

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

<b>1. Meeting:</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL SCRUTINY PANEL</b>
<b>2. Date:</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup> September, 2010</b>
<b>3. Title:</b>	<b>Rotherham Election Turnout Analysis</b>
<b>4. Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's</b>

### **5. Summary**

Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel requested statistical analysis of the May Election turnout figures, to identify turnout change or information that could help members work more effectively in their wards.

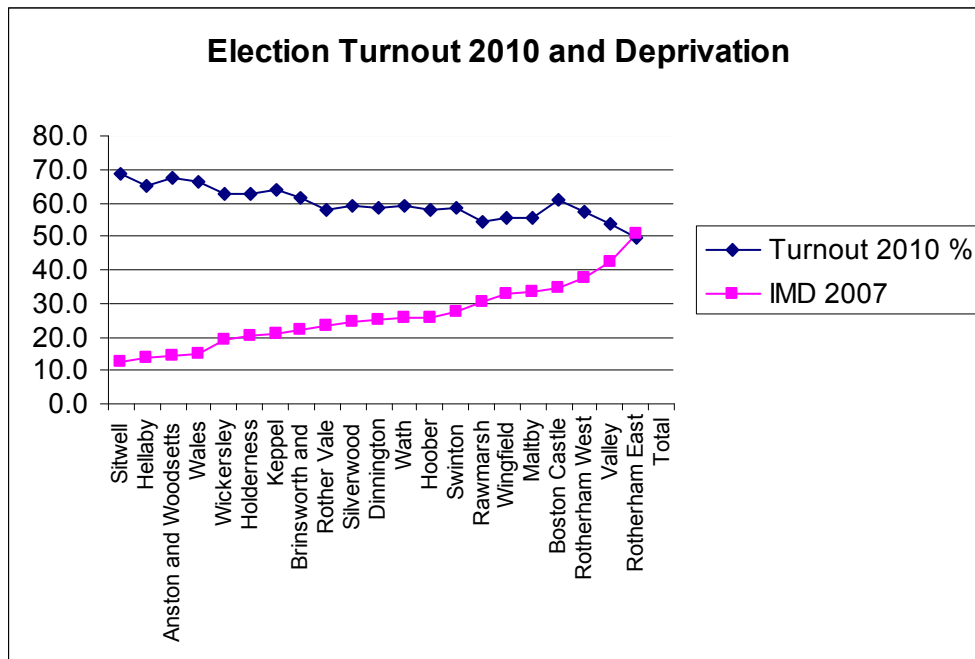
### **6. Recommendations**

That the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel note the contents of this report.

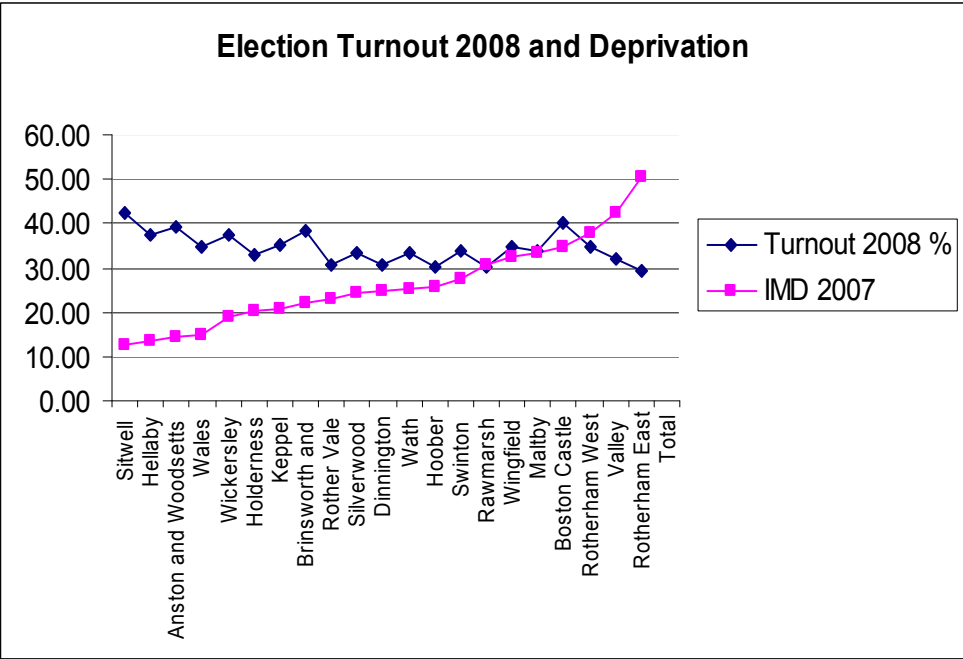
## 7. Proposals and Details

### 7.1 Deprivation

There is a clear correlation between turnout and deprivation. The least deprived wards (Sitwell, Hellaby, Anston) have the highest turnout in both 2008 and 2010. The pattern for the most deprived wards is rather more complex but generally they have the lowest turnout. Boston Castle is an exception, possibly because BME voters are more likely to turnout, allowing for deprivation levels.

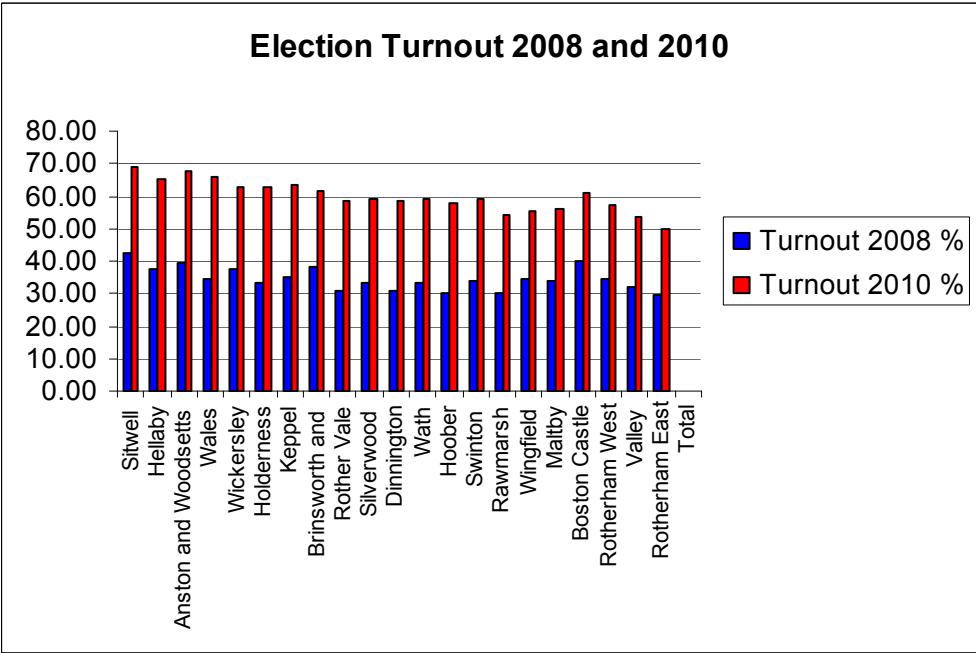


**IMD = Index of Multiple Deprivation**



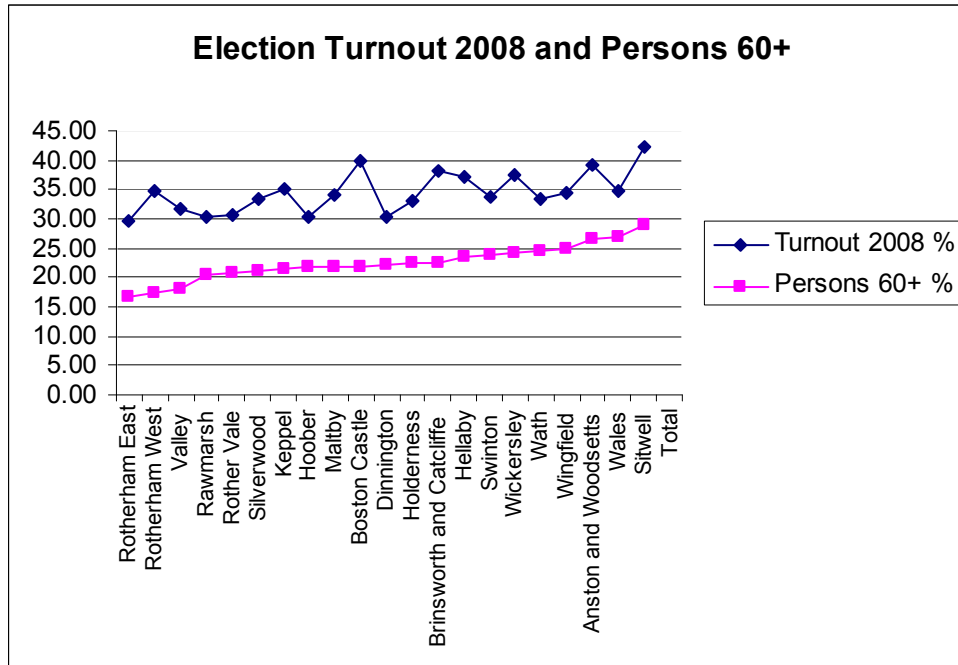
A study by Manchester University found that turnout is the same for Pakistani voters as White British. However, there is much evidence to show that Pakistanis are generally more deprived so their tendency to turnout will be higher relative to deprivation.

The 2010 election was unusual in that turnout was boosted by the General Election. This was an untypical election so the 2008 turnouts will be used to compare with other factors below to give an indication of local election turnout.



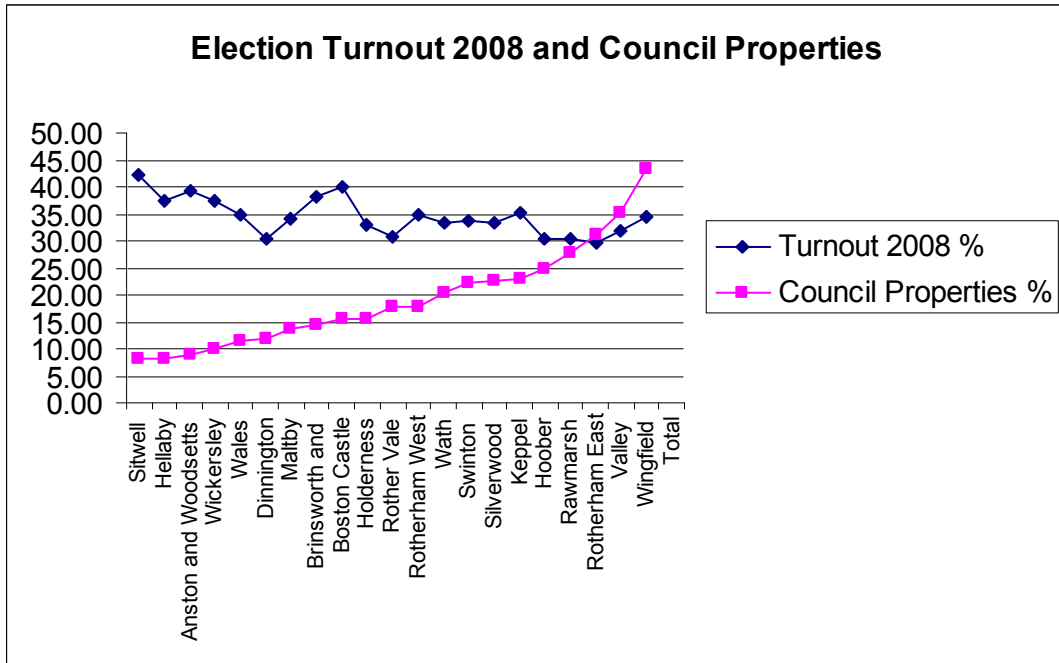
## 7.2 Age

Turnout is generally higher amongst older voters and this has an effect on Rotherham wards. Wards with older residents tend to turnout better although these also tend to be the less deprived and the two factors may combine to increase turnout.



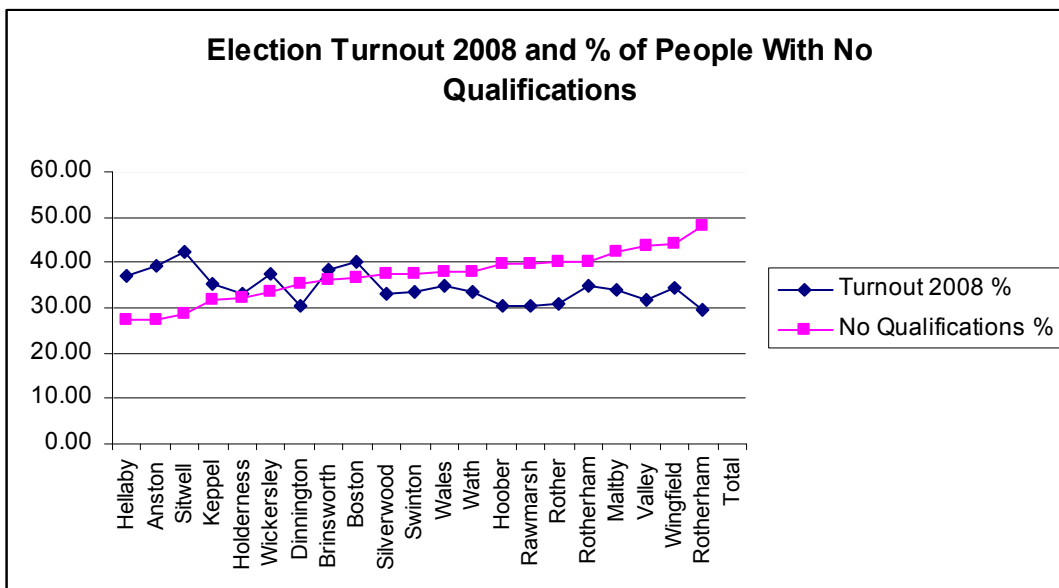
## 7.3 Tenure

Council housing is clearly linked to deprivation but there is a less clear cut relationship between the amount of council housing in a ward and turnout. Generally wards with few council homes have high turnouts but there is also a link with age. Council housing residents tend to be deprived (less likely to vote) but also older (more likely to vote). Thus, Wingfield has many older residents living in council housing and has a fairly average turnout despite high deprivation.



#### 7.4 Qualifications

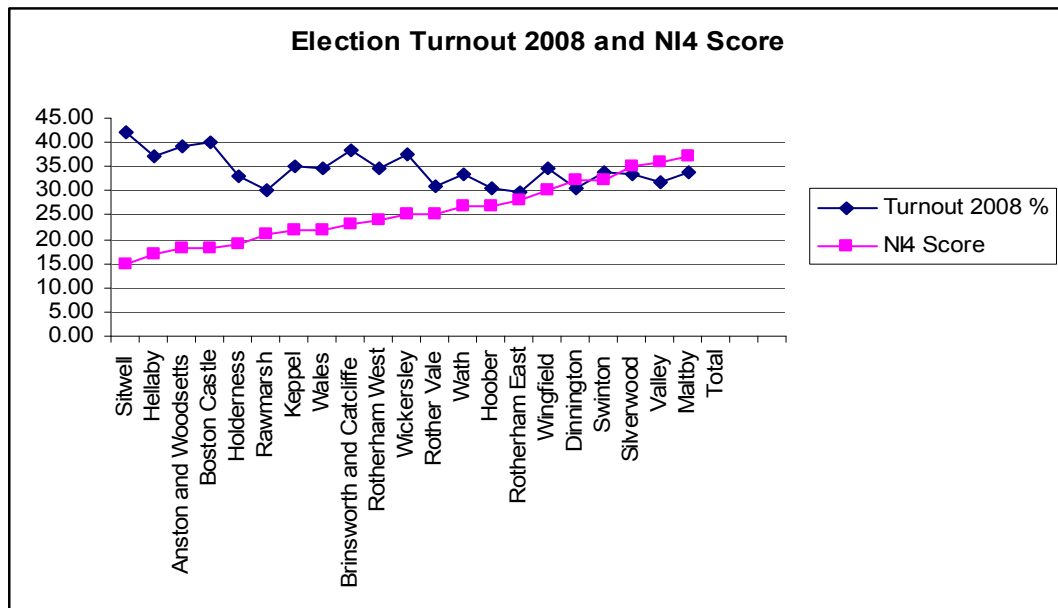
Qualification level is linked to deprivation and thus there is a pattern where wards with the fewest qualified votes have the lowest turnouts.



#### 7.5 National Indicator 4 – People feel they can influence local decisions.

In Rotherham, 25% feel that they can influence local decisions (2008 Place Survey), which varies from 15% in Sitwell to 37% in Maltby. There is a general link to deprivation with feelings of influence rising with deprivation. Wards with a low feeling of influence generally have the highest election turnouts. Wards with an above average NI 4 score (25-37%) had turnouts

averaging 32% but those below average (15-25%) had turnouts averaging 37%.



## 8. Finance

There are no financial implications directly arising out of this report.

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

If voter turnout falls significantly the election result may not be an accurate reflection of the will of the people and will constitute a challenge to governance arrangements.

## 10. Background Paper and Consultation

Non-applicable.

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