

PURDAH 2024-2025

Recommendation:		
1. To note the report.		
	Yes	No
Does the decision involve new expenditure?		No
Is there an existing budget for the proposed expenditure (insert code)	N/A	
What procurement level is required?	N/A	
Are there equalities impacts / an equalities assessment required?		No
Does this require a full council decision? (Reports for full council decision should still be sent to the relevant committee where possible.)	Yes	
Is there a background paper or papers? (provide links below).		No
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> As you will be aware, mayoral elections for the new, enlarged Combined Authority and for the post of Police and Crime Commissioner are due to take place on 2 May 2024. It is also likely that, during Civic Year 2024-25 a general election will take place, and all councillors are to be re-elected on the first Thursday in May 2025, along with county councillors. Officers therefore consider it useful to remind elected members about the guidelines and restrictions on publicity during any pre-election period and that these restrictions apply to all elections happening during this period. From the start of the pre-election period ('purdah'), the council must comply with restrictions outlined in Section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986. In addition a Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity published in 2011 makes clear that particular care should be taken in periods of heightened sensitivity, such as in the run up to an election. The Act defines publicity as "any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or to a section of the public." Generally, the Act says that we should "not publish any material which, in whole, or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party." The Code of Practice recommends that authorities should generally not issue any publicity which seeks to influence voters and that publicity relating to individuals involved directly in the election should not be published unless expressly authorized by statute. With regard to decision making within the council, the position remains that it is 'business as usual' unless there are very good reasons why this should not be the case. In the vast majority of cases, the pre-election period will have no impact on normal council business, including the approval of planning decisions. Elected members are also reminded that they may not use council provided facilities, including council email addresses, for political purposes at any time. 		
Issues arising from proposal		
None.		
Rationale for recommendation.		
Not applicable.		