

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons	9 July 2012
Subject: Election of Verderers - dates of nomination and polls	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>This report follows on from the report to your last Committee regarding the election of Verderers which must take place not later than 20 March 2013. This report proposes dates for the special meetings for the settling of the Register of Commoners, nomination meetings and polls.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>Its recommended that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two special meetings of your Committee to settle the Register of Commoners be held on 25th and 29th January 2013 • The nomination meetings be held on 25th February 2013, and if polls be demanded, they be held on 27th February in the southern parishes and 28th February 2013 in the northern parishes. 	

Main Report

Background

1. The Epping Forest Act 1878 requires that elections are held every seven years to return four Verderers to serve on your Committee. Two Verderers are elected for the northern Forest parishes and two for the southern Forest parishes. The next election must be held not later than 20 March 2013, and the Verderers will take office on 25 March 2013.
2. A report was submitted to May meeting of your Committee which asked you to approve the number of polling stations (four in the north and one in the south) and the fee for the poll clerks. It was stated in that report that a further report would be brought to your Committee asking for approval of the dates for meetings at which the Register will be settled, nomination meetings and polls.

Proposed election dates

3. An outline timetable was included in May report to your Committee, and dates are now proposed:

Town Clerk to write to those on the existing register inviting claims	By end of July 2012
Notice of intention to revise register to be published in local newspapers and placed on Epping Forest notice boards	By end of July 2012
Town Clerk to write to Local Authorities requesting them to check the Register against their electoral rolls	By end of July 2012
Draft Revised Register printed and placed on deposit	By the end of December 2012
Notice of deposited Register and Special Meetings to be published in local newspapers and placed on Epping Forest notice boards	December 2012
Meeting to settle the Register (Guildhall)	25 January 2012
Meeting to settle the Register (Epping Forest)	29 January 2012
Settled Register printed and put on deposit	Following the settling of the Register on 29 January
Town Clerk to write to all those on Register notifying them of the details of the Nomination meetings and poll dates	Following the settling of the Register on 29 January
Notice of settled Register, Nomination meetings and dates & places of polls to be published in local newspapers and placed on Epping Forest notice boards. The City's website will also be used to display information about the polls and to provide confirmation of whether a poll has been demanded.	Following the settling of the Register on 29 January
Arrange with all persons with more than one registration to choose a polling station	February 2013
Nomination meetings	25 February

Write to all on Register advising a poll has been demanded	25 February
Polling days	27 February (south) 28 February (north) (Polls for the north and south must be held on separate days)
Announce result	Immediately following the elections

Corporation of London Proxy Voting

4. The May report also raised the issue of the City Corporation exercising the right to vote in these elections. As outlined in the previous report, in the past the Chairman of this Committee and the Chairman of the Port Health Committee have been appointed by the Court of Common Council as proxy to vote on behalf of the Corporation.
5. While the Act permits corporations and companies on the register of commoners to vote by proxy appointed in writing sealed with the common seal, officers question whether it continues to be appropriate for the City to exercise a vote in the election of Verderers. As Members may be aware, this election is not covered by the usual requirement for a secret ballot, and Members may feel that it may be preferable for the Corporation to stand back from participating in an election which chooses people to sit on one of its own Committees.
6. If Members wish to exercise the vote, it will be necessary to recommend to the Court of Common Council that your Chairman (or if he is unable to vote, your Deputy Chairman) be appointed as proxy to vote on behalf of the Corporation in the election for the northern parishes. Similarly, it would be necessary to request that the Port Health Committee makes the same recommendation in respect of their Chairman voting in the southern parishes.
7. Members are asked to consider whether they wish to exercise the option of proxy voting.

Next steps

8. In order to progress the revision of the Register of Commoners, officers will be writing to each person included on the current Register inviting claims for inclusion on the Register. In line with the provisions of the 1878 Act, notice of intention to revise the Register will be published in

local newspapers, Forest notice boards and City AM. Officers are also considering other forms of publicity such as local radio.

9. Once claims have been received and reviewed, a draft revised register will be placed on deposit by the end of December 2012. Notice of this will again be published in local newspapers. This notice will also confirm the date of the meetings held to settle the Register, at which any interested persons may attend and apply to the Conservators to correct the Register by inserting or deleting any names.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. In considering dates for the nomination meetings and polls, the Recorder of London and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of this Committee have been consulted. Officers have also considered the timings of the 2013 Court of Common Council elections which will also be taking place in March.

Conclusion

11. This report proposes dates for the settling of the Register, nomination meetings and polls. Legislation provides that elections be held every seventh year, no later than the twenty day of March and that the Verderers take office on the twenty-fifth day of March in the year of election. In order to start this process notice will be given by the end of this month of the intention to revise the Register.

Background Papers:

Election of Verderers 2013, 14 May 2012 Committee Report
Epping Forest Act 1878 (Fourth Schedule)

Appendices

The Forest boundary for the purpose of registration is illustrated at Appendix 1

Contact:

Esther Sumner | esther.sumner@cityoflondon.gov.uk | 020 7332 1481