

CABINET

9 JANUARY 2017

Present: Councillors Chowney (Chair), Forward, Cartwright, Davies, Poole, Fitzgerald, Lee and Patmore

57. REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES

The Chief Legal Officer submitted a report which set out the recommendations of the Acting Returning Officer, following an interim review of polling places.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had recently undertaken a review of borough ward and county division boundaries within Hastings. The changes were due to take effect at the next scheduled elections, in this case the East Sussex County Council elections in May 2017 and the Hastings Borough Council elections in May 2018.

Although the next full review of polling places was not due to take place until 2018/19, the council was required to carry out an interim review to ensure all electors within the borough had access to appropriate facilities for voting once the boundary changes have taken effect.

The report gave an overview of the review process, including comments received during the consultation period and the criteria used by the Acting Returning Officer to assess potential polling places. A cross-party working group had been set up to consider representations received during the consultation period, carry out site visits and make recommendations on the location of polling places around the borough.

Following the interim review, the Acting Returning Officer was proposing to change the polling place for polling district N1 from St Helens Methodist Church, The Ridge to The Bridge Community Centre, Priory Road, due to the former venue no longer being in use. No other changes to polling district boundaries or existing polling arrangements were proposed as a result of the review.

The final proposals were due to be reported to a special meeting of Full Council on 18 January 2017, ahead of the publication of a revised electoral register on 1 March 2017.

RESOLVED:

- 1. To recommend that Council adopts the Acting Returning Officer's recommendations (as appended to the Chief Legal Officer's report) and publish the results of the review, and;**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Corporate Services and Governance to amend any decisions made under this review with regard to polling places or polling stations, should there be an urgent or necessary need**

The reason for this decision was:

Due to the changes made as part of the recent boundary review by Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), the council must carry out an interim review of polling places. The review must incorporate the division of its parliamentary constituency area (within the borough boundary) into polling districts and the places where electors are asked to vote. The council must comply with the requirements of

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the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Section 16, EAA 2006) and complete regular reviews of all polling districts and polling places. The council has a duty to ensure that the most suitable premises are used as polling places with regard to the needs of the electorate, subject to availability.