Date: 24 February 2017

Subject: Appointment of a Combined Authority Returning Officer

Report of: Liz Treacy, GMCA Monitoring Officer

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

To propose that Sir Howard Bernstein be appointed as the Combined Authority Returning Officer until 31 March 2017, with that appointment passing to Eamonn Boylan from 1 April 2017.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The GMCA is recommended to:

1. Appoint Sir Howard Bernstein as the Combined Authority Returning Officer for elections of a Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayor, until 31 March 2017 (inclusive).

2. Appoint Eamonn Boylan, as GMCA Head of Paid Service as the Combined Authority Returning Officer for elections of a Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayor, with effect from 1 April 2017.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.
**RISK/ FINANCIAL/ LEGAL CONSEQUENCES/DETAILS**

Risk Management – N/A  
Legal Considerations – as detailed in the report the GMCA is required to appoint a Combined Authority Returning Officer  
Financial Consequences – Revenue – N/A  
Financial Consequences – Capital – N/A

| TRACKING/PROCESS |  
|---|---|
| Does this report relate to a major strategic decision, as set out in the GMCA Constitution (paragraph 14.2) or in the process (paragraph 13.1 AGMA Constitution) agreed by the AGMA Executive Board: | No |

| EXEMPTION FROM CALL IN |  
|---|---|
| Are there any aspects in this report which means it should be considered to be exempt from call in by the AGMA Scrutiny Pool on the grounds of urgency? | No |
| AGMA Commission | TfGMC | Scrutiny Pool |
| N/A | N/A | N/A |
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The first election of a mayor of the GMCA will be held on 4 May 2017. Subsequent ordinary elections of the mayor will take place on the ordinary day of election for councillors in 2020 and then every fourth year thereafter on the same day as the ordinary day of election for councillors. The administrative model adopted for the GMCA mayoral election involves a Returning Officer (colloquially referred to as a “Local Returning Officer”) at district level for each of the ten constituent councils of the GMCA, with a Combined Authority Returning Officer (“CARO”) overseeing the election on a Greater Manchester basis.

1.2 The particular duties of the CARO include:

- issuing directions to Local Returning Officers;
- publishing the notice of election;
- administering the nomination process;
- publishing the statement of persons nominated;
- ensuring that candidates and their agents comply with the requirements relating to the content of election addresses;
- producing and distributing a booklet to every voter containing the candidates’ election addresses;
- collating the number of votes given for each candidate and calculating the result; and
- declaring the result.

2. APPOINTMENT OF A COMBINED AUTHORITY RETURNING OFFICER

2.1 The conduct of the GMCA mayoral election is governed by The Combined Authorities (Mayoral Elections) Order 2017 (“the 2017 Order”). Article 6(1) of the 2017 Order provides that: “The combined authority must appoint one of its officers, or one of the officers of a constituent council, to be the combined authority returning officer in relation to the election.”

2.2 It is considered that the most appropriate officer to be appointed as CARO would be the person holding the office of Head of Paid Service of the GMCA. This creates a degree of complication as on 1 April 2017 Eamonn Boylan will take over as Head of Paid Service, replacing Sir Howard Bernstein in that role.

2.3 It is recommended that the GMCA:

- appoint Sir Howard Bernstein as the Combined Authority Returning Officer for elections of a Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayor, until 31 March 2017 (inclusive); and
• appoint Eamonn Boylan, as GMCA Head of Paid Service as the Combined Authority Returning Officer for elections of a Greater Manchester Combined Authority Mayor, with effect from 1 April 2017.