



Electoral Matters Committee

Tue 4 Jun
2024
3.00 pm

Oakenshaw Community
Centre
Castleditch Lane
Redditch
B98 7YB

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS

Please note that this is a public meeting.

If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers, please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.

GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS ATTENDING MEETINGS IN PERSON

Meeting attendees are encouraged not to attend the meeting if they have any of the following common symptoms of Covid-19 on the day of the meeting; a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of smell and / or taste.

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Members of the public are encouraged not to attend the meeting if they have any of the following common symptoms of Covid-19 on the day of the meeting; a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of smell and / or taste.

Notes:

Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.



Electoral Matters

Tuesday, 4th June, 2024

3.00 pm

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Joe Baker (Chair)	Sachin Mathur
	James Fardoe (Vice-Chair)	Rita Rogers
	Brandon Clayton	

1. Apologies for absence and named substitutes

2. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 5 - 6)

4. Polling Place Changes for Parliamentary Election on 4th July 2024 (Pages 7 - 10)

5. To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

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Electoral Matters

Committee

Thursday, 29th February,
2024

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Peter Fleming (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Barker Smith and Sharon Harvey.

Officers:

Sue Hanley, Darren Whitney and Melissa Bassett.

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Luke Court and Monica Stringfellow. Councillor Sharon Harvey was substitute for Councillor Stringfellow.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 13th December 2023 be approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

17. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND (LGBCE) - WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY DIVISIONS REVIEW

The Committee considered a report which set out proposals by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for revised County Council electoral divisions in the Borough. The consultation on the proposals was open until 18th March. Officers had identified two areas where the proposed division boundaries were not coterminous with recently agreed polling district boundaries.

In Redditch Central/Redditch East the LGBCE proposals would result in there being two polling districts NRB 1 and NRB 2 in different county council divisions. It was suggested that the boundary was moved so that the whole of polling district NRC with

Chair

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1,271 electors – Church Hill North would be within the proposed Redditch East division. The boundary would also be moved so that the whole of polling district NRB with 791 electors – Papermill was within the proposed Redditch Central division.

In Redditch West/Redditch South it was suggested that if the boundary was moved north to encompass Morton Stanley Park and Redditch Golf Course the boundary of polling district WCD – Callow Hill – would then be co-terminus with the division boundary. This would move 27 electors Members from Redditch West to Redditch South division. Members supported this suggestion as it improved the efficient administration of elections.

During consideration of the Redditch West/Redditch South proposal, a Member raised the impact on electoral equality of the LGBCE proposals for Wirehill, which would move into Redditch South. This affected 700 electors. Having considered the net result of the changes in overall elector numbers in each division, members concluded that they would not wish to make a submission relating to the Wirehill proposals.

It was proposed by Councillor Peter Fleming, seconded by Councillor Juliet Barker Smith and

RESOLVED that

- 1. That the contents of the report be noted, and**
- 2. Officers make a submission on behalf of the Council to the consultation on proposals for County Council electoral divisions being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as set out in the report, relating to Redditch Central/Redditch East and Redditch West/Redditch South electoral divisions.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 6.46 pm

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE
2024**

4 June

Polling Place changes for Parliamentary Election on 4 July 2024

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Baker, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Governance
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton
Report Author	Job Title: Darren Whitney, Electoral Services Manager Contact email: darren.whitney@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881650
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	N/A
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

1. RESOLUTIONS

- 1.1 **Members of the Committee are asked that the (Acting) Returning Officer following consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Ward Members be allowed to alter polling places;**
- 1.2 **that the decision of the Committee take effect immediately.**

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A UK Parliamentary general election has been called for 4 July 2024 which means there is a very tight timetable to get the mechanics of the election in place.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 No direct costs from this report.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Authority to set Polling District boundaries and to designate Polling Places rests with the Council (Statutory elements of the Council's Constitution under the Local Government Act 2000). Redditch Borough Council has delegated full relevant powers to this Electoral

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- 4.2 Decisions about the situation of Polling Stations within designated polling places are for the (Acting) Returning Officer. Arrangements must comply with relevant provisions of the Representation of the People Acts and Regulations and the Equality Act 2010.

5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 This report deals with statutory functions but relates to the strategic purpose of an effective and sustainable council.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 None for this report.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 Electoral staff have been contacting premises that are normally used as polling places for elections. For scheduled elections premises are booked well in advance however it is not possible to do this for a snap general election. So far, two premises have informed Electoral Services that their premises is not available for polling on 4 July. These may not be the only ones as at time of writing there are still a number to reply to usage requests.
- 6.3 Alternate premises are being considered for the two polling places and the Ward Councillors will be asked for their thoughts on these and any of other alternatives they may know of.
- 6.4 Poll cards are planned to be mailed out on 5 June which obviously cannot happen for those polling places where agreement to hold the poll has not been finalised.
- 6.5 Currently, this committee must agree any change of a polling place, but due to the short timetable of this election it is recommended that the (Acting) Returning Officer be able to alter polling places following consultation with the Portfolio Holder and relevant Ward Members. This expedites the process and allows poll cards to be produced as soon as possible.

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7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 It might prove difficult to get an alternative polling place which will involve electors travelling long distances to vote, although this may be the case if there are no alternatives.
- 7.2 Alternative polling places may not be agreed until late in the election timetable meaning some electors may receive poll cards after absent vote deadlines have past or not receive one at all. At worst this could mean some electors are disenfranchised from voting.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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