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# Governance Committee

Monday, 27th November, 2023 at 5.30 pm  
Conference Room, Parkside, Chart Way, Horsham

Councillors: Belinda Walters (Chairman)  
James Brookes (Vice-Chairman)  
Tony Bevis  
Jon Campbell  
Paul Clarke  
Jay Mercer  
Roger Noel  
David Skipp  
Mike Croker

You are summoned to the meeting to transact the following business

Jane Eaton  
Chief Executive

## Agenda

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	Page No.
1. <b>Apologies for absence</b>	
2. <b>Minutes</b> To approve as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 <i>(Note: If any Member wishes to propose an amendment to the minutes they should submit this in writing to <a href="mailto:committeeservices@horsham.gov.uk">committeeservices@horsham.gov.uk</a> at least 24 hours before the meeting. Where applicable, the audio recording of the meeting will be checked to ensure the accuracy of the proposed amendment.)</i>	3 - 8
3. <b>Declaration of Members' Interests</b> To receive any declarations of interest from Members of the Committee	
4. <b>Announcements</b> To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Committee or the Chief Executive	
5. <b>Planning Committee Review</b> To receive a report of the Monitoring Officer	9 - 28
6. <b>Polling Places and Polling Districts Review</b> To receive a report of the (Acting) Returning Officer	29 - 46

7. **Urgent Business**

Items not on the agenda which the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as urgent because of the special circumstances

**Governance Committee**  
**27 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Present: Councillors: Belinda Walters (Chair), James Brookes (Vice-Chair), Tony Bevis, Jon Campbell, Paul Clarke, Jay Mercer, Roger Noel and Mike Croker

Apologies: Councillor: David Skipp

GO/4 **MINUTES**

Councillor Bevis queried whether the amendment to the Constitution identified in minute GO/11 of the minutes dated 6 February 2023 had been made. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that she would check the position and respond.

The minutes of the meetings held on 6 February 2023 and 24 May 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

GO/5 **DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

GO/6 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

GO/7 **TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS TO PARISH COUNCILS**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which recommended that the Returning Officer be delegated authority to make temporary appointments to parish councils.

Members made comments, and asked questions, on the proposed delegation.

In response to a question asked as to whether the temporary appointment would automatically devolve to a district councillor, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that it would. In response to a further question asked as to what would happen if a district councillor was unwilling to take up the appointment, for example due to a conflict of interest, the Monitoring Officer advised that another district councillor could be asked to do so.

In response to a question asked as to whether the legislation specified that the appointment was temporary or if there was an expectation on the district councillor to resign once the appointment was no longer required, the Monitoring Officer advised that she believed that the appointment was temporary and not intended to be permanent but she would clarify the position once she had checked the relevant legislation.

## RESOLVED

- i) To ask Council to delegate authority to the Returning Officer to make temporary appointments to parish councils under section 91 of the Local Government Act 1972; and
- ii) To note that the Monitoring Officer will reflect the delegation in the Constitution (pursuant to her authority to do so, per Article 13, paragraph 13.3 b) 3 of the Constitution) should the recommendation be approved.

## REASON

Granting the Returning Officer authority to make temporary appointments to parish councils should (i) minimise the period within which a parish council is inquorate and so unable to carry out any business, as Council would otherwise be required to meet and approve the temporary appointment, and, (ii) negate the requirement to convene council meetings to consider and make such appointments.

## GO/8 **ELECTRONIC VOTING**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report of the Head of Customer and Digital Services which recommended that an electronic voting system be introduced for Full Council meetings.

Members debated the proposal and expressed mixed views. Some of the arguments put forward in favour of the proposal included increased accuracy, efficiency, accountability and transparency. Some of the arguments put forward against the proposal included concerns around cost, reliability and longevity.

With regard to the concern around reliability, the Monitoring Officer advised that she was assured by the Technology Services team that they had undertaken appropriate due diligence. She added that, should the technology fail, the Council would revert to its present system of raising hands and counting votes manually.

As to how the result of a vote would be displayed, the Monitoring Officer advised that she understood that the result would be displayed on a screen, and that names would also be displayed in the event of a recorded vote.

Clarity was sought as to the information that would be available to Committee Services. Whilst the Monitoring Officer was unable to clarify the position, Councillor Mercer, who had used electronic voting as a West Sussex County Councillor, explained that the system used by West Sussex County Council enabled officers to see how each Member had voted, but that information was not displayed more widely unless the vote was a recorded one.

RESOLVED

- i) To ask the Council to adopt and use an electronic voting system at its Full Council meetings.
- ii) To note that the Monitoring Officer will reflect the above-noted arrangement in the Council's Constitution (pursuant to her authority to do so as per Article 13, paragraph 13.3 b) 3 of the Constitution) should the subject recommendation be approved.
- iii) To ask Council to approve a £9,667 increase to the Technology Services' 2023/24 revenue expenditure budget to cover the one-off implementation costs.

REASON

- i) To achieve accurate voting.
- ii) Full Council must approve all budget changes.

GO/9 **PUBLIC SPEAKING AT COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which recommended that the Committee considered whether changes should be made to the provisions that existed under the Constitution for public speaking at ordinary and extraordinary meetings of Council.

The Committee heard from Paul Kornicky, a member of the public, who made a statement on the proposed changes. Whilst he was supportive of the proposed changes, he wished to see the reintroduction of the ability of members of the public to make statements at Council meetings.

Members made comments on the proposed changes.

It was agreed that consideration would be given at a later date as to whether the ability of members of the public to make statements at Council meetings should be reintroduced.

RESOLVED

- i) To ask Council to approve and adopt the changes recommended by the Committee, as detailed in Appendix D to the report; and
- ii) To note, and to ask Council to note, that any adopted changes will be reflected in the Constitution per the Monitoring Officer's authority to implement any such revisions pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 13.3 b) 3 of the Constitution.

## REASON

- i) To review public speaking rights at ordinary and extraordinary Council meetings and adopt any revisions considered appropriate.
- ii) It is good practice for councils to keep their constitutions and arrangements under regular review.

## GO/10 **PUBLIC SPEAKING AT CABINET MEETINGS**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which recommended that the Committee considered whether changes should be made to the provisions that existed under the Constitution for public speaking at ordinary and special meetings of the Cabinet.

The Committee heard from Paul Kornycky, a member of the public, who made a statement on the proposed changes. He expressed the view that Full Council rather than Cabinet was the appropriate forum for a public question time. He considered that it was, however, appropriate for members of the public to be able to make statements at Cabinet meetings and he wished to see that reintroduced.

Members made comments on the proposed changes.

Mixed views were expressed as to the appropriateness of allowing members of the public to make statements at Cabinet meetings. It was agreed that consideration would be given at a later date as to whether this should be reintroduced.

A concern was expressed that personal matters were not excluded from the questions able to be asked by members of the public at Cabinet meetings. An amendment was proposed, seconded and put to the vote for an additional line to be added under paragraph 4j 4.5 of Appendix D to read:

“e) in the opinion of the Head of Paid Service, relates to personal and/or inappropriate matters of the speaker.”

The amendment was carried.

The substantive motion, as amended, was then moved, seconded and put to the vote.

## RESOLVED

- i) To ask Council to approve and adopt the changes recommended by the Committee, as detailed in Appendix D to the report with the addition of the following wording in 4j 4.5 Scope of questions:

- e) in the opinion of the Head of Paid Service, relates to personal and/or inappropriate matters of the speaker.
- ii) To note, and to ask Council to note, that any adopted changes will be reflected in the Constitution per the Monitoring Officer's authority to implement any such revisions pursuant to Article 13, paragraph 13.3 b) 3 of the Constitution.

#### REASON

- i) To review public speaking rights at ordinary and special Cabinet meetings and adopt any revisions considered appropriate.
- ii) It is good practice for councils to keep their constitutions and arrangements under regular review.

#### GO/11 **DELEGATIONS TO CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (SECTION 151 OFFICER)**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which recommended the approval of three delegations to the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer).

Members made comments, and asked questions, on the proposed delegations.

Among the questions asked was what would happen if the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Leader of the Council did not agree. The Monitoring Officer advised that the delegation would not take effect, as the decision would be required to be taken together.

#### RESOLVED

- i) To ask Council to approve that the delegation to the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) in paragraph 10 of section 3.5.2 of Part Three of the Constitution be removed and replaced by the following:

"10. With the Leader of the Council, to approve the receipt and consequent expenditure and/or allocation (as the case may be) of grant monies for new projects or new service areas for which there is no provision in the Council's budget up to a threshold of £100,000 in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

11. With the Leader of the Council, to approve the receipt and consequent expenditure and/or allocation (as the case may be) of grant monies for existing projects or existing service areas for which there is no provision in the Council's budget up to a threshold of £249,999 in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee."

- ii) To ask Council to approve that an additional delegation to the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) be included in section 3.5.2 of Part Three of the Constitution as follows:  
  
“12. With the Leader of the Council, to be authorised to make decisions relating to any other income or expenditure for which there is no provision in the Council’s budget up to a threshold of £100,000 in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, such income or expenditure being the gross amount.”
- iii) To note that the Monitoring Officer will reflect the above-noted delegations in the Constitution (pursuant to her authority to do so, per Article 13, paragraph 13.3 b) 3 of the Constitution) should the recommendations be approved.

REASON

The recommendations will further streamline the decision-making process by allowing certain decisions to be made by the Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Leader of the Council in a timely manner without the need to obtain prior approval from Council. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have oversight of these decisions.

GO/12 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

*The meeting closed at 6.32 pm having commenced at 5.37 pm*

CHAIR



## Report to Governance Committee

Monday 27 November 2023

By the Monitoring Officer

### INFORMATION REPORT

Not Exempt



Horsham  
District  
Council

## Planning Committee Review

### Executive Summary

Officers are undertaking a review of the Council's Planning Committees to consider the suitability of existing arrangements. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Governance Committee of the review and the proposed areas for consideration.

### Recommendations

That the Committee is recommended to note the contents of the report.

### Reasons for Recommendations

To raise awareness of the Planning Committee review.

### Background Papers

Minutes of the March 2019 meeting of the Governance Committee

Minutes of the April 2019 meeting of Council

**Wards affected:** All

**Contact:** Bradley Daymon, Democratic Services Officer, 01403 215466

## Background Information

### 1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Officers are undertaking a review of the Council's Planning Committees to consider the suitability of existing arrangements. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Governance Committee of the review and the proposed areas for consideration.

### 2 Relevant Council policy

- 2.1 Council Plan 2023-2027: "Always listening, learning and improving".

### 3 Details

- 3.1 The Planning Advisory Service undertook a Peer Review on the operation of the Council's Planning Committees in November 2018. Following that Peer Review, the Governance Committee made a number of recommendations to Council at its meeting on 19 March 2019. A copy of the minutes of that meeting is contained in Appendix A to this report.
- 3.2 The recommendations made by the Governance Committee were considered by Council at its meeting on 24 April 2019 and a number of these were adopted. A copy of the minutes of that meeting is contained in Appendix B to this report.
- 3.3 One of the changes recommended by the Governance Committee was that "there should be a single Planning Committee comprising 18 Members". Council decided to retain the two area-based Planning Committees and a review of those arrangements is now being undertaken.

#### 3.4 Scope of review

The review will consider all of the recommendations agreed by Council at its meeting on 24 April 2019, with a particular focus on the structure of the Planning Committees.

The following possible options will be considered:

- Retain the existing arrangements;
- Retain the two Planning Committees (one for the north and one for the south of the Horsham District) but reduce the number of Members sitting on them;
- Replace the Planning Committees with one Planning Committee (covering the whole of the Horsham District) comprised of fewer Members; and
- Replace the Planning Committees with two Planning Committees (one for 'major' applications and one for 'minor' applications) comprised of fewer Members.

The review will include consideration of the following areas:

- Composition
- Local Ward Member participation
- Public (and parish council/neighbourhood forum) participation

- Frequency and timing of meetings
- Mandatory training
- Mandatory site visits
- Pre-meetings for Planning Committee members

Dependent on the outcome of the review and any changes agreed by Council, the Independent Remuneration Panel may be instructed to undertake an interim review of the allowances applicable to members of the Planning Committee.

## **4 Next Steps**

- 4.1 The review will be undertaken.
- 4.2 The Planning and Infrastructure Policy Development Advisory Group will be kept apprised of the progress of the review through its scheduled meetings.
- 4.3 All Members will have an opportunity to express their views at a workshop to be held in early 2024.

## **5 Views of the Policy Development Advisory Group and Outcome of Consultations**

- 5.1 The Planning and Infrastructure Policy Development Advisory Group were briefed on the review on 31 October 2023. The suggestions made by members of the PDAG in relation to the scope of the review have been considered in the drafting of this report.
- 5.2 The Monitoring Officer has been consulted on the content of this report.

## **6 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected**

- 6.1 The alternative course of action is not to undertake the review. This has been rejected as it is good practice to keep arrangements under review, and it would be contrary to the commitment made by Council at its meeting on 24 April 2019 to review any changes made after 12 months.

## **7 Resource Consequences**

- 7.1 The review will be undertaken using existing resources.

## **8 Legal Considerations and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from undertaking the review.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 There are no risks associated with undertaking the review.

## **10 Procurement implications**

- 10.1 There are no procurement implications associated with undertaking the review.

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 11.1 There are no apparent equalities or human rights implications associated with undertaking the review. Due regard to the public sector equality duty will be had when making any recommendations arising from the review.

## **12 Environmental Implications**

- 12.1 There are no environmental implications associated with undertaking the review.

## **13 Other Considerations**

- 13.1 There are no apparent GDPR, data protection or crime and disorder consequences associated with undertaking the review.

## Appendix A

### Governance Committee 19 MARCH 2019

- Present: Councillors: Michael Willett (Chairman), David Coldwell (Vice-Chairman), Andrew Baldwin, Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Philip Circus and Leonard Crosbie
- Apologies: Councillors: Matthew French
- Also Present: Councillors: Brian Donnelly, Nigel Jupp, Lynn Lambert, Godfrey Newman and Claire Vickers

#### GO/35 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### GO/36 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

#### GO/37 ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

#### GO/38 REVIEW OF THE FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONSTITUTION OF PLANNING COMMITTEES AT HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

Two members of the public addressed the Committee in respect of both the recommendations in the report, suggesting changes in respect of the composition of Planning Committees and the rules in respect of speaking, and the Planning Advisory Service's analysis in respect of the public 'call-in' to committee of planning applications.

The Monitoring Officer advised that, as she had been advised in advance of concerns regarding the public 'call-in' analysis, she had obtained a re-analysis of the figures by the Council's officers which indicated that the data in the Planning Advisory Service's report were accurate in that they were indicative and gave the general picture.

The Monitoring Officer then reminded the Committee of the process that it had followed over the last nine months in reviewing the functions, responsibilities and constitution of the Council's Planning Committees including visiting/speaking to a number of other local authorities in order to review and compare practices and procedures and engaging the Planning Advisory Service to undertake an independent peer review. The final report from this review had been circulated to all Members of the Council.

At its last meeting, the Committee had agreed that detailed recommendations to Council should be drawn up for consideration at this meeting, based on the draft recommendations presented at that time.

The Committee then considered each of the recommendations in turn, as follows:

1. *All Members need to be adequately trained and must attend mandatory training which includes the entire planned programme – only trained members may sit on Planning Committee.*

It was agreed to insert the words “the full programme of” after “must attend” and to delete “which includes the entire planned programme”

2. *Members can opt out of sitting on Planning Committee if they choose to. If Members do opt out they are still encouraged to attend training.*

It was agreed to add the word “so” after they and to delete the word “to” and add the words “on an annual basis” after “choose”.

3. *Review/changes to delegations with input from planning officers as per below:*

*Change of call-in - Where fifteen or more persons in different households living within the district or on the neighbouring district boundary or where bodies make a written representation (to include email), which discloses a material planning consideration within the consultation period.*

*Add to part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para 5 of Constitution - functions of Planning Committees:*

*Where a Local Ward Member of the relevant Planning Committee requests it and where an objection is received. Such request to be in writing (to include e-mail) and received by the Head of Development within 35 days of the date of validation for all applications with the exception of....*

It was agreed to delete the word “on” after “within the district or” and to replace it with “close to”; to delete the word “district” and replace it with “authority”; and to delete the words “of the relevant Planning Committee” after “Where a Local Ward Member”.

4. *Site visits to be undertaken as per the Constitution Part 5 para 7 to include – Planning Officers will facilitate a site visit to sites where access is restricted.*
5. *Look for a suitable code of practice which sets out general rules for Member and Officer communication at the pre-application stage subject to advice from Planning Officers.*

It was agreed to delete the words “Look for” at the beginning of the sentence and to replace it with “Officers to devise”.

6. *Single Planning Committee limited by numbers, adopted by the majority of Local Planning Authorities throughout the UK.*

It was agreed to delete the words “adopted by the majority of Local Planning Authorities throughout the UK” and that the committee should comprise 18 Members.

7. *Two area committees with improvements made by the above recommendations.*

This recommendation was not agreed following the approval of recommendation 6 above (see the Recommendations to Council below).

8. *Independent Remuneration Panel to be asked to look at the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance for members of planning committee.*

It was not considered necessary to include this recommendation as the Independent Remuneration Panel would carry out a full review of all allowances in due course.

9. *Amend 4a.19 Public speaking on agenda items in the Constitution to allow Parish Council or Neighbourhood Councils (as a Statutory Consultee) to speak for up to 5 minutes instead of 2 minutes on Planning or Licensing applications.*

10. *Any changes agreed to be reviewed after 12 months of operation.*

It was then agreed to RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

- (i) That all Members need to be adequately trained and must attend the full programme of mandatory training – only trained members may sit on Planning Committee.
- (ii) Members can opt out of sitting on Planning Committee if they so choose on an annual basis. If Members do opt out they are still encouraged to attend training.
- (iii) That the scheme of delegation of responsibilities to Committees of the Council be amended as follows:

Amend part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para c) 5 of Constitution:

“Where a Local Ward Member requests it and where an objection is received. Such request to be in writing (to include e-mail) and received by the Head of Development within 35 days of the date

of validation for all applications with the exception of clauses i to iv and viii below.”

Amend part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para c) 6 of Constitution:

“Where fifteen or more persons in different households living within the district or close to the neighbouring authority boundary or where bodies make a written representation (to include email), which discloses a material planning consideration within the consultation period and is inconsistent with the Head of Development’s recommendation with the exception of clauses i to viii below.”

- (iv) Site visits are to be undertaken as per the Constitution Part 5c (Planning protocol) para 7 to include – Planning Officers will facilitate a site visit to sites where access is restricted.
- (v) Officers to devise a suitable code of practice which sets out general rules for Member and Officer communication at the pre-application stage subject to advice from Planning Officers.
- (vi) That there should be single Planning Committee comprising 18 Members.  
***(Note: This recommendation was approved on the casting vote of the Chairman. Councillors Toni Bradnum, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess and Leonard Crosbie requested that their vote against the recommendation be recorded.)***
- (vii) That part 4a of the Constitution (Council procedure rules) para19 (Public speaking on agenda items) be amended to allow Parish Council or Neighbourhood Councils (as a Statutory Consultee) to speak for up to 5 minutes instead of 2 minutes on Planning or Licensing applications.
- (viii) That any changes agreed will be reviewed after 12 months of operation.

REASON

To comply with Article 13.2 Review and Revision of the Constitution.

GO/39 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

Members of the Committee thanked the Chairman for his good-humoured chairmanship of the Committee, including some difficult issues, over the last twelve months.



*The meeting closed at 7.35 pm having commenced at 5.30 pm*

CHAIRMAN

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## Appendix B

### Council 24 APRIL 2019

Present: Councillors: Peter Burgess (Chairman), Kate Rowbottom (Vice-Chairman), John Bailey, Andrew Baldwin, John Blackall, Toni Bradnum, Alan Britten, Karen Burgess, Jonathan Chowen, Paul Clarke, David Coldwell, Roy Cornell, Christine Costin, Leonard Crosbie, Ray Dawe, Brian Donnelly, Matthew French, Billy Greening, Tony Hogben, Nigel Jupp, Liz Kitchen, Lynn Lambert, Adrian Lee, Gordon Lindsay, Tim Lloyd, Paul Marshall, Christian Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Godfrey Newman, Brian O'Connell, Jim Sanson, David Skipp, Ben Staines, Claire Vickers, Michael Willett and Tricia Youtan

Apologies: Councillors: John Chidlow, Philip Circus and David Jenkins  
Absent: Councillors: Jonathan Dancer, Josh Murphy, Connor Relleen, Stuart Ritchie and Simon Torn

#### CO/55 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

#### CO/56 **DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### CO/57 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman:

- Advised Council that he had written to Lady Emma Barnard and Mr Gary Shipton congratulating them on their appointments as Deputy Lord Lieutenants for West Sussex.
- Congratulated all staff and colleagues who had taken part in the YMCA homeless sleep-over on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2019.
- Thanked all Councillors for their service over the last four years. He made particular reference to two retiring Members: Councillor David Jenkins who had served the Council for 43 years, including terms as Chairman of the Council in 1999/2000 and as Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning from 2001 to 2011, and Councillor John Bailey who had served the Council for 16 years, including a term as Chairman of the Council in 2008/09.

The Cabinet Member for Local Economy thanked and congratulated all staff involved in the organisation of this year's Piazza Italia over the Easter weekend.

The Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing advised that it had recently been agreed to lease nine flats from Saxon Weald for use as temporary accommodation. Also, the homelessness team had secured £84,000 of new funding from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to enable the further development of services for homeless individuals. Lastly, disabled facilities grants totalling more than £1,300,000 had been approved over the last year for adaptations to enable residents in the District to remain in their homes.

CO/58 **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

(i) Mrs Sue Kornicky asked the following question:

*In our representative democracy, the geographical ward or constituency is the critical association between the electorate and their elected representative. This is particularly so at district council level. The local ward member represents his or her local ward. Residents are promised that and expect it. It is much valued.*

*Planning decisions do, of course, need to be made on valid planning grounds. But, as they determine the usage of land, a good local knowledge of the area involved should surely enhance and enrich those decisions. A brief site visit seems a very poor substitute for such local knowledge and affinity. Communities expect that cases heard by planning committee will have strong local representation; not to raise 'nimby' concerns, but to ensure that the local impact is correctly assessed and properly represented.*

*The current planning committees have that strong local link inherently inbuilt. I have personally witnessed members of planning committees discharging that duty, admirably, whilst still retaining the necessary 'open mind'.*

*In that context, please explain how a single planning committee of 18 members (out of 48) would be established and, in particular, if the current geographical/Ward representation would be completely forsaken in favour of a politically balanced one?*

Councillor Michael Willett, the Chairman of the Governance Committee replied as follows:

*None of the recommendations restrict the ability of councillors to call in applications or represent the views of their constituents at planning committees as all members whether sitting on the committee or not will have the ability to speak and make representation on behalf of their ward. In fact it is argued that members not sitting on the Planning Committee have more freedom to speak and impart their local knowledge to Committee members therefore geographical and ward representation would continue.*

As a supplementary question, Mrs Kornycky asked, if recommendations (i) and (ii) of the Governance Committee were approved by Council, would Members' planning training records be published on the Council's website.

Councillor Willett noted the question and advised that, if not covered by the discussion on this item later on the agenda, a response would be provided.

(ii) Mr Paul Kornycky asked the following question:

*In order to reduce the number of planning applications going to committee, Paragraph 31 of the PAS report states, regarding any change to the delegation rules: 'A review would need to be conducted in detail to set clear objectives and to fully understand the impact the options would have'.*

*Agenda Item 7(a) proposes an increase in the public call-in threshold from 8 to 15.*

*The statistics referenced in the original report apparently logged just the first reason for call-in, even when there were multiple reasons e.g. a case with both public call-in and Parish/Neighbourhood Council call-in was simply logged as a public call-in. The report does not make this at all clear and is highly misleading.*

*No official report has been published showing, for example, those cases only being determined by committee because of public call-in, nor any impact analysis of any proposed threshold change.*

*The recommendation to increase the public call-in threshold from 8 to 15 therefore appears unjustified, unsubstantiated and arbitrary. It would clearly be unfair to those residents living in small hamlets.*

*So, as required by the PAS report, please explain the rationale behind the proposed threshold increase together with the supporting evidence, and clarify the impact that this is expected to have on the volume of cases coming to planning committee?*

Councillor Michael Willett, the Chairman of the Governance Committee replied as follows:

*The purpose of a planning committee is to consider strategically important developments, which are of importance to the whole District. It was considered that 8 representations or more, which resulted in 44% of planning applications being considered at committee, did not represent the more strategically important applications. A threshold of 15 or more is considered to better represent this position and ensure that more time can be spent on the most complex and contentious applications. This proposed threshold of 15 should be viewed in the context of the proposal to increase the speaking time of Parish and Neighbourhood Councils to 5 minutes. This will allow Parishes to represent their whole Parishes and not just those objecting or supporting a proposal. Furthermore the proposed increase in the threshold to 15 letters does not remove the ability for any application to be considered at committee if it is*

*considered that it is important to do so. Applications would still be able to be elevated to committee by a district Councillor, Parish or Neighbourhood Council or at the discretion of the Head of Development.*

As a supplementary question, Mr Kornycky asked, if the proposed increase in the threshold was not unfair to those living in small hamlets.

Councillor Willett noted the question and advised that, if not covered by the discussion on this item later on the agenda, a response would be provided.

CO/59 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET**

**Affordable Housing Investment - Proposal to set up Development and Management Companies to provide Affordable Rented Housing in Horsham District – Approval of Funding**

The Cabinet Member for Community and Wellbeing reminded Members that the Council was committed to delivering affordable housing to support its residents.

The Council had an excellent record in this area and had:

- Delivered the highest number of affordable homes in Sussex during the past three years;
- Supported Registered Providers with funding in excess of £9,000,000 to deliver 1,107 affordable homes since 2010; and
- Invested in excess of £5,500,000 in temporary accommodation, which would see the provision of 34 properties to prevent households that were managing the challenges of homelessness from having to be accommodated in bed and breakfast accommodation.

At its meeting in March, Cabinet had approved the setting up of a property development company and a property holding company, which would see the Council invest £10,000,000 to deliver its own permanent affordable housing through an Affordable Housing Company model. This funding would support the delivery of up to 70 units in some of the District's most in demand areas and reduce the number of households on the Council's Housing Register. Alongside providing additional affordable rented homes, this would also build an asset base that could enable the delivery of affordable homes into the future.

The Cabinet Member thanked officers for their work in developing this proposal and sought Council's approval for £500,000 in equity funding to the Property Development Company.

Members spoke in support of the proposal.

RESOLVED

That the provision of £500,000 equity funding to the Property Development Company be approved.

## REASONS

- (i) To increase the delivery of affordable housing.
- (ii) To make the best use of Section 106 Commuted Sums.
- (iii) To provide a financial return to the Council for reinvestment in the District.

## CO/60 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES

### (a) Governance Committee - 19th March 2019 Review of the Functions, Responsibilities and Constitution of Planning Committees at Horsham District Council

Four members of the public addressed the Committee in respect of the recommendations of the Governance Committee with particular reference to the proposed composition of Planning Committees and the rules in respect of speaking.

Councillor Michael Willett, the Chairman of the Governance Committee, introduced the item giving a brief overview of the research undertaken and the process followed by the Committee in reaching its conclusions.

Each of the recommendations was moved in turn by Councillor Willett, seconded by Councillor David Coldwell and debated as follows:

**Recommendation (i)** - That all Members need to be adequately trained and must attend the full programme of mandatory training – only trained members may sit on Planning Committee.

Members supported this proposal.

**Recommendation (ii)** - Members can opt out of sitting on Planning Committee if they so choose on an annual basis. If Members do opt out they are still encouraged to attend training.

Some concern was expressed regarding the operation and implications of the opt-out. Other views were that it was innovative and would allow withdrawal from membership of a planning committee rather than being an 'absent' Member.

**Recommendation (iii)** - That the scheme of delegation of responsibilities to Committees of the Council be amended as follows:

Amend part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para c) 5 of Constitution:

“Where a Local Ward Member requests it and where an objection is received. Such request to be in writing (to include e-mail) and received by the Head of Development within 35 days of the date of validation for all applications with the exception of clauses i to iv and viii below.”

Amend part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para c) 6 of Constitution:

“Where fifteen or more persons in different households (living within the district or close to the neighbouring authority boundary) or bodies make a written representation (to include email), which discloses a material planning consideration within the consultation period and is inconsistent with the Head of Development’s recommendation with the exception of clauses i to viii below.”

Councillors Willett and Councillor Coldwell accepted an amendment to the proposed wording of part 3.2.2 para c) 5 deleting the words: “and where an objection is received”.

It was moved by Councillor Paul Clarke and seconded by Councillor Jim Sanson that the proposed wording of part 3.2.2 para c) 6 be amended by the substitution of the word “ten” for “fifteen”. On being put, the amendment was declared LOST.

It was then moved by Councillor Christian Mitchell and seconded by Councillor Toni Bradnum that the proposed wording of part 3.2.2 para c) 6 be amended by the substitution of the word “eight” for “fifteen”. On being put, the amendment was declared CARRIED.

**Recommendation (iv)** - Site visits are to be undertaken as per the Constitution Part 5c (Planning protocol) para 7 to include – Planning Officers will facilitate a site visit to sites where access is restricted.

Members supported this proposal.

**Recommendation (v)** - Officers to devise a suitable code of practice which sets out general rules for Member and Officer communication at the pre-application stage subject to advice from Planning Officers.

Members supported this proposal.

**Recommendation (vi)** - That there should be a single Planning Committee comprising 18 Members.

It was moved by Councillor Ray Dawe and seconded by Councillor Adrian Lee that this recommendation be amended to read “That the existing two area-based Planning Committees be retained.”

It was then moved and seconded that a recorded vote be taken. The voting was as follows:



FOR THE MOTION: Councillors: John Bailey, Andrew Baldwin, John Blackall, Toni Bradnum, Alan Britten, Karen Burgess, Peter Burgess, Jonathan Chowen, Paul Clarke, Roy Cornell, Christine Costin, Leonard Crosbie, Ray Dawe, Brian Donnelly, Matthew French, Billy Greening, Tony Hogben Nigel Jupp, Lynn Lambert, Adrian Lee, Gordon Lindsay, Tim Lloyd, Paul Marshall, Christian Mitchell, Mike Morgan, Godfrey Newman, Kate Rowbottom, Jim Sanson, David Skipp, Ben Staines, Claire Vickers, Tricia Youtan

AGAINST: None

ABSTAINED: Councillors: David Coldwell, Brian O'Connell, Michael Willett,

ABSENT: Councillors: John Chidlow, Philip Circus, Jonathan Dancer, David Jenkins, Liz Kitchen Josh Murphy, Connor Relleen, Stuart Ritchie, Simon Torn

The amendment was therefore declared CARRIED.

**Recommendation (vii)** - That part 4a of the Constitution (Council procedure rules) para19 (Public speaking on agenda items) be amended to allow Parish Council or Neighbourhood Councils to speak for up to 5 minutes instead of 2 minutes on Planning or Licensing applications.

Members supported this proposal.

**Recommendation (viii)** - That any changes agreed will be reviewed after 12 months of operation.

Members supported this proposal.

The substantive motion was therefore **RESOLVED** as follows:

- (i) That all Members need to be adequately trained and must attend the full programme of mandatory training – only trained members may sit on Planning Committee.
- (ii) Members can opt out of sitting on a Planning Committee if they so choose on an annual basis. If Members do opt out they are still encouraged to attend training.
- (iii) That the scheme of delegation of responsibilities to Committees of the Council be amended as follows:

Amend part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para c) 5 of Constitution:

“Where a Local Ward Member requests it. Such request to be in writing (to include e-mail) and received by the Head of Development within 35 days of the date of validation for all applications with the exception of clauses i to iv and viii below.”

Amend part 3.2.2 Functions of the Planning Committee para c) 6 of Constitution:

“Where eight or more persons in different households (living within the district or close to the neighbouring authority boundary) or bodies make a written representation (to include email), which discloses a material planning consideration within the consultation period and is inconsistent with the Head of Development’s recommendation with the exception of clauses i to viii below.”

- (iv) Site visits are to be undertaken as per the Constitution Part 5c (Planning protocol) para 7 to include – Planning Officers will facilitate a site visit to sites where access is restricted.
- (v) Officers to devise a suitable code of practice which sets out general rules for Member and Officer communication at the pre-application stage subject to advice from Planning Officers.
- (vi) That the existing two area-based Planning Committees be retained.
- (vii) That part 4a of the Constitution (Council procedure rules) para 19 (Public speaking on agenda items) be amended to allow Parish Council or Neighbourhood Councils to speak for up to 5 minutes instead of 2 minutes on Planning or Licensing applications.
- (viii) That any changes agreed will be reviewed after 12 months of operation

**(b) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019**  
**Recommendations in respect of the West Sussex County Council**  
**S106 Task and Finish Group**

Councillor Leonard Crosbie, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the item and moved the recommendations of the Committee.

Councillor Brian O’Connell, who had chaired the Task and Finish Group, seconded the motion and presented the recommendations.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) That the current protocol agreed between West Sussex County Council and Horsham District Council be reviewed and updated as required, as agreed by the West Sussex County Council Team

Manager in conjunction with Horsham District Council in accordance with new legislation regarding CIL.

- (ii) That the protocol be reviewed by the Business Improvement Working Group on an annual basis.
- (iii) That the West Sussex County Council Team Manager be invited to attend the Business Improvement Working Group annually to update members and talk through current procedures employed and review effectiveness.
- (iv) That a training seminar be offered to parish clerks and members on the S106 procedure and how to interpret the monthly reports issued to parishes.
- (v) That the annual report produced by West Sussex County Council be distributed to all Members and Parish Councils.

CO/61 **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

None.

CO/62 **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

No questions had been received.

CO/63 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business.

*The meeting closed at 8.50 pm having commenced at 6.00 pm*

**CHAIRMAN**

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## Report to Governance Committee

Monday, 27 November 2023  
By the (Acting) Returning Officer

### DECISION REQUIRED



Not Exempt

## Polling Places and Polling Districts Review

### Executive Summary

The council is required to undertake a review of all polling districts and polling places to be completed by 31 January 2025.

Accordingly, a review of the provision of polling places, and the polling district boundaries has been undertaken to satisfy this requirement within the requisite timeframe. A number of changes were proposed to the schedule of polling places. The consultation process in respect of this is now complete and the recommendations are set out in Appendix 1.

### Recommendations

That the Committee is recommended:

- i) To recommend that Council approves the revised schedule of polling districts and polling places, as set out in Appendix 1, for all elections

### Reasons for Recommendations

- i) To ensure that polling districts, polling places and polling stations are relevant and fit for purpose.
- ii) To ensure statutory compliance.

### Background Papers

Schedule of polling districts, places and stations  
Responses to consultation.

**Contact:** Aisha Nottage, Democratic Services and Elections Manager.

## **Background Information**

### **1 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The Council has a legal duty to complete a review of polling districts and polling places in its area by 31 January 2025, with subsequent compulsory reviews undertaken every five years. If approved, the changes will take effect from 1 January 2024 and the electoral register will be republished to incorporate any changes, if required. The last compulsory review took place in 2019.
- 1.2 Polling districts are geographical areas created by sub-dividing the Horsham District electoral area into smaller parts for voting. Each polling district must be allocated a polling place which is a building or area in which the polling stations will be situated. The polling place must be within the boundaries of the polling district for which it serves, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area outside of that polling district.
- 1.3 Although the statutory requirement is to review the polling districts and places in relation to UK Parliamentary General Elections, the polling places and districts adopted pursuant to this review will be used at all future elections taking place within the district.

### **2 Relevant Council policy**

- 2.1 To ensure statutory compliance and the successful delivery of elections.

### **3 Details**

- 3.1 The review of polling districts and polling places in the Horsham area began on 2 October 2023 and closed on 30 October 2023.
- 3.2 The Notice of Review and schedule of existing and proposed polling districts and places were published on the Council's website on 2 October 2023. The schedule included comments from the (Acting) Returning Officer. A press release was also issued. A consultation was undertaken, whereby District and County councillors, parish and neighbourhood councils, local MPs and party agents were advised directly of the review and their comments sought.
- 3.3 The principles underlying the proposals were, as far as practicable:
  - To ensure that all electors in the District have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
  - To ensure that where possible, in line with Electoral Commission's guidelines, no more than 2,250 electors are allocated to each polling station.
  - To ensure that polling places are accessible to people with disabilities.
- 3.4 Where possible, the proposed polling place allocated to a polling district is within the boundaries of that polling district. There are circumstances where this has not been possible, however a full investigation of the options has been undertaken.

- 3.5 The schedule, as published, proposed the following changes:
- The polling place for polling district HGGB would be the Function Room at Broadbridge Heath Parish offices. This is considered more convenient for electors than the previous polling station at the Bridge, as it is accessible by foot for many within the polling district, whilst also providing sufficient parking.
  - The polling place/station for polling district HHNP would be Park Barn, North Street, as it is more central within the polling district, than the previous polling station at London Road Methodist Church.
  - The polling place/station for polling district HHXG would be Horsham Youth Centre, Hurst Road, as it is within the polling district. Voters in HHXG have previously voted at the Youth Centre, however have recently voted at Park Barn, North Street, when the Youth Centre was unavailable.
  - The polling place/station for polling district HLVA would be The Millennium Hall, as it is within the polling district and is a suitable venue for a double polling station.
- 3.6 Representations were received from a local Member in relation to the polling stations within the Forest ward. Following investigation, it is proposed that no changes are made to the polling stations within the ward as no suitable alternative venues have been identified. It has been agreed that this will be kept under review, should a suitable venue become available.
- 3.7 Representations were also received from a local Member in relation to the polling station within the Nuthurst ward. Voters in Nuthurst have voted at Mannings Heath Village Hall since 2019. Turnout at the local elections in 2019 and 2023 were 42% and 40% respectively. The turnout in the 2023 elections was the highest across the District. Further to this, we have received no adverse comments from voters in relation to the use of this venue. It should be noted that a number of parishes of this size and larger have only one polling station/place (e.g. Ashington, Itchingfield, Rudgwick, Slinfold, Steyning, Thakeham, Warnham, West Chiltington) so this is not an unusual situation. It is therefore proposed that the existing arrangements remain unchanged.
- 3.8 A representation was further received from a County Councillor in relation to the use of the Holbrook Club for HKXC. The polling district does not have a suitable venue within its boundaries, and currently voters attend the Holbrook Club. Following discussions with ward Members, it is proposed that voters in HKXC continue to attend the Holbrook Club. If voters in HKXC were to attend the Horsham Youth Centre, there are concerns that there would be pressure on parking and traffic at the venue. There is also a concern regarding the administration of the West Sussex County Council elections. Should the voters in HKXC attend Horsham Youth Centre, as well as the voters of HHNP, the polling station staff would be administering the poll for two county divisions (Holbrook and Horsham Hurst). This would introduce an element of risk in relation to the issuing of ballot papers, and ensuring the ballot papers are contained within the correct ballot box. Further to this, we have not received any adverse comments from voters in relation to the location of this polling station. For these reasons, it is proposed that the existing arrangements remain unchanged.

- 3.9 Further, it is proposed that the polling district boundaries remain unchanged, however due to the Parliamentary Boundary Review there are proposed amendments to the naming of the polling districts within Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead. The polling districts are currently named to signify the Parliamentary constituency that they form part of. Those polling districts that fall within the Arundel & South Downs constituency begin with “A”, whereas those in the Horsham constituency begin with “H”. As such, it is proposed that polling districts in the Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead ward are renamed so that the first letter of the polling district code is “H”, to represent that following the next UK Parliamentary General Election, these polling districts will form part of the Horsham constituency.
- 3.10 Consideration has been given to accessibility of all polling stations, and the use of ramps will be investigated further at relevant polling stations. Where there are concerns that cannot be addressed with a ramp, and there are no suitable alternatives, staffing levels will be adjusted accordingly.
- 3.11 Where there is a change to the polling station for a given polling district, the poll card for voters within that polling district will be amended to highlight that voters should check the location of their polling station, as there has been a change.
- 3.12 Details of all consultation responses and the local authority/(Acting) Returning Officer’s comments are attached (Appendix 2).

## **4 Next Steps**

- 4.1 If approved, the recommendations in relation to the polling districts and polling places set out in Appendix 1 will be implemented with effect from 1 January 2024.

## **5 Views of the Policy Development Advisory Group and Outcome of Consultations**

- 5.1 Consultation has been carried out as set out in Section 3 above and comments received incorporated where appropriate. All Horsham District Councillors were consulted directly, and as such the views of a Policy Development Advisory Group were not sought.

## **6 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected**

- 6.1 Alternative venues and arrangements were considered and investigated, as outlined in section 3.
- 6.2 The option of conducting the review at a later date was considered but rejected given that a UK Parliamentary General Election could take place, at short notice, at any time until January 2025. Conducting the review at this stage should ensure that the selection of polling stations are the most appropriate for the upcoming elections and that the Council has sufficient resource to undertake the review and service any general election held at short notice.



## **7 Resource Consequences**

- 7.1 The total cost for the hire of the polling stations in the May 2023 elections was £19,851. The projected cost of hiring the revised polling stations (as contained in the schedule) for the elections in May 2024 is £19,750. This will be subject to any annual price increases applied by the individual venues. Horsham District Council recharges the cost of the UK Parliamentary General Election, Police and Crime Commissioner elections, West Sussex County Council and Parish Council elections to the relevant body. As such, the cost of these polling stations to Horsham District Council is limited to district council elections, by-elections and local referenda, such as Neighbourhood Plan Referenda.
- 7.2 The review was undertaken by council officers. Therefore, other than officer time, there are no other resource consequences associated with conducting the subject review.

## **8 Legal Considerations and Implications**

- 8.1 The power to designate polling districts and places rests with the Council.
- 8.2 The Council is required under section 17 the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and section 18c of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to carry out a review of polling places and districts at least every five years. In conducting the review, local authorities must follow the rules set out in Schedule A1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- 8.3 In formulating the proposals contained in this report, it is noted that the Electoral Commission's guidance on polling district and polling place reviews was followed.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 The review was undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements and after due consultation. Accordingly, there should not be any risks associated with undertaking the subject review.
- 9.2 Otherwise, risk assessments in relation to polling stations will be undertaken at appropriate times.

## **10 Procurement implications**

- 10.1 There are no procurement implications arising from undertaking the subject review.

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 11.1 The Council has had regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. This provides, inter alia, that local authorities should have due regard to (i) the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, (ii) the need to

advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not, and, (iii) the need to foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not. (The protected characteristics are as follows: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation).

- 11.2 The Council does not think that the change in polling places and polling stations would have an adverse impact on individuals with protected characteristics. Individuals who may be impacted by polling station changes are likely to be those who may find it difficult to physically go to or access a polling station, whether due to age, disability, pregnancy or otherwise. However, all polling stations are reviewed to ensure adaptations are made where possible to improve accessibility for voters and disabled parking is provided. Staff at all polling stations will offer assistance to any voters that may require it. The Elections Team can offer support with alternative ways of voting, such as by post or proxy.
- 11.3 The proposals will have no detrimental impact on human rights. Officers attempted to seek the views of a group representing residents with accessibility needs however no such group operating in the District was identified. The proposals aim to provide accessible polling stations to voters, within their polling district where possible. Where this is not possible, the closest suitable venue has been selected. There will always be a need for some electors to use private transport to access their polling station and for those who are not able to do so alternative methods are available (e.g. postal and proxy voting). Where possible, a dedicated accessible parking bay will be reserved for those who require it. In administering all elections, the Returning Officer has regard to the need to consider equality and diversity issues. The accessibility of polling places is constantly reviewed and whenever possible fully accessible premises are used.
- 11.4 In addition, in avoiding the use of schools as polling stations, this would ensure that the education of young people in the District is not disrupted.

## **12 Environmental Implications**

- 12.1 There are no environmental implications.

## **13 Other Considerations**

- 13.1 There are no other considerations.

## SCHEDULE OF POLLING PLACES AND STATIONS

Note, it has been resolved that schools will no longer be used as polling stations to avoid disruption.

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
<b>Amberley Parish</b>						
Pulborough, Coldwaltham & Amberley	ASNA (Amberley)	Arundel & South Downs	390	Amberley Church Hall, Church Street, Amberley, Arundel, BN18 9ND		No change
<b>Ashington Parish</b>						
West Chiltington, Thakeham & Ashington	ASNB (Ashington)	Arundel & South Downs	1670	Ashington Community Centre, Foster Lane, Ashington, Pulborough, RH20 3PG		No change
<b>Ashurst Parish</b>						
Steyning & Ashurst	ACNC (Ashurst)	Arundel & South Downs	170	The Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning, BN44 3XZ		No change
<b>Billingshurst Parish</b>						
Billingshurst	HBFA (Billingshurst West)	Horsham	1877	Billingshurst Library, Mill Lane, Billingshurst, RH14 9JZ	Billingshurst Library is out of polling district (HBFC). There are no suitable alternatives within the polling district, and the Library is accessible with sufficient parking.	No change
	HBFB (Billingshurst South)		2239	St Gabriels Church Hall, East Street, Billingshurst, RH14 9QH		No change
	HBFC (Billingshurst North)		2580	Billingshurst Centre, Roman Way, Billingshurst, RH14 9QW (2)		No change
<b>Bramber Parish</b>						
Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote	ACNE (Bramber)	Arundel & South Downs	540	Conservatory, Castle Hotel, The Street, Bramber, BN44 3WE	The room is not ideal due to the distance from the car park to the polling station, however there are no suitable alternatives in the polling district.	No change
<b>Broadbridge Heath Parish</b>						
Broadbridge Heath	HGGA (Broadbridge Heath)	Horsham	2261	St Johns Church Hall, Church Road, Broadbridge Heath, Horsham, RH12 3LD		No change

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
	HGGB (Wickhurst Green)		1497	The Bridge Leisure Centre, Wickhurst Lane, Broadbridge Heath, RH12 3YS	Access to the polling station at the Bridge is mostly by car, due to the road network and pavements. There is also a distance to walk from the car, to the polling station itself.	It is suggested that the Function Room at the Broadbridge Heath Parish offices, Sargent Way, RH12 3TS is used as an alternative to the Bridge. The Parish Offices has good accessibility and parking, whilst also being accessible by foot.
<b>Coldwaltham Parish</b>						
Pulborough, Coldwaltham & Amberley	APNI (Coldwaltham)	Arundel & South Downs	661	Sandham Memorial Village Hall, London Road, Coldwaltham, Pulborough, RH20 1GG	The lobby area is small, and potentially not possible for wheelchair users to access the polling station. However, there are no suitable alternatives in the polling district.	No change
<b>Colgate Parish</b>						
Colgate & Rusper	HLNJ (Colgate)	Horsham	422	Colgate Memorial Hall, Forest Road, Colgate, Horsham, RH12 4SY		No change
	HLSA (Faygate)		355	Faygate Village Hall, Park Road, Faygate, Horsham, RH12 4SG		No change
	HLSC (Kilwood Vale)		1910	The Green at Kilwood Vale, The Clubhouse, Rookfield Road, RH12 0AX		No change
<b>Cowfold Parish</b>						
Cowfold, Shermanbury & West Grinstead	AFNL (Cowfold)	Arundel & South Downs	1303	Allmond Centre, Fairfield Cottages, Cowfold, Horsham, RH13 8BL	This polling district will become part of the Horsham constituency at the next Parliamentary election.	The polling district to be renamed "HFNL (Cowfold)" to match the naming convention.
<b>Denne Neighbourhood</b>						
Denne	HRNN (Blackbridge)	Horsham	2360	Blackbridge Community Centre, Three Acre, Horsham, RH12 1RS (2)		No change
	HRQN (Highwood)		949	Highwood Mill, The Boulevard, Horsham, RH12 1GG	This room is not ideal due to need to manage the security door to access the premises but there is no viable alternative at present.	No change, however 3 poll clerks will be appointed to the station, where possible, to ensure accessibility
	HRNO (Denne)		1361	The Causeway Barn, Causeway, Horsham, RH12 1HE		No change
	HHNP (Horsham Park)		537	London Road Methodist Church, London Road, Horsham, RH12 1AN	Whilst London Road Methodist Church is within the polling district, there are difficulties with parking.	Park Barn, North Street, to be reinstated as the polling station for electors in HHNP as it is more central within the polling district, and has suitable parking nearby.
Holbrook West	HKXC (Millpond)	Horsham	636	The Holbrook Club, North Heath Lane, Horsham, RH12 5PJ		No change

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
	HHXG (Collyers)		630	Park Barn, North Street, Horsham, RH12 1RJ	Polling station is out of polling district.	Horsham Youth Centre, Hurst Road, is within the polling district and has previously been used as a polling station. It also has good accessibility and therefore it is proposed that Horsham Youth Centre is the polling station for HHXG.
<b>Forest Neighbourhood</b>						
Denne	HRRB (Chesworth)	Horsham	1005	Horsham YMCA Football Club, Gorings Mead, Horsham, RH13 5BP		No change
Forest	HERA (Forest)		1302	Brighton Road Baptist Church, Brighton Road, Horsham, RH13 5BD	Polling station out of polling district (HHPH), however there are no suitable alternatives within the polling district. Voters for this polling district have voted at this station for several elections and it has been deemed suitable.	No change
	HRPI (Oakhill)		1615	Brighton Road Baptist Church, Brighton Road, Horsham, RH13 5BD	Polling station out of polling district (HHPH), however there are no suitable alternatives within the polling district. Voters for this polling district have voted at this station for several elections and it has been deemed suitable.	No change
	HHPH (New Street)		1757	St Leonards Church Hall, Cambridge Road, Horsham, RH13 5ED		No change
	HHJA (Pollards)		543	St Leonards Church Hall, Cambridge Road, Horsham, RH13 5ED	Polling station out of polling district (HHPH), however there are no suitable alternatives within the polling district. Voters for this polling district have voted at this station for several elections and it has been deemed suitable.	No change
	HRJB (Millais)		277	St Leonards Church Hall, Cambridge Road, Horsham, RH13 5ED	Polling station out of polling district (HHPH), however there are no suitable alternatives within the polling district. Voters for this polling district have voted at this station for several elections and it has been deemed suitable.	No change
	HEVD (Station Road)		22	St Leonards Church Hall, Cambridge Road, Horsham RH13 5ED (Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham, RH12 4DT for West Sussex County Council elections)	Polling station out of polling district (HHPH), however there are no suitable alternatives within the polling district. Voters for this polling district have voted at this station for several elections and it has been deemed suitable.	No change – but note that for West Sussex County Council elections, HEVD will continue to be allocated to Roffey Millennium Hall to ensure that voters attend a polling station within the relevant electoral area
Roffey South	HEVC (Foundry)		732	Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham, RH12 4DT		No change

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
<b>Henfield Parish</b>						
Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote	ACPB (Oreham)	Arundel & South Downs	146	Small Dole Village Hall, Henfield Road, Small Dole, Henfield, BN5 9XE	No level access to the polling station.	No change but investigate whether a ramp could be provided
Henfield	AFNW (Henfield)	Arundel & South Downs	3832	The Henfield Hall, Coopers Way, Henfield, BN5 9EQ (2)		No change
<b>Itchingfield Parish</b>						
Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham	HBND (Barns Green)	Horsham	1077	Barns Green Village Hall, Muntham Drive, Barns Green, Horsham, RH13 0PT		No change
<b>Lower Beeding Parish</b>						
Nuthurst & Lower Beeding	HLNM (Lower Beeding)	Horsham	712	Parish Room, Holy Trinity Church, Sandygate Lane, Lower Beeding, Horsham, RH13 6NU		No change
<b>North Horsham Parish</b>						
Polgate & Rusper	HKQH (North Horsham Rural)	Horsham	176	Holbrook Tythe Barn, Pondtail Road, Horsham, RH12 5EZ		No change
Holbrook West	HKXA (North Heath Copse)		1459	Holbrook Tythe Barn, Pondtail Road, Horsham, RH12 5EZ		No change
Holbrook West	HKXB (Holbrook West)		1210	The Holbrook Club, North Heath Lane, Horsham, RH12 5PJ		No change
Holbrook East	HKXD (Motte and Bailey)		1766	North Heath Hall, St Marks Lane, Horsham, RH12 5PU		No change
	HKXE (Holbrook East)		1799	St Marks Church Hall, North Heath Lane, Horsham, RH12 5PJ		No change
Roffey North	HENT (Roffey North)		1943	Roffey Club, Spooners Road, Horsham, RH12 4DY	Access road to the polling station not particularly wide, and can be problematic with voters arriving by car and on foot	No change, however 3 poll clerks will be appointed to each station, where possible, to ensure that traffic flow can be managed
	HENU (Littlehaven)		1899	Roffey Club, Spooners Road, Horsham, RH12 4DY		
Roffey South	HLVA (Roffey South)		2264	Roffey Club, Spooners Road, Horsham, RH12 4DY	Roffey Club is situated outside of the ward and has not been practical to be used as a triple polling station, due to the use of a separate room causing confusion.	The Millennium Hall is within the district ward, although outside of the polling district. It has previously been used successfully as a triple polling station in 2021, and would be suitable as a double polling station with HEVB.
	HEVB (Comptons)		1021	Roffey Millennium Hall, Crawley Road, Horsham, RH12 4DT		No change

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
<b>Nuthurst Parish</b>						
Nuthurst & Lower Beeding	HWPA (Mannings Heath)	Horsham	1225	Mannings Heath Village Hall, Golding Lane, Mannings Heath, Horsham, RH13 6JU		No change
<b>Parham Parish</b>						
Pulborough, Coldwaltham & Amberley	ASPG (Parham)	Arundel & South Downs	127	Amberley Church Hall, Church Street, Amberley, Arundel, BN18 9ND		No change
<b>Pulborough Parish</b>						
Pulborough, Coldwaltham & Amberley	APPF (Pulborough)	Arundel & South Downs	3509	Pulborough Village Hall, Swan View, Lower Street, Pulborough, RH20 2BF (2)		No change
	APPC (Nutbourne)		199	The Rising Sun, The Street, Nutbourne, Pulborough, RH20 2HE	No level access to the polling station.	No change but investigate whether a ramp could be provided.
<b>Rudgwick Parish</b>						
Rudgwick	HGPK (Rudgwick)	Horsham	1864	Rudgwick Village Hall, Bucks Green, Rudgwick, Horsham, RH12 3JJ		No change
<b>Rusper Parish</b>						
Colgate & Rusper	HLSB (Wimlands)	Horsham	108	Faygate Village Hall, Park Road, Faygate, Horsham, RH12 4SG		No change
	HLSD (Kilwood Vale North)		0	Faygate Village Hall, Park Road, Faygate, Horsham, RH12 4SG		No change
	HLPL (Rusper)		1111	Rusper Village Hall, Horsham Road, Rusper, RH12 4PR		No change
<b>Shermanbury Parish</b>						
Cowfold, Shermanbury & West Grinstead	AFPM (Shermanbury)	Arundel & South Downs	266	Partridge Green Village Hall, High Street, Partridge Green, RH13 8HX	This polling district will become part of the Horsham constituency at the next Parliamentary election.	The polling district to be renamed "HFPM (Shermanbury)" to match the naming convention.
	AFQB (Wineham)		165	Allmond Centre, Fairfield Cottages, Cowfold, Horsham, RH13 8BL	This polling district will become part of the Horsham constituency at the next Parliamentary election.	The polling district to be renamed "HFQB (Wineham)" to match the naming convention.
<b>Shipley Parish</b>						
Southwater South & Shipley	HBNK (Coolham)	Horsham	448	Coolham Village Hall, Billingshurst Road, Coolham, Horsham RH13 8QN		No change

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
	HBPN (Shipley)		352	Andrew Hall, Red Lane, Shipley, RH13 8PH		No change
<b>Slinfold Parish</b>						
Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham	HGPO (Slinfold)	Horsham	1247	Slinfold Village Hall, The Street, Slinfold, RH13 0RP		No change
<b>Southwater Parish</b>						
Southwater North	HWNH (Christs Hospital)	Horsham	682	Bluecoat Sports Health & Fitness Club, Christ's Hospital, Horsham, RH13 0YB		No change
	HWQA (Southwater Park)		1817	Southwater Village Hall, Church Lane, Southwater, Horsham, RH13 9BT		No change
	HWQD (Southwater North)		2848	The Ghyll, Pevensey Road, Southwater, Horsham, RH13 9XZ (2)		No change
Southwater South & Shipley	HWQB (Southwater South)		1457	Beeson House, 26 Lintot Square, Fairbank Road, Southwater, Horsham RH13 9LA		No change
	HWQC (Southwater Hogs Wood)		262	Beeson House, 26 Lintot Square, Fairbank Road, Southwater, Horsham, RH13 9LA		No change
<b>Steyning Parish</b>						
Steyning & Ashurst	ACPR (Steyning)	Arundel & South Downs	3648	The Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning, BN44 3XZ (2)		No change
<b>Storrington &amp; Sullington Parish</b>						
Storrington & Washington	ASPS (Storrington)	Arundel & South Downs	2920	Ravenscroft Guide & Community Centre, Browns Lane, Storrington, Pulborough RH20 4LG (2)		No change
	ASPT (Sullington)		1576	Sullington Parish Hall, Thakeham Road, Storrington, Pulborough RH20 3PP		No change
<b>Thakeham Parish</b>						
West Chiltington, Thakeham & Ashington	APPU (Thakeham)	Arundel & South Downs	1505	Thakeham Village Hall, 1 Abingworth Crescent, Thakeham, Pulborough, RH20 3GW		No change
<b>Trafalgar Neighbourhood</b>						
Trafalgar	HHPV (Trafalgar)	Horsham	2145	Holy Trinity Church Hall, Rushams Road, Horsham, RH12 2NT		No change



District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
	HHPW (Greenway)		1677	The Scout Hut, Swindon Road, Horsham, RH12 2HF	Polling station out of polling district (HHPV), however there are no suitable alternatives within the polling district. Voters for this polling district voted at this station in May 2023 and it has been deemed suitable.	No change
<b>Upper Beeding Parish</b>						
Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote	ACPA (Small Dole)	Arundel & South Downs	501	Small Dole Village Hall, Henfield Road, Small Dole, Henfield, BN5 9XE		No change
	ACPX (Upper Beeding)		1970	Beeding and Bramber Village Hall, High Street, Upper Beeding, Steyning, BN44 3WN		No change
<b>Warnham Parish</b>						
Itchingfield, Slinfold & Warnham	HGPY (Warnham)	Horsham	1333	Warnham Village Hall, Hollands Way, Warnham, Horsham, RH12 3RH		No change
<b>Washington Parish</b>						
Page 41 Torrington & Washington	ASZA (Washington)	Arundel & South Downs	693	Washington Memorial Hall, School Lane, Washington, Pulborough, RH20 4AP	No level access to the Hall.	No change but investigate whether a ramp could be provided.
	ASZB (Heath Common)		575			
<b>West Chiltington Parish</b>						
West Chiltington, Thakeham & Ashington	APQA (West Chiltington)	Arundel & South Downs	2275	West Chiltington Village Hall, Mill Road, West Chiltington, Pulborough, RH20 2PZ		No change
<b>West Grinstead Parish</b>						
Cowfold, Shermanbury & West Grinstead	AFPE (Partridge Green)	Arundel & South Downs	1727	Partridge Green Village Hall, High Street, Partridge Green, Horsham, RH13 8HX	This polling district will become part of the Horsham constituency at the next Parliamentary election.	The polling district to be renamed "HFPE (Partridge Green)" to match the naming convention.
	AFNQ (Dial Post)		216	Dial Post Village Hall, Worthing Road, Dial Post, Horsham, RH13 8NS	This polling district will become part of the Horsham constituency at the next Parliamentary election.	The polling district to be renamed "HFNQ (Dial Post)" to match the naming convention.
<b>Wiston Parish</b>						
West Chiltington, Thakeham & Ashington	ASQC (Wiston)	Arundel & South Downs	126	Washington Memorial Hall, School Lane, Washington, Pulborough, RH20 4AP	No level access to the Hall	No change but investigate whether a ramp could be provided

District Ward	Polling District	Current Parliamentary Constituency	Polling Station Electorate (November 2023)	Current Polling Places/Stations	Issues & considerations	(Acting) Returning Officer's proposals/comments
<b>Woodmancote Parish</b>						
Bramber, Upper Beeding & Woodmancote	ACQD (Woodmancote)	Arundel & South Downs	338	Blackstone Cricket Pavilion, Blackstone Lane, Henfield, BN5 9TA		No change

## Responses to the Polling District Review 2023

Respondent	Comments	(Acting) Returning Officer's comments
Dennis Livingstone Councillor for Nuthurst and Lower Beeding Ward	<p>I note that for the parish of Nuthurst there is currently only one polling station at Mannings Heath Village Hall. Due to the size of the parish this makes it very difficult for voters in the rural areas to access the polling station, they would in many cases need to travel by car (no public transport) for over 3 miles, some even longer.</p> <p>A second polling station was previously provided in the local Primary School of St. Andrews in Nuthurst, this I now believe is no longer possible. However, there is now another venue that I would think is suitable, Copsale Village Hall. This has recently undergone an upgrade of facilities including for disabled toilets and step free access.</p> <p>Could you kindly consider this location please.</p>	Thank you for your comment. At the local elections this year, turnout for this polling station was the highest in the District. It is therefore recommended that the existing arrangements remain and that the polling district is not split, as the turnout figures do not indicate that an additional polling station is required.
Joanne Knowles Councillor for Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead Ward	<p>Further to your request for feedback.</p> <p>The ramp to enable independent, disabled access at Partridge Green village hall polling place could not be found at the local election in May. Mobility scooter and wheelchair users were manually helped and no one was unable to access the polling station. However I felt this was physically challenging and inappropriate.</p> <p>Kindly ensure the ramp is available in future.</p>	Thank you for your feedback. We have made contact with the venue, who have confirmed that a ramp will be made available.
Residents	We are very happy with our local polling station of the Tythe Barn in Pondtail Road	Thank you for your comment.

<p>Nigel Dennis County Councillor, Horsham Hurst Division</p>	<p>I just have one comment/suggestion to make which is that if Horsham Youth Centre, Hurst Road is being reinstated as a Polling Station for HHXG then it could also be used for HKXC.</p> <p>Between 1993-2005 this was used as a Polling Station for the whole of this area but when the ward and division boundaries were redrawn, HKXC has had to vote at the Holbrook Club which is far away.</p> <p>There would be several advantages in switching HKXC to Horsham Youth Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It would be within walking distance for at least some of the electors whereas most people from HKXC drive a car to the Holbrook Club, it is also conveniently en-route to the rail station or town centre hence voting can be combined with other trips.</li> <li>- It would even up the numbers better between the two polling stations as the Holbrook Club polling station gets busy at peak times.</li> <li>- As HKXC is part of Denne Neighbourhood Council area and Horsham Town it would respect that allocation rather than requiring them to vote in North Horsham.</li> </ul> <p>I declare an interest as an elector of HKXC myself!</p>	<p>Thank you for your proposal. Following discussions with ward members, it is proposed that the Holbrook Club is retained for HKXC. There are concerns surrounding the traffic and parking pressure at the Youth Centre, should there be two polling districts attending this venue. The parking arrangements at the Holbrook Club are sufficient.</p> <p>Further to this, there are administrative complexities to this proposed arrangement, as HKXC and HHXG (the voters allocated to the Youth Centre) are in different County Divisions. For the West Sussex County Council elections this would introduce an element of risk and complexity to the voting processes within the polling station.</p>
<p>Forest Neighbourhood Council</p>	<p>Thank you for inviting Forest Neighbourhood Council to be part of the consultation process. This is to confirm that we have no amendments to make to the current polling stations arrangement in our neighbourhood.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>Horsham Denne Neighbourhood Council</p>	<p>Thank you for consulting Horsham Denne Neighbourhood Council. I confirm that we have no objection to the proposed schedule of polling places.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

<p>Colin Minto Councillor for Forest Ward</p>	<p>I have raised my concerns before about these two polling stations being so close together and a considerable distance from the North of the Forest Ward.</p> <p>Even with these suggestions It doesn't make sense that the furthest away residents have to essentially travel past a closer station, IMHO Opinion.</p> <p>There must be an opportunity to use a hall closer to the Forest section of the Ward, and I do not understand given the vast size of Millais and The Forest Schools (the latter with its additional and separate building space for Youth Clubs and Technology etc.) that these cannot be used.</p> <p>There is also the Salvation Army, Stroke Centre, QE2 School in better positions so I hope these have been assessed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your suggestions. We have assessed the Stroke Centre, which unfortunately as it is on school grounds, is not a suitable venue. The centre need to close the access gate during the day, which means that is not able to be used as a polling station.</p> <p>It has previously been agreed that schools would not be used as polling stations to avoid disruption to education. Use of buildings on school grounds has issues around safeguarding.</p> <p>The Salvation Army are currently booked on Thursdays, and so are unable to accommodate us.</p>
<p>Washington Parish Council</p>	<p>Washington Parish Council wishes to comment that it supports the continued use of the Washington Memorial Hall as a polling place in the Washington Parish.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>North Horsham Parish Council</p>	<p>Members agreed that they have no issue with the proposed changes but would want assurance of minimum boundary changes for Polling Districts until there is a solution for the continuation of the Mowbray Development</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Statutory reviews take place every 5 years, and the Parish council would be consulted as to any future proposed changes to the polling district boundaries.</p>

