

Agenda Item No:

Report No:

Report Title: Review of Polling Place for Streat Parish electors

Report To: Council

Date: 15 October 2014

Ward(s) Affected: Plumpton, Streat, East Chiltington and St John Without

Report By: Catherine Knight, Assistant Director of Corporate Services

Contact Officer(s)-

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Purpose of Report:

To recommend to Council that the polling place for Streat parish electors be changed in response to further consultation with Streat Parish Meeting.

Officer Recommendation(s):

- 1 To approve the Returning Officer's proposal that Westmeston Parish Hall, Lewes Road, Westmeston be designated as the polling place for Streat parish electors (Polling District LPB).
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Reason for Recommendations

- 1 To enable the Council to meet its statutory duty to keep its polling places under review, in accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 and guidance published by the Electoral Commission.

Information

- 2 A full review of the Council's polling districts and the places where electors are asked to vote was undertaken earlier this year and its recommendations were approved by Full Council at its meeting on 17 July 2014.
- 3 Full reviews must be undertaken every 4 years. In between reviews, polling places and polling stations used should be kept under consideration to ensure they remain suitable. Key factors such as location, accessibility, size of venue, parking, availability and suitable facilities must be considered by the Returning Officer.

Information from Streat Parish Meeting

- 4** As part of the recent polling review, Streat Parish Meeting asked if the voters from polling district LPB, who currently vote at Plumpton Village Hall, West Gate could vote at Westmeston Parish Hall, Lewes Road as it was more conveniently located for the majority of electors in Streat village. Based on the knowledge the Elections office had at the time, the locations of Westmeston Parish Hall and Plumpton Village Hall were compared on a map of the polling area and it was thought that neither was more conveniently located than the other for the majority of Streat voters so we had no valid reason to change it under the review.
- 5** However, we have since received more detailed, local information from Streat Parish Meeting confirming that Westmeston Parish Hall is actually closer than Plumpton Village Hall for the majority of the properties in that area, and asking for the polling place to be reconsidered.
- 6** On the basis of this subsequent knowledge received, Council is recommended to approve the Returning Officer's proposal to change the polling place for Streat parish electors from Plumpton Village Hall to Westmeston Parish Hall as it is a more conveniently located venue.
- 7** The relevant District Ward Councillor representing Streat electors, Councillor Sarah Osborne, has already been consulted on the proposed change.

Implementation

- 8** The suitability of Westmeston Parish Hall as a polling venue has already been established. It is currently used as a polling venue for Westmeston parish electors (Polling District LCC) and is large enough to accommodate another polling station for the 139 Streat electors. It has long established use and has been assessed as having good parking facilities and disabled access.
- 9** Any change in polling place will become effective at all elections held after this date. Residents will be notified of the change by letter well in advance of the next scheduled elections. A reminder of the change will also be included on the poll cards for that area at the next elections.

Financial Appraisal

- 10** There are no financial implications arising from the recommendation in this Report. Election costs are borne by the body for whom the election is being held.

Legal Implications

- 11** None over and above those set out in the body of this Report.

Sustainability Implications

- 12** I have completed the Sustainability Implications questionnaire and have identified no impacts, either positive or negative, arising from this Report.

Equality Screening

- 13** I have completed the initial Equality Analysis screening exercise and have identified no potential negative impacts as a result of this recommendation. Therefore, a full Equality Analysis is not required.

Risk Management Implications

- 14** I have completed the Risk Management questionnaire and have identified that the main risk is that the Council would fail in its statutory duty to comply with the requirements for reviewing polling places. We will avoid this by keeping polling places under review in accordance with legislation.

Background Papers

- 15** Electoral Commission Guidance 'Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations': <http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/polling-place-reviews>
- 16** Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places documentation 2013/14: <http://www.lewes.gov.uk/council/21707.asp>

Appendix

- 17** None