

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every four years. The first review under the Act was completed by the end of 2007, and a further review was completed in March 2011.
- 1.2 New legislation that deals with the proposed move to Individual Electoral Registration (IER), now requires a further review of polling districts and polling places to be completed within a period of 16 months beginning with 1 October 2013.
- 1.3 On 13 September 2013 the Committee appointed a Working Party comprising Cllrs Beck, Clarke, Dow, Mrs McLean and Penwarden to oversee the review and to make recommendations to this Committee. The review was published on the Council's website and views were sought from all District Councillors, Parish/Town Councils and disability groups. In accordance with legal requirements, Hampshire County Council was informed of the review. The Working Party met on 10 January 2014 to consider the responses received. The main report considered by the Working Party is attached at Appendix 1, but if members wish to view the appendices they are available at forestnet2/committeedocs/pdwp/CDR08798.pdf

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION/ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 The following are responsible for taking various decisions arising from the review:
 - The designation of polling districts (a geographical subdivision of an electoral area, such as a parliamentary constituency or a district ward), known by distinctive letters such as LA, RD, etc, is a matter for the Council (on the recommendation of this Committee);
 - The designation of polling places (the geographical area in which a polling station is situated) is a matter for the Cabinet. The Cabinet has previously designated the whole of each polling district as the polling place for that district;
 - The designation of polling stations (the building where polling takes place) is a matter for the Returning Officer.
- 2.2 There are 104 polling stations in the District. It is only three years since the last review was completed and the officers' view was that there were no pressing issues that the review needed to address. Some polling stations are not ideal, but, apart from schools and buildings maintained out of any rate, the Returning Officer does not have power to "requisition" buildings to use as polling stations. He has to rely on the goodwill of the owners of premises to make them available. The location and designation of polling stations is therefore to a large extent dictated by their availability. Every effort is made to avoid using schools because of the inconvenience to them, but in some cases it has been impossible to identify suitable alternatives. Very few complaints about the situation of, or the facilities provided at, polling stations are received from the public.

- 2.3 There were, however, a number of cases of very low numeric turnouts at some polling stations. This is due partly to the small number of voters being allocated to those polling stations, and to the increase in the number of electors choosing to vote by post. The low usage of certain polling stations was raised during both the 2007 and 2011 reviews. Some polling stations were closed (while new ones opened) and voters allocated elsewhere, but others have remained open with a request to officers to maintain a watching brief over the continued need for them. These polling stations, together with a number of others where different issues have arisen in recent years, were identified for special consideration as part of the current review.
- 2.4 The disability group New Forest Access for All had no concerns about particular polling stations in the District.
- 2.5 In arriving at its recommendations, the Working Party was mindful of the need for electors to be able to exercise their democratic right to vote in person at a polling station in reasonable proximity to their homes. However, this had to be balanced against the cost of providing the polling station. Postal voting is available for electors who find it inconvenient to visit their polling station, but the Working Party also recognised that postal voting was not suitable for all electors because of the relative complexity of completing them. The Working Party's recommendations were arrived at after careful consideration of the location of each polling station, the communities they serve, distance to an alternative polling station, and whether or not electors were likely to find it relatively convenient to visit an alternative polling station (for example whether they were likely to make trips to the area for other purposes such as shopping or commuting).
- 2.6 The polling stations where changes are recommended or where the Working Part wishes a further watching brief to be maintained are set out in paragraph 3 below. Changes are intended to take effect from the 2015 elections (Parliamentary, District and Parish), but the Returning Officer wishes to make on change in time for the 2014 European Parliamentary election in May. Each proposed changes is cross-referenced to the report considered by the Working Party. No changes were recommended in respect of the remaining polling stations discussed by the Working Party.
- 2.7 The Returning Officer will write to each elector affected by changes that might be agreed, to advise them of the changes and to invite them to apply for a postal vote if they will find it inconvenient to visit their new polling station.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

3.1 Calmore Village Hall (NA polling district, Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh District Ward)

(See Appendix 1, paragraph 3.1 (a))

Statistics:

Polling District	NA
Electors allocated	331
Postal Voters	42
Electors using polling station at 2013 elections	44
% Turnout	15%
Cost per voter (direct staffing & premises only)	£11.26

Reason for Review:

Low usage.

Summary of Working Party's consideration:

Cllr Tipp: Concerned that discontinuing polling station would result in even lower turnout.

Netley Marsh Parish Council made strong representations for the retention of this polling station, pointing out that, of the low usage polling stations identified for review, it had the highest number of electors allocated to it, and the highest number of voters attending. However, it recognised that, at 15%, it had the lowest turnout in % terms. It was not the most expensive on a cost per per voter basis.

Working Party's recommendation (to the Returning Officer):

That the polling station remain, but that its continued use be kept under review.

- 3.2 **Reading Room, Hinton Admiral** (BG Polling District – Bransgore & Burley District Ward)
Thorney Hill Community Centre (BI Polling District – Bransgore & Burley District Ward)

(See Appendix 1, paragraph 3.1 (b))

Statistics:***Reading Room***

Polling District	BG
Electors allocated	146
Postal Voters	16
Electors using polling station at 2013 elections	34
% Turnout	26%
Cost per voter (direct staffing & premises only)	£13.95

Thorney Hill Community Centre

Polling District	BI
Electors allocated	222
Postal Voters	42
Electors using polling station at 2013 elections	60
% Turnout	27%
Cost per voter (direct staffing & premises only)	£8.09

Reason for Review:

Low usage.

Summary of Working Party's consideration:

Cllr Penwarden: If one polling station is to close, suggests Thorney Hill, rather than the Reading Room.

Bransgore Parish Council: No comments received.

Bransgore and Burley is the only district ward with two "low usage" polling stations. The Working Party considered that this should be reduced to one, and, although its usage is higher than the Reading Room at Hinton Admiral, the Working Party recommends that the polling station at the Thorney Hill Community Centre be discontinued. This is because Thorney Hill residents regularly visit Bransgore Village Centre to access the shops, post office and medical centres and are likely to find it less inconvenient to vote at the Bransgore Village Hall than those allocated to the Reading Room, which is situated to the east of the A35.

Working Party's Recommendation (to the Returning Officer):

That the Thorney Hill Community Centre be discontinued with effect from the 2015 Parliamentary/local elections; and that voters be allocated to the Bransgore Village Hall.

Further recommendations from the Returning Officer:

That it be recommended to the Council that with effect from the publication of the December 2014 register of electors:

- (a) the existing BI polling district (approximately 264 electors) be transferred to BH polling district;
- (b) the properties on the south side of Betsy Lane, and all properties south of Betsy Lane in the area bounded by Betsy Lane, Ringwood Road and Burnt House Lane (approximately 184 voters) be transferred from BH to the current BJ polling district;
- (c) the enlarged BJ polling district be renamed BI.

(This will mean 1,712 voters in BH and 1,659 in the new BI polling districts respectively)

3.3 Bisterne Village Hall (RD Polling District – Ringwood South District Ward)

(See Appendix 1, paragraph 3.1 (i))

Statistics:

Polling District	RD
Electors allocated	175
Postal Voters	20
Electors using polling station at 2013 elections	34
% Turnout	22%
Cost per voter (direct staffing & premises only)	£13.75

Reason for Review:

Low usage

Summary of Working Party's consideration:

Ringwood Town Council wishes the polling station to be retained. Closure would mean electors having to travel too far to access their polling station and would have a detrimental effect on the democratic process.

Cllr Jeremy Heron: Supports closure in view of low numbers using polling station and high relative cost. Postal voting available to those who find it difficult to travel to Ringwood Centre.

The Working Party noted that usage of this polling station has been consistently low. It considered it likely that, because it is in a sparsely populated area, most electors are already driving to reach the polling station. Many of these electors are probably also travelling towards the centre of Ringwood to access the town's facilities or en route to and from places of work. They should therefore not be unduly inconvenienced by using the polling station at the Trinity Centre.

Working Party's recommendation (to the Returning Officer):

That the polling station be discontinued with effect from the 2015 Parliamentary/local elections, and that voters be allocated to the Trinity Centre, Christchurch Road, Ringwood.

Further recommendation from the Returning Officer:

That it be recommended to the Council that, with effect from the publication of the revised register of electors in December 2014:

- (a) The RD (175 voters) and RE (1,549 voters) polling districts be amalgamated as a single RD polling district with approximately 1,724 voters; and
- (b) The existing RF (1,941 voters) and RG (1,155 voters) polling districts be renamed RE and RF respectively.

3.4 St George's Centre, Tristan Close, Calshot (FA Polling District – Fawley, Blackfield and Langley District Ward)

(See Appendix 1, paragraph 3.1 (e))

Statistics:

Polling District	FA
Electors allocated	321
Postal Voters	29
Electors using polling station at 2013 elections	75
% Turnout	26%
Cost per voter (direct staffing & premises only)	£6.79

Reason for review:

Administrative issues with bookings, keys, condition of polling station and anti-social behaviour in the vicinity on polling days

Summary of Working Party's consideration:

Fawley Parish Council: do not feel that the Centre offers value for money or an environment conducive to voting. Residents of the ward should be encouraged to vote by post. Parish Council "community bus" could be used to take residents to other polling stations.

Cllr McEvoy: If it is acceptable to close the polling station, the best option is for Calshot residents voting in person to do so at Jubilee Hall in Fawley.

Cllr Wappet: Agrees that polling station should be closed and voters transferred to FB polling district.

Working Party's recommendation (to the Returning Officer):

That the polling station be discontinued and FA voters allocated to the Jubilee Hall, The Square, Fawley.

Further recommendations from the Returning Officer:

That it be recommended to that Council that, with effect from the publication of the revised register of electors in December 2014 -:

- (a) the FA and FB polling districts be amalgamated as a single FA polling district, with approximately 1,559 electors; and
- (b) the FC, FD, FE, FF and FG polling districts be renamed FB, FC, FD, FE and FF respectively.

Update: The Returning Officer wishes to make the change in the polling station in time for the 2014 European Parliamentary election on 22 May. The changes to the polling districts would not take effect until the publication of the updated register of electors in December 2014.

3.5 **Sea Scouts Hall, Becton Lane, Barton on Sea (NM Polling District – Becton District Ward)**

(See Appendix 1, paragraph 3.2 (I))

Reason for review:

Access issues arising from gravelled entrance

Working Party's recommendation:

That officers discuss with New Milton Town Council, in its capacity as owner of the premises, the condition of the access way to the polling station, with a view to improving the surface of the access.

(There are no alternative venues available within the polling district.)

Update: The Town Council is arranging for additional gravel to be laid and to be compressed in advance of the election. No further action is considered necessary.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Overall, the Working Party is recommending the closure of three polling stations, which would reduce the total number in New Forest District from 104 to 101. There will be some savings arising from the closures but these will be offset in the first year by the one-off cost of writing to electors to advise them of the changes. There is also likely to be an increase in the number of postal votes, which are comparatively expensive to administer. Savings in the region of £1,200 should be achieved in the first year and approximately £1,500 at each election thereafter. These are not always savings to the District Council but to the body bearing the cost of an election.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Closure of the polling stations will mean electors wishing to vote in person having to travel longer distances from their homes to vote. Most of these journeys are likely to be by car. However, electors may vote by post.

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The minor incidents of anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of the St George's Centre in Calshot on polling days will be avoided.

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 New Forest Access for All, an organisation representing disability groups within the District, has no issues with particular polling stations. Voters with mobility problems whose current polling stations are closure might find it more difficult to visit alternative polling stations but could cast their votes by post.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 8.1 That the recommendations set out in paragraph 3 be agreed.

Further information:

Rosemary Rutins
Democratic Services Manager
Tel: (023) 8028 5588
e-mail: rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers

Published documents

POLLING DISTRICTS WORKING PARTY – 10 JANUARY 2014

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The General Purposes and Licensing Committee on 13 September 2013 appointed this Working Party to:

“oversee the review of polling districts and polling places in New Forest District under Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and to make recommendations to the General Purposes and Licensing Committee”.

- 1.2 A review should not have been necessary until 2015 for implementation in 2016. However, new regulations have been passed requiring all electoral registration authorities to carry out a full review during the period of 16 months beginning with 1 October 2013. The Government has apparently made this change in order to ensure that any anomalies with polling districts and stations are addressed before the 2015 Parliamentary and local elections, which will be the first run using registers prepared under the new system of Individual Electoral Registration (IER). Following the review now being undertaken, reviews will be required only every five years, rather than the previous four years. Any changes to polling districts and polling places that might be agreed as a result of this review will not take effect until the December 2014 register is published.

- 1.3 Various pieces of legislation dictate that:

- The designation of polling districts is a matter for the Council
- The designation of polling places is a matter for the Executive
- The designation of polling stations is a matter for the Returning Officer

- 1.4 Members are reminded that:

- Each district council must provide “such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances”. Councils are required, so far as is reasonable and practicable, to designate as polling places only places which are accessible to electors who are disabled.
- unless special circumstances apply, a polling place and polling station should be within the same polling district;
- the Returning Officer has no power to requisition buildings in private ownership for use as polling stations. However, the Returning Officer is entitled to use schools maintained or assisted by a local authority, as well as those schools that receive grants made out of monies provided by Parliament. This includes academies and free schools.

2. THE REVIEW

- 2.1 As required by law, the review has been publicised and comments invited. The review was published on the Council’s website and comments invited from all District

Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, and disability groups. Responses were requested by 9 December 2013.

2.2 Attached to this report are:

- A schedule of polling districts, polling places and polling stations, with the Returning Officer's comments on each (Appendix 1)
- Polling station turnout and costs at 2103 HCC elections (Appendix 2)
- Additional comments by the Returning Officer on polling stations with low usage. This shows the cost per voter (premises and direct staffing only at the May 2013 Hampshire County Council elections) at each of the low use polling stations on which particular comments have been invited. (Appendix 3)

2.3 Comments received in response to the review are set out in paragraph 3 below.

3. ISSUES TO CONSIDER

3.1 As was expected, most comments received relate to the continued use of those polling stations which are little used, or which have been identified by the Returning Officer as being in need of review for other reasons. These are set out below.

(a) **Calmore Village Hall (NA polling district, Ashurst, Copythorne South & Netley Marsh District Ward)**

Reason for special consideration: Low usage

Cllr Derek Tipp:

I have seen the statistics for Calmore Village Hall polling station and can only conclude that it is very poorly used. In that area the properties are very widely spread out and so most voters would be likely to come by car. Parking is not good, though with such low usage I cannot see that being a big factor. Looking at the alternatives, the next nearest polling station in the ward would be Copythorne Parish Hall which is quite a bit further away. If we are concerned at turnout (which we certainly should be, at 15%) then making voters go further to vote is likely to make matters worse. Is it possible to use Calmore Community Hall, even though it is not in the same ward? If not then what else can we do? I suspect that there is a higher proportion of elderly voters, so a postal vote might be a better option. Could we invite them to apply for a postal vote and tell them that their polling station is to be closed due to lack of use?

Netley Marsh Parish Council:

The Council believes there is a strong case for keep Calmore polling station open. Looking at the full statistics for the four stations identified as being under consultation, Calmore:

- serves the highest number of electors - 331, as opposed to 146, 152 and 175 respectively.
- had the highest number of voters voting at the last election - 44, compared with 41, 34 and 34 respectively, and
- although the percentage turnout is actually the lowest,
- at £11.26 per voter, it is not the most expensive, coming third in the group of four after Bransgore & Burley (£13.95), and Ringwood South (£13.75).

Netley Marsh Parish Council feels that this is a significant number of voters who have a democratic right to expect a polling station to be made available to them in their

area. Council would also point out that the turnout in a national government election is likely to be higher than that for a local election.

Based on this the Parish Council recommend that the Calmore polling station remain in use until after the next general elections. Naturally if figures are produced post the next general election the Council would reconsider the situation at that time.

Returning Officer's comments: Working Party to discuss.

- (b) **Reading Room, Hinton Admiral (BG Polling District – Bransgore & Burley District Ward)**
Thorney Hill Community Centre (BI Polling District – Bransgore & Burley District Ward)
Reason for special consideration: Low usage

Returning Officer's comments: Bransgore Parish is the only parish within the District with two identified "low use" polling stations. Cllr Penwarden, one of the local members, is a member of the Working Party and will express his views at the meeting. No comments have been received from Bransgore Parish Council.

- (c) **Valetta Barn, Fritham (BF Polling District, Bramshaw, Copythorne North & Netley Marsh District Ward)**
Reason for special consideration: Low usage

Cllr Diane Andrews:

Valetta Barn is a good venue. I imagine it would be primarily used by those living in Fritham only. However Bramshaw Village Hall is not all that far away from Fritham and could be used instead if cost was an issue.

As next election will be an important one, and possibly interest more voters, perhaps the venue could be retained for 2015 and the numbers using it be re assessed afterwards?

Returning Officer's comments: It is agreed that the 2015 Parliamentary and local elections should attract a higher turnout, but that higher turnout is likely to be reflected throughout the District, and this polling station, because of the low number of voters allocated there, will remain expensive on a per voter basis relative to others in the District. However, it serves a distinct community and voters would have to travel a reasonably long distance to vote at the Bramshaw Village Hall. Working Party to discuss.

- (d) **Blandford Hall, Martin (MR Polling District)**
Reason for special consideration: Not fully accessible

Cllr Edward Heron:

Whilst the accessibility issues of the polling station are acknowledged, this has not proven to be a problem in the past due to the excellent assistance provided by polling station staff. No suitable alternative venue is available within the ward. A number of less mobile electors have opted to use postal votes.

Returning Officer's comments: When designating polling stations, local authorities must:

- Seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

As Cllr Heron has pointed out, there is no suitable alternative venue in the parish. Postal voting is available for those who find it difficult to use the polling station. No complaints have been received about the accessibility of this polling station. In all other respects it is an ideal polling station and no change is recommended.

- (e) **St George's Centre, Tristan Close, Calshot (FA Polling District, Fawley, Blackfield & Langley District Ward)**
Reason for special consideration: Administrative problems with bookings, keys; condition of polling station; anti-social behaviour in vicinity

Fawley Parish Council:

The Parish Council do not feel St George's Centre offers value for money or an environment conducive to electioneering.

The council felt that residents in this ward would be better encouraged to use the postal voting system instead.

Additionally the parish council is waiting on delivery of a new 'Community Bus' which will operate from Calshot into Blackfield and will be available during this time. The council would support its use in taking residents to other polling stations in Fawley or Blackfield.

The council is therefore happy for NFDC to make the final decision on what polling opportunities are made available to residents in the Calshot area.

Cllr Alexis McEvoy:

I was content to leave the Polling Stations as they were. However, if it is acceptable to close the Polling Station at Calshot, I consider that the best option. Any Calshot residents voting in person could do so at Jubilee Hall in Fawley and thus be included in the FB register.

Cllr Bob Wappet:

I agree that the polling station should be closed and that the voters should be transferred to FB.

Returning Officer's comments: Officers recommend that this polling station be discontinued, that FA polling district be disbanded and amalgamated into FB polling district, and that existing FA voters be allocated to the polling station at Jubilee Hall, The Square, Fawley.

- (f) **Fountain Court Hotel, Frost Lane, Hythe (HJ Polling District; Furzedown & Hardley District Ward)**
Reason for special consideration: Some accessibility concerns

Hythe & Dibden Parish Council:

It was suggested that as there is no real alternative location, consideration could be given to the use of a marquee or caravan/trailer in the car park.

Returning Officers' comments: While there are some accessibility concerns, the access meets the disability criteria. Mobile polling stations bring with them a number of issues – they are not ideal for staff, power and heating has to be provided and are expensive. In the absence of suitable alternative permanent facilities, it is recommended that this polling station be retained.

- (g) **Waterside Primary School, Ashford Crescent, Hythe (HK1 Polling District; Hythe West & Langdown District Ward)**
Reason for special consideration: School wishes polling station to be moved to alternative premises

Cllr Maureen Robinson:

I can appreciate why the school would want the polling station to be moved, but unless it could be accommodated in the Children's centre next door, there really is no alternative venue in my opinion.

Hythe & Dibden Parish Council:

The Children's Centre should be explored as an alternative site if the Waterside Primary school is unwilling to continue providing the facility.

Note: Officers have approached the Children's Centre but they are unwilling to make the premises available because of regular Thursday commitments.

Returning Officer's comments: In the absence of alternatives, it is recommended that this polling station be retained.

- (h) **Studio 1, Lymington Health and Leisure Centre, North Street, Pennington (LG & LH Polling Districts; Pennington District Ward)**
Reason for special consideration: Leisure Centre requests move to Studio 2 to avoid loss of income from school use and disruption to class programme

Cllrs Mrs Jackman and Kilgour:

Elections are only once a year at most and, while we appreciate that there is disruption to the Centre and inconvenience to their users, election dates are known well in advance and users could be informed at early stages. Studio Two caused such trouble in the past, we think we should stick with the current arrangements as it is on such an infrequent basis.

The loss of income is regrettable but as the Centre is a Council facility we think that, in the circumstances, it is justified because this is a well-used polling station. We cannot identify any suitable alternative.

Returning Officer's comments: In the absence of alternative facilities, it is recommended that this polling station be retained.

- (i) **Bisterne Village Hall (RD Polling District, Ringwood South District Ward)**
Reason for special consideration: Low usage

Cllr Jeremy Heron:

Falling numbers using Bisterne and the resultant increase in cost makes it difficult to support the provision at this location. Greater accessibility through the provision of

postal voting offers a viable alternative to those in more remote locations. I would propose that those registered to vote at Bisterne Village Hall be transferred to the Trinity Centre, Ringwood.

Ringwood Town Council:

Bisterne Village Hall should be retained. Closure of this polling station will require electors to travel too far to cast their votes and this will have a detrimental effect on the democratic process.

Returning Officer's comments: Working Party to discuss.

(j) **Main Hall, Lydlynch Infant School, Totton (TA Polling District; Totton Central District Ward)**

Reason for special consideration: School wishes polling station moved to alternative premises

Returning Officer's comments: The school has, over a number of years, requested that its premises not be used as a polling station. However, it has not proved possible to find alternative premises within the polling district.

In the circumstances it is recommend that, in the absence of an alternative venue, no change be made.

(k) **Beaulieu Abbey Church Hall (DL, DM, DN, EX Polling Districts; Brockenhurst & Forest South East District Ward)**

Reason for special consideration: Low usage

Cllr Paul Vickers:

In my time on the Council we have closed the Polling Station at the Bold Forester (used by Denny Lodge) and Exbury All electors have been redirected to Beaulieu, which now serves 3 Parishes.

I therefore believe it would be unreasonable, given the distances in these parishes, to close the Beaulieu Polling station.

Returning Officer's comments: No change.

3.2 **Other comments received** related to:

(l) **Sea Scouts Hall, Becton Lane, New Milton (NM Polling District, Becton District Ward)**

New Milton Town Council

The Town Council requests that the pathway to the Scout Hut be tarmacked to assist with access to the polling station.

Note: This is not a cost that the District Council could legitimately bear, nor could it be charged to a particular election. The premises are owned by the Town Council and leased to the Sea Scouts. It is accepted that the access, which is gravelled and not always in good condition, is not ideal but there are no alternative premises in that area.

(m) Boldre War Memorial Hall, Pilley Street, Pilley (BC & BD Polling Districts – Boldre & Sway District Ward)

Cllr Colin Wise:

The arrangements with only polling station covering Boldre and Pilley work very well and should be continued.

(n) Milford on Sea Polling Stations

Milford on Sea Parish Council:

The Parish Council is content with the present arrangements.

(o) All polling stations in the District

New Forest Access for All (Mrs Joan Cundhill, Chairman)

Some of us use postal votes for convenience, although I do feel it is important for as many as possible of the stations to be accessible so that we can vote in person if we wish.

I don't know if a particular station is inaccessible whether it is possible to arrange for a voter to use the nearest polling station in the same district that is?

I don't think I have anything useful to add that we did not discuss at our meeting with you last year.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Closure of any of the smaller polling stations will result in savings (premises and direct staffing only) of approximately £450 each. However, cost should not be a major consideration.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL, CRIME & DISORDER AND EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The accessibility of the polling station at Martin is dealt with in paragraph 3 above. There is no suitable alternative venue that is accessible within that polling district.
- 5.2 There are no environmental or crime & disorder implications.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 6.1 The Working Party is requested to consider the representations received in response to the review, as well as the Returning Officer's comments, and submit recommendations to the General Purposes and Licensing Committee and the Cabinet as appropriate.

Further information:

Rosemary Rutins

Democratic Services Manager

Tel: (023) 8028 5588

e-mail: rosemary.rutins@nfdc.gov.uk

Background documents:

Published documents