

Electoral Matters Committee

Tuesday, 4th June, 2024

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Joe Baker (Chair), Councillor James Fardoe (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Brandon Clayton, Sachin Mathur and Rita Rogers.

Officers: Melissa Bassett and Darren Whitney.

Democratic Services Officers: Jess Bayley-Hill.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that

The minutes of the meeting of the Electoral Matters Committee held on 29th February 2024 be approved as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. POLLING PLACE CHANGES FOR PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION ON 4TH JULY 2024

The Committee considered a report recommending polling place changes for the Parliamentary election on 4th July.

Poll cards were being sent out to the majority of electors in the next few days. Due to the short notice for the election, there were two polling station venues which were not available on this occasion. Potential alternative venues had been suggested and details were provided for the Committee.

Polling District WID – the current polling station, Lavender Barn at the Old Rectory House, was not available for the election. It was

Chair

proposed this should now be at St Peter's Church Hall in Ipsley. Officers reported that this could accommodate a polling station and was a suitable site, although slightly further away for electors to visit than Lavender Barn. A ward member had told the Elections team they were happy for the change subject to accessibility being confirmed, which it had.

Polling District NRA – the current polling station was the Abbey Hotel, which was unavailable. A number of potential alternative venues had been considered but were not suitable for the election because of access issues or size constraints. Officers suggested that the Meadow Farm Hotel would be the most appropriate alternative as a meeting room could be used with a small parking area adjacent to the venue.

Officers reported that the (Acting) Returning Officer supported the use of both venues for polling stations.

The Electoral Services Manager reported that in the short term there was a risk of a polling station no longer being available for the General Election, so officers had suggested a delegation to enable the Acting Returning Officer to alter venues, having consulted with the Portfolio Holder and Ward Members. The delegation would apply to this General Election only. A member suggested that in addition to the Portfolio Holder and Ward Members all members of the Committee should be consulted as they had a view of arrangements across the Borough, and this was agreed.

It was noted that the Committee would be asked to review polling places later in the year, both for local reasons and potentially as a result of the review of county council electoral divisions. Recommendations from this were due to be released by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in early July.

Members spoke in support of the alternative venues proposed for Polling Districts WID and NRA.

Councillor James Fardoe proposed, Councillor Brandon Clayton seconded, and it was

RESOLVED that

For the purposes of the Parliamentary election on 4th July 2024:

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- 1. the polling station for Polling District WID be located at St Peter's Church Hall and for Polling District NRA at the Meadow Farm Hotel;**
- 2. following consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Ward Members and all members of the Electoral Matters Committee, the (Acting) Returning Officer be allowed to alter polling places; and**
- 3. the decision of the Committee take effect immediately.**

The Meeting commenced at 3.00 pm
and closed at 3.16 pm