

RETURNING OFFICER FACTSHEET – RE-COUNTS

1. This factsheet is for use by Returning Officers where a re-count is considered appropriate.
2. It is for the RO to decide when and in what circumstances to determine there should be a re-count of votes. The main circumstances where a re-count may be requested or indicated are:
 - Where a candidate or agent is not satisfied about the conduct and/or accuracy of the Count or Count process.
 - If the result of the Contest is particularly close i.e. with only a few votes separating successful and unsuccessful candidates. However, if the Returning Officer is content that the correct processes have been followed and each part of the process has been sufficiently scrutinised, then a close result should not of itself be a valid reason for a full re-count of the votes.
 - If there is an incident with the eCounting system during a Count e.g. a power failure. However, there are processes in place to recover the eCounting system safely, which are intended to avoid the need for a re-count in most circumstances. ROs are advised to consult their Fujitsu Manager and Technical Manager before deciding whether a re-count of any Contests should be undertaken.

Re-count Process

3. Where a re-count of a specific Contest is agreed to, it should be noted that this cannot be undertaken until:
 - all other Contests have been completed and results declared; and
 - all Contest reports and system reports have been run and the relevant data transferred to the Council's secure portable drives; and
 - the eCounting system has been cleared of all data.
4. Once all these actions have been undertaken, the Contest to be re-counted needs to be fully re-processed, e.g. registered, scanned, verified, adjudicated and counted again. If the same result is not obtained it may be necessary to perform more than one re-count of the same Contest. The process for re-setting the eCounting system needs to be repeated for each re-count. All reports and data will be captured from both the original Count and the re-count(s) and transferred to the secure portable drives once the Count is completed.

Timings

5. It will take between 1 and 1.5 hours on average to prepare for a first re-count following completion of all other Contests. Any additional re-counts will, on average, take 30 minutes to prepare.

eCounting Project Team