

LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

21 October 2019

Minutes of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee meeting held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Bexhill-on-Sea on Monday 21 October 2019 at 6:30pm.

Committee Members present: Councillors A.K. Jeeawon (Chairman), Mrs S. Hart (Vice-Chairman), R.K. Bird, G.S. Browne, S.J. Coleman, G.C. Curtis, B.J. Drayson, K.M. Harmer, A.S. Mier, R.B. Thomas and H.L. Timpe.

Other Members present: Councillors C.A. Madeley.

Advisory Officers in attendance: Executive Director, Executive Director, Head of Service Environmental Services, Licensing and Community Safety, Electoral Services Manager, Deputy Legal Services Manager - Wealden and Rother Shared Legal Services and Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: 1 member of the public and 1 member of the press.

LG19/9. **MINUTES**

The Chairman was authorised to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee held on 15 July 2019 as a correct record of the proceedings.

LG19/10. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K.M. Field.

It was noted that Councillor Gray was present as substitute Member for Councillor Field.

LG19/11. **ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM**

The Chairman of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee had accepted an Additional Agenda Item onto the Agenda, which was considered as Agenda Item 7 (see Minute LG19/14 below) concerning Licensing Act 2003 Appeals.

LG19/12. **CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS AND IMMIGRATION GUIDANCE**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Executive Director on the Council's Criminal Convictions Policy and Immigration Guidance in relation to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers.

In 2015, the Council adopted a Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Licensing: Criminal Convictions Policy, the purpose of which was to provide guidance on the criteria taken into account by the Council when determining whether or not an applicant, or an existing licence holder, was a fit and proper person to hold a dual drivers licence; a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Licence; and/or a Private Hire Operators Licence.

In September 2017, the Government established the Task and Finish Group (TFG) on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing to consider evidence relating to the adequacy of taxi and private hire legislation and to make recommendations for actions to address any priority issues identified. In the following September (2018), the Group published its report 'Taxi and Private Hire Licensing – steps towards a safer and more robust system', which made a total of 34 recommendations, many of which had already been adopted by the Council. The report called upon the Government to legislate for national minimum standards and to set such standards at a level that ensured high minimum safety standards (recommendation 2). In addition it called for urgent guidance on the relevance of previous convictions and the period for which exclusions from licensing should apply (recommendation 21).

In February 2019, the Government published its response to the TFG report, accepting that there was a need for greater consistency and collaboration in regulation to address changes and the concerns of the public, the trade and regulators, and three key measures recommended to achieve a safe service for passengers, namely: national minimum standards, national enforcement powers and a national licencing database. The latter two measures were beyond the Council's scope of powers but the Council could introduce measures towards achieving robust standards in advance of the introduction of any national minimum standards being ratified.

The Institute of Licensing (IoL) had published its 'Guidance on Determining the Suitability of Applicants and Licensees in the Hackney and Private Hire Trades' in April 2018, which was welcomed by the Government in their response to the TFG and had stated that, subject to consultation (which took place between February and April 2019), it was the intention to include this in the national minimum standards.

The Council's Criminal Convictions policy presented to Members had been amended in line with the IoL guidelines and the Government's draft guidance, which incorporated those omissions identified, along with other minor variations and was attached to the report at Appendix A.

Members had the opportunity to raise questions and the following points were noted:

- the guidance had been simplified by grouping offences together under general headings;
- when considering an application for a licence, allegations that did not result in a conviction could also be taken into consideration. Members requested that the sentence at 2.6 in the guidelines, 'This will also include complaints where there has been no police involvement', be shown as a point in its own right in order to highlight it further;
- no applicants were to be deterred from applying for a licence and would be considered against guidelines set out in the policy;

- the removal of the requirement for written references was due to the availability of relevant information through the newly established Anti Fraud Network database; and
- further Government guidance was expected in the future, therefore the policy would need amending again at that point.

RECOMMENDED: That the Council's existing Criminal Convictions policy be amended in line with the Institute of Licensing guidelines and the Government draft guidance, as set out in Appendix A, as amended.

LG19/13.

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2019

Members received and considered the report of the Executive Director detailing the Council's statutory review of its polling districts and polling places.

The review considered the arrangements for polling districts and polling places at UK Parliamentary elections and thus covered the arrangements in place for the parts of Bexhill and Battle and the Hastings and Rye constituencies that fell within Rother. These arrangements remained in place for other elections. The review did not cover parliamentary, local government or parish boundaries, or the naming of these electoral areas, which were subject to a separate review process conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

A total of 17 responses to the consultation were received, which were included in Appendix 2 to the report. Feedback from polling station staff and polling station inspectors had also been considered.

There were seven changes to the existing polling places and polling stations that the Committee was asked to recommend, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

During the debate, the following points were noted:

- Rother currently had 81 polling districts, which would be reduced to 72;
- 190 staff were employed across the polling stations, consisting of 71 presiding officers and 119 poll clerks; the number of staff would not increase as a result of the proposed changes;
- access to polling stations was constantly reviewed and signage improved; and
- measures were taken to ensure polling stations were as centrally located and easily accessible within Wards as possible.

RECOMMENDED: That:

- 1) the Polling Places Scheme in Appendix B be approved; and
- 2) the Executive Director's current delegated authority to agree necessary changes of polling place after consultation with the Chairman of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee, relevant District Ward Member(s), County Council Member and

Parish Council be maintained. Should any of the consultees not agree the proposed change, the decision to be brought to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee and full Council for determination.

LG19/14. **LICENSING ACT 2003 APPEALS - ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM**

Members received and considered the report of the Executive Director which recommended delegated authority be granted to the Solicitor of the Council to settle appeals under the Licensing Act 2003, where appropriate.

Whilst the Council rarely found itself the Respondent in licensing appeals under The Licensing Act 2003, the right of appeal was within the Act to be utilised by applicants and interested parties.

When such an appeal was made, the process involved a full hearing before a Magistrates Court involving a full rehearing in a legal environment. In most cases that process would be necessary to defend a decision to refuse or revoke a licence, but equally could occur when a condition was attached to a licence that a party felt was inappropriate. In such cases where the issues were relatively straightforward, it would be pragmatic to have the ability to settle appeals with minor changes to the original decision, such as changing the time that doors had to be closed by, in order to avoid the expense and time of unnecessary court involvement.

The S.182 Guidance under the 2003 Act recommended that any such proposals to settle appeals involved consultation with the Interested Parties, and this consultation would be undertaken before the Solicitor and Chairman of the original Panel to consider the issue of settling the appeal by agreement.

RESOLVED: That delegated authority be granted to the Solicitor to the Council, in consultation with the Chairman of the respective Licensing Panel that decided the matter, to settle appeals under the Licensing Act 2003 where it is considered appropriate to do so.

(The Chairman of the Licensing and General Purposes Committee had accepted this item onto the Agenda as an Additional Agenda Item in order for the Committee to consider the request to grant delegated authority to the Solicitor to the Council to settle appeals in consultation with the Chairman of the respective Licensing Panel, where it was considered appropriate to do so.)

CHAIRMAN

The meeting closed at 7:06pm.

Rother District Council

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver – Proposed changes to the licensing guidelines in Council's Criminal Convictions Policy

(Material changes to the existing document are highlighted in red)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the criteria taken into account by the Council when determining whether or not an applicant, or an existing licence holder, is a fit and proper person to hold a dual drivers licence; a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle licence; and/ or a private hire operators licence.
- 1.2 The overriding aim of the Licensing Authority is to protect the safety of the public. The Licensing Authority is concerned to ensure that:
- A person is a fit and proper person.
 - The person does not pose a threat to the public.
 - The public are safeguarded from dishonest persons.
 - The safeguarding of children and young persons.
- 1.3 This policy provides guidance to any person with an interest in public and private hire licensing. In particular, but not exclusively:
- Applicants for drivers'/ vehicles/ operators licences
 - Existing licensed drivers whose licences are being reviewed
 - Licensing officers
 - Members of the licensing committee/ panel (or other relevant decision making body)
 - Magistrates' hearing appeals against local authority decisions
- 1.4 Where licensing officers have delegated powers to grant licences, they will utilise these guidelines when making a decision to grant a licence. In all other cases applications for licences will be referred to the licensing committee/ panel (or other relevant decision-making body). Whilst officers and the committee/ panel will have regard to the guidelines contained in the policy, **each case will be considered on its individual merits and, where the circumstances demand, the committee/ officer may depart from the guidelines.**

2. General policy

- 2.1 These guidelines do not replace the duty of the Licensing Authority to refuse to grant a licence, or to revoke a licence, where they are not satisfied that the applicant or licensee is a fit and proper person. There may be circumstances where it is appropriate to depart from the guidelines or where a situation is not covered by them. In these cases the Authority will consider the matter from first principles and determine the fitness and propriety of the individual.
- 2.2 In determining whether an individual is fit and proper the Licensing Authority is entitled to take into account all matters concerning that applicant or licensee. They are not simply concerned with that person's behaviour whilst working in the hackney carriage or private hire trade. This consideration is far wider than

simply criminal convictions or other evidence of unacceptable behaviour, and the entire character of the individual will be considered. This can include, but is not limited to, the individual's attitude and temperament.

- 2.3 As the Licensing Authority will be looking at the entirety of the individual, the fit and proper test will not simply be determined by a specified period of time having elapsed following a conviction or the completion of a sentence. Time periods are relevant and weighty considerations, but they are not the only determining factor. In addition to the nature of the offence or other behaviour, the quantity of matters and the period over which they were committed will also be considered. Patterns of repeated unacceptable or criminal behaviour are likely to cause greater concern than isolated occurrences as such patterns can demonstrate a propensity for such behaviour or offending.
- 2.4 In all cases the Licensing Authority will consider the conviction or behaviour in question, and what weight should be attached to it. Each and every case will be determined on its merits and with regard to these guidelines.
- 2.5 In this policy any reference to 'conviction' shall be construed to include matters that amount to criminal behaviour, but which may not have resulted in conviction.
- 2.6 Matters which have not resulted in a criminal conviction (be that due to an acquittal; a conviction being quashed; a decision not to prosecute; or a continuing investigation) can and will be taken into account by the Licensing Authority.
 - 2.6.1 Complaints where there has been no police involvement can and will also be taken into account by the Licensing Authority.
- 2.7 Convictions for attempt or conspiracy will be regarded as convictions for the substantive crime. Cautions, fixed penalty notices, and community resolutions shall also be considered in the same way as convictions.
- 2.8 Where a new applicant is under investigation; has been charged with any offence; or is awaiting trial; the determination of the licence application will be deferred until the trial has been completed, or the charges/ summonses withdrawn. Where an existing licensee has been arrested; is under investigation; or has been charged/ summonsed; it will be for the Licensing Authority to decide what action to take in the light of these guidelines.
- 2.9 Once a licence has been granted, there is a continuing requirement on the part of the licensee to maintain their fit and proper status. The Licensing Authority has powers to take action against the holder(s) of all types of licence (driver's, vehicle and operator's) and it must be understood that any convictions or other actions on the part of the licensee which would have prevented them being granted a licence on initial application will lead to that licence being revoked.
- 2.10 Any dishonesty by any applicant, or other person on the applicant's behalf, which is discovered to have occurred in any part of any application process (e.g. failure to declare convictions, false names or addresses, falsified references) will result in a licence being refused or, if already granted, revoked, and may result in prosecution.

2.11 Whilst a single conviction will not necessarily be an automatic bar to obtaining a licence, an applicant would normally be expected to:

- a. Remain free of conviction for an appropriate period;
- b. Demonstrate that they are an exceptional case sufficient for the Council to deviate from these guidelines; and
- c. Show adequate evidence that he/ she is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

Simply remaining free of conviction will not generally be regarded as adequate evidence that a person is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.

In determining time elapsed 'free of conviction' shall be measured from the date of completion of any sentence, or driving ban, imposed; or, in the case of a fine, from the date of conviction (whichever is the longer).

The onus for proving that an applicant is a fit and proper person lies with the applicant.

3 Where an applicant has been convicted of a criminal offence, the Licensing Authority cannot review the merits of the conviction [Nottingham City Council v. Mohammed Farooq (1998)].

4 Pre-requisites to making an application

4.1 It is the policy of the Licensing Authority that every application for a licence to drive a hackney carriage and/ or private hire vehicle must be accompanied by satisfactory evidence of the following matters (and that applications that are incomplete will not be deemed to have been made until such time as they are completed):

- That the applicant has the right to live and work in the country;
- An enhanced criminal record check and evidence that they are not on a child and/ or vulnerable adult barring list;
- A certificate of their current medical fitness to DVLA Group 2 standard;
- That the applicant is authorised to drive a vehicle of the same classification as that which the licence will allow them to drive;
- That the applicant has a minimum of three years post-qualification driving experience (or if not, has completed an advanced driving assessment);
- That the applicant has adequate literacy and numeracy skills to provide the service that they wish to be licensed for;
- That the applicant has sufficient ability to speak English and to understand spoken English to provide the service that they wish to be licensed for.
- That the applicant has had child sexual exploitation and safeguarding training.
- That the applicant has been checked against National Anti Fraud Network (NAFN) database.

4.2 If an applicant has spent six continuous months or more overseas, the Licensing Authority will expect to see evidence of a criminal record check from the country/ countries covering the period before a licence application can be made. This period will be for ten years.

5 Appeals

- 5.1 Any applicant refused a driver's licence on the grounds that the Licensing Authority is not satisfied that he or she is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence has a right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the notice of refusal [Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, s 52 (1)].
- 5.2 Any applicant refused an operator licence on the grounds that the Licensing Authority is not satisfied he/ she is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence has a right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the notice of refusal. [Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, s 55 (4)]
- 5.3 Any licensee whose licence is suspended or revoked has a right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the notice of suspension or revocation. [Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, s 61 and 62]

6 Powers

- 6.1 Sections 61 and 62 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976 allow the Licensing Authority to suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a licence if the application/ licence holder has been convicted of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency, violence; failure to comply with the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847; failure to comply with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; or any other reasonable cause.
- 6.2 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions)(Amendment) Order 2002, allows the Licensing Authority to take into account all convictions recorded against an applicant or the holder of a private hire vehicle or hackney carriage driver's licence, whether spent or not. Therefore the Licensing Authority will have regard to all relevant convictions, particularly where there is a long history of offending or a recent pattern of repeat offending.
- 6.3 In this policy the term "disqualification" refers to the period served, in order to take account of the fact that a court may reduce the period of disqualification from driving. An applicant must provide evidence in advance to prove that the court agreed a reduction in the period of disqualification.

7 Consideration of disclosed criminal history

- 7.1 Under the provisions of sections 51, 55, and 59, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Licensing Authority is required to ensure that an applicant for the grant or renewal of a hackney carriage and/ or a private hire vehicle drivers' licence and/ or private hire vehicle operators licence is a 'fit and proper' person to hold such a licence. However, if an applicant has any convictions, warnings, cautions, charges or **summons** awaiting trial, **or pending investigations**, the licensing authority will look into:

- How relevant the offence(s) are to the licence being applied for
- How serious the offence(s) were

- When the offence(s) were committed
 - The date of conviction
 - Circumstances of the individual concerned
 - Sentence imposed by the court
 - The applicant's age at the time of conviction
 - Whether they form part of a pattern of offending
 - Any other character check considered reasonable (e.g. personal references)
 - Any other factors that might be relevant
- 7.2 Existing holders of drivers'/ operators licences or the proprietors of hackney carriage / private hire vehicle licences are required to notify the Licensing Authority in writing within 7 days of being arrested, receiving a driving licence endorsement, fixed penalty notice or criminal conviction (including cautions).
- 7.3 The Licensing Authority requires enhanced disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) of any applicant for a driver licence. Standard level checks are required for applicants for an operators licence. The Licensing Authority follows the DBS's Code of Practice on the fair use of disclosure information. A copy is available on request.
- 7.4 Applicants applying for the grant or a renewal of a drivers' licence will be required to obtain an enhanced disclosure at their expense. Similarly applicants for the grant or renewal of an operators licence will be required to obtain a standard level disclosure at their own expense. The Licensing Authority abides by the DBS's Policy on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosure information, which is available on request.
- 7.5 Where a driver has received penalty points because they have failed to notify the Council of a relevant conviction, the Licensing Authority will require applicants to register for the DBS's update service and to nominate the Licensing Authority to receive updates. These licensees are expected to provide evidence of continuous registration and nomination throughout the duration of their licence. The cost of the registration will be met by the driver concerned.
- 7.6 More information about the DBS can be found on their website at:
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>
- 7.7 The Licensing Authority is also entitled to use other records and information that may be available to it in determining applications or an entitlement to continue holding a licence. This may include information held by the Licensing Authority or other licensing authorities, and information disclosed by the police.

8 Crimes resulting in death/ serious injury

- 8.1 Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime which resulted in the death of another person; was intended to cause the death or serious injury of another person; or was reckless as to whether death or serious injury would be caused; they will not be licensed. This will include the offences of causing death by dangerous driving; death by careless driving whilst under

the influence of drink or drugs; death by driving whilst disqualified, un-licensed or uninsured; or any similar offence(s).

9 Exploitation

- 9.1 Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with abuse, exploitation, use or treatment of another individual irrespective of whether the victim or victims were adults or children, they will not be licensed. This includes slavery, child sexual exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional or financial abuse, but this is not an exhaustive list.

10 Terrorism

- 10.1 Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with terrorism they will not be licensed.

11 Sex and indecency offences

- 11.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence involving or connected with illegal sexual activity or any form of indecency, a licence will not be granted.
- 11.2 In addition to the above, the Licensing Authority will not grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on the Sex Offenders Register or on any 'barred' list.

12 Offences involving violence

- 12.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence of violence, or connected with any offence of violence, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

13 Dishonesty

- 13.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence of dishonesty, or any offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

14 Drugs

- 14.1 Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to, the supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply or connected with possession with intent to supply, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
- 14.2 Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant will also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

15 Possession of a weapon

- 15.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a firearm, or imitation firearm, a licence will not be granted until at least 10 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
- 15.2 Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a weapon or any other weapon related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

16 Criminal damage

- 16.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for criminal damage, including arson that does not endanger life, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

17 Public Order

- 17.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for a public order offence a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed

18 Discrimination

- 18.1 Where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in any form, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

19 Motoring convictions

- 19.1 Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. Any motoring conviction demonstrates a lack of professionalism and will be considered seriously. It is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence would not prohibit the grant of a licence or may not result in action against an existing licence. Subsequent convictions reinforce the fact that the licensee does not take their professional responsibilities seriously and is therefore not a safe and suitable person to be granted or retain a licence.

20 Drink driving/ driving under the influence of drugs/ using a hand-held telephone or hand held device whilst driving

- 20.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant will also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.
- 20.2 Where an applicant has a conviction for using a held-hand mobile telephone or a hand-held device whilst driving, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.

21 Other motoring offences

- 21.1 A major traffic or vehicle related offence is one which is not covered above and also any offence which resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). It also includes driving without insurance or any offence connected with motor insurance. Where an applicant has a conviction for a major traffic offence or similar offence, a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
- 21.2 A minor traffic or vehicle related offence is one which does not involve loss of life, driving under the influence of drink or drugs, driving whilst using a mobile phone, and has not resulted in injury to any person or damage to any property (including vehicles). Where an applicant has 7 or more points on their DVLA licence for minor traffic or similar offences, a licence will not be granted until at least 5 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.
- 21.3 An operator who aids and abets the driving of passengers for hire and reward without insurance will normally have his/ her operators' licence revoked immediately and be prevented from holding a licence for at least 7 years.

22 Hackney carriage and private hire offences

- 22.1 Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence concerned with or connected to hackney carriage or private hire activity (whether the offence involved the use of a vehicle or not), a licence will not be granted until at least 7 years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

23 Once a licence has been granted

- 23.1 If, following the grant of a licence, the licensee's conduct is such that were they applying for a new licence their application would not be granted, then consideration will be given to revocation of their existing licence. In determining such cases any reference to 'applicant' in this policy shall be construed as to include an existing licensee and it shall be for the Licensing Authority to decide what action to take in the light of these guidelines.
- 23.2 A suspension or revocation of the licence of a driver takes effect at the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the day on which notice is given to the driver. If it appears that the interests of public safety require the suspension or revocation of the licence to have immediate effect, and the notice given to the driver includes a statement that is so and an explanation why, the suspension or revocation takes effect when the notice is given to the driver. [Road Safety Act 2006, s 52, 2A&2B]
- 23.3 A suspension or revocation of the licence of an operator takes effect at the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the day on which notice is given to the operator.

24 Licences issued by other Licensing Authorities

- 24.1 Applicants who hold a licence with one Licensing Authority should not automatically assume that their application will be granted by another. Each case will be decided on its own merits.

24.2 Licensees who are licensed by multiple Authorities are expected to inform all such Authorities of the Authorities that they are licensed by and to advise each Authority of any changes in this respect; and should expect those Authorities to share information regarding their conduct and to take it into account as appropriate.

This page is intentionally left blank

Rother District Council – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2019

Current Polling Scheme with Proposals**Bexhill Central District Ward**

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BC001	Beulah Baptist Church Hall, Clifford Road	2,098	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BC002	Meeting Room at Sackville Road Methodist Church, Parkhurst Road	2,112	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> “A bit difficult to comment as only know my own polling station on Sackville Road which is fine. Review seems to have been conducted well.” – Member of the public <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.

Bexhill Collington District Ward

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BD001	St Augustine's Church Hall, St Augustine's Close	1,484	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None.
BD001/A*	St Augustine's Church Hall, St Augustine's Close	8	1	<u>Recommendation:</u> That BD001/A is merged with BD001, as there is no longer a requirement for the two polling districts to be split. No other changes proposed.
BD002	Cooden Beach Sports & Social Club	998	1	Dual polling place with BG002. The current polling place is not in the polling district. We have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.
BD002/A*	Cooden Beach Sports & Social Club	240	1	<u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> That BD002/A is merged with BD002, as there is no longer a requirement for the two polling districts to be split. No other changes proposed.
BD003	Bexhill Amateur Athletic Association, Little	1,276	1	Dual polling place with KEW01. The current polling place is not in the polling district. We have

	Common Road			<p>investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
--	-------------	--	--	--

Bexhill Kewhurst Ward

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
KEW01	Bexhill Amateur Athletic Association, Little Common Road	1,614	1	<p>Dual polling place with BD003.</p> <p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
KEW02	St Stephens Church Hall, Woodsgate Park	1,245	1	<p>Dual polling place with BI001.</p> <p>The current polling place is not in the polling district. We have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

KEW03	St Marthas Church Hall, Cooden Sea Road	1,195	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u>
KEW03/ A*	St Marthas Church Hall, Cooden Sea Road	0	1	None. <u>Recommendation:</u>
KEW03/ B*	St Marthas Church Hall, Cooden Sea Road	7	1	That KEW03/A and KEW03/B are merged with KEW03, as there is no longer a requirement for the three polling districts to be split. No other changes proposed.

Bexhill Old Town & Worsham

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BE001	St Peters Community Centre, Church Street	1,466	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u>
BE001/A*	St Peters Community Centre, Church Street	40	1	None. <u>Recommendation:</u> That BE001/A is merged with BE001, as there is no longer a requirement for the two polling districts to be split. No other changes proposed.
BE002	Christchurch Methodist Church Hall, Springfield Road	1,680	1	Dual polling place with BI002. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.

Bexhill Pebsham & St Michaels

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BH001	St Michael's Church Hall, Glassenbury Drive	1,295	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
BH002	Pebsham Community Centre, Seabourne Road	2,661	2	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p>The electorate in BH002 is currently too large, and therefore it is proposed to split the polling district into two smaller polling districts. The proposed division is along Seabourne Road, which runs centrally through the current polling district.</p> <p>The current polling place is considered large enough to accommodate two polling stations, and so it is proposed that the polling place remain the same for both polling districts.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BH002 is split into two smaller polling districts (BH002 and BH003), and that Pebsham Community Centre remains the polling place for both polling districts.</p>

Bexhill Sackville

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BF	The whole polling district (St Mary Magdalene Church Hall, Upper Sea Road is the venue currently in use)	3,888	2	<p>The whole of the polling district was designated as the polling place as part of the last compulsory review of polling districts and polling places, to allow for the use of an alternative venue, should one come into use in the near future.</p> <p>The electorate for BF is currently too large, and therefore it is proposed to split the polling district into two smaller polling districts (BF001 and BF002). The proposed division is along the train line which runs centrally through the current polling district.</p>
BF/A*	The whole polling district (St Mary Magdalene Church Hall, Upper Sea Road is the polling station currently in use)	203	1	<p>It is proposed that St Mary Magdalene Church Hall, Upper Sea Road is designated as the polling place for the new polling district which would cover the area north of the train line (BF001).</p>
BF/B*	The whole polling district (St Mary Magdalene Church Hall, Upper Sea Road is the polling station currently in use)	66	1	<p>It is proposed that the whole of the polling district be designated as the polling place for the new polling district south of the train line (BF002).</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BF/A and BF/B are merged with BF, as there is no longer a requirement for these three polling districts to be split. It is further recommended that BF is then split into two smaller polling districts (BF001 and BF002), and that St Mary Magdalene Church Hall be designated as the polling place for</p>

				BF001, and the whole of the polling district be designated as the polling place for BF002.
--	--	--	--	--

Bexhill Sidley

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BJ001	Our Lady of the Rosary Church Hall, Southlands Road (All Saints Community Hall, All Saints was the venue for the most recent elections)	2,335	1	<p>Our Lady of the Rosary Church Hall is the currently designated polling place, however we have been advised that it has now been closed on a permanent basis.</p> <p>All Saints Community Hall was used at the recent elections, and there are no issues identified with the venue.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that All Saints Community Hall is designated the polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That All Saints Community Hall be designated as the polling place.</p>
BJ002	Sidley Baptist Church, Claremont Road	1,812	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

Bexhill St Marks Ward

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BG001	St Marks Church Hall, Green Lane (Little Common Community Centre was used at the most recent elections)	2,680	2	<p>St Marks Church Hall is the currently designated polling place, however Little Community Centre was used at the recent elections, due to issues with the use of St Marks Church Hall. However, these issues have now been resolved, and therefore no change in polling place is proposed.</p> <p>Additionally, the electorate for BG001 is currently too large. In the consultation document, it was proposed to merge a portion of the polling district, including Barnhorn Road and the area to the south, with BG002 in order to balance the electorate.</p> <p>However, it has not been possible to find a suitable location to do so without inconveniencing the electorate. Therefore, it is instead proposed that BG001 be split into two smaller polling districts. The proposed division is where Peartree Lane meets Barnhorn Road.</p> <p>St Marks Church Hall is considered large enough to accommodate two polling stations, and so it is proposed that the polling place remain the same for both polling districts.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>"I live in Little Common and we have always used St Marks hall for voting.</p> <p>Recently there was an unexpected election (maybe the European one) and we had to use a school – I think Little Common School. The access was limited for drivers. It felt very</p>

				<p>tight for space, especially in such a residential area.</p> <p>I'd be pleased not to go there again." – Member of the public</p> <p>"I live in Ocklynge Close and find it easy to vote at St Mark's Church Hall because there is no need to cross the A259. The 'new' crossing is a nightmare to cross with pedestrians having to wait in the middle of the busy road for the traffic to be stopped in order to cross. Parking is a potential problem if the polling station is at the Community Centre because the car park is small and access difficult via Shepherd's Close.</p> <p>Because of the road crossing situation I decided to become a postal voter." – Member of the public</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BG001 is split into two smaller polling districts, and that St Marks Church Hall remains the polling place for both polling districts.</p>
BG002	Cooden Beach Sports & Social Club, Withyham Road	853	1	<p>Dual polling place with BD002.</p> <p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
BG003	Normans Bay Caravan Park	162	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>"I am happy with the current arrangements for Normans Bay, where we can vote in the Caravan Park by the train station. This</p>

				<p>is much better than the previous arrangements where we voted in the (not to be confused with...) Camping and Caravan Park to the west of the village. It is important to be able to vote within walking distance of home.” – Member of the public</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>
--	--	--	--	--

Bexhill St Stephens Ward

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BI001	St Stephens Church Hall, Woodsgate Park	2,680	1	Dual polling place with KEW02.
BI001/A*	St Stephen Church Hall, Woodsgate Park	149	1	The electorate in BI001 is currently too large, and therefore it is proposed to split the polling district into two smaller polling districts. The proposed division is along Gunters Lane, which runs centrally through the current polling district.
BI001/B*	St Stephens Church Hall, Woodsgate Park	9	1	<p>The current polling place is not considered ideal in the long term, as it is already a dual polling place with KEW02.</p> <p>However, we have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district. Therefore, it is proposed that St Stephen's Church Hall be designated as the polling place for the new polling district to the east of Gunters Lane, but the whole of the new polling district to the west of Gunters Lane be designated as the polling place to allow for the use of an alternative venue, should one come into use in the near future.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BI001/A and BI001/B are merged with BI001, as there is no longer a requirement for these three polling districts to be split. It is further recommended that BI001 is then split into two smaller polling districts, and that St Stephens Church Hall remain the polling place for the polling district to the east of</p>

				Gunters Lane, but the whole of the polling district be designated as the polling place for the polling district to the west of Gunters Lane.
BI002	Christchurch Methodist Church, Springfield Road	1,084	1	Dual polling place with BE002.
BI002/A*	Christchurch Methodist Church, Springfield Road	32	1	The current polling place is not in the polling district. We have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.
BI002/B*	Christchurch Methodist Church, Springfield Road	45	1	<p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BI002/A and BI002/B are merged with BI002, as there is no longer a requirement for the two polling districts to be split. No other changes proposed.</p>

Brede & Udimore

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
HAI	St Marys Community Hall, Udimore	289	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
HBL	Brede Village Hall, Cackle Street	1,548	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.

Burwash & the Weald

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BM	Brightling Village Hall, Brightling	307	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BN	Burwash Village Hall, High Street	1,482	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BO	Burwash Common Pavilion, Burwash Common	768	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BS	Etchingam Village Hall, Parsonage Croft	706	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u>

				<p>“The Parish Council of Etchingam, while declaring an interest as Guarantor Trustee to the owners of the property currently in use as polling place for district BS, would wish to support the proposal of “no changes”.” – Parish Clerk, Etchingam Parish Council</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>
BY	Mountfield Village Hall, Church Road	426	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>

Catsfield & Crowhurst

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BA	Ashburnham Village Hall, Brownbread Street	295	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BAP	Ashburnham Village Hall, Brownbread Street	38	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BP	Hermon Cottage, Church Road	660	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BQ	St Georges Church Parish Room, Forwood	675	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u>

	Lane			None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BR	Dallington Old School Village Hall, The Street	270	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.

Eastern Rother

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAB	Peasmarsh Memorial Hall, Main Street	983	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
BHB	Playden W.I. Hall, Houghton Green Lane	292	1	<p>Dual polling place with HHA.</p> <p>The current polling place is not in the polling district. We have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
HA	Camber Memorial Hall, Lydd Road	875	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p>

				No changes proposed.
HB	Salts Farm Shop, East Guldeford	62	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
HF	Iden Village Hall, Iden	393	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
HHA	Playden W.I. Hall, Houghton Green Lane	226	1	Dual polling place with BHB. No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
HJ	Rye Harbour Village Hall, Harbour Road	331	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u>

				No changes proposed.
HM	Winchelsea Beach Community Hall, Sea Road	699	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“The village hall is my polling place. It is ideal in all respects and no children miss a day’s education many times a year.” – Member of the public.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

Hurst Green & Ticehurst

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAF	Stonegate Village Hall, Forge Field	405	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>
BAH	Ticehurst Village Hall, High Street	1,972	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>
BU	Flimwell Cricket Pavilion, High Street	589	1	<p>We have been made aware that the new Flimwell Village Hall is nearing completion and should come into use in the near future. It is considered that this venue would be an improvement over the current venue. As the venue is not yet completed, it is proposed that the whole polling district is designated as the polling place, to allow the venue to be changed to Flimwell Village Hall, subject to availability and suitability.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> “In Flimwell we currently use the cricket pavilion – however this</p>

				<p>has stepped access.</p> <p>We are having built a new village hall at the A21 Cross roads which will be complete in 2 to 3 months and available with parking and step free access. Can you consider this?</p> <p>I have copied the Clerk to the Parish Council and the chair of Flimwell Village Hall Trustees” – Member of the public</p> <p>“Good idea [name removed] – certainly would be endorsed by the PC and I am sure the poll people would prefer the kitchen and loo facilities – I have this on the agenda for 3rd September full council meeting” – Parish Clerk, Ticehurst Parish Council</p> <p>“I write as the County Councillor for Rother NW to indicate that, with the possible exception of Flimwell, I think the selection of polling stations in my ward has worked well and I recommend no change. In Flimwell, the pavilion is not a good location as far as the polling clerks are concerned, though fine for voting. If the new village hall is ready in time, that should be considered.” – Councillor John Barnes</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That the whole polling district be designated as the polling place.</p>
BVA	Hurst Green Village Hall, Station Road	1,172	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

North Battle, Netherfield & Whatlington

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAJ	Battle Baptist Church, Mount Street	2,444	1	<p>The electorate in BAJ is currently too large, and therefore it is proposed to split the polling district into two smaller polling districts. The proposed division is in Mount Street, north of the current polling place, Battle Baptist Church.</p> <p>The current polling place is considered large enough to accommodate two polling stations, and so it is proposed that the polling place remain the same for both polling districts.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BAJ/A is merged with BAJ, as there is no longer a requirement for these two polling districts to be split. It is further recommended that BAJ is then split into two smaller polling districts, and that Battle Baptist Church remains the polling place for both polling districts.</p>
BAJ/A*	Battle Baptist Church, Mount Street	387	1	
BAM	Whatlington Village Hall, Whatlington	284	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

BZ	The whole polling district (Netherfield C.E. Primary School was used at the most recent elections)	663	1	The whole of the polling district was designated as the polling place as part of the last compulsory review of polling districts and polling places, however Netherfield C.E. Primary School is currently used as the polling station.
BZ/A*	The whole polling district (Netherfield C.E. Primary School was used at the most recent elections)	3		<p>Whilst the use of a school is not considered preferable, there are currently no suitable alternative venues in the polling district. Therefore it is proposed that Netherfield C.E. Primary School is designated the polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“I agree that using a school is not ideal so I suggest the Village Hall.” – Councillor Kathryn Field</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BZ/A is merged with BZ, as there is no longer a requirement for these two polling districts to be split.</p> <p>Netherfield Village Hall has been considered at previous reviews, but was considered not to be suitable due to its location in relation to the majority of residences in the polling district. There were also safety concerns for electors travelling to the venue on foot, as there is not a footpath along most of Netherfield Road. This situation remains the same, and therefore it is recommended that Netherfield C.E. Primary School be designated as the polling place.</p>

Northern Rother

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAA	Northiam Village Hall, Frewen Close	1,854	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BAE	Staplecross Village Hall, Northiam Road	731	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> “Ewhurst Parish Council supports the proposal that the Polling Places for Ewhurst Parish remain unchanged.” – Parish Clerk, Ewhurst Parish Council <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.
BB	Beckley Village Centre, Main Street	902	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.

BK	Bodiam Parish Room, Sandhurst Road	306	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
BT	The Arthur Herdman Pavilion, Ewhurst Green	252	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“Ewhurst Parish Council supports the proposal that the Polling Places for Ewhurst Parish remain unchanged.” – Parish Clerk, Ewhurst Parish Council</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

Robertsbridge

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAC	Robertsbridge Village Hall, Station Road	2,054	1	Due to new developments in Robertsbridge, the electorate in BAC is expected to rise over the next few years.
BVB	Robertsbridge Village Hall, Station Road	57	1	<p>In the consultation document, it was proposed to merge a portion of the polling district with BVB in order to balance the electorate.</p> <p>However, following further investigation, it is now considered unlikely that the electorate will increase above 2,500 in the next few years.</p> <p>It is therefore proposed that for now the smaller polling district of BVB be merged with BAC as there is no longer a requirement for the two polling districts to be split. This will cause no disruption to the electorate.</p> <p>The polling district division can then be considered again at the appropriate time in the future.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“Robertsbridge conducts its poll using the Village Hall. This serves the community extremely well as the location is easy to attend by folk from all over the village. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it is my motto and that certainly applies in this case.” – Member of the public</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That BVB is merged with BAC, as there is no longer a</p>

				requirement for these two polling districts to be split.
--	--	--	--	--

Rye & Winchelsea

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
HI001	Badger Gate, Udimore Road	1,712	1	<p>Badger Gate has been the designated place since 2016 as the previous venue, Tilling Green Community Centre, was not available for use at the time.</p> <p>Tilling Green Community Centre is now available and is considered a more suitable venue. Therefore it is proposed to change the polling place to Tilling Green Community Centre.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“I am councillor for Rye and Winchelsea town. The three polling stations used are fine.” – Councillor Gennette Stevens</p> <p>“Rye Town Council supports the proposal that the Polling Place should be changed from Badger Gate to Tilling Green Community Centre.” – Town Clerk, Rye Town Council</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That Tilling Green Community Centre be designated as the polling place.</p>
HI002	Rye Community Centre, Conduit Hill	1,905	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“I am councillor for Rye and Winchelsea town. The three polling stations used are fine.” – Councillor Gennette Stevens</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p>

				No changes proposed.
HL	Winchelsea New Hall, Rectory Lane	386	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>“I am councillor for Rye and Winchelsea town. The three polling stations used are fine.” – Councillor Gennette Stevens</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

Sedlescombe & Westfield

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAD	Sedlescombe Village Hall, Church Hill	1,239	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>
HAK	Westfield Church Hall, Vicarage Lane	1,766	1	<p>Dual polling place with HAK.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.</p>
HAL	Westfield Church Hall, Vicarage Lane	321	1	<p>Dual polling place with HAL.</p> <p>The current polling place is not in the polling district. We have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u> None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p>

				No changes proposed.
HBW	The whole polling district (Westfield Church Hall was used at the most recent elections)	240	1	<p>The whole polling district is currently designated as the polling place as the previous venue, Sedlescombe Golf Club House, is no longer available for use. Westfield Church Hall was used at the most recent elections, but is not considered suitable for permanent use as it is already in use as a polling place for two other polling districts.</p> <p>Claverton Country House Hotel, Bluemans Lane has recently been identified as a possible venue. Following a visit by officers, it has been determined that the venue would be available and is considered suitable for use.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That Claverton Country House Hotel is designated as the polling place.</p>
HK	Three Oaks Village Hall, Butchers Lane	675	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>

South Battle & Telham

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
BAG	Wilmoths, Hastings Road	436	1	<p>Wilmoths is currently designated as the polling place, however it is not considered to be an ideal venue. We have investigated alternative venues, but have not been able to identify a suitable alternative within the polling district, and therefore no change of polling place is proposed.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That the whole polling district is designated as the polling place.</p>
BX	The whole polling district (The Emmanuel Centre was used at the most recent elections)	1,291	1	<p>The whole polling district is currently designated as the polling place, however The Emmanuel Centre was used at the most recent elections, and is considered a suitable venue. Therefore it is proposed that The Emmanuel Centre is designated as the polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>That The Emmanuel Centre is designated as the polling place.</p>

Southern Rother

Current Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Number of Polling Stations	Acting Returning Officer Comments and Proposals
HC	Fairlight Village Hall, Fairlight	1,562	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
HD	The whole polling district (Guestling Village Hall, Church Lane is currently used as a polling station)	514	1	<p>The whole polling district is currently designated as the polling place. Guestling Village Hall is currently used as a polling station, but is not considered to be an ideal venue. Therefore, it is proposed that the whole polling district continue to be designated as the polling place to allow for an alternative venue to be used at such time as one becomes available.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p> <p>No changes proposed.</p>
HE	Icklesham Memorial Hall, Workhouse Lane	799	1	<p>No issues identified with polling place.</p> <p><u>Other comments received:</u></p> <p>None.</p> <p><u>Recommendation:</u></p>

				No changes proposed.
HG	Pett Village Hall, Pett Road	746	1	No issues identified with polling place. <u>Other comments received:</u> None. <u>Recommendation:</u> No changes proposed.

* The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) conducted a review of Rother electoral arrangements in 2016, which resulted in new ward boundaries. As a result, it was necessary to create a number of additional temporary polling districts, where the existing polling district boundaries were not aligned with the new ward boundaries and part of the polling district had changed ward. It was intended that these temporary polling districts would remain until the new ward boundaries took effect at the local elections in May 2019 (after which they would no longer be required), and then be merged with an existing polling district in their new ward as part of the next compulsory review of polling districts and polling places.

General Comments and Proposals

“Isn’t it about time this system was dragged into the 21st century and allowed us to vote online?
If I can register as a voter online why can’t I vote online?
Surely more people would actually vote if they didn’t have to physically go down to some seedy little hall.”

– Member of the public.

“Thankyou for the chance to respond to the request for feedback concerning the polling stations.
I would like to put forth my views on voter turnout and how this could be positively affected by giving some thought to our four legged canine friends and their owners in the polling stations.
We have a very well behaved small dog. Previously on any given election day we would walk down to our local polling station and in we went with our dog. There were no problems. Far from it. People wanted to pet her and fuss over her, all which she loves.
Last time we went to vote the dog was refused into the polling station. She has never caused any trouble and she has never asked to vote for a candidate as she does not hold any particular political view. Would be nice if there was a more dog friendly atmosphere in the polling stations. I realise that not all dogs may be as friendly as our dog. I am sure that the traffic flow could be arranged in the polling station so that possibly one of the kiosks was for people with dogs or that there was a one way system so noone needed to be in contact with an animal.

There are many people with assistance dogs as well- I know they are in a different category and likely allowed in.
Bexhill being a retirement town means there are a lot of retired people out walking their pets during the day who would likely pop in and vote more often with their dogs than without. Otherwise it means a separate trip out again in the same day to vote- not an option for many elderly people. Most get out once a day with their dog on a walk and that is the sum total of their activity or stamina for the day. I think if you allowed dogs in the polling stations there would be a greater turnout. I am sure you could manage to do this with some very simple measures concerning traffic flow within the polling stations. When you consider all of the public places that pooches are allowed into in the town such as many cafes, and public buildings and businesses I think it would be well worthwhile considering this as an option on polling days.

Thankyou for letting me express my views

Sincerely,

[name removed]

And Meg the Cockapoo-who although she holds no political beliefs is as smart as many politicians in Westminster.”

– Member of the public

“Dear Malcolm

Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places - Hastings and Rye parliamentary constituency

Thank you for the recent letter from your Electoral Services Manager, Richard Adams. This invited me, as the Acting Returning Officer (ARO) of Hastings and Rye parliamentary constituency, to comment on your current review of polling districts and polling places.

I have reviewed the consultation documentation received and concur with the proposals made by Rother District Council, in relation to the Rye part of the constituency. As also agreed in 2016, I am happy to continue support of the designation of the whole of Guestling polling district as polling place, in order to give a degree of flexibility, should a more suitable venue become available. Similarly, I am happy to support your proposal to designate the whole of Kent Street polling district as the polling place for the same reasons. I am also in agreement with your proposal to move the HI001 polling place from Badger Gate to Tilling Green Community Centre, for elections from May 2020, as this venue is more conveniently located for electors and affords better access and facilities.

I agree it is vitally important to focus on access for all electors, including those with disabilities. We should always strive to ensure that polling stations have full disabled access, but realise this is not always possible, given the limited numbers of venues within an area. Achieving reasonable disabled access is certainly a challenge in the Hastings part of the constituency. Nevertheless, I feel we should continue to aspire to make our polling stations as accessible as possible. In addition to this, I believe that all members of the community should feel comfortable when entering a polling station and would suggest that you take this into consideration also.

As indicated earlier, I fully support your proposals. However, my previous electoral experience suggests that further changes to polling stations will sometimes be forced upon us, when current locations are no longer available. Similarly, new potential locations that become available from time to time can present opportunities to improve access and/or facilities. I hope it will be possible to take full advantage of these opportunities.

Thank you again for allowing me to make representations, and I wish a successful conclusion to your review.”

- Jane Hartnell, Acting Returning Officer, Hastings & Rye Parliamentary Constituency

This page is intentionally left blank