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Wednesday 17 October 2007

## **S U M M O N S**

**MEETING:** Polling Districts and Polling Places Review Sub-Board  
**DATE:** 25 October 2007  
**TIME:** 6.00pm  
**PLACE:** Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport  
**Democratic Services contact:** Lindsey Holloway

BOROUGH SOLICITOR

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### **MEMBERS OF THE SUB-BOARD**

Councillor Carter  
Councillor Chegwyn  
Councillor Wright

The Mayor (Councillor Gill) (ex officio)  
Chairman of Policy and Organisation Board (Councillor Cully) (ex-officio)

### **FIRE PRECAUTIONS**

(To be read from the Chair if members of the public are present)

**In the event of the fire alarm (continuous ringing) or controlled evacuation alarm (intermittent ringing) sounding, please leave the room immediately.  
Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.**

**Legal & Democratic Support Unit:** Linda Edwards – Borough Solicitor  
Switchboard Telephone Number: **(023) 9258 4242**  
Britdoc Number: **DX136567 Gosport 2** Website: **[www.gosport.gov.uk](http://www.gosport.gov.uk)**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:**

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

**NOTE:**

- i. Members are requested to note that if any member wishes to speak at the Sub-Board meeting then the Borough Solicitor is required to receive not less than 24 hours prior notice in writing or electronically and such notice shall indicate the agenda item or items on which the member wishes to speak.
- ii. Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

# AGENDA

RECOMMENDED  
MINUTE  
FORMAT

## PART A ITEMS

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE
2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

*All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.*

4. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

*(NOTE: The Sub-Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Sub-Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Tuesday 23 October 2007. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).*

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

*(NOTE: The Sub-Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Sub-Board provided that notice of such question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Tuesday 23 October 2007).*

6. DRAFT PROPOSALS FOR THE REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

*To advise the Sub-Board of the statutory requirement to review the Parliamentary Constituency Polling Districts and Polling Places and to suggest draft proposals for consultation. (report attached)*

PART II  
Contact Officer:  
Chief Executive  
Ian Lycett  
Ext 5201

7. ANY OTHER ITEMS

*- which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.*

## AGENDA ITEM NO. 6

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	Polling Districts and Polling Places Review Sub-Board
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	25 October 2007
<b>Title:</b>	Draft Proposals for the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
<b>Author:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Status:</b>	FOR DECISION

### **Purpose**

To advise the Sub-Board of the statutory requirement to review the Parliamentary Constituency Polling Districts and Polling Places and to suggest draft proposals for consultation.

### **Recommendation**

To approve the draft proposals set out below for consultation purposes.

## **1 Background**

- 1.1 The Council is required by Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to carry out the review of Polling Districts and Polling Places for the Parliamentary Constituency by the end of this year. The review will not consider the boundary of the Parliamentary Constituency. The arrangements put in place following the review will be used for Local Government elections.

## **2 Report**

- 2.1 A Polling District is the area created by the division of a constituency into smaller parts within which a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.
- 2.2 A Polling Place is the building or area in which Polling Stations will be selected by the Returning Officer
- 2.3 A Polling Station is the room or building where the poll takes place. It is chosen by the Returning Officer for the election and publicised on the Notice of Poll and communicated to electors on the Poll Card
- 2.4 **Procedure for Review**  
The Council has to give notice that it is conducting a review in accordance with the relevant regulations including seeking responses from the electorate, bodies or persons with expertise in access for persons with disabilities on their proposals.

- 2.5 The Returning Officer has to be consulted and must respond to the consultation with details of existing polling stations and polling stations that would probably be used based on any newly recommended Polling Place. The Returning Officer's response has to be published within 30 days of receipt by the Council.
- 2.6 Once the Council has considered the response to its consultation the final proposals have to be published and the Register of Electors amended to reflect the review.
- 2.7 The Electoral Commission has produced guidance to assist Councils in undertaking their review. Therefore a set of reference documents have been prepared to assist the Council and are appended to this report.

Appendix 1 Current Polling Districts and Polling Places and arrangements for access to Polling Stations

Appendix 2 List of Streets in each Polling District and map of the Polling District

- 2.8 In order to take account of future requirements proposed areas of new residential development and projected population changes may need to be considered, however I have been advised that these are not materially different.
- 2.9 The Returning Officer has checked the records from Polling Station Inspectors and reports from other polling station staff about the condition of polling stations and accessibility of the currently used polling stations and these are reflected in Appendix 1.
- 2.10 When reviewing polling places the Council must:
- seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in its area 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
  - have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place or the designation of which as a polling place it is reviewing
  - unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the polling district designate polling places in the polling district
  - ensure the polling place for a polling district is small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station.

If no polling place is designated for a polling district then the polling district is to be taken to be the polling place.

#### Draft Proposals for Consultation Polling Districts

- 2.11 No representations have been received about the number of polling districts or to the number of electors in each district. However following a paper appraisal and site visits a number of changes are suggested. Full details of the suggested draft proposals for polling districts are set out in Appendix 3.
- 2.12 Alterations are suggested to the following polling districts
- Anglesey- Fort Road is moved from GB 1 to GB 2 as it is at the foot of GB 2. The polling place will be as for the rest of GB 2 the Scout Hut on Clayhall Road
  - Brockhurst- GE 1 and GE 2 are amended as set out in Appendix 4 as the roads are closer to the polling place for GE 1 and it will avoid the need for voters to cross Brockhurst Road
  - Forton- Gladstone Road to be moved to GH 1 and Behrendt Close and Coulmere Road moved to GH 2. There will be no change to the polling place for voters in these roads as all the polling districts use Brockhurst Junior School
  - Lee West- all 3 polling districts are to be changed, roads are moved from GL 1 to GL 2 so that voters no longer have to cross Manor Way and roads are moved from GL 2 to GL 3 so that voters no longer walk past the polling place at Lee Junior School

Maps of the suggested new polling districts are at Appendix 4

#### Polling Places

- 2.13 Representations have been received from Ward Councillors for Bridgemary South suggesting that Nobes Hall rather than St Mathews Church should be used as a polling station for GD 1. This has been considered but if the change was to be made more voters would be travelling further than would be nearer to Nobes Hall. However following the site visit officers are investigating whether the Church or Church Hall at Fisher Road would be suitable as a polling place.
- 2.14 Representation has also been received from a Ward Councillor for Rowner and Holbrook asking that consideration be given to using Holbrook Recreation Centre as the polling place for GP 1. Whilst there may be a room available access to this would be through the existing reception area, down a corridor with a number of doors and from a narrow corridor which is difficult to access in a wheelchair.
- 2.15 A number of polling places are outside the polling district and consideration has been given to alternative polling places within the

polling district. However it has not been possible to find any alternative polling places within the polling districts. There are suggested changes to the polling places for the following polling districts:-

- Bridgemary North- GC 1 as almost all voters have to walk past Bridgemary Methodist Church to get to the existing Polling Place at Bedenham Primary School investigations are being undertaken to see if the Church would be a suitable polling place
- Brockhurst- GE 1 the polling place for this district is Solent Evangelical Church which does not require a large number of voters to cross Brockhurst Road. However there is no suitable access for people with disabilities and it is not possible to use a temporary ramp. Therefore in order for this venue to continue to be used as a polling place it is essential that work to provide a suitable access is undertaken. It is suggested that the Council should contribute to the costs of these works. If an access cannot be provided then the polling place would need to be changed to St Mary's School Norman Road which would require voters to walk further and also uphill over the bridge.
- Privett- GO 1 the distance to the existing polling place at St Mary's School Norman Road is quite considerable, although it is on a bus route. However it is considered that more voters would be closer to Leesland C of E School if the suggested change is made.

Details of the proposals for polling stations are contained in Appendix 3.

### **3 Risk Assessment**

- 3.1 The Council has to comply with its statutory obligation and conduct the review before the end of the year.

### **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 Once the Sub-Board has considered the draft proposals the notice of the review and the consultation on the proposals will be undertaken.
- 4.2 The response to the consultation will be reported to a meeting of the Council before the end of December 2007.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	There is no budgetary provision for the costs of works to provide disabled access to polling places/stations.
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	Contained in the report
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	None
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	None
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	See Section 3
<b>Background papers:</b>	
<b>Appendices/Enclosures:</b>	
Appendix 1	Current Polling Districts and Polling Places and arrangements for access
Appendix 2	Polling Districts Register of Electors Road/Property Report
Appendix 3	Suggested Draft Proposals for Consultation
Appendix 4	Maps of changes to Polling Districts
<i>(Appendices available for inspection at the Town Hall)</i>	
<b>Report author/ Lead Officer:</b>	Ian Lycett