

**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

Matters Committee.

- 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.

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