

<b>Name of Committee:</b>	Council		
<b>Committee Date:</b>	17 January 2024		
<b>Report Title:</b>	Polling District and Polling Place Review 2023		
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Matt Goodwin, Acting Chief Executive		
<b>Cabinet Lead:</b>	Councillor Alex Rennie, Leader of the Council		
<b>Status:</b>	Non-Exempt		
<b>Urgent Decision:</b>	No	<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix A - Polling Places used in May 2023 Appendix B - Electoral Commission Polling place review checklist		
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<a href="#">Reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations   Electoral Commission</a>  <a href="#">Map showing new &amp; old boundaries and new Polling Places</a>		
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<b>Report Number:</b>	HBC/		

#### Corporate Priorities:

- a) Pride in Place - This review helps to ensure residents in Havant Borough will have the opportunity to engage in the democratic process across the borough by ensuring an equal opportunity to vote as part of the electoral process.
- b) The purpose of the review is to ensure equality of electorate in polling district.

#### Executive Summary:

This report is recommended for consideration to ensure that the Council is updated on the compulsory Polling District and Polling Place review taking place in conjunction with the full Local Government Boundary Review of Havant Borough Council. It is important there is no delay in the consideration and approval of the proposals for polling districts and polling places to ensure the revised Register of Electors 2024 containing the new ward and polling district structure can be published on 1 February 2024 in time for the Local and (Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections on Thursday 2 May 2024.

**Recommendations:**

That Council:

- a) Note the report on the review of polling districts and polling places following the Local Government Boundary Review of all wards in the Borough.
- b) Approves the recommended polling places and endorses the Returning Officer's choice of polling stations for future elections.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Sections 18C and Schedule A1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and The Review of Polling District and Polling Places Regulations 2006 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of polling districts and polling places. A compulsory review must take place between 2 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.
- 1.2 This report sets out the changes to polling districts due to the Local Government Boundary Review of all wards and changes to polling places as a result of the review.
- 1.3 The review has given us the opportunity to look for new polling places to replace those previously used that are not located within the new polling districts. The Portacabin in Hayling West has been replaced.
- 1.4 Initial representations received from the review of polling districts and polling places and the steps which must be taken to complete this process.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Under sections 18A to 18E of the Representation of the People Act 1983 as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006, Local authorities are required to keep their polling districts and polling places under review for UK parliamentary constituencies at least once every five years. Schedule A1 of the 1983 Act, as inserted by the Electoral Administration Act, requires certain matters to be prescribed in regulations. These Regulations specify the manner in which representations made by a returning officer in connection with the review are to be published by a relevant authority and specify the information that a relevant authority must publish on the completion of a review.
- 2.2 In addition to compulsory reviews, local authorities may also conduct additional reviews at other points, depending on local circumstances. Additional local reviews do not affect the timetable for compulsory reviews.

- 2.3 The Review of Polling District and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of polling districts and polling places. A compulsory review must take place between 2 October 2023 and 31 January 2025 (inclusive).
- 2.4 Subsequent compulsory reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013.
- 2.5 The review of warding arrangements undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission, effective for the local elections to be held on 2 May 2024, there is now a requirement to conduct a polling district and polling place review alongside to ensure compliance with the 2006 Act.
- 2.6 The Elections Act 2022 provides a duty for ROs to provide each polling station with such equipment as it is reasonable to provide for the purposes of enabling, or making it easier for, relevant persons to vote independently and in secret. The review should therefore include consideration of whether the building can accommodate the equipment you will provide to support disabled voters.
- Accessibility ramps where there are steps at the entrance.
  - Narrow doorways, not suitable for wheelchair users.
  - Size/space required for wheelchair manoeuvrability.
  - Polling booths that enable privacy for voters and low-level booth for disabled voters
  - Chairs available for people to rest.
  - Clear display of guidance or aids (tactile voting devices, pencil grips, magnifiers) to enable voters to feel confident about the voting process.
  - Adequate lighting inside and outside throughout the day
  - Private areas for privacy screens
  - Fully DDA compliant

### **Definitions**

- 2.7 In accordance with the relevant legislation, Polling districts, polling places and polling stations are defined as follows: -

**Polling District** – a geographical area created by the division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.

**Polling Place** - a building(s) or area(s) within each polling district in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer. A polling place within a

polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across the polling district.

**Polling Station** - the room or area within the polling place chosen by the Returning Officer, where the process of voting takes place at an election.

### **Criteria**

- 2.8 The Electoral Commission guidance states that the following should be considered as part of the assessment of the suitability of polling district boundaries:
- Are the boundaries well-defined? For example, do they follow the natural boundaries of the area? If not, is it clear which properties belong in the polling district?
  - Are there suitable transport links within the polling district, and how do they relate to the areas of the polling district that are most highly populated? Are there any obstacles to voters crossing the current polling district and reaching the polling place e.g., steep hills, major roads, railway lines, rivers?

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 2.9 Where a local authority makes any alterations to the polling districts within its area, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) must amend the register of electors accordingly – either on a notice of alteration or by publishing a revised Register of Electors. The changes to the register take effect on the date that the ERO publishes a separate notice stating that the alterations have been made, which should be done to coincide with the publication of a notice of alteration/publication of a revised Register.
- 2.10 The (Acting) Returning Officer for a UKPGE must comment during any review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places on both existing polling stations and the polling stations that would be used if any new proposal for polling places were accepted. The election rules require the (Acting) Returning Officer to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling place and they must allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as they think most convenient.

## **3 THE PROCESS FOR THE REVIEW**

- 3.1 The Electoral Commission has issued guidance on the practical procedures involved in conducting a review of polling districts and polling places, including

measures to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. In determining polling places, an authority must:

- (a) seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- (b) seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

- 3.2 The length of the review process is not prescribed, provided all the steps required by the legislation can be undertaken within it. However, the time allowed for consultation should be sufficient to enable interested persons and groups to read and understand the proposals, gather comments and respond with any alternative arrangements that they may wish to submit.
- 3.3 Where a local authority makes any alterations to the polling districts within its area, the ERO must amend the register of electors accordingly – either on a notice of alteration or by publishing a revised register.
- 3.4 The changes to the register take effect on the date that the ERO publishes a separate notice stating that the alterations have been made, which should be done to coincide with the publication of a notice of alteration/publication of a revised register.
- 3.5 The (Acting) Returning Officer ((A)RO) must comment during any review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places on both existing polling stations and the polling stations that would likely be used if any new proposal for polling places were agreed.
- 3.6 The election rules require the (A)RO to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling place and they must allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as they think most convenient.

### **Statutory requirements**

- 3.7 Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 sets out the steps that authorities must follow in undertaking any review of polling districts and/or polling places. The authority must: -
  - Publish a notice of the review
  - Consult the Returning Officer for every parliamentary election held in a constituency that is wholly or partly within its area. The Returning Officer

must make representations which must include information as to the location of polling stations (both existing and proposed) within polling places (both existing and proposed).

- Within thirty calendar days of their receipt, the relevant authority is required to publish the Returning Officer's representations
- Actively seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises; or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability

3.8 On completion of a review, the authority is required to give reasons for its decisions in respect of the designation of both polling districts and polling places. In addition, the authority must publish:

- all correspondence sent to a Returning Officer in connection with the review;
- all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability;
- all representations made by any person in connection with the review;
- the minutes of any meetings held by the authority where details of the review have been considered;
- details of the actual designations of polling districts and polling places agreed as a result of the review; and
- details of where the results of the review have been published.

### 3.9 **Review Timetable**

- Preparatory work January – November 2023
- Notice of Review and Consultation – 2 October 2023
- Consultation ends – 30 November 2023
- Prepare final proposals – January 2024
- Council meeting and decision – January 2024
- Conclude Review – January 2024
- Publish revised Register of Electors 2024– 1 February 2024
- Create new polling places – February 2024
- Notice of Election – 26 March 2024

## 4 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2023

4.1 In view of the Local Government ward boundary changes, the 2023 review of polling districts and polling places will be full exercise. It provides the opportunity to respond to feedback from stakeholders on the arrangements in place for polling stations at the combined local government and police and crime commissioner elections on 2 May 2024.

4.2 In relation to polling places, the Commission advises that there are a number of factors that will need to be considered when reviewing existing polling places or when assessing new polling places, including:

- **Location:** Is it reasonably accessible within the polling district? Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.? Are there any convenient transport links?
- **Size:** Can it accommodate more than one polling station if required? If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place capable of accommodating all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?
- **Availability:** Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?
- **Accessibility:** Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?

4.3 The Council continues to make every effort to find suitable alternative polling places for those polling places where there is uncertainty about their availability for future elections and enhance the convenience, suitability and practical electoral arrangements for electors.

4.4 In 2023, all the premises to be used as polling stations were visited with a particular emphasis on:

- access and the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended on 1st October 2004
- to attempt to have a polling place in every new polling district
- to explore changing the location of any polling places that were previously identified as being inadequate (i.e. were considered too small, inappropriately located, located outside of the polling district, placed in a school when other suitable locations were available

- noting the importance of the equality of the electorate following the Local Government Boundary Review for Havant.

## 5 Composition of new ward structure and polling district letters

### 5.1 Current Ward Structure

Ward Name	Polling Districts	Councillors
Barncroft	JA, JB, JC	2
Battins	GA, GB, GC, GD	2
Bedhampton	CA, CB, CC, CD, CE	3
Bondfields	FA, FB	2
Cowplain	KA, KB, KC, KD, KE, KF,	3
Emsworth	EA, EB, EC, ED, EE	3
Hart Plain	LA, LB, LC, LD, LE, LF	3
Hayling East	AA, AB, AC, AD	3
Hayling West	BA, BB, BC, BD	3
Purbrook	PA, PB, PC, PD, PE	3
St Faiths	DA, DB, DC, DD, DE	3
Stakes	NA, NB, NC, ND, NE	3
Warren Park	HA, HB, HC	2
Waterloo	MA, MB, MC, MD, ME, MF	3

### 5.2 New Ward Structure

Ward Name	Polling Districts	Councillors
Bedhampton	BEDA, BEDB, BEDC, BEDD	3
Cowplain	COWA, COWB, COWC, COWD	3
Emsworth	EMSA, EMSB, EMSC, EMSD	3
Hart Plain	HAPA, HAPB, HAPC, HAPD, HAPE	3
Havant St. Faith's	HSFA, HSFB, HSFC, HSFD, HSFE, HSFF, HSFG, HSFH	3
Hayling East	HAEA, HAEB, HAEC, HAED	3
Hayling West	HAWA, HAWB, HAWC, HAWD	3
Leigh Park Central & West Leigh	LPCA, LPCB, LPPC, LPCD	3
Leigh Park Hermitage	LPHA, LPHB, LPHC, LPHD	3
Purbrook	PURA, PURB, PURC, PURD	3
Stakes	STKA, STKB, STKC, STKD	3
Waterloo	WATA, WATB, WATC, WATD	3

### 5.3 **County Division Boundary Considerations**

When creating the new ward boundary areas for Havant, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) did not take into account the County Division boundaries which are still linked to the old wards. This means the County Division boundaries are not always aligning with the new ward areas. Where possible, some polling districts are larger to account for the County boundary, and this will result in a double station at that designated polling place. However, where this is not possible, additional polling districts have been created in the two affected areas – Havant St. Faith's and Hart Plain wards to identify the County division areas. These polling districts will be identified with suffix higher than 'D' at the end of the polling district letters.

### **Geographic Information System (GIS) Service Comments**

- 5.4 The LGBCE have not aligned the existing Hampshire County Council (HCC) electoral districts to the new Havant boundaries, therefore it has been necessary to split a small number of larger polling districts into two, three or even four new areas to account for the change in county council area they would be voting for if they were to be voting in a district election at the same time as a local borough election.
- 5.5 In addition, where the HCC electoral boundary does not align with a new ward boundary, but instead passes through a ward, the option has been to either create a fifth polling district to accommodate the bisection, or to expand or shrink a polling district to match the boundary. We have where possible, tried to align to this boundary rather than create more polling districts.
- 5.6 In accordance with councillor comments, GIS have sought to make sure that geographical features have been respected in terms of routing foot traffic to stations as best as possible, whilst also being mindful of the need for finding appropriately placed, sized, suitable and available polling places.
- 5.7 The guidance was generally to try and ensure that Polling Places were centralised within a district and would be familiar to those roads around it where estates exist. In places like central Havant, this has meant that hard physical features such as the A27 and the railway lines have been limiting factors in balancing property and elector numbers to the point where some areas may require a dual station and the polling district splitting again later down the line once feedback has been given.
- 5.8 Where possible GIS have taken guidance from existing polling district boundaries to minimise confusion to the public of where they would expect to vote normally.

The next County elections are scheduled to take place in 2025.

## 6 PROPOSED NEW POLLING PLACES

6.1 In September 2023, premises to be used as polling stations were reviewed with a particular emphasis on accessibility and the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended on 1st October 2004.

### 6.2 Proposed New Polling Places 2024 by Ward (new locations shown in blue)

New Ward	Polling Place 1	Polling Place 2	Polling Place 3	Polling Place 4
<b>Bedhampton</b>	<b>BEDA</b> – Barncroft Primary School, Park Lane, Havant, PO9 3HN	<b>BEDB</b> – Bedhampton Community Centre, 21 Bedhampton Road, PO9 3ES	<b>BEDC</b> – <b>St. Nicholas Church Centre, Belmont Grove, PO9 3PU</b>	<b>BEDD</b> – <b>Bedhampton Methodist Church Hall, Park Lane, PO9 3TF</b>
<b>Cowplain</b>	<b>COWA</b> – Cowplain Social Club, 54 London Road, PO8 8EN	<b>COWB</b> – <b>St Wilfrid's Lower Church Hall, Padnell Road, PO8 8DJ</b>	<b>COWC</b> – Cowplain Activity Centre, Padnell Road, PO8 8EH	<b>COWD</b> – Westbrook Hall, Tempest Avenue, PO7 8NU
<b>Emsworth</b>	<b>EMSA</b> – Sports Pavillion, Hollybank Recreation Ground, Southleigh Road, PO10 7TX	<b>EMSB</b> – 1st Emsworth Scout Hut, Coniger Road, PO10 7SG	<b>EMSC</b> – Emsworth Baptist Church, North Street, PO10 7BY	<b>EMSD</b> – <b>Emsworth Sports &amp; Social Club, 43-45 Havant Road, PO10 7JF</b>
<b>Hart Plain</b>	<b>HAPB</b> – Woodcroft Primary School, 37 Woodcroft Lane, Lovedean, PO8 9QG	<b>HAPB</b> – Wecock Community Association, The Acorn Centre, PO8 9UB	<b>HAPC</b> – Hart Plain Church, 59 Hart Plain Avenue, PO8 8RG	<b>HAPD</b> – The Rainbow PH, 214 Milton Road, Cowplain, PO8 8SE
<b>Havant St. Faith's</b>	<b>HSFA</b> – <b>Havant Methodist Church, Petersfield Road, PO9 2HU</b>	<b>HSFA</b> – The Stride Centre, Daffodil Way, Denvilles, PO9 2FA	<b>HSFC</b> – The Pallant Centre - St Faiths, The Pallant, PO9 1BE	<b>HSFD</b> – HYSTS Building, Ship Inn, Langstone Road, PO9 1RD
<b>Hayling East</b>	<b>HAEA</b> – Royal British Legion, Legion Road, Hayling Island, PO11 9ES	<b>HAEB</b> – South Hayling United Reformed Church, Hollow Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 9EY (was in Hayling West)	<b>HAEC</b> – St Andrews Church Hall, 1-3 Culver Drive, off Southwood Road, PO11 9QL	<b>HAED</b> – Eastoke Community Centre, Wheatlands Avenue, PO11 9SG

<b>Hayling West</b>	<b>HAWA</b> – North Hayling Recreational Hall, St. Peters Road, PO11 0RT (was in Hayling East)	<b>HAWB</b> – St. Patricks RC Church Hall, Manor Road, PO11 0QU	<b>HAWC</b> – Hayling Island Community Centre, Station Road, PO11 0HB	<b>HAWD</b> – West Town Inn, 52 Station Road, Hayling Island, PO11 0EL
<b>Leigh Park Central &amp; West Leigh</b>	<b>LPCA</b> – Sharps Copse Children and Families Centre, Prospect Lane, PO9 5PE	<b>LPCB</b> – St. Albans Church Hall, Bartons Road, PO9 5TE	<b>LPCC</b> – Trosnant Community Centre, The Scout Hut, Stockheath Lane, PO9 3BT	<b>LPCD</b> – Leigh Park Community Centre, Dunsbury Way, PO9 5BG
<b>Leigh Park Hermitage</b>	<b>LPHA</b> – St Clares Church, Strouden Court Precinct, Strouden Court, PO9 4JX	<b>LPHB</b> – Leigh Park & District Working Mens Club, Dunsbury Way, PO9 5BD	<b>LPHC</b> – St. Francis Church Hall, Riders Lane, Leigh Park, PO9 4QT	<b>LPHD</b> – Dickinson Centre, 143 Middle Park Way, PO9 4BU
<b>Purbrook</b>	<b>PURA</b> – The Purbrook Centre, Stakes Road, PO7 5LX	<b>PURB</b> – Hampshire Rose, 44 London Road, Widley, PO7 5AG	<b>PURC</b> – Phoenix Community Centre, Crookhorn Lane, PO7 5QB	<b>PURD</b> – Hampshire Rose, 44 London Road, Widley, PO7 5AG
<b>Stakes</b>	<b>STKA</b> – Windsor Court. Anne Crescent, Waterlooville, PO7 7NA	<b>STKB</b> – Springwood Community Building, 110 Springwood Avenue, PO7 8BJ	<b>STKC</b> – Crookhorn College, Stakes Hill Road, PO7 5UD	<b>STKD</b> – Growing Places, Mill Hill School, Mill Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7DB
<b>Waterloo</b>	<b>WATA</b> – 1st Hart Plain Scout Hut, behind 105/107 Milton Road, PO7 6AG	<b>WATB</b> – Sacred Heart RC Church, 356 London Road, PO7 7SR	<b>WATC</b> – Queens Inclosure Primary School, Cornelius Drive, Waterlooville, PO7 8NT	<b>WATD</b> – Waterlooville Community Centre, 10 Maurepas Way, Waterlooville, PO7 7AY

### 6.3 Proposed Polling Place Replacements

<b>WARD</b>	<b>Proposed New</b>	<b>Replaced</b>
Bedhampton	1. Bedhampton Methodist Church Hall, Hulbert Road, PO9 3TF; 2. St Nicholas Church Centre, Belmont Grove, PO9 3PU	St Joseph's Church Hall (now in Havant St. Faith's)
		Double station at Bedhampton Community Centre
		St Andrews Church Hall, PO6 1AA – (out of Borough in Portsmouth)
Cowplain	St Wilfrid's Lower Church Hall, Padnell Road, PO8 8DJ	Additional polling place required due to previous double stations at Cowplain Activity Centre; and Cowplain Social Club
Emsworth	Emsworth Sports and Social Club, 43-45 Havant Road, PO10 7JF	Emsworth Primary School, PO10 7LX;
		Brookfield Hotel, PO10 7LF

Hart Plain	The Rainbow PH, 214 Milton Road, Cowplain, PO8 8SE	Double station previously used at Hart Plain Church
Havant St. Faith's	Havant Methodist Church, Petersfield Road, PO9 2HU	Warblington School, PO9 2RR;
		Double Station previously used at: The Pallant Centre – St. Faith's, PO9 1BE
Hayling East	South Hayling United Reformed Church, Hollow Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 9EY (was in Hayling West)	North Hayling Recreational Hall, PO11 0RT (now in Hayling West)
Hayling West	1. St Patricks RC Church Hall, Manor Road, PO11 0QU; 2. West Town Inn, 52 Station Road, Hayling Island, PO11 0EL	South Hayling United Reformed Church, PO11 9EY (now in Hayling East)
		Portacabin between 11/12 Island Close;
		Double station at Hayling Island Community Centre
Leigh Park Central & West Leigh	None required	Front Lawn Primary Academy PO8 5HX;
		Sharps Copse Primary School, Prospect Lane, PO9 5PE
Leigh Park Hermitage	1. Leigh Park & District Working Mens Club, Dunsbury Way, PO9 5BD;	The Original Place, 136 Purbrook Way, PO9 3SU
Purbrook	None required	Double station at: Hampshire Rose, PO7 5AG still used for two polling districts
Stakes	None required	
Waterloo	1. Sacred Heart RC Church, 356 London Road, PO7 7SR; 2. Waterloo Community Centre, 10 Maurepas Way, PO7 7AY	St Georges Church Hall, St Georges Walk, PO7 7EH;
		Waterlooville Baptist Church, 368 London Road, PO7 7SY

#### 6.4 Polling Places Investigated – Not suitable or declined

Bedhampton Ward	St Andrews Church Hall, Havant Road, PO6 1AA <b>(location is out of the borough in Portsmouth)</b> ; St Joseph's Church Hall (now in Havant St. Faith's); Belmont Cast Care Home – declined.
Hart Plain Ward	Lovedean Village Hall, 160 Lovedean Lane, PO8 9SF – declined; The Cowplain School, Hart Plain Avenue, PO8 8RY – secondary school, alternative location found; Hart Plain Infant/Junior School, Hart Plain Avenue, PO8 8RZ – would need to close both schools, alternative location found.

Havant St. Faith's Ward	The Spring Arts & Heritage Centre, Old Town Hall, 56 East Street, PO9 1BS- declined; Havant and Emsworth United Reformed Church, North Street, PO9 1PP – agreed, but alternative location found.
Hayling East Ward	St Mary's Church Hall, 24 Church Road, PO11 0NT – agreed but alternative location found.
Leigh Park Central & West Leigh Ward	Widbrook Football Ground, Wakefords Way, PO9 5QA – declined; St Michael and All Angels RC Church, 437 Dunsbury Way, PO9 5BD – declined; Leigh Park Baptist Church, Stockheath Lane, PO9 5NT – agreed, but alternative location found.
Leigh Park Hermitage	Warren Park Primary School, Sandleford Road, Havant, PO9 4LR – would need to close school, alternative location has been found;
Purbrook Ward	Deverall Hall Conference Room, 84 London Road, PO7 5JU – agreed but upstairs conference room is not DDA compliant.
	Purbrook Park School, Park Avenue, Widley, PO7 5DS – Exams taking place on 2 May 2024, alternative location found.
	HSDC South Downs College, College Road, PO7 8AA – declined.
	Church of St John the Baptist, London Road, PO7 5LJ – declined.
Stakes Ward	Purbrook Infant/Junior School, Alder Moor Road East, Waterlooville, PO7 5NQ - would need to close both schools – alternative location found.

## 7 Properties and Electorate – September 2023

7.1 The new ward structure will change the following property and elector numbers: -

Ward	Current Properties Dec 2023	Current Electors Dec 2023
Bedhampton	4939	8587
Cowplain	4334	7629
Emsworth	5136	8271
Hart Plain	4700	7728
Havant St. Faith's	5357	8700
Hayling East	4690	7222
Hayling West	4299	6743
Leigh Park Central & West Leigh	5438	8493
Leigh Park Hermitage	5132	8610
Purbrook	4112	7301
Stakes	4340	7492
Waterloo	4453	7443

## 8. Representations received

8.1 The statutory steps for the review as outlined above have been followed and representations received considered prior to finalisation of the report as required by law. The review shall be implemented in time for the May 2024 elections.

8.2 The Returning Officer must publish representation received about specific polling places within polling districts identified under the review for consideration in November 2023.

8.3 The Returning Officer has received the following representations about specific polling places within the current polling districts.

A detailed breakdown of these comments and the potential polling places identified under this review is shown in the table below: -

Old Ward	Received from	Current Polling Place	Response
Cowplain	Cllr Keast	Replace six roads voting in Queens Inclosure with Westbrook Hall Thistle Down currently vote at Cowplain Activity Club – move to Cowplain Social Club as they pass this polling station.	Six roads moved from the old Waterloo ward into the new Cowplain ward will now vote at: Westbrook Hall, PO7 8NU.  Thistle Down residents will now vote at Cowplain Social Club.

Hayling West	Cllr Gray	Use of Village Hall in Northney or Yew Tree pub to replace portacabin in Island Close	Portacabin has been replaced with North Hayling Recreational Hall
Hayling West	Cllr Linger	Use Stoke Fruit Farm Shop car park to site portacabin	Portacabin has been replaced.
Hayling West	Cllr Richardson	Use St. Marys Hall to replace portacabin on Island Close	St Marys Hall has moved from Hayling West ward to Hayling East ward. Portacabin has been replaced.
St Faith's	Cllr Harris	The Stride Centre is a long way from Normandy Way	No other suitable polling place was found. It is only 1km by foot from the cut-through between Wren Grove off Normandy Way and Japonica Way which for anyone other than limited mobility is a 15-minute walk
St Faith's	Cllr Harris	Some residents' have a long way to go to The Pallant Centre	Twelve roads moved from the old St Faiths ward into the new Bedhampton ward will now vote at: Bedhampton Community Centre, PO9 3ES.
St Faith's	Cllr Harris	Langstone residents – HYSTS building The Ship was not well signposted	New large 'Poling Place' signs from the road to the car park will clearly identify the polling place entrance for May 2024.
St Faith's	Cllr Harris	Roads around Chidham Stores have to cross the railway to get to St Joseph's Church Hall	No longer using St Joseph's Church Hall. New polling place identified – Havant Methodist Church, Petersfield Road. Stride Centre - is only 1km by foot from the cut-through between Wren Grove off Normandy Way and Japonica Way which for anyone other than limited mobility is a 15-minute walk

## 9 Options

- 9.1 The preferred and recommended option is to approve the polling places as set out in the report. These places are recommended following a thorough review as outlined above and are the best available option.
- 9.2 The decision maker can, if they wish, approve alternative options for polling places, but in doing so they would need to comply with statutory guidance and decisions would also need to be supported by demonstrable evidence.

## **10 Relationship to Corporate Strategy**

- 10.1 Pride in Place - This review helps to ensure residents in Havant Borough will have the opportunity to engage in the democratic process across the borough by ensuring an equal opportunity to vote as part of the electoral process.

The purpose of the review is to ensure equality of electorate in polling district.

## **11 Conclusion**

- 11.1 Council is requested to support the outcome of the Polling District and Polling Place review.

## **12 Implications and Comments**

- 12.1 The Committee is asked to consider the process to be put in place and to agree the recommendations outlined in the review.

### **Financial Implications**

#### **12.2 Section 151 Officer Comments**

Members should be content that there are no additional budget pressure or commercial implications arising from this report.

- 12.3 In carrying out a review of polling places, the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (as amended) requires that each polling district must have sufficient and suitable designated polling places that provide 'such reasonable facilities for voting that are practicable in the circumstances' including accessibility for electors with disabilities. The Council is under a duty to promote equality for those with a disability and the recommendations of the review will be drafted with this duty in mind.
- 12.4 The report describes a review of polling districts and polling places in Havant ahead of the scheduled Local and Police & Crime Commissioner elections on Thursday 2 May 2024. Any financial implications arising from changes to the polling districts or polling places are expected to be fully contained within existing budgets.
- 12.5 There is not expected to be a financial impact on staffing the poll stations as some poll places in the borough previously operated as 'double' poll stations. With a reduction in the number of polling districts and subsequent polling stations, the number of staff for future elections, compared with the poll station staff used for the 2021 PCC election is due to go down slightly.

- 12.6 UK Parliamentary elections must be conducted by January 2025. This election will be funded by the Government and there are no immediate financial implications for the Council.

### **Monitoring Officer Comments**

- 12.7 Agreeing the recommendations in this report will ensure that the Council complies with its obligation to review polling districts and polling places under the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The Council is required to follow the rules set out in section 18C and Schedule A1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and this has been adhered to throughout the review process.

### **Equality and Diversity**

- 12.8 The aim of the electoral review is to secure appropriate and as far as possible equal representation for electors across all wards of the borough.
- 12.9 Within the constraints of the suitability and availability of the accommodation, polling places are located so as to minimise the distance electors need to travel to cast their vote.
- 12.10 Disability issues have been taken fully into account in election matters particularly in this review. All recommended polling places are, as far as practicable, located centrally within the polling district and are accessible for people with disabilities.
- 12.11 All new polling places have been reviewed to ensure they are available, fit-for-purpose and are in accordance with the new Elections Act 2022 accessibility measures. The Electoral Commission's checklist for reviewing polling places was used for this purpose and can be found as Appendix B.
- 12.12 A private area with a privacy screen will be made available in every polling station.

### **Human Resources**

- 12.13 This is a review of polling places and polling districts and while there may be HR implications in recruiting additional poll station staff, there are no HR implications directly out of this report.

### **Information Governance**

- 12.14 This is a review of polling districts and polling places and as such there are no information governance considerations as a result of this report.

## Climate and Environment

12.15 Polling places have been identified in each polling district wherever possible to help minimise the distance voters have to travel to cast their vote.

### 13 Risks

13.1 The polling place review exercise is concerned with managing risk at all premises used as polling places.

13.2 Due to the Local Government Boundary Review ward changes, if the council was to continue to use the same polling stations and not consider the findings of this report, the council will continue to operate poll stations that fall outside of the new wards and polling districts and in one instance, that falls outside of the borough.

### 14 Consultation

14.1 Consultation has been available via the council website, in addition to contacting all councillors to canvass their views. Fareham Borough Council were also consulted regarding the Parliamentary Constituency change of name.

14.2 The consultation period ended on 30 November 2023.

### 15 Communication

15.1 The council website will be used to communicate the ward and polling station changes. In addition to information on poll cards and 'Where's my polling station'?

<b>Agreed and signed off by:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Cabinet Lead:</b>	Councillor Rennie	21/12/23
<b>Executive Head:</b>	Matt Goodwin	27/12/23
<b>Monitoring Officer:</b>	Jo McIntosh	09/1/24
<b>Section151 Officer:</b>	Steven Pink	27/12/23