It is essential that lessons are learned from this and that if the available frameworks are not fit for purpose, then OJEU is commenced early.

7.5 Digital

7.5.1 It was decided to reuse and update 2012's LondonElects.org.uk website. Initial work was done in summer 2015, with further updates to the site appearance, functionality and mobile responsiveness being made once the campaign branding was finalised in early 2016. This work was led by the External Relations Digital team and was carried out by developers, Code Enigma and Sirius, alongside GLA's Technical Group. Strong communication between these partners meant that this work, and last minute alterations, was completed efficiently.

7.5.2 The quality of information available to voters was improved, encouraging them to find out about candidates, how they could vote, how they could keep up to date with results and more. Increasing the range of content which explained the key responsibilities of the Mayor and the London Assembly was important, but required consideration to ensure there was a balance between political neutrality and fulfilling our duty to educate potential voters. Periodic updates to content were also made covering:

- the candidates and agents' section of londonelects.org.uk when the timetable was finalised and updated, guidance published, the nominations pack made available and candidates announced (led by legislation & rules)
- public sections of londonelects.org.uk, similarly at key stages of the election (in collaboration with legislation & rules)

7.5.3 All web pages were reviewed to improve accessibility, ensuring the content was unambiguous, accurate and written in plain English. The web pages and accompanying material were translated into 19 different languages and an audio download of the elections booklet was made available. This ensured that as wide an audience as possible could access the information and would therefore be encouraged to vote. It would be more cost efficient and consistent to do the online translation work at the same time as the leaflet and poster translations, managed by the creative team.

7.5.4 The website included a polling station finder tool which had over 80,000 visitors. The timeline for collecting the data needed to balance the time needed to build and test the tool, with the likely date that polling station locations would be finalised.

- 7.5.5 It was built using two data files; it varied across boroughs how quickly and easily they could provide these, depending on their systems and available resources. Data cleansing was then required as multiple formats were supplied before it was loaded into the map built by the GLA. The marketing campaign encouraged Londoners to use the tool leading up to the election and on polling day and it was signposted when responding to queries. Issues, for example a couple of instances where the wrong polling station data was in the system were picked up on the day and resolved. Further testing could refine this in the future
- 7.5.6 The potential for improvements are being explored nationally including the data being produced directly by each district producing the required information directly from their election management system. An organisation called Democracy Club is also working on producing a similar tool for all elections which the boroughs and London Elects could look to support.
- 7.5.7 Another tool for the public was the live count feed which showed the mounting votes for the Mayor and London Assembly candidates in real-time, cutting off when they reached 90%.
- 7.5.8 The constituency, London-wide and Mayoral results were published on the site. This involved updating the results tables and results map then uploading the relevant files. The Mayoral and London-wide election announcements were also broadcast live via webcast, hosted on London.gov.uk. In the following days, further detail of results data was added to the London Elects website.
- 7.5.9 LondonElects.org.uk formed a crucial source of information in the 2016 Mayoral and London Assembly elections. The following statistics suggest that the improvements made to accessibility, available content and interactive functionality were well judged and impactful:
- The live count feed page received 939,000 unique page views during elections week (the number of times the page was looked at by one user on a single device) and generated positive feedback via social media
 - LondonElects.org.uk received 1.95 million unique page views across the whole elections period, or 1.1 million 'sessions' (people who visited the site and spent time looking at multiple pages) – a 51% increase on 2012
 - 19% of these can be attributed directly to the online marketing campaign which indicates the effectiveness of the campaign and the importance of the website as a hub of information for Londoners
 - There were 44,691 content referrals (the number of times someone shared a link to the site and this link was opened), suggesting that visitors found the information useful and were engaging with it
 - The official results PDFs were downloaded 318,000 times
- 7.5.10 For 2020, the user needs and current technology should be reviewed before we develop any London Elects digital products. This should include mobile optimisation from the beginning, for the site itself and any additional functionality. When considering implementing a live count feed, careful consideration should be given as to how the data is displayed.

7.6 Print materials

7.6.1 A series of statutory and non-statutory printed materials were designed, printed and delivered to London boroughs. These included voter information and polling station materials for the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections 2016. The materials were launched to boroughs at a briefing meeting at City Hall, then each submitted orders for their requirements based on the number of polling stations.

7.6.2 Feedback from 2012 was that there had been a lack of clarity on how and when the materials would be delivered to boroughs. This was better managed in 2016, with the dates set out in the timeline and boroughs kept updated via messages from a central email address, including meeting invites, progress and delivery updates and circulation of PDF versions of documents.

7.7 London Elects Phone line

7.7.1 An elections phone line and voicemail system was staffed by the Public Liaison Unit (PLU), a team experienced in dealing with public enquiries. It was staffed by two members of the team each week day, operating between 9:00am to 5:00pm. The voicemail system was set up to handle excess calls and queries out of hours. For the majority of the election period, PLU was able to manage with those resources. There was good communication between the marketing and public liaison teams, with an FAQ sheet being developed as a reference point.

7.7.2 Overall the phone line was staffed very well with experienced public enquiries staff and provided a good service to voters and this should be continued. In 2020 it would be beneficial to record the number and type of calls received. This was not done in 2016.

8. Venues

8.1 The Venue workstream incorporates

- Venue management by the Facilities Management Team (FM)
- Event Management by the Events team
- Accreditation to access the venues

8.2 For the 2016 Mayoral and Assembly Member elections FM were responsible for the following activities:

- preparing the count centres to host the electronic count for the election of the Mayor of London and the London-wide and constituency Assembly Members
- the set up and event management of City Hall, the central count venue
- providing a training centre for the training of borough count staff
- responsibility for the security, policing and business continuity of the count
- management of the archiving of the ballot papers

8.3 Three venues (in addition to City Hall) were needed, repeating the previous arrangements at Excel, Alexandra Palace and Olympia. Due to the demand

for exhibition space in London, the procurement of the venues for the count centres has to be completed around 2-3 years in advance of the election date. Even with advanced planning, the preferred hall at Olympia, which had been used in 2012, was not available for 2016. A smaller hall at Olympia was used.

- 8.4 City Hall was the central count venue where the results of the Mayor of London and London-wide Assembly Member elections were collated and announced. Most of the Mayoral and London-wide Assembly Member candidates and their supporters and the media congregated there. The Head of FM, also the Venue Director for City Hall, was responsible for planning and managing the use of different spaces in the venue, ensuring the relevant permissions were obtained, all aspects of security were managed, liaison with contractors, catering provision and the facilitating media access. Making the arrangements for the announcements of the results included rehearsals and stage management.
- 8.5 The layout of City Hall worked well, with the information screens on the Map Area and in the Café. Candidates' lounges with space allocated to each candidate/party were set up in committee rooms 1 & 2 which helped manage the use of the café space.
- 8.6 Venue Directors
- 8.6.1 In 2012, London Elects had appointed Deputy Greater London Returning Officers to operate at the venues and this had led to some confusion about the roles and responsibilities between DGLRO and CROs. Staff were also deployed to work at the venue as coordinators but the numbers of staff were felt to be insufficient and required long hours to be worked by individuals.
- 8.6.2 A senior manager was needed at the venue to provide leadership, without intervening in the autonomy of the CRO in running their counts so the Venue Director role was introduced in 2016. Additional staff were needed to provide support to the venue. As a result of this, the staffing structure in appendix 3 was developed.
- 8.6.3 The Venue Director covered three aspects of the external venues:
- strategic management of the venue and senior stakeholder management.
 - facilitation communications within the venue and with City Hall
 - managing deployed GLA staff
- 8.6.4 This role was effectively already established for the central count venue in City Hall. The Head of FM had performed this function in previous elections and the protocols were well established and documented.
- 8.6.5 There was a significant amount of preparatory work required once the venue directors had been identified. This commenced with briefings on the elections programme to date and previous venue issues. Introductory meetings with CROs and borough staff helped gain trust, provide assurance and identify further planning requirements. A number of site visits took place and where possible, Venue Directors visited the Hounslow training venue on the days that were allocated to their constituencies which aided building relationships

with both the borough and IntElect staff. Briefings with GLA staff were also held. Some of the work required was generic across all three sites, so a Lead Event Officer was identified to coordinate these tasks.

8.6.6 Key issues included scheduling the sign off of the count kit by the CRO following installation and agreement to establish brief meetings with all CROs and key members of venue team to be held every two hours throughout count day. The meetings worked well and they were followed up with a topline report which was sent to City Hall to update on progress. Each venue director had a named point of contact at City Hall allocated to them on count day who had access to the ecounting dashboards showing the count progress of the constituencies. CROs contacted the City Hall liaison role directly to discuss the declaration of the results, but other than this the contact was between the Venue Director and the liaison, who could identify the correct point of escalation as required.

8.6.7 The Venue Director role and team structure worked well and should be reprised with venue directors being appointed well in advance of the election. The effort put into developing good working relations and clarifying the scope of the roles paid off. Briefing and engagement of staff was helpful in supporting team building. Credit cards were issued to venue directors to pay for any last minute/contingency items. While the role at City Hall was different it was useful to have the Head of Facilities at City Hall included as a venue director to support a shared understanding of the different venues. It was essential that the preparation was supported by the events team lead and FM colleagues. Media training meant that the Directors were equipped to respond to media enquiries

8.7 Events Team

8.7.1 The Lead Event Officer came on board in mid-November 2015 taking on responsibility for running the operation in the count centres and acting as a central point of contact across the venues. Changes to the venues project planning/meeting structure, which had been set up for each venue, were made. A monthly venue director meeting was established with the Programme Manager and Events Lead to share information and deliver a consistent approach. A monthly (moving to fortnightly then weekly) project team was also established, attended by FM, Security, borough liaison, resourcing, programme manager and events. This allowed all team members to share and update issues in their area. Facilities specific meetings were also held.

8.7.2 The Lead Event Officer worked on the following items, mainly focussing on the three external venues:

- developing venue specific Count Centre Manuals for the Venue directors and CROs collating relevant venue information
- Development of an event management plan and operations manager plans and delivering briefings/training to the Events for London team and other staff
- Working with the accreditation lead and FM on the accreditation system from design through to fulfilment

- Ordering and distributing all venue print materials, working with borough liaison to collate all staffing numbers for shirts, lunch vouchers, accreditation
- Along with the Resourcing Manager, agreeing roles and required tasks in each venue, shift times and allocating appropriate staff to appropriate roles
- Developing and delivering a table top exercise for staff and then senior borough representatives
- Creating contacts sheets and reporting forms and structure to facilitate communications within the venue and between the venues and City Hall
- Liaising with venues managers and caterers on event days
- Creating vehicle delivery schedules
- Recruitment of Team London Volunteers for ballot tray building

8.7.3 This role provided a single point of contact in the events team; facilitated the prompt resolution of any issues answering of queries and aided decision making but created a contingency risk as the lead took on a considerable amount of responsibility across a range of tasks. The scope of this could be reviewed to ensure there is alignment with the delivery of these areas in City Hall too.

8.7.4 All members of the Events for London team worked on the elections as Operations Managers, split into teams of three across the three venues. Shift patterns were used to maintain coverage of the site, particularly on count day. Contingency was built in to ensure that there was cover and support throughout. The team came on board pre event in March. Several planning meetings, site visits and meetings with venue managers were held and all visited the venues on the Wednesday for orientation. This allowed as much as possible to be prepared and scheduling contingency for the unknown. As this was a new approach, it was still unknown exactly how the role would play out on site but the experienced event managers hit the ground running once on site.

8.8 Security, policing and business continuity

8.8.1 FM took the lead on security and policing for the count centres and City Hall. This included:

- Liaising with the Metropolitan Police over
 - policing arrangements for the polling stations on the 5th May and City Hall and the count centres
 - regarding the prevention and detection of electoral fraud
- Producing and implementing access and security protocols, accreditation procedures and an admissions policy for City Hall and the count centres
- Working with the events team and the lead for accreditation developing the required materials, including passes and lanyards
- Developing business continuity plans in the event of the loss of a count centre, or City Hall, on count day
- Provision of security staff at City Hall and of GLA Security Managers to oversee the security staff procured for the count centres

8.9 Strategy for count centre set-up

8.9.1 A production company was procured to supply and set up all the furniture, supporting equipment and ancillary services used for the electronic count and the count centre receptions. They were experienced in working at the venues and had longer term relationships; as a result, they were able to negotiate earlier access for the set-up, which was absolutely necessary. They also provided a one stop shop for all count centre infrastructure requirements and were able to respond to late, ad-hoc requests. Key elements of this included:

- Use of a production company - this should be repeated and consideration should be given to involving the company earlier in the process during the procurement and negotiation with the venues. They have longer term relationships, experience and knowledge and are likely to be able to leverage more out of the venues. They should also be given responsibility for provisioning the electrical services, as this is something that they will be experienced in supplying for exhibitions
- Coordination of contractors - a number of contractors were on site providing catering, security, the ecount, archiving as well as the production company who provided furniture and AV. All delivered what was required. GLA Security had a daily checklist for their key activities with clear role and responsibility summary. Adfield Harvey's two onsite porters were invaluable throughout the three days. Early work to build better relationships in advance between Operations Managers and key points of contact with contractors would support joint working
- Health and safety - the health & safety process worked far better than in 2012, with the GLA doing a master risk assessment of each venue and then a separate risk assessment & method statement from each of the contractors and this should be repeated. This satisfied both the venues and the boroughs and saved constituencies carrying out their own assessment and avoided delays on count day with health & safety briefings. It was also useful and reassuring to have the GLA's health & safety consultant, Richard Coe from WYG, visit all the sites throughout the build and event days. There was some lack of health and safety awareness with contractors and this was appropriately challenged
- By –elections - It is inevitable that there will be local by elections which will need to be collocated. The planning for these should be incorporated into the overall accreditation and event management plan
- Materials - Count centre printed materials included security passes, t-shirts, meal vouchers and venue/computer signage. They should be included in the overall marketing collateral plan and budget. Lists of quantities of each need to be drawn up, including contingency, to ensure that there are sufficient provided to all the venues

8.9.2 The night shift Operations Managers took delivery of thousands of ballot boxes on Thursday night from boroughs and polling stations all over London. All boxes arrived and were kept secure overnight. Key information covering borough vehicles, staffing lists, key borough contacts and the number of boxes expected was available but it needs to be collated together in a single place next time.

8.9.3 Catering arrangements were made at all the venues with food provided for borough, GLA and ecounting staff at the three count centres and at cost

catering for visitors. Public catering is available at Excel and Alexandra Palace, and was arranged at Olympia where there was no public catering available in, or close to the count room.

- 8.9.4 This was a great success, with no complaints received and only minor issues identified; this is a significant achievement as it is an area that has in the past caused a considerable amount of complaint and had been the subject of many extended discussions with the boroughs. A large amount of work was put in to understand the issues then careful planning to meet the requirements was implemented by a manager experienced in catering contracts. Communication with the boroughs throughout the process was also helpful so that they were fully aware of what catering was being provided before the event.
- 8.9.5 The count at all the count centres started on time and ran well and, unlike 2012, there were no break downs or delays. The FM team, Venue Directors and the Events Team sharing responsibility worked well.
- 8.9.6 The workstream initiation document, whilst recognising headline tasks such as procurement of venues, security, AV, catering and security did not initially take account of the workload involved in delivering three external venues. This could be improved by a Lead Event Officer being on board from the start.
- 8.9.7 There was a sense of huge team effort and camaraderie in the venues and the GLA volunteers were a crucial part of successful on site delivery. They were highly praised by Operations Managers across all venues and the feedback from the volunteers was also very positive.
- 8.10 Accreditation
- 8.10.1 Before gaining access to the three count venues and City Hall observers, staff and media needed to be accredited. The planning and implementation of the accreditation process was a substantial piece of work carried out by a combination of a GLA Accreditation co-ordinator, the facilities team and the events manager.
- 8.10.2 There were a number of issues with accreditation in 2012, including a complex set of categories denoted by a range of coloured wristbands, delays to staff accessing the venues and complexity caused by London Elects implementing a centralised process for all attendees, including those the boroughs where the boroughs were the main point of contact. There were a lot of discussions around different approaches to the accreditation system between FM, security and the Lead Events Officer before agreement was reached on the final approach which was captured in guidance and an implementation document
- 8.10.3 Observers who are legally entitled to attend election counts include candidates and agents, counting agents, guests and Electoral Commission observers. Around 1,600 individuals were accredited to attend the count as formal observers.

- London Elects accredited count observers for the Mayoral and London wide Member elections (approximately half of the total number of accredited people)
- London Boroughs led the accreditation of observers for the Constituency Member elections, within a framework set out by London Elects
- Boroughs also managed the accreditation of all polling and postal vote agents

8.10.4 Media and staff from the GLA, boroughs and contractors/venue staff were also accredited for entry into the venues.

8.10.5 Borough staff, IntElect (the ecount contractor) staff and GLA staff were pre-accredited which allowed more rapid access to the venue on the morning of the count. This was kept under review, and identification/security scanning of staff would have been implemented if the security alert had changed in the lead up to the election. Boroughs collated their lists of staff, and submitted requests for the required materials (accreditation, lunch vouchers, t-shirts, manuals). These were sent in the week before the election and yet many staff turned up at the count centres with no accreditation

8.10.6 Electronic forms, capturing the required information (personal details, which election, their role, eligibility etc) from candidates and agents, were submitted to London Elects for the Mayoral and London wide Member elections, or the boroughs for Constituency Member elections. This was collated via a master database, accessible to boroughs on google drive, which was a straightforward way to collate information and for all involved to be able to track accreditation.

8.10.7 This was a resource-intensive process in the final 2-3 weeks before the election with queries being relatively urgent because of the need to meet a fixed deadline. A very large amount of information had to be compiled into the database with many returns coming in close to the statutory deadline. Amendments needed to be made where the lists changed. The accreditation service was responsive to a significant amount of contact with agents by phone and email answering queries and receiving information.

8.10.8 The number of observers arriving at venues without the required accreditation material was low. Reception staff across all four venues were able to contact the accreditation manager at City Hall with queries.

8.10.9 Overall, the accreditation scheme was successful. Across the Mayoral, London wide and Constituency elections, candidates and agents provided required information within the statutory deadlines and permitted numbers. The division of responsibilities between London Elects and boroughs was effective. Further review of the lists and streamlining of the roles to be accredited would be helpful for 2020.

9. Media

- 9.1 The Media team were responsible for managing all aspects of the media, including
- drafting and delivering the media and PR strategies and a crisis communications plan
 - briefing media on technical and editorial matters and accrediting media for the count centres
 - Distributing operational notes and press releases
 - Managing enquiries, web content, coverage reports and drafting proactive and reactive press releases and responding to media enquiries
- 9.2 The team was led by the Assembly External Relations Manager and consisted of staff from both the Assembly and Mayor's press teams. The media team co-located to the 7th floor six weeks before the election which enabled the team to switch focus to the elections without distractions. Despite different remits in the usual roles, once the London Elects Media Team was established, it worked as one team with no issues working together as London Elects. This combination also allowed sharing of media contacts, as well as a wide range of skills and ideas. The capacity allocated to the work was a challenge; the head of the team needs to be fully dedicated to the election role at least 3 months from the election date.
- 9.3 The work was split between media communications and PR/promotional. The team ran a one stop media function for the election, working with the media on a day to day basis and producing press releases promoting key events and responding to issues that arose. Press releases heralded election milestones like 100 days to go, booklet distribution, polling station finder etc. They were also issued in response to situations such as when a high profile potential candidate did not complete the nomination process.
- 9.4 Solely media work included:
- Accreditation - Media accreditation was managed via an online form on the London Elects website. This was easy to use and worked well to capture the information necessary to verify media, which resulted in 607 members of the media requesting accreditation across all four venues. Whilst it worked well to have one person lead on this task, it was a team effort to issue such a large number of confirmation e-mails / accreditation letters. Late accreditations were an issue at City Hall; at least another 20/30 media requested late access. Good communication between those receiving the late requests and the media accreditation desk at reception is imperative
 - Briefings - Several media briefings, split into technical and editorial, were held at City Hall to update media on the election progress. These were well attended and highly praised. Bowtie (the GLA's audio visual and broadcast services provider) dealt with the majority of technical media questions for the City Hall media centre and were very helpful in trying to meet the ever increasing demands of the broadcast media
 - Training - Media training was supplied to the GLRO, Deputy GLRO, Venue Directors the programme manager at no cost

- Liaison with borough media staff - Meeting borough communications staff in advance of the elections, to brief them on count day plans was a useful liaison. This was best managed through a face to face briefing in order to build relationships, especially as they were being asked to help with monitoring social media activity and were also asked to help on count day. The Venue Director or their operations manager attending these briefings provided added context. Borough teams should receive all operational notes and press releases. Linking the promotion of the elections with voter registration would probably have made things easier in terms of gaining coverage and working with the boroughs. To facilitate this, contacts of Borough Communications teams needs to be collated early on in the process. Despite this early liaison, a mix of reluctance and available capacity, put limits on some borough communications teams playing an active role on Count Day
- 9.5 A good amount of coverage was achieved through public relations activity, even though this was limited to zero cost solutions. The main activities that were planned and delivered:
- Community groups forming '5 May' shape
 - Targeted Borough press releases to community groups
 - Lighting up London landmarks on the eve of the election (lighting City Hall as part of this incurred costs)
 - Photos of 'celebrities' holding up the pink May 5th sign were also taken and used to raise awareness on social media. Channel 4's John Snow, LBC's James O'Brien, the London Live news team, etc.
- 9.6 On count day, having a separate media desk with clear branded signage and a media officer at each venue worked very well. Large numbers of media attended and were managed well on the day. Accredited media including photographers and film crews were chaperoned at all times between the non-restricted to restricted areas at count centres. At the count centres, involving the media leads in the Venue Director and CROs two hourly catch-up was beneficial for sharing information and keeping everyone informed.
- 9.7 A discrepancy in the declaration process caused issues with media expectations, which was exacerbated by the difficulties that were encountered with the ecounting system producing the results. This meant that media did not have access to the results nor a clear understanding of when these would be provided.
- 9.8 The delayed result could have become a major issue – especially with the large contingent of journalists at the City Hall media centre. This was carefully managed by keeping verbal communication lines open with all media. Regular, casual briefings with journalists continued throughout the delay. This prevented an information vacuum which could have escalated into widespread media complaints.
- 9.9 Overall, the joint team worked well, particularly from the point of colocation and there has been positive feedback from media colleagues. Thorough communication with any external contractors is essential to ensure all parties

work together. Clear, consistent information on count day processes are also essential.

10. Ecounting

- 10.1 The London Elects team carried out a cost benefit analysis (CBA) of ecounting and manual counting for the 2016 GLA elections. This looked at the comparative costs of ecounting and manual counting and if ecounting was used, how many count centres there should be.
- 10.2 The CBA concluded that ecounting was more costly by an estimated £500k than a manual count but it would take at least three days for a manual count to be concluded, compared to a single day for an ecount. The GLRO took the view that based on speed and accuracy, the fact that ecounting was tried and tested for GLA elections and the additional data that can be produced by the ecount system, ecounting should be used again in 2016.
- 10.3 In considering the number of venues, significant resilience issues were identified if venues were reduced from three to two. The boroughs also made it very clear that they wanted to remain at their current venues for geographical reasons.
- 10.4 In 2012, the ecount was delivered by IntElect, a joint enterprise of DRS Data Services and Electoral Reform Services. The contract was let in 2010 following an OJEU process and provided an option to extend for the 2016 elections. The GRLO form recording the decision to extend the contract was signed on 21 March 2014 and notice was given to IntElect. Negotiations on the detailed implementation of this concluded with a Deed of Variation, mainly revising the contract deadlines, being signed in June 2014.
- 10.5 As the 2016 contract was a repeat of the 2012 contract, the fundamental approach was that once the deed of variation was signed, any changes were required to follow a request for change (RFC) procedure. The count had been delivered in 2012 so any changes would need to be considered carefully against the background that change introduced risk.
- 10.6 The Ecounting Management Board (EMB) met on a regular basis to oversee the delivery of the ecounting contract and comprised staff from the GLA, IntElect and two borough representatives. The obligations document setting out all the contractual obligations on both sides was maintained and reviewed at every meeting to manage the delivery against the key milestones. Video conference arrangements were implemented to reduce travel and make the meetings efficient. This proved very effective and was the default meeting approach, unless there was good reason otherwise.
- 10.7 Outside these meetings the project managers from both GLA and IntElect spoke regularly to discuss the actions identified and progress on delivery. Some face to face meetings at the contractor's offices in Milton Keynes or City Hall and attendance at borough events were still required.

- 10.8 Due to the contract being a repeat of the 2012 count, the bulk of the detailed specification documents were in place. However, these all needed to be reviewed to ensure they reflected what was required for 2016. IntElect made the required updates and these were signed off by London Elects. The vast majority of the documents were signed off during the second half of 2014. Where there were subsequent changes to systems, processes or floor plans, they were re-issued.
- 10.9 A secure drive system called Huddle was used to share documents between London Elects and IntElect, meaning that the most recent of the extensive contract and specification documents were accessible to both parties at all times.
- 10.11 As noted above, discussions were held about a significant change in the legislation relating to the design of the ballot paper used in 2012. The new design included removal of the numbers from beside the names of the candidates and moving the logos to beside the box to be marked.
- 10.12 The system software is developed to read a precise, specific design of ballot paper so there was a lengthy lead in time the changes made to the software following the changes. A range of options were developed to reflect the potential different numbers of candidates. The agreed likely design of final paper was used for UAT, on the understanding if the legislation did not make the anticipated changes, that the system could be reset to the design used in 2012.
- 10.13 Due to Electoral Commission research into ballot paper design, which could have impacted on the final appearance, the legislation was not finalised by the deadline for the software design.
- 10.14 As noted in the venues section, a different, smaller hall had to be used at Olympia. The impact of this was that there was only space for four as opposed to five constituencies to count at Olympia. Having considered the options, it was agreed that the count for Ealing and Hillingdon would be moved to Alexandra Palace, where there was more capacity initially to the West Hall, then into the main hall to ensure that the counts were all close to the server hub.
- 10.15 PS960/PS1000 Counting Machines
- 10.15.1 In 2012 the scanner machine model PS960 was used at all the counts. A request was received from IntElect to change some of the scanning machines that they would use to carry out the count. They did not have sufficient numbers of the PS960 available and were in the process of designing a new model of their scanner (the PS1000). They requested that rather than build more of the PS 960s, they could use the new machine, using the new machines for all constituencies at Alexandra Palace and Olympia. It was agreed to on the basis that there would be no mixing of machines within a constituency. The machines would be subject to testing at UAT. The new machines were anticipated (based on testing) to operate at a faster scan rate so to deliver the contractual requirement of a 10 hour

count, based on 50% turnout of an electorate of 5.8 million, therefore fewer machines were needed. The resulting smaller footprint of each count layout assisted with the management of space in the different hall at Olympia. The build of the machines was closely monitored at the EMB.

10.15.2 A further RFC was received from IntElect, as further PS960s had been freed from other projects. This resulted in two constituencies using the PS 960s and three using PS1000s. IntElect agreed to meet the costs of the additional staff this would require.

10.16 Testing activities

10.16.1 The testing of the Ecounting system for the 2016 elections consisted of two main elements independent testing and User Acceptance testing.

10.16.2 Independent (technical) Testing

As with previous counted elections, the GLA procured the services of an independent company to carry out a range of technical tests into the Ecounting system. Actica Ltd, the same company as 2012, was selected to carry out a range of agreed technical tests, covering:

- Review of the IntElect functional specification documents
- Testing the Ecounting software for security vulnerabilities
- Testing the performance of the Ecounting software and network under load
- Testing the resilience of the server and network architecture

10.16.3 The scope of the engagement with Actica was reduced from 2012 on the basis that the 2016 Ecounting project being an extension of the 2012 project.

10.16.4 The performance and resilience testing went well and in accordance with the planned timetable. The security testing too was conducted smoothly and efficiently by both parties involved. A number of vulnerabilities were highlighted, which were either rectified during the build process (witnessed by Actica representatives) or it was agreed that sufficient mitigations were present to accept the residual risks. The scope of the security testing did not (and would normally not) include checks on the results calculation / consolidation algorithms. Previous attempts at testing this in 2008 was a drain on the supplier resources and time involving hundreds of lines of code. It was therefore decided that this would not constitute part of the independent testing in future and that the accuracy of the Ecounting system's calculations would be checked as part of UAT, comparing a 'manually' counted result with system calculated results.

10.16.5 The results of the technical testing showed a high degree of compliance with good technical practice by IntElect. The network in particular was set up using industry standard equipment and configurations.

10.16.6 User Acceptance testing (UAT)

The purpose of the UAT was to ensure that the Ecounting system is fit for purpose from an operator perspective and that an accurate result can be declared within the 10 hours. The way that this was carried out is to run a

mock count, with pre-marked ballot papers, to mimic a scaled down version of the real count. The mock count includes all the main stages of a real count, staffed with GLA officers carrying out the functions from Registration through to RO Adjudication.

10.16.7 A three day UAT was carried out in early November 2015. The preparation for the UAT is captured in three specific documents:

- A Test Strategy - prepared by the GLA, the Test Strategy sets out the overall objectives to be achieved from testing
- Test Plan and scripts - prepared by the GLA, the Test Plan expanded on the Strategy and set out the specific areas for functional testing and details of individual tests to be conducted
- Test Specification - in response to the GLA's Test Strategy and Plan, IntElect produced a Test Specification document which set out the physical and technical testing environment (in terms of the number of constituencies, PCs, mock ballot papers, display screens, engineer resources etc.) to be made available for the GLA to conduct the UAT

10.16.8 The UAT took place between 2 and 5 November 2015. The various tests were executed, feedback obtained and reports produced. It was considered to be a success in respect of the mock count and the design and construction of the Ecounting system. The user feedback overall was very positive.

10.16.9 As noted above IntElect had produced a new model of scanner (PS1000) designed to scan at a higher rate than the PS960 scanners used in 2012. Before the request to change the model was agreed and during the build phase of the new design, a considerable amount of time and effort was expended by the GLA in assessing risks associated with the new model of scanner and monitoring its production schedule. The PS1000 scanners were not fully ready for testing during the UAT and required a further testing session in January 2016. This test utilised a single mock count using a single constituency of 4 PS1000 scanners. The test was successful.

10.16.10 It was the intention that a live test of the webfeed would be carried out during UAT. However, owing to a combination of factors (some supplier and some GLA), this could not be completed. However, the actual technical issues encountered during the count day did not persist for long and were remedied quickly. It is however accepted that for a future e-counted election, a live test of the website feed is a mandatory element.

10.17 Staffing the counts

10.17.1 Constituencies were responsible for staffing the counts at each venue on 6 May. Previous counts had used temporary/agency staff; however for 2012 constituencies deployed their own staff allowing them more control as they knew the staff. A list of the required roles and numbers, which included some contingency/break cover was circulated to boroughs for them to allocate the roles among their staff.

10.18 Information Portals

10.18.1 IntElect used two portals during the elections; a web portal for data entry and a training portal

10.18.2 The data portal

In 2012, the portal which had been used to upload data into the system had proven problematic. The data was entered using a combination of manual entry and uploading a report into the system. The report had not worked properly for all the borough systems resulting in last minute additional manual entry being required. There were three (now four) elections management systems in use in London, each of which operate in a different way.

10.18.3 To address the issues for 2016, preparations commenced early, in June 2015.

- A meeting was held with representatives of all the Elections Management Systems, a borough from each provider and at this meeting IntElect presented a simplified data set that would require to be extracted from the system
- The EMS providers were asked to build a report to extract this data – for some this was more complicated and costly than for others
- Testing of the portal to allow borough and GLA staff who would be using it was scheduled for December, with a planned go-live for January

10.18.4 Despite the long lead in time and the relatively simple nature of the data required, the extract reports were not all built and released for borough use by the time that had been scheduled for testing. The testing window needed to be extended into January which was manageable but not ideal.

10.18.5 The access to enter data into the web portal was closed down immediately after the close of nominations so that the ballot papers could be printed and the data could be loaded onto the system. The machines for each count centre were put together over a three week period and the data was loaded onto the system and tested then, before each machine was sealed. This meant that following the build of the system and machines at the count sites, any changes to the electorate, staffing or batch numbers needed to be updated onto the system.

10.18.6 In general the contractor's deadlines required the provision of information and data earlier than boroughs were best placed to provide it and this needed to be managed carefully by London Elects.

10.18.7 Training Portal

This was set up to support the training for borough count staff. The portal included computer based training modules and videos. Individual log ons were provided to users to keep track of completion rates.

10.18.8 There were some issues with boroughs not having access to the correct technology eg where work computers were not able to play sound and some wanted to deliver the training to their staff as a group. The first round of

training was in advance of the day at the Hounslow training site. Following this the training system was reset so that staff could revisit it and repeat the learning as often as they wanted to.

10.18.9 IntElect operated a helpdesk for borough staff to support the portals. There was some anecdotal comments made around the responsiveness of the helpdesk but they were addressed.

10.19 Training schedule and venue

10.19.1 Changes were made to the training programme. In 2012, scanner operators attended for a day of training prior to a whole constituency training day. For 2016, the training days were merged so the whole team were there for a whole day. In the morning, scanner operators were trained in the use of the machine, while the rest of the staff were given a briefing on the whole count process. In the afternoon the whole team came together to work through a mock count. Generally the training was well received, and was useful in boroughs learning how to run a count but also for team building.

10.19.2 A suitable space at Hounslow Civic Centre was identified and procured for the training of borough count staff in the operation of the count machines and the procedures required. Attempts were made to identify a space in central London location as the training venue but none could be found at a realistic cost. Whilst the Hounslow venue was excellent in terms of space and facilities it did prove geographically challenging for some Boroughs. IntElect provided the training. Each of the 14 constituencies were given a day for the training and sessions were also held with candidates/agents and a separate day for the media, The borough liaison team provided support to the preparations for and delivery of the e-count training for boroughs at Hounslow, including arranging all the catering. FM provided a central point of contact for all issues and queries relating to the training centre and could liaise with the hosts, London Borough of Hounslow.

10.19.3 There was one day where there were issues with the training count system. The cause of the fault was identified and resolved in time for the next day of training. Assurance was provided that it related uniquely to the training set up. Following a number of discussions it was concluded that the staff had received sufficient training, and the CRO team were provided with an additional demonstration of the machines and end of count process.

10.19.4 A crucial element of the training day was that constituency staff to had the opportunity to meet the IntElect colleagues who would be working on the count on the day. Wherever possible borough requests to have particular staff work on their count was met.

10.19.5 One of each type of machine was installed in City Hall during March and April as this gave the opportunity for training and demonstrations to be given to candidates and agents as well as to borough staff. This was a very useful facility.

10.19.6 IntElect staff attended meetings of borough staff (both representative groups and the whole AEA branch) to brief staff directly. This worked well and gave helpful opportunities for direct contact, rather than only via London Elects.

10.20 Ballot boxes

10.20.1 As part of the contract IntElect procured and supplied ballot boxes and associated seals. All boxes and seals were supplied direct to the boroughs. Learning from 2012 changes were made to the seal design to make it clearer where they should be attached to the ballot box.

10.21 Count Day

10.21.1 At the heart of the Ecounting project is the development of a highly complex technical solution, by a chosen supplier, over a period of about 18 months. Whilst the scanning and adjudication of the votes went according to plan the result of the Mayoral count was delayed. The cause was minor discrepancies in the 1st and 2nd preference totals for the Mayoral candidates in the preliminary reports and in the final reports at constituency level and also in the final reports at the central consolidated level. IntElect were able to confirm on the night that these discrepancies arose in the reporting and were not present in the source data and this was confirmed in the subsequent Audit report.

10.21.2 Correct final reports were produced at City Hall by querying the source data and representing the reports manually. The delay in announcing the results arose because of the need to create new queries directly on the source data, reconstruct the required reporting format for the 14 constituency reports plus the central site consolidated reports and carry out checks to ensure the accuracy of these reports.

10.21.3 During this delay the GLRO was conscious that a decision would need to be made about when to brief the press, candidates and agents on the reasons for the delay and progress towards a final announcement. The view was taken that until there was clarity about the problem and the timetable for resolution, it was best to focus on getting the result.

10.21.4 It was not until after 9.00pm that IntElect were able to confirm the timescale for the production of the Mayoral results from the core data. As the information to answer the inevitable questions as to the nature of the problem, what had been done to resolve it and the likely time for the declaration of the result the GLRO met with candidates and agents and the media were briefed.

10.21.5 Subsequent investigations identified that the discrepancies in the original incorrect reports always occurred as a result of a misallocation between 1st and 2nd preference and never occurred as a result of a misallocation between one candidate and another. The reason has been identified as a pre-existing code defect which was also present in 2012, which combined with a subsequent change to the database server configuration in 2015 (specifically SQL Server Max Degree Of Parallelism) resulted in the ordering

of the data during the calculation of the mayoral figures to be incorrect in 2016 which had not been the case in 2012. The issue was not evident in the 2012 election because this combination of conditions was not present. The underlying code in this area had not changed since 2012.

10.21.6 The Audit investigation confirmed that the effect of parallelism is to enable high volumes of records to be processed – and its use was recommended by Microsoft who provide SQL server (the database management system used). The Audit report concluded that a volume test with at least the (expected) amount of records during the elections would have discovered the issue.

10.21.7 In any project that involves the development of a software system, the role of testing is all important. A review of the role of user and technical testing should be carried out ahead of any further GLA elections which use ecounting. This review should include the following areas:

- The level and visibility / greater involvement of London Elects in the testing carried out by the supplier during the software build
- The extent of involvement that the appointed technical testing company should have throughout the project and working as part of the supplier project team
- Duration of the UAT – should it be longer and/or two UAT exercises
- the scale of the UAT - should it be increased to better reflect the scale of the live Count
- Whether the Ecounting systems should be set up in the Count centres earlier, allowing for final testing over a longer period than is currently the case.
- Whether the 2016 or other mocked up data can be used to test any 2020 system at higher volumes (ie. without the need to scan the equivalent number of ballot papers)
- What in-built and manual checks should be carried out on provisional and final results that the system is producing

10.21.8 There was confidence that the result was accurate, based on the testing process. However, it was declared outside the planned 10 hour count time.

10.21.9 A repeat/review of the cost benefit analysis on ecounting/manual count and venues should be carried out to inform a decision on the approach to counting in the future. This should include an assessment of the level of risk which attaches to ecounting in meeting the planned deadlines for accurate declaration of results.

10.21.10 If a decision is taken to use ecounting in the future, the following should be taken into account:

- provisional venue bookings should be made as soon as possible as venues of the size and scale required for ecounting are in high demand
- procurement should commence as soon as possible with a contract manager (separate to the programme manager) to lead throughout
- even with a pre-existing contract extended by a deed of variation and suite of specification documents in place, the detailed work on the

contract was ongoing for 18-24 months (decision to extend was taken in March 2014, the deed signed in June 2014 for delivery in May 2016)

- the specification that was drawn up for the contract was highly detailed, requiring a very specific form of delivery. The specification should be higher level, requiring the contractors to specify how they would deliver the count within the election rules
- Discussion of any potential legislation changes should be held with Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission and any ecounting contractor as early as possible and the timeline/implications clearly set out to everyone
- EMB reflected a good range of expertise, covering technical, venue, project management.
- the live feed to the website was popular and should be repeated

10.21.11 Borough representatives should be directly involved in all elements. This includes:

- involvement at every stage of the contracting, including as full members of the procurement panel
- development of the specifications, the process flows and output reports
- Scoping, defining and timelines/approaches and data extraction/entry methods for the full range of information that they are required to provide to any ecount provider and to London Elects. This should also include early involvement of the Election Management System providers Testing of portals etc should be carried out as early as possible
- planning for and staffing the counts

10.21.12 If ecounting is ruled out, then London Elects should commence work immediately in partnership with boroughs to start to plan for a manual count, which is likely to take a number of days. This will need to take account of other workstreams in planning for communications with the public and media as well as planning for the declaration process.

11. Audit

11.1 Internal Audit reviewed elections preparations in two phases – the first commenced in July 2015, reporting three recommendations in September 2015, which concerned:

- clarification of the programme structure documentation to confirm the use of London Elections Management Board as opposed to setting up a new, duplicate body
- success measures to be added to the programme plan
- finalising the budget and the Maximum Recoverable Amount calculations – the MRA calculations had proven complicated and some high value contracts were still being let at the time which needed to be reflected in the final budget

11.2 The follow up Audit in March 2016 closed these three recommendations and sought assurance around the completion of the engagement approach document and the production of contingency planning documents, both of which were addressed.

11.3 The audit process and report were useful and gave assurance that good progress was being made.

12. Contingency planning

12.1 A suite of contingency documents were put together. This reflected the nature of the workstreams being responsible for the development of the planning

Document	Purpose
Gold Strategy for the security and business continuity of the London Mayoral and Assembly Elections 2016	Set out the strategic contingency plans for the election
IntElect Election BCP	Prepared by the ecounting contractor, this describes the continuity plans for the ecounting process
Venue	Expanded on some of the principles set out in the Gold Strategy and captures the thinking from a venue table top exercise
Crisis Communications Plan (internal document)	Defined the communications hierarchy in the event of a crisis
Programme (internal document)	Captured a summary of how each workstream lead would arrange to cover any changes to the workstream delivery

12.2 The Lead Event Officer ran a table top exercise in February, involving GLA staff who had been allocated roles in the venues. Scenarios were used to explore and assess the programme’s capability to respond to and recover from a disruptive incident that affects the delivery of the elections. The discussions were an opportunity to consider the strengths and weaknesses of policies, resources, communication, coordination, data management, and other aspects of emergency preparedness.

12.3 Planning for managing aspects of the count potentially overrunning not done far enough in advance enough and in future we should be more realistic about preparing for this eventuality, such as at putting in place arrangements for taxis and hotels.

13. Commentary on approach to 2020

13.1 In 2016, the election was delivered successfully with a record turnout and a record number of Mayoral candidates. The new delivery approach was well managed and was positively received by key stakeholders. As with every programme of this scale, there are further lessons to be learned and

improvements to be made, but the cross-functional team has been recognised as being highly effective, with the following benefits:

- a wider range of specialist expertise contributed to the delivery,
- a better understanding of the required resources has emerged, embedding wider organisational knowledge of the process, requirements and effective joint working
- there is an improved grasp of how to use existing GLA structures to support elections delivery
- elections tools, guidance and documentation have been updated and reviewed
- borough confidence in London Elects as a programme has been established
- procurements were managed by the people who were best placed to understand the relevant requirements
- staff have built new networks through working on the elections

13.2 The programme approach should be continued instead of a full time, permanent elections unit which had considerable 'down time' between the four year election cycle . Full consideration to refine the details of the programme is needed, in particular to stream line overlapping areas and to ensure sufficient capacity is built in. Work should be done now to fully record final structures, staff resources and work programming. Guidance notes need to be produced to capture approaches which were not formally documented in previous elections.

13.3 Workstream leads need to start planning how to embed their areas for delivery into forthcoming business plans. The established tools and knowledge will help with this. An identified programme lead would then be able to maintain oversight of these to ensure that cross stream dependencies are picked up and issues escalated to the GLRO as appropriate.

13.4 Resourcing requirements need to be assessed and allocated considering what the full/part time capacity needs are and how these will be staffed. There would be merit in taking the joint-working between workstreams, in particular legislation & rules, ecounting, programme management, a step further: London Elects staff working on these streams, with the DGLRO, should form a team at the centre of the project, working across their respective areas. The team should be collocated from around six months out on a phased basis. The pool of volunteers for the additional roles should also be repeated. In the period between elections, at least one GLA officer should have elections responsibilities, reviewing the approach to the count, keeping abreast of and influencing policy development and good practice as well as ensuring work for 2020 begins early.

13.5 An early decision should be taken on the required documentation for the programme, based on the learning from the evolution of the documentation used for the 2016 event. Discussions with programme leads will ensure a shared understanding of the approach continues. This will also allow earlier cascading of the documentation to boroughs.

- 13.6 However, there are a number of factors that need to be considered:
- the 2020 GLA elections are currently set in legislation for the same date as the General Election. There are also a number of PCC/some parishes and districts elections scheduled to happen nationally. If this remains the case, it has extensive implications for managing all aspects of the polls and count. There may be some consideration as to whether the date of the GLA election should be changed so that it does not take place with the general election. This would have very significant impact on planning for the GLA election. If such a decision, to change the date, were taken late in the day, the impact would be even greater
 - a review of the approach to counting the ballots (whether to use ecounting or a manual count), factoring in the issues faced in 2016 and also the potential requirements for coordinating counts for both the General and GLA Elections
 - continued engagement with borough colleagues is needed to maintain the good relations that have been established
 - managing of the impact on organisational knowledge caused by staff turnover
 - boroughs are under increasing pressure to streamline their functions and reduce expenditure and this impacts on the capacity that is available to support elections corporately
- 13.7 The GLA Elections are complex therefore London Elects supports the central conclusion of the Law Commissions' interim report into electoral law: that it should be rationalised into a single, consistent legislative framework. It follows it is important the GLA stays informed of and seeks to influence changes in electoral law; albeit recognising this influence is limited.

14. High level recommendations for 2020

- 14.1 The delivery of the 2016 GLA elections has been a huge learning curve for staff across the GLA but a large amount of knowledge on what needs to be done to run the London Mayor and Assembly elections now exists within the GLA and can be applied to the 2020 elections. Workstreams have each been tasked with recording their lessons in more detail.
- 14.2 The following recommendations are made:
- with some amendments to the programme structure, the same approach of using existing GLA staff resources to organise the election should be taken and the delivery of the election built into departmental business plans
 - The good practice and lessons learned summarised here and set out in detailed workstream documents should be taken on board by the relevant staff working on the next election
 - A further cost benefit analysis needs to be commissioned into manual/ecounting for the 2020 elections. This not only needs to address the issues arising from previous elections but also needs to deal with the implications of the next GLA elections being held on the same day as the next scheduled general election

- The budget and the approach to MRA allocations needs to be reviewed for 2020 elections – this will need to be carried out post November 2016 once the claims have been submitted by the 14 CROs and reviewed by the GLA
- A detailed project plan and timetable needs to be prepared over the next few months as an outline for 2020 over taking on board the lessons learned from 2016 and conclusions reached about continuing the programme structure, documentation approach and staffing leads
- Time should continue to be invested in borough liaison, with further opportunities for extending this explored such as involvement in procurement and contract management groups
- If ecounting is used again a review of the role of user and technical testing should be carried out

Appendix 1 Review of the recommendations from the 2012 Elections Review Panel Report

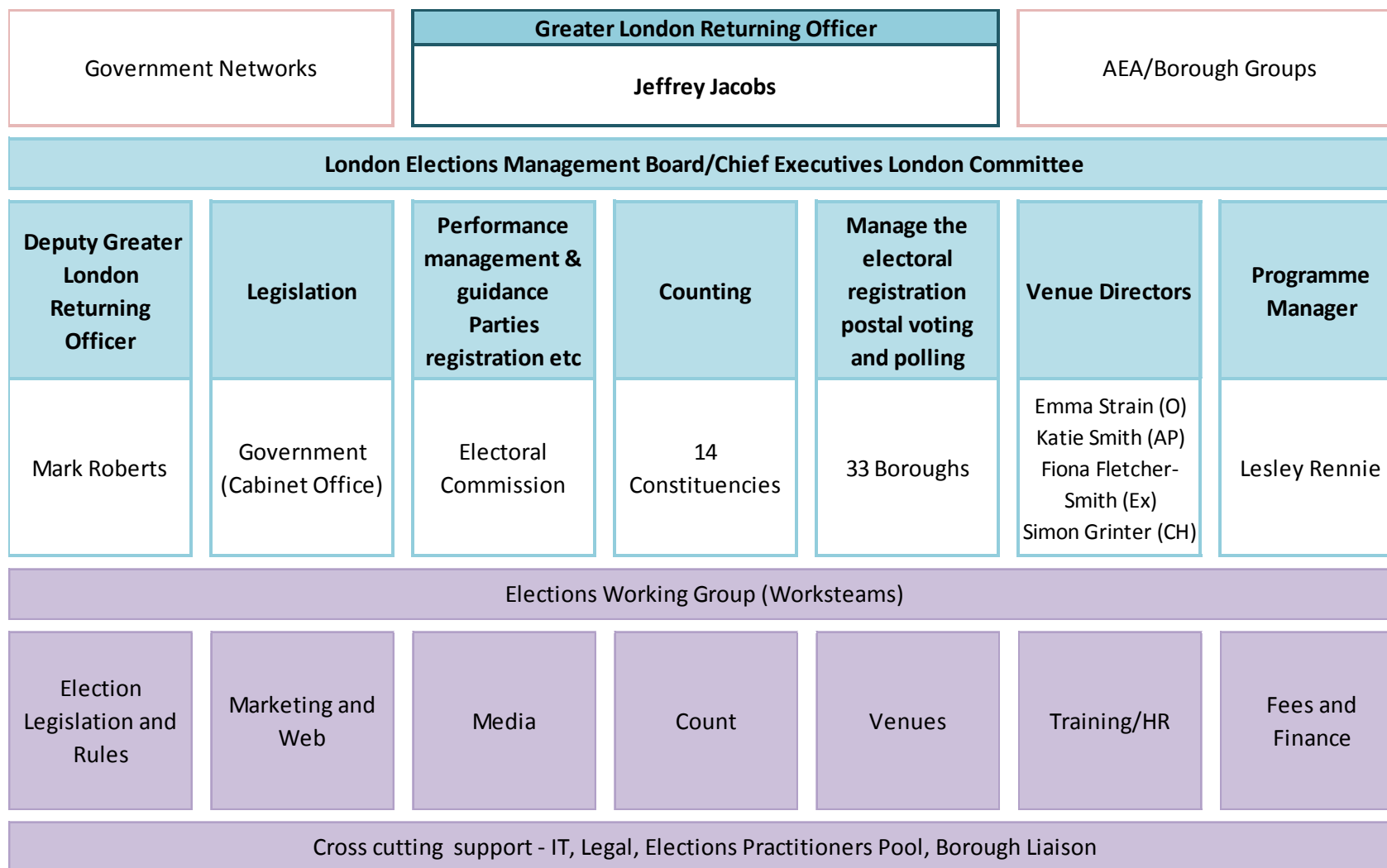
<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/about-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/elections-review-report>

Ref	Recommendation	Commentary
1	London Elects' proposals for the 2016 elections should provide the GLA with a cost and benefit analysis of moving to two centres for the count.	A cost benefit analysis was completed in consultation with the Electoral Commission. The CBA concluded that it was likely to cost more to use two count centres than three and most boroughs were content with the present arrangements
2	The Greater London Returning Officer should review and ensure there are adequate contingency arrangements in place, including arrangements for communications within count centres and between the centres and City Hall (if City Hall is again used as the declaration venue). He should ensure these arrangements are agreed with all partners in advance and known to all.	Business continuity and contingency planning was coordinated with a suite of contingency plans being put in place supporting the relevant workstreams. these were shared with boroughs in advance of the election A different approach to staffing the count centres was implemented with a Venue Director taking a lead on managing the relationships within the venue and back to a dedicated point in City Hall. These arrangements were communicated well in advance through a number of meetings with CROs and borough staff.
3	The Electoral Commission should establish whether and under what circumstances the GLRO should be able to call for a full Mayoral re-count and press Government for a change in the law to accommodate it.	Response from Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform - In other such polls where an overall result is aggregated from a number of counts at sub-divisions, the guidance precludes an overall recount being required on the basis of the result alone. Instead the senior responsible officer (such as a Regional Returning Officer or Chief Counting Officer) can direct re-counts at pre-aggregation count levels where there is reason to think that such a count was inaccurate or impaired in some way. The premise is that the 'lower- level' counts need to be effectively run and accepted and any issues should be raised at that stage rather than having re-counts called for on the basis of a close result on aggregation when there is no reason to doubt the numbers produced. If there is a lack of confidence in the initial counts that needs to be addressed rather than the overall result per se, which would involve considerable logistical co-ordination and cost for a full re-count

4	<p>Government should consider the feasibility of establishing a national framework for e-counting procurement, by the end of 2013.</p>	<p>Response from Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform - Whilst I can see that the procurement of e-Counting for elections on the scale of those for the GLA is a significant undertaking, in the light of that system only currently being used in London for statutory polls for which the UK Government has responsibility, I would not think it cost-effective for central Government to take on the role of building and maintaining a framework of suppliers</p>
5	<p>The Head of Paid Service should, in consultation with the Greater London Returning Officer, review the resourcing requirements for the London Elects team and for the 2016 elections and produce a report for consideration by the GLA Oversight Committee by 21 March 2013. The Head of Paid Service's review should include consideration of the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What options are available to embed the London Elects team within the GLA, including drawing on the GLA's existing resources to support the elections function as necessary; b) What specific resources and arrangements are required to provide effective arrangements for communicating with local authority elections teams; and c) What the budget provision should be for the 2016 GLA elections. 	<p>A new programme team, embedded in the GLA has been established and has been the subject of internal Audit. Work to transition to the new team was carried out. The programme was staffed from across the GLA and detailed planning and risk management undertaken. Extensive partnership work was undertaken with boroughs, receiving positive feedback</p> <p>The budget was reviewed, with savings anticipated (the full maximum recoverable amount claims process is not yet completed).</p>
6	<p>There should be one set of guidance which London Elects should produce. This should be published in draft form by June 2015 to allow for consultation and amendment.</p>	<p>A single set of guidance was developed in partnership with the Electoral Commission and consulted on with boroughs. This was supported by a set of documents setting out supporting briefings providing information on practicalities</p>

7	<p>The Greater London Returning Officer should develop a draft communications strategy setting out his plans for communicating with local authority elections teams and Constituency Returning Officers, share it with returning officers and seek their input. This should be completed by March 2015.</p>	<p>A new approach to engagement with CROs, BROs and borough staff was implemented over the past two years. This has been very well received, and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance and presentations at the Association of Electoral Administrators over two and a half years leading up to the election Introductory meetings with each of the CROs to discuss planning for the elections are underway Using existing opportunities for discussions such as CELC Participation in the London Elections Management Board, looking at elections good practice Involvement of borough staff in the Ecounting Management Board Ad hoc borough groups to discuss specific topics eg training, contingency plans etc <p>the approach was documented in the Elections Engagement Approach document</p>
8	<p>London Elects should consider the proposals made by boroughs in their feedback on the training and where possible ensure that training plans for 2016 reflect these proposals.</p>	<p>A sub group of borough representatives, supported by the Training and HR workstream led on the review and planning and delivery of poll clerk and presiding officer training. A set of tools were provided supported by a cascade training approach</p> <p>Ecounting training was reviewed and improved with better training materials and the delivery on the borough training day restructured to make better use of time.</p>
9	<p>The Greater London Returning Officer should ensure that the London Elects website is fully up and running by September 2015.</p>	<p>Improvements were made to the site's background functionality. The content was reviewed and updated where possible at present. This continued on a rolling basis as appropriate, for example to include the guidance once it was finalised and information on the nominations process. Following the confirmation of the marketing approach, the website was rebranded to align with the agreed colour scheme.</p>

Appendix 2 - Programme structure



Appendix 3 - Venue staff structure

