

## **POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW – APPOINTMENT OF WORKING PARTY AND REQUEST FOR DELEGATION TO COMMITTEE**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a requirement for all authorities to complete a review of the polling districts and polling places within their areas by 31 December 2007. The review has commenced with information being placed on the Council's website, and all Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, political parties and disability groups being consulted. Representations have been requested by 28 September.
- 1.2 In order that any changes that might be agreed to the polling districts may be incorporated in the revised version of the register to be published on 1 December 2007, it would be advantageous to complete the review by 23 November at the latest.
- 1.3 Under the current arrangements, any changes to the polling districts need the approval of the full council. Changes to polling places are a matter for the Executive and a report in this regard will be made to the Cabinet on 3 October.

### **2. PROPOSAL FOR WORKING PARTY**

- 2.1 Following informal discussions with the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, it is suggested that a Working Party be appointed to consider in detail any representations that might be received in response to the review, and to make recommendations to the Committee. Any representations will be discussed by the officers with local members before they are referred to the working party.
- 2.2 It is suggested that the Working Party comprise five members of the Committee. If the principles of proportionality apply, the membership should comprise four Conservative and one Liberal Democrat Group members. However, because of the nature of the work to be undertaken, the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Committee suggest that the composition of the Working Party be three Conservative and two Liberal Democrat group members. The Committee should note, however, that a decision not to follow the proportionality rules may be taken only if no member of the Committee votes against.
- 2.3 The following terms of reference are proposed:  
  
To consider and make recommendations to the General Purposes and Licensing Committee on representations received in response to the review of polling districts and polling places required under the provisions of Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

### **3. DELEGATION TO COMMITTEE**

- 3.1 The last full Council meeting before 1 December (the date of publication of the revised version of the register) is on 29 October 2007. It will be difficult for the proposed Working Party, and the Committee, to give full consideration to any representations in time for a report to be made to the Council on 29 October. It is therefore suggested that the Council be requested to delegate authority to the Committee to agree any changes to the polling districts that it might consider appropriate, following consideration of the representations received. The matter could then be considered in detail by the Committee at its scheduled meeting on 16 November, and any changes implemented with the 1 December version of the register.
- 3.2 All members of the Council could be invited to attend the Committee's meeting on 16 November.

### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Creation of the Working Party will involve some additional printing and members' travel costs. These are likely to be minimal and can be contained within existing budgets.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None

### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 6.1 That a Working Party comprising five members of the Committee be appointed with the following terms of reference:

To consider and make recommendations to the General Purposes and Licensing Committee on representations received in response to the review of polling districts and polling places required under the provisions of Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

- 6.2 That the membership of the Working Party comprise three Conservative and two Liberal Democrat Group members

**(Note: This recommendation may be approved only if no member of the Committee votes against)**

- 6.3 That it be recommended to the Council that authority be delegated to the Committee to agree any changes to the polling districts that it considers appropriate following consideration of the representations received in response to review of polling districts required under Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

#### **Further information:**

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#### **Background papers;**

Published documents