

22 October 2014

Ordinary Council

**The Review of Polling District & Polling Places
(Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006**

Report of: *Carole Tatton-Bennett – Electoral Services Manager*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is to consider the comments received in connection with the statutory review of polling districts and polling places and confirm the arrangements.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 It is recommended that Members reconfirm the schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places without modification.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council is required to conduct a review of polling districts and polling places within the Parliamentary Constituency in accordance with the above regulations.
- 3.2 Details of the existing arrangements were circulated to Ward Councillors in June and the relevant public notices were displayed. The existing polling district provisions having proved satisfactory, the Acting Returning Officer has made no recommendations for modification of the polling districts and polling places.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 One comment was received in relation to the JB polling district within the Hutton South Ward. This related to the fact that some electors who had

previously voted at the Hutton Free Church were now required to go to the Hutton & Shenfield Union Church. This arrangement has been in place since the boundary review in 2001 that saw the creation of the Hutton Central Ward.

- 4.2 The Hutton & Shenfield Union Church is located within the Hutton South Ward. It is a suitable building with sufficient capacity and local electors are familiar with the location. The alternative suggestion of the Hutton Free Church is outside the Ward, being located within Hutton Central, and currently operates a double station for the electors of that particular Ward. It does not have the capacity to accommodate another polling station. Therefore, no modification of the existing arrangements is proposed.
- 4.3 A further comment has been received from a Ward Councillor regarding the polling provisions in respect of the GA polling district within the Hutton East Ward and it has been suggested that the revamped Hutton Community Centre would make a suitable polling station for electors in Hutton East.
- 4.4 Members will be aware that, following the closure of Hutton Parish Hall, it was necessary to relocate the polling station for the GA polling district to Willowbrook Community Hall, which was the nearest available suitable building. The description of the polling place was modified at that time to allow for alternative premises within one mile of the Rayleigh Road/Wash Road junction to be utilised. The Acting Returning Officer is aware that residential building taking place adjacent to the Willowbrook site has impacted on parking provision and access for electors. There is also a question of capacity within the hall, bearing in mind the higher turn-out expected at the Parliamentary Election in 2015.
- 4.5 Discussions are ongoing regarding securing suitable polling station accommodation to serve Hutton East Ward and the Acting Returning Officer will be advising electors of any changes to polling stations as soon as the details are confirmed. As the Hutton Community Centre and other venues are located within the polling place previously defined, no other action is required in this respect to facilitate the relocation.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To meet the statutory requirements with regard to conducting elections.

6. Consultation

6. Statutory provisions have been met and are detailed above.

7. References to Corporate Plan

7.1 Accords with the objectives set out under 'A Modern Council'.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

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8.1 As there are no planned alterations to the polling districts and polling places, there would be no financial implications arising from this decision.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer Comment

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8.2 The Council has a statutory obligation to carry out a periodic review of the polling districts and polling places within the borough and this report meets that requirement.

9. Appendices to this report

Appendix A - Schedule of polling districts and polling places

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