



REPORT OF:	ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER/ RETURNING OFFICER
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TO:	COUNCIL
DATE:	17 TH DECEMBER 2015

WARDS AFFECTED:	PRESTON AND EARLSWOOD & WHITEBUSHES
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SUBJECT:	DESIGNATION OF POLLING PLACES
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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Tadworth Leisure and Community Centre, Preston Manor Road, Epsom KT20 5JG be designated the polling place for the polling district of Preston; and
2. That Earlswood Baptist Church, St John's Road, Earlswood, RH1 6DZ be designated the polling place for the EWB1 polling district of Earlswood & Whitebushes.

SUMMARY

A new Leisure and Community Centre has been constructed as part of the regeneration plans for the Preston area of Tadworth. This report recommends that the centre is designated as the polling place for the polling district of Preston (PRE1).

The current polling place for the EWB1 polling district of Earlswood and Whitebushes at Earlswood Infant and Nursery School accommodates the two polling stations required for the number of electors in EWB1 in addition to the polling station for the RHE3 polling district of Redhill East. This report recommends that a new polling place be designated at Earlswood Baptist Church which can accommodate the two polling stations required for EWB1.

Statutory Powers

1. 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.

Background

Tadworth Leisure and Community Centre

2. Since the previous community centre was demolished the Council has used Merland Rise Church and the Phoenix Youth Centre as a polling place whilst the new leisure and community facilities have been rebuilt in Preston.
3. The new community facilities are now available as construction of the Tadworth Leisure and Community Centre is complete.
4. Officers have carried out a site visit and had discussions with the centre manager and propose to use the large community room at the front of the centre as a polling station

as this room can be accessed without electors having to go through the main reception area.

5. In accordance with established procedures appropriate consultation has been carried out. The proposal has been welcomed by the ward councillor and no objections have been received at the time of writing this report. Any further comments received will be reported to Council by the Chief Executive.

Earlswood Baptist Church

6. Earlswood Infant and Nursery School is currently the polling place for EWB1 and RHE3 polling districts. The electorate for EWB1 is split between 2 polling stations to meet Electoral Commission guidelines that a polling station will have no more than 2,500 electors. As the school is also the designated polling place for the RHE3 polling district of Redhill East there are 3 polling stations at the school.
7. It has been necessary to use both the Nursery and the Children's Centre at the school to accommodate the 3 polling stations required and although the correct building is written on the poll card and signs put up at the entrances in Ifold Road this does cause some confusion on polling day.
8. The school has to close the Nursery for the day to accommodate the polling stations and there are no dedicated parking spaces. Members and staff have expressed concern about the number of electors and polling stations at the school.
9. Earlswood Baptist Church is situated within the polling district. There is room for the 2 polling stations required for EWB1 and the church is willing to accommodate the polling stations. There are two dedicated parking spaces for the church in addition to a disabled parking space and the building is DDA compliant.
10. The polling station for RHE3 would continue to be located at Earlswood Infant and Nursery School.
11. In accordance with established procedures appropriate consultation was carried out. At the time of writing this report a positive response has been received from two of the Ward Councillors. No objections have been received and any further comments will be reported to Council by the Chief Executive.

Legal Implications

12. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Resource Implications

13. None.

Consultation

14. Consultation has been undertaken as set out in paragraphs 5 and 11 of this report.

Conclusions

15. Two alternative polling places are recommended to be designated for all future elections for the reasons set out in this report.

Background Papers: None.