

BOUNDARY AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS WORKING PARTY

**Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2014 at 6.30 pm at Pugin & Rossetti Rooms,
First Floor, Council Offices, Cecil Street, Margate.**

Present: Councillor D Green (Chairman); Councillors Gideon, Hornus, Johnston, K Gregory (Councillor Michael J Roberts), D Green and W Scobie

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Roberts, who was substituted by Councillor K Gregory.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Proposed by Councillor Johnston, and
Seconded by Councillor Hornus that:

Councillor D Green be elected Chairman of the Boundary and Electoral Arrangements Working Party.

RESOLVED

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillors K Gregory, Hornus, Johnston and W Scobie sought clarification from the Monitoring Officer as to whether they would need to declare an interest as they were all Margate Charter Trustees. It was the decision of the Monitoring Officer that no declarations of interest were required.

4. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager gave a brief on the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places which had to be undertaken and completed by 31 January 2015.

It was recommended to the Working Party that the review would start in July.

All existing polling stations would be evaluated by Officers at the forthcoming European Parliamentary Election using the evaluation checklist used by the Electoral Commission. Upon completion, Officers would analyse each individual polling stations checklist to ascertain the suitability of the existing polling station.

Furthermore, feedback generated from the European Parliamentary Election (electors, staff, candidates, agents, elected representatives, etc.) would be analysed and incorporated into the review¹. This would be in addition to the public consultation as part of the statutory review.

Members asked for a copy of the existing (2011) Polling District and Polling Places schedule, together with any recent feedback received on those polling stations, and it was agreed that would be provided.

¹ This is undertaken by staff at review/evaluation at all elections

Members were informed there would be some changes to the existing polling stations for the forthcoming European Parliamentary Election arising from the Kent County Council election in May 2013. It had been hoped that a report would be presented to this meeting but as yet a few polling stations remained unconfirmed.

When the situation of polling stations had been agreed for the forthcoming European Parliamentary Election a report would be submitted to Council for information purposes².

Proposed by Councillor Scobie, and
Seconded by Councillor Johnston that:

1. The proposed timetable for the review of polling districts and places be agreed;
2. All representations received during the polling districts and polling places review be considered; and
3. Recommendations be made to an extraordinary meeting of the Council in November 2014.

RESOLVED

5. COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

The Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager outlined the proposed review of community governance arrangements in Margate.

The area to be reviewed was currently an area having Charter Trustees³. Although the Charter Trustees covered the whole un-parished area of Margate, statutory guidance states that consideration must be given to the possibility of smaller community interests/identities should a desire for that emerge from the consultation.

Some Members suggested that Westgate-on-Sea residents may identify themselves as a separate community identity (i.e. separate from the rest of Margate), therefore it was imperative that the consultation document contained details of all options that are technically possible as a result of the community governance review.

Therefore, it was agreed to arrange another meeting of the Working Party to discuss the formal consultation document prior to it being published.

Proposed by Councillor K Gregory, and
Seconded by Councillor Hornus that:

4. The terms of reference (including the area to be reviewed) as set out in paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2 of the report are approved, together with the review timetable; and

² Polling district and polling places are fixed by the local authority. Polling stations are chosen by the Returning Officer.

³ Charter Trustees were established following local government reorganisation in 1972 to preserve the historic identity of former boroughs or cities. Charter Trustees have the power to carry out ceremonial functions and not to act as administrative units.

5. Another meeting of the Working Party be arranged to discuss the formal consultation document prior to it being published.

RESOLVED

Meeting concluded : 7.15 pm