



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	THE ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER AND RETURNING OFFICER
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<b>TO:</b>	COUNCIL
<b>DATE:</b>	10 FEBRUARY 2011

<b>AGENDA ITEM NO:</b>	11	<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	ALL
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<b>SUBJECT:</b>	DESIGNATION OF POLLING PLACE FOR HORLEY EAST (POLLING DISTRICT QB)
<b>PURPOSE OF THE REPORT:</b>	To re-designate the polling place for polling district Horley East QB to ensure compliance with an Electoral Commission Directive in relation to the number of electors for a Polling Station. To note the Returning Officer's intention to replace seven single polling stations with double stations.
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	<b>That St. Francis Church Hall, Balcombe Road, Horley be designated the polling place for Polling District Horley East QB from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011.</b>

## Background

1. Under the Constitution electoral matters are reserved for the Council to determine.

## Statutory Powers and Directives

2. The Representation of the People Act, 1983 (as amended) provides for the Council to designate polling places for all elections. Polling stations within a polling place are for the Returning Officer to determine.
3. In relation to the proposed Referendum on the Alternative Vote system the Chief Counting Officer (the Chair of the Electoral Commission) can issue Directives under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 which the Council's Returning Officer (in his capacity as Counting Officer for the Referendum) must follow.
4. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (for elections) and provisions in the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill (as currently drafted) (for the Referendum) the Returning Officer and Counting Officer respectively must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the local

authority provides the required staff and resources. This must be certified as being the case to the Electoral Commission.

5. The Chief Counting Officer has now issued a Directive regarding the maximum number of electors (after excluding postal voters) that can be allocated to an individual polling station. That threshold has been set at 2500.
6. The Chief Counting Officer has also issued a Directive in relation to staffing levels at polling stations as follows:

For up to 750 electors	1 Presiding Officer, plus 1 Poll Clerk
For up to 1500 electors	1 Presiding Officer, plus 2 Poll Clerks
For up to 2500 electors	1 Presiding Officer, plus 3 Poll Clerks

#### **Alternative Polling Place for Polling District - Horley East - QB**

7. A review of all polling stations has been undertaken to ensure compliance with the Directive that has been issued on the maximum number of electors per polling station. This review has shown that in the case of polling district QA the electorate for its one polling station is currently in excess of 3100 and therefore does not comply with the Electoral Commission 2500 threshold.
8. The polling place for polling district QA is located at Oakwood School, Balcombe Road, Horley, along with a polling station for polling district QB. To overcome the identified problem it is proposed to split polling district QA by the creation of an additional polling station at Oakwood School and then relocate the polling station for polling district QB to an alternative building.
9. St. Francis Church Hall has been identified as being suitable for polling district QB. Whilst the venue is already used by 1058 electors as a polling station for the RC polling district (Horley Central Ward) the building and parking area is large enough to accommodate another polling station for QB.
10. The current and proposed arrangements are as follows:

#### **Current**

Polling District QA - 1 Polling Station Oakwood School - Electors 3153

Polling District QB - 1 Polling Station Oakwood School - Electors 1288

#### **Proposal**

Polling District QA - 2 Polling Stations Oakwood School - Electors 1544 and 1609

Polling District QB - 1 Polling Station St Francis Church Hall - Electors 1288

#### **Consultation**

11. In accordance with established procedures, the local MP's, Ward Members, the relevant County Councillor, Political parties and Tandridge District Council have been consulted on the proposal. No objections have been raised.

### **Other Issues**

12. In the context of the Chief Counting Officer's Directives, it has been necessary to review arrangements at a number of other polling stations. As a result, Council is asked to note that the single stations for the following will become double stations but retained at the existing polling place:

Banstead Civic Centre (AA polling district)  
Kingswood Village Hall (EB polling district)  
Woodmansterne Village Hall (FA polling district)  
The Phoenix Centre ( KA polling district)  
Oakwood School (QA polling district) (see paragraphs 7 to 10 above)  
Regent Hall (RA polling district)  
St. Wilfrid's Church Hall (SB polling district)

### **Resource Implications**

13. The above arrangements will result in additional staffing costs of £5000 falling to the Council.

### **Conclusions**

14. The Council's Returning Officer must comply with Directives issued by the Chief Counting Officer for the forthcoming Referendum. As a result it is necessary to introduce a number of changes to polling districts, polling places and staffing levels for election/referendum purposes.
15. The arrangements set out in this report ensure the required compliance.
16. The Returning Officer (Elections) and Counting Officer (Referendum) must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the local authority provides him with the required staff and resources for an election and the Referendum.

Background Papers: None