

## Report to Council

7 December 2016

By the Electoral Registration Officer

**DECISION REQUIRED**



**Horsham  
District  
Council**

### Interim Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

#### Executive Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) published their final recommendations for changes to the West Sussex County Council division boundaries on 16 August 2016 and the draft Order was laid before Parliament on 26 October 2016. The recommendations required Horsham District Council to conduct an interim review of some polling districts and polling places. The Council undertook a 4 week consultation between 20 October 2016 and 20 November 2016, this report summarises the conclusions of that consultation and presents the recommendation of the Electoral Registration Officer.

#### Recommendations

That the Council is recommended:

- i) to approve the changes to polling districts and places set out in section three of this report.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- i) to discharge the duty to review polling districts and places consequent to the recommendations for West Sussex County Council made by the LGBCE

#### Background Papers

Notice of Interim Review of Polling Districts in the Horsham District

**Wards affected:** Forest and Horsham Park.

**Contact:** Lesley Morgan, Democratic Services Manager

## **Background Information**

### **1 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 A full review of all polling districts and places was completed in 2014 by the District Council. This interim review arose as a consequence of the LGBCE recommendations for changes to the West Sussex County Council division boundaries.
- 1.2 The review process, including the consultation was undertaken by officers according to the Electoral Commission guidance '*Reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations*'.
- 1.3 In determining where polling places should be located the Council sought to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practical in the circumstances and that, so far as is reasonable and practical, polling places chosen are accessible to all electors, including those who have a disability.

### **2 Relevant Council policy**

- 2.1 This is an operational matter covered by the Legal and Democratic Services Service Plan 2016/17.

### **3 Details**

- 3.1 The Electoral Registration Officer consulted on the following proposals:
  - a) Polling District NRA (Forest Ward) – a small number of properties move into NRB and electors will then vote at YMCA Football Club
  - b) Polling District NRB (Forest Ward) – a small number of properties move into NRA and electors will then vote at Heron Way Primary School
  - c) Polling District PI (Horsham Park Ward) – a small number of properties move into PH and electors will then vote at St Leonards Church
  - d) Polling District PJ (Horsham Park Ward) – a small number of properties move into PH and electors will then vote at St Leonards Church
  - e) Polling District PJ (Horsham Park Ward) – the remaining majority of this polling district split to make PJA and PJB to take account of the new County Division boundary and to continue voting at Millais School.
- 3.2 The responses to the consultation are summarised in section 5 of this report.

### **4 Next Steps**

- 4.1 The Parliamentary Order for West Sussex County Council is placed before Parliament for 40 sitting days. Parliament can either accept or reject the recommendations of the review.
- 4.2 Consequently, the Register of Electors will be published on 1 December 2016, and will not include the changes recommended in this report.
- 4.3 The Register of Electors, including the changes recommended in this report, will need to be re-published subsequent to the conclusion of the statutory process.

- 4.4 If the recommendations in the Order are accepted, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the next scheduled elections for West Sussex County Council on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017.

## **5 Outcome of Consultations**

- 5.1 A 4 week public notice of consultation was placed on 20 October 2016. The consultation process included consultation with groups concerned with access and disability issues, political parties, councillors, neighbourhood and parish councils and the Member of Parliament.
- 5.2 The notice specified that any member of the public may make representations.
- 5.3 Three responses to the consultation were received.
- a) Forest neighbourhood council responded with no objections to the changes in the polling districts due to the new county divisions.
  - b) Councillor Newman (Forest Ward) responded in agreement with the changes.
  - c) The Senior Advisor – Council and Member Support, at West Sussex County Council responded in agreement with the proposals.

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

- 6.1 No other courses of action were considered necessary as the outcome of the consultation process favoured the course of action proposed.

## **7 Resource Consequences**

- 7.1 There are no financial or human resource implications. No disability access implications were identified in the consultation process.

## **8 Legal Consequences**

- 8.1 This report demonstrates the discharge by the council of the relevant provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 The Council manages strategic risks through its Corporate Risk Register and individual Departmental Risk Registers, all of which are formally reviewed quarterly. The Legal and Democratic Services Service Plan 2016/17 identifies the risk of 'successful challenge to a Returning Officer'. The mitigation for such a risk is compliance with both legislation and electoral commission guidance.

## **10 Other Considerations**

10.1 Officers have given full consideration to the matters required and there are no additional material considerations.