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Ask For: Sue Glover
Direct Dial: **01843 577459**
Email: **sue.glover@thanet.gov.uk**

ELECTORAL MATTERS WORKING PARTY

27 SEPTEMBER 2011

A meeting of the Electoral Matters Working Party will be held at **6.00 pm on Tuesday, 27 September 2011** at the Austen Room, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Membership:

Councillors: Fenner, Gideon, Hornus, Johnston (Chair), King, Poole and Roberts

A G E N D A

Item
No

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** (Pages 1 - 2)
To approve the Minutes of the Electoral Matters Working Party meeting held on 8 September 2011, copy attached.
4. **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES** (Pages 3 - 20)

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ELECTORAL MATTERS WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2011 at 6.00 pm at Austen Room, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate, Kent.

Present: Councillors Fenner, Gideon, Johnston, King, Poole and Roberts

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Hornus.

2. ALSO PRESENT:

Officers: Mark Avis – Electoral Services Officer
Lyn Davey – Electoral Services Assistant

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Proposed by Councillor King and seconded by Councillor Roberts that:

“Councillor Mrs Johnston be elected as Chairman of the Electoral Matters Working Party”

MOTION ADOPTED.

4. ELECTORAL MATTERS WORKING PARTY

The Electoral Services Officer introduced the report which gives background information on the Electoral Commissions requirement for a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (The Electoral Administration Act 2006).

5. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2011

The Electoral Services Officer introduced the briefing paper which summarises the work undertaken by the Democratic Services Department on the review of polling districts and polling places 2011. The briefing paper includes representations that were received during the public consultation and seeks Members views in respect of further action.

The revised polling district and polling places schedule was agreed, but the following discussion took place on the proposed changes to the Salmestone Ward.

Members had concerns regarding the use of Salmestone Primary School as the polling station for both MP1 (Yoakley) and MP2 (Westwood) polling districts. It was considered by Members that the ingress/egress onto Tivoli Road was not safe and therefore the use of St Gregorys RC School was recommended as an appropriate alternative for the MP1 (Yoakley) district.

Views were sought on an alternative polling station for MP2 (Westwood).

It was agreed that the Chairman and Officers are to visit the Westwood area to locate a polling station for the MP2 (Westwood) polling district. Members suggested the use of Global Generation Centre within the Westwood Industrial Estate as a suitable polling station.

6. **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2011 - SUPPLEMENTARY BRIEFING PAPER**

The Electoral Services Officer outlined the supplementary briefing paper which highlights any representations received during the second phase of the public consultation and seeks Members views.

Members had no further comments to make on the supplementary briefing paper and therefore agreed to the proposed changes.

AGREED.

Meeting concluded : 6.50 pm

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2011

To: **Electoral Matters Working Party – 27 September 2011**

Main Portfolio Area: **Performance**

By: **Mark Avis, Electoral Services Officer**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **All wards**

Summary: This briefing paper summarises the work to date on the review of polling districts and polling places 2011.

For consultation

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 At the first meeting of the Electoral Matters Working Party Members agreed to the revised polling district and polling places scheme (attached at Annex 1) apart from the designation of polling places within the Salmestone Ward.
- 1.2 This report considers the designation of polling places within the Salmestone Ward together with updates on various items which were raised at the meeting that were outside the terms of reference of the Working Party.

2.0 Salmestone Ward

- 2.1 Officers had recommended to the Working Party that Salmestone Primary School be the designated polling place for the MP1 and MP2 polling district within the Salmestone Ward.
- 2.2 However, Members had concerns regarding the use of Salmestone Primary School as the polling station for both MP1 (Yoakley) and MP2 (Westwood) polling districts.
- 2.3 It was considered by Members that the ingress/egress onto Tivoli Road was not safe and therefore the use of St Gregory's RC School was recommended as an alternative for the MP1 (Yoakley) district. Views were sought on an alternative polling station for MP2 (Westwood).
- 2.4 It was suggested that the Chairman and Officers visit the Westwood area to locate a polling station for the MP2 (Westwood) polling district. Members suggested the use of Global Generation Centre within the Westwood Industrial Estate as a suitable polling station.

- 2.5 Officers felt it unnecessary for the Chairman of the Working Party to inspect the Global Generation Centre together with officers and assess suitability, as no Members were involved with the inspection and inspection of any other polling places.
- 2.6 Officers are due to carry out an inspection and assessment of the Global Generation Centre within the next few days.
- 2.7 Officers will give a verbal update at the meeting on their inspection/assessment.
- 2.8 Members' views are sought on the designation of polling places within the Salmestone Ward.

3.0 Terms of Reference of the Electoral Matters Working Party

- 3.1 At the previous meeting some Members sought clarification of the terms of reference of the Electoral Matters Working Party.
- 3.2 The brief of the Working Party as agreed by Council in May 2011 is attached at Annex 2.
- 3.3 Since the last meeting some Members have sought advice from officers on whether it would be possible to expand the terms of reference of the Working Party, and if so how.
- 3.4 The Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager is preparing a report on options for expanding the terms of reference of the Electoral Matters Working Party, for consideration at a future meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party. Any recommendations that emerge would need to be considered by the Standards Committee before submission to Council.

4.0 Protocols on advising stakeholders on replacement polling station

- 4.1 Members were keen on protocols being drawn up to govern how the Council advises stakeholders on alterations that may need to be made to designated polling stations at short notice (e.g. when one suddenly becomes unavailable in the run-up to an election).
- 4.2 The Returning Officer must designate a replacement polling station if a designated polling station becomes unavailable. Normally, such changes are reported to Council for information, even though the decision rests with the Returning Officer and not Council.
- 4.2 Unfortunately, due to time constraints, such reporting to Council was not possible in the run-up to the May 2011 elections.

4.3 After listening to Members concerns it is suggested that the protocol on advising stakeholders about replacement polling stations be as follows :

- A report will be presented to full Council for information purposes only (where a scheduled meeting is available within the time limit before an election);
- All agents and sub-agents are advised of any changes;
- The changes are published on the Council's website;
- All affected poll cards are endorsed with "Please note! Change in polling station"; (where time permits) and
- Notices are displayed at old polling station highlighting location of new polling station.

4.4 The views of the Working Party are sought on the above proposals.

5.0 Corporate implications

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 Any increase in the number of polling stations (above any requirement based upon electorate imposed by the Electoral Commission) will increase the costs of running an election.

5.2 Legal

5.2.1 It is a legal requirement to undertake the review before the end of the year. Failure to carry out the review could result in representations being made to the Electoral Commission because the Council failed to carry out the review, which could result in the Electoral Commission directing the Council to amend its current polling districts and polling places.

5.3 Corporate

5.3.1 Through the polling district and polling places review Thanet people have been consulted.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

5.4.1 The subject of equalities has been considered during the review and detailed findings were included in the briefing note previously circulated and the reports presented to the Working Party and circulated to others.

Contact Officer:	Glenn Back, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
Reporting to:	Harvey Patterson, Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager

Annex 1	Revised Polling District and Polling Places Scheme 2011
Annex 2	Annex 1 of report to Council in May 2011 on the constitution of committees, political balance, appointments to committees, panels and boards, and appointment of chairmen and vice-chairmen of committees, panels and boards - 2011/12

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	None at this stage
Legal	None at this stage

DISTRICT OF THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL – REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2011

Beacon Road Ward

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BSB	Beacon Road (Westover)	At or near; Westover Free Church Hall, Linley Road, Broadstairs, Kent	2189	No change to existing polling place but to reallocate the following roads to BSC (Beacon Road – Reading Street) due to the closeness of these roads to BSC's polling place: Afghan Road, Beacon Road (205 – 237), Grafton Road (Ferndale – 18), Link Road and Reading Street Road.
BSC	Beacon Road (Reading Street)	At or near; St Andrews Church Hall, Reading Street, Broadstairs, Kent	1084	No change to existing polling place but to include the following roads: Afghan Road, Beacon Road (205 – 237), Grafton Road (Ferndale – 18), Link Road and Reading Street Road.

Birchington North

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BTA	Birchington North (Minnis Bay)	At or near; Kearns Memorial Hall, Grenham Bay Avenue, Birchington, Kent	2002	No change
BTB	Birchington North (Epple Bay)	At or near; Birchington Bowls Club, Bowls Pavilion, Beach Avenue, Birchington, Kent	1207	Ramp needs to be provided on polling day No change

Birchington South

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BTC	Birchington South (Brooksend)	At or near; Church House, Kent Gardens, Birchington, Kent	2750	No change
BTD	Birchington South (Quex)	At or near; Birchington Village Centre, Alpha Road, Birchington, Kent	2258	No change

Bradstowe

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BSD	Bradstowe	At or near; Broadstairs Youth and Leisure Centre, Albion Street, Broadstairs	3262	Holy Trinity Church Hall Church Road, Broadstairs, Kent not suitable due to access restrictions.

Central Harbour

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RG	Central Harbour (Station)	At or near; Ramsgate Youth Centre, High Street, St Lawrence, Ramsgate, Kent then upon closure At or near: Salvation Army Hall, High Street, Ramsgate as an alternative polling station.	2735	No change at present. However, the building has been earmarked for closure. Upon closure the polling place be designated to Salvation Army Hall, High Street, Ramsgate.
RH	Central Harbour (Royal Harbour)	At or near; Ramsgate Social Club, Elms Avenue, Ramsgate, Kent	2698	No Change

Cliffsend and Pegwell

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RL	Cliffsend and Pegwell (Cliffsend)	At or near; Cliffsend Village Hall, Foads Lane, Cliffsend, Ramsgate, Kent	1489	No change
RM	Cliffsend and Pegwell (Pegwell)	At or near; Christ Church CE School, London Road, Ramsgate, Kent	2261	No change

Cliftonville East

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MK	Cliftonville East (Hodges Gap)	At or near; St Anne's Hall, Devonshire Gardens, Margate, Kent	1869	No change
ML	Cliftonville East (Palm Bay)	At or near; St Phillips Church, Summerfield Road, Margate, Kent	2302	No change
MM	Cliftonville East (Northdown Park)	At or near; Cliftonville Library, Northdown Road, Margate, Kent	879	No change

Cliftonville West

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MI	Cliftonville West (Lido)	At or near; Quarterdeck Youth Centre, Zion Place, Margate, Kent	1401	No change
MJ1	Cliftonville West (Newgate)	At or near; Cliftonville Community & Training Centre, St Pauls Road, Margate, Kent	1604	No change
MJ2	Cliftonville West (Walpole Bay)	At or near; Margate Bowls Club, Northdown Avenue, Margate, Kent	1441	No Change

Dane Valley

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MIN	Dane Valley (Dane Park)	At or near; St John's Scout Hall, Durban Road, Margate, Kent	1999	No change
MO1	Dane Valley (Millmead)	At or near; Holy Trinity Resource Centre, Lounge Room, St Mary's Avenue, Margate, Kent	1038	No change

MO2	Dane Valley (Millmead South)	At or near; Surestart, Millmead Childrens Centre, Dane Valley Road, Margate, Kent	2170	No Change
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Eastcliff

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RE1	Eastcliff (St Lukes)	At or near; St Lawrence College, College Road. Ramsgate, Kent	2168	No change
RE2	Eastcliff (St Lukes)	At or near; Brunswick Hall, Belmont Street, Ramsgate, Kent	718	No Change
RF	Eastcliff (Granville)	At or near; Echo Shop, Plains of Waterloo, Ramsgate, Kent	1951	No change

Garlinge

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
ME	Garlinge (Dent-De-Lion)	Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Garlinge, Kent	2215	No change
MF	Garlinge (Hartsdown)	All Saints Church Hall, All Saints Avenue, Margate, Kent	2377	No change

Kingsgate

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BSA	Kingsgate	At or near; Fayreness Hotel, Marine Drive, Kingsgate, Kent	1762	No change

Margate Central

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MG	Margate Central (Harbour)	At or near; Union Church, Union Row, Margate, Kent	1536	No change
MH	Margate Central (St John)	At or near; St John Community Centre, Victoria Road, Margate, Kent	1406	No change

Nethercourt

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RJ	Nethercourt (Nethercourt Park)	At or near; St Laurence Church Hall, High Street, St Lawrence, Ramsgate, Kent	1803	No change
RK	Nethercourt (Southwood)	At or near; Ramsgate Football Club, Southwood Stadium, Prices Avenue, Ramsgate, Kent	1611	No change

Newington

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RI	Newington	At or near; Newington Community Centre, Princess Margaret Avenue, Ramsgate, Kent	3218	No change

Northwood

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RA	Northwood (Pysons Road)	At or near; St Marks Church Hall, Pysons Road, Ramsgate, Kent	2666	No change
RB	Northwood (Whitehall)	At or near; Windmill Public House, Newington Road, Ramsgate, Kent	2179	No change

Salmestone

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MP1	Salmestone (Yoakley)	At or near; Lesters Public House Ramsgate Road, Margate, Kent Salmestone Grange, Nash Road, Margate (alternative for 2011 elections)	3070	Members views sought
MP2	Salmestone (Westwood)	As Above	507	Members views sought

Sir Moses Montefiore

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
RC	Sir Moses Montefiore (West Dumpton)	At or near; Newlands Children Centre, Dumpton Lane, Ramsgate, Kent	1149	No change to existing polling place but to include the following roads: Dumpton Lane
RD	Sir Moses Montefiore (St Ethelbert)	At or near; The Racing Greyhound Public House, Hereson Road, Ramsgate, Kent	2379	No change to existing polling place but to reallocate the following roads to RC (Sir Moses Montefiore – West Dumpton) due to the closeness of these roads to RC's polling place: Dumpton Lane

St Peters

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BSE	St Peters (Village)	At or near; St Peters Church Hall, Hopeville Avenue, Broadstairs, Kent	2807	No change
BSF	St Peters (Bromstone)	At or near; Kent Innovation Centre, Millenium Way, Broadstairs, Kent until no longer available then At or near: Canterbury Christchurch University, Broadstairs Campus, Northwood Road, Broadstairs	2758	No change at present however when the Kent Innovation Centre, Thanet Reach Business Centre, Millennium Way, Broadstairs is no longer available, the polling place be designated to Canterbury Christchurch University, Broadstairs Campus, Northwood Road, Broadstairs (subject to availability)

Thanet Villages

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
VAC	Acol	At or near; Acol Village Hall, The Street, Acol, Kent	229	No change
VMAN	Manston (North Thanet Part)	At or near; Manston Village Hall, Preston Road, Manston, Kent	287	Due to changes in Parliamentary boundaries Manston now falls wholly in Thanet North Constituency therefore VMAN and VMAS polling districts will be merged to form VMA

VMAS	Manton (South Thanet Part)	At or near; Manston Village Hall, Preston Road, Manston, Kent	356	Due to changes in Parliamentary boundaries Manston now falls wholly in Thanet North Constituency therefore VMAN and VMAS polling districts will be merged to form VMA
VMI	Minster	At or near; Minster Village Hall, Minster, Kent	2620	No change
VMK	Monkton	At or near; Monkton Village Hall, Monkton Street, Monkton, Kent	525	No Change
VSA	Sarre	At or near; The Crown Inn, Wansum Ramsgate Road, Sarre, Kent	163	No Change
VSN	St.Nicholas-at-Wade	At or near; Village Hall, The Street, St Nicholas, Kent	604	No change

Viking

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
BSG	Viking (Upton)	At or near; St Mildred's School, St Mildred's Avenue, Broadstairs, Kent	2656	No Change
BSH	Viking (Dumpton Gap)	At or near; Council Chamber, Pierremont Hall, Pierremont Park, Broadstairs .	2766	Park Hall earmarked for demolition.

Westbrook

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MC	Westbrook (Westbrook Bay)	At or near; Westbrook Bowls Pavilion, Westcliff Gardens, Margate, Kent	2111	No change. Ramp required
MD	Westbrook (St James)	At or near; Methodist Church Hall High Street Gralinge, Kent	972	No Change

Westgate

Arrangements/Officer Comment				
Polling District	Description of Polling District	Polling Place	Electorate	Comment
MA	Westgate (Westgate Bay)	At or near; Christ Church Hall, Westgate Bay Avenue, Kent	2541	No Change
MB	Westgate (Lymington Road)	At or near; Westgate Community Centre, Kent	2570	No Change

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

Summary

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA 2006) introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places at least once every four years. The first such review had to be completed by the end of 2007. This report outlines the steps the Council is taking to comply with this duty and the timetable for public consultation and consideration of representations by Council.

Background

Every relevant authority is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts for UK Parliamentary elections and for keeping polling districts under review. For local government elections, although there is no requirement to sub-divide county electoral divisions or district wards into polling districts, it is considered good practice to do so. Polling district schemes for local government elections, must, so far as possible, mirror the scheme in place for parliamentary elections.

The Council must have undertaken and completed the review by 31 December 2011. In reality, this review should be completed by 21 November 2011 to enable the Register of Electors to be published by 1 December 2011 to reflect any changes to the present scheme of polling places and polling districts.

Definitions

A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area such as a district council ward.

A polling place is a geographical area in which a polling station is located. There is no legal definition of what a polling place is. The polling place can either be designated as tightly as a building in the polling district used for polling (ie. a church hall) or as widely as the entire polling district.

A polling station is the area, normally a building, where voting takes place. One or more polling stations may be provided within a polling place.

The Rules

When designating polling districts and polling places, the Council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.

Furthermore, unless there are special circumstances that lead the Council to determine otherwise, each parish must be in a separate polling district.

The Council must also seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places it designates are accessible to all electors, including taking into account the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

The designation of polling districts and polling places are matters for which the Council is responsible. The Returning Officer is responsible for providing a sufficient number of polling stations within those polling places.

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