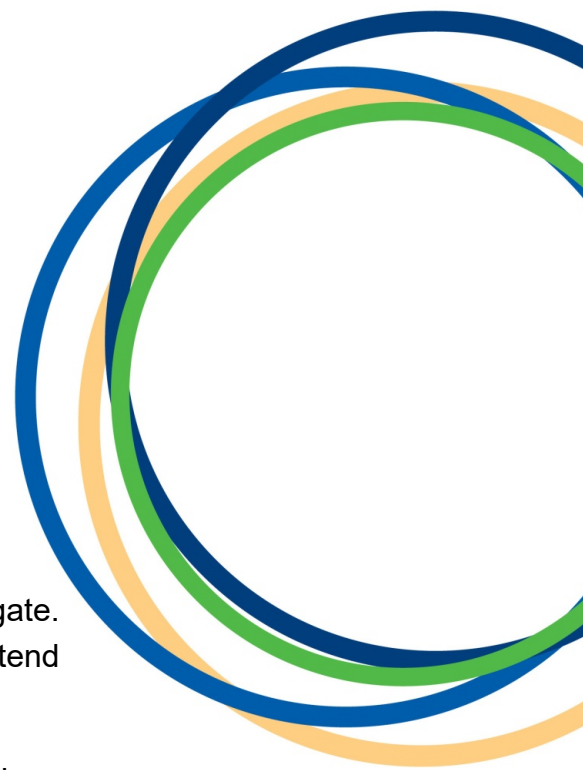


# Agenda

## Council



**Thursday, 18 January 2024 at 7.30 pm**

**New Council Chamber, Town Hall, Reigate**



Members will assemble at the Town Hall, Reigate. Members of the public and Officers may attend remotely.



Members of the public may observe the proceedings live on the Council's [website](#).

**Members of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council are respectfully summoned to attend a meeting of the Borough Council on Thursday, 18 January 2024 at 7.30 pm.**

*Prior to the commencement of the meeting, prayers will be said by the Mayor's Chaplain*

**Mari Roberts-Wood**  
Managing Director

**For enquiries regarding this agenda;**

**Contact:** 01737 276182

**Email:** [democratic@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@reigate-banstead.gov.uk)

Published 10 January 2024

**Reigate & Banstead**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
Banstead | Horley | Redhill | Reigate

**1. Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)

To sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 30 November 2023.

**2. Apologies for absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**3. Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of interest.

**4. Urgent business**

To consider any urgent business.

**5. Petition: Reinstate Monitored CCTV Cameras in our Town Centres** (Pages 11 - 18)

To receive and consider a Petition regarding restating monitored CCTV cameras in the Borough's Town Centres.

**6. Interim Polling Place and District Review 2023/24** (Pages 19 - 108)

To consider the final recommendations of an interim Polling Place and District Review, which seeks to ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities for voting in elections.

**7. Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances for 2024/25** (Pages 109 - 130)

To receive and consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel including any recommendations on Members' Allowances for 2024/25.



### **Our meetings**

As we would all appreciate, our meetings will be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and trust, working together for the benefit of our Community and the Council, and in accordance with our Member Code of Conduct. Courtesy will be shown to all those taking part.



### **Streaming of meetings**

Meetings are broadcast live on the internet and are available to view online for six months. In attending any meeting, you are recognising that you may be filmed and consent to the live stream being broadcast online, and available for others to view.



### **Accessibility**

The Council's agenda and minutes are provided in English. However, the Council also embraces its duty to anticipate the need to provide documents in different formats, such as audio, large print or in other languages. The Council will provide such formats where a need is identified prior to publication or on request.



**Notice is given** of the intention to hold any part of this meeting in private for consideration of any reports containing "exempt" information, which will be marked accordingly.

This page is intentionally left blank

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held at the **New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate** on **Thursday, 30 November 2023 at 7.30 pm.**

**Present:** Councillors E. Humphreys (Mayor) and R. Biggs (Leader); J. Baker (Deputy Mayor), V. H. Lewanski (Deputy Leader), R. H. Ashford, H. Avery, M. S. Blacker, J. Booton, J. S. Bray, P. Chandler, V. Chester, Z. Cooper, J. C. S. Essex, K. Fairhurst, B. Green, P. Harp, R. Harper, N. D. Harrison, G. Hinton, J. Hudson, F. Kelly, S. Khan, A. King, J. P. King, S. A. Kulka, S. McKenna, N. C. Moses, S. Parnall, A. Proudfoot, R. Ritter, K. Sachdeva, S. Sinden, M. Smith, C. Stevens, M. Tary, C. Thompson, J. Thorne, D. Torra and S. T. Walsh

## 38 Minutes

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 21 September 2023 be signed as an accurate record.

## 39 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Adamson, Buttironi, Dwight, Elbourne, Michalowski and Neame.

## 40 Declarations of interest

There were none.

## 41 Urgent business

There was none.

## 42 Public questions

A public question was asked by Alderman Christopher Whinney on the subject of retrofitting local housing stock. A response was provided by the relevant Executive Member in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 2.14.

**Note:** For more information on the response to Council questions, please see the following page on the Council's website:

<https://reigate-banstead.moderngov.co.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13260>

## 43 Petition: Save The Oriental in Merstham

The Lead Petitioner, Councillor Khan, addressed Council, making the following observations:

- The removal of small shops has had a negative effect on efforts to address social deprivation in Merstham. It has caused detriment to the elderly, disabled, financial compromised and care givers. The loss of these shops made a significant negative contribution to an established community when many were doing what they could to resist social decline.
- Mrs Susan Wong, the owner of The Oriental, had cooked for Merstham for 23 years and felt that the Council did not care for local businesses. Other shop owners felt that businesses were being destroyed by Landlords with reduced lease length times being used to close businesses.
- The Council was called on to take action, to:
  1. Immediately use an Article 4 Direction to remove Permitted Development Rights for change of use without waiting for a retail needs survey. It was already known that the community needed the shops which were at risk.
  2. Use its ability to invest to purchase the parade of shops.
  3. Apply for the parade to become an Asset of Community Value

Councillor Michalowski, the Portfolio Holder for Place, Planning and Regulatory Services, had given his apologies to the meeting. The response to the petition was therefore provided by Councillor Biggs, the Leader of the Council, who made the following comments:

- The parade of shops in Merstham, which was the subject of the petition and debate, was not owned by the Council. Such parades played an important role in creating a sense of place for communities as well as providing important services for residents. This was why the Council had consistently objected to the expansion of Permitted Development Rights which had removed the rights of Councils to resist the removal of such local facilities.
- The Local Plan would continue to be used to as far as possible protect local shops. However, developments could not be assessed against the Council's own policies. Rather, there was a fixed standard for Permitted Development Rights which if passed, meant the development had to be passed.
- A commitment had already been made to explore the potential of an Article 4 Directive to remove Permitted Development Rights for shops across the Borough. This was the only option available to the Council to resist the conversion of shops. Sadly, the evidence needed and the consultation required, meant that the shortest period for a Directive to be gained to remove Permitted Development Rights was a year. It typically took up to two years for a directive to be confirmed and the evidence needed for an application to be made needed to be robust.
- There was support for affordable rents and favourable rental terms but these were not within the Council's powers. The Council's Economic Prosperity Team would be asked to reach out to the Landlord to see if there was anything that could be done to allow the Oriental to remain or other units to be restored.
- All of the action requested within the petition was already being undertaken by the Council. Whilst it was not possible for the Council to get involved in individual planning proposals or to prevent evictions, it was possible for the Council to object to the expansion of Permitted Development Rights, explore the use of Article 4 Directions and engage with the Landlord to reach agreements for the benefit of the Community. On which basis, support was given to the petition.
- The wording of the petition was read out in full.

# Agenda Item 1

Council, Thursday, 30th November, 2023

One Member had registered to speak on the petition. Councillor Blacker made the following comments:

- He supported retaining the Oriental which had existed for possibly 50 years, longer than stated in the petition.
- Highlighted all the shops and services that had been lost from the parade due to rent increases by the Landlord. But stressed that there was nothing the Council could do to stop this occurring.
- Called on Councillor Khan and the other Merstham Councillors, to look at making the parade into an Asset of Community Value. Councillor Blacker offered his support in this endeavour but noted the need to find the funding required to initially purchase this from the owner.
- It was not desirable that the shops be turned into flats. This could cause a significant issue with parking.

Councillor Biggs confirmed his support for the petition.

Councillor Biggs proposed and Councillor Lewanski seconded a motion for the Council to accept the petition.

**RESOLVED** that the Council accept the petition.

## 44 Questions by Members

Twelve questions with notice were received from Members of Council. One was additional and therefore, in accordance with Procedure Rule 2.15.8, was to receive a written response following the meeting. Two were on the same subject and therefore, in accordance with Procedure Rule 2.15.7, were grouped together and received a joint response.

	Question by	To be answered by	Subject
--	-------------	-------------------	---------

# Agenda Item 1

Council, Thursday, 30th November, 2023

1.	Councillor McKenna	Councillor (A) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets	Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC)
2.	Councillor Smith	Councillor (A) King, the Executive Member for Commercial & Community Assets	Reinforced Aerated Autoclave Concrete (RAAC)
3.	Councillor Sachdeva	Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing Support	Homelessness
4.	Councillor Essex	Councillor Neame, the Executive Member for Housing Support	Right to Buy
5.	Councillor Sinden	Councillor Ashford, the Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture	Safer Streets funding
6.	Councillor Booton	Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Replacement of felled trees
7.	Councillor Proudfoot	Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Greenspaces management plans
8.	Councillor Ritter	Councillor Moses, the Executive Member for Environment & Sustainability	Biodiversity obligations
9.	Councillor Chandler	Councillor Avery, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services	Litter bin requests
10.	Councillor Khan	Councillor Michalowski, the Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Permitted Development Rights
11.	Councillor Tora	Councillor Michalowski, the Executive Member for Place, Planning & Regulatory Services	Licensing obligations
<b>Written responses given after the meeting</b>			
12.	Councillor Khan	Councillor Ashford, the Executive Member for Communities, Leisure & Culture	Youth Work

**Note:** For more information on the response to Council questions, please see the following page on the Council's website:

<https://reigate-banstead.moderngov.co.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13260>



**45 Statements**

Councillor Harp gave a statement in his capacity as the Chair of the Standards Committee. It had received the annual report of the Monitoring Officer on complaints against Councillors. These were noted to have increased by 100% on the previous year moving from two to four but this was still a low base. A review of the Councillors' Code of Conduct had been initiated with a view to possibly bringing this into line with the version produced by the Local Government Association. A new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training provider was being sought. It had been agreed that Members could use mobile phones in the Chamber given the switch to a bring your own device strategy with advice given for all devices to be used appropriately at meetings.

With the proximity to the end of the calendar year, the Managing Director expressed thanks on behalf of the staff to all Councillors for their commitment to their roles.

**46 Motion**

A motion on Climate Change was proposed by Councillor Essex who made the following comments:

- The petition called for the declaration of a climate emergency by the Council. This had been done by all the Council's immediate neighbours. This should be considered as part of the ongoing review of the Council's Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Clearer targets and actions should be developed so that residents would be able to know how the Council was tackling climate change locally.
- The Council's strategy on Climate Change should be aligned with that produced by Surrey County Council and its expertise utilised.
- The Mission Zero report, Chaired by the Rt Hon Chris Skidmore MP, had found that half or more of emission reductions were within the control or influence of Councils. Therefore, the Council had a clear role to play from the bottom-up.
- There was still a role for Government to play in removing blockages, providing funding and establishing an enabling framework through legislation.
- The Climate and Ecology Bill was progressing through Parliament. The Council was urged to give this support as it sought to bridge the gap between the Government's promises on Climate Change and its actions. Action was needed nationally, at a county level and locally in order to tackle climate change.

The motion was seconded by Councillor Booton.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 2.17.3, the Mayor gave notice that the motion was going to be referred to the Executive for consideration, without any further debate taking place at the meeting.

**47 Council Tax Base 2024/25**

# Agenda Item 1

**Council, Thursday, 30th November, 2023**

The motion to approve the recommendations contained in the officer's report was proposed by Councillor Biggs and seconded by Councillor Lewanski.

**RESOLVED** by recorded vote that Council:

1. Approve a Council Tax Base for 2024/25 for the purpose of setting the Collection Fund budget of 64,252.3 Band D equivalents, this being a net increase in the Tax Base compared to 2023/24 of 1.19%; and
2. Delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Finance & Governance to make further adjustments to the final Tax Base where necessary to reflect any changes in the underlying assumptions and report the outcome to Executive in January.

## **48 Appointment of an Independent Member to the Audit Committee**

The motion to approve the recommendation to appoint an Independent Member of the Audit Committee, was proposed by Councillor Kelly in his capacity as Chair of the Audit Committee and seconded by Councillor Lewanski.

**RESOLVED** that Mr Tommy Hyun be appointed as the Independent Member to the Audit Committee.

## **49 Leader's announcements**

At the start of the festive season, the Leader gave thanks on behalf of Members to all the Council's staff. The fantastic job done by Council staff was exemplified by a new home being found for the panto with just a couple of weeks' notice. It was requested that the Managing Director pass on massive thanks to all the staff and the best wishes of Members for the Council's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

It was also announced that that Councillor Humphries was nominated as the Mayor for 2024/25.

## **50 Mayor's announcements**

Fulsome thanks were given to all those who supported the Borough's Remembrance events. A successful Race Night event had been held raising £1,300 for the Mayor's charities (the Lucy Rayner Foundation and the Royal British Legion). Notice was given of a Community Carol Services at Banstead Methodist Church from 10:30am on Sunday 17 December 2023. Two further fundraising events were to be held; a Quiz Night at the Town Hall on Thursday 22 February 2024 and a charity lunch with special guest speaker at Ciao Italia in Banstead hosted by the Mayoress. Members were encouraged to keep informed of events through the new Mayor's Facebook page and the weekly ReMember e-bulletin.

The meeting finished at 9.09 pm

# Agenda Item 5



<b>Signed off by</b>	Head of Community Partnerships
<b>Author</b>	Justine Chatfield, Head of Community Partnerships, Isabel Wootton, Partnerships Team Leader
<b>Telephone</b>	Tel: 01737 276084, Tel: 01737 276333
<b>Email</b>	justine.chatfield@reigate-banstead.gov.uk, Isabel.Wootton@reigate-banstead.gov.uk
<b>To</b>	Council
<b>Date</b>	Thursday 18 January 2024
<b>Executive Member</b>	Portfolio Holder for Communities, Leisure and Culture

<b>Key Decision Required</b>	N
<b>Wards Affected</b>	Banstead Village; Horley Central and South; Redhill East; Redhill West and Wray Common; Reigate.

<b>Subject</b>	Petition: Reinstate Monitored CCTV Cameras in our Town Centres
----------------	--

<b>Recommendations</b>
(i) <b>That Council considers the petition received seeking to reinstate monitored CCTV cameras in town centres within Reigate and Banstead.</b>
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b>
Under the Council’s Petition Scheme, any petition with more than 400 signatures is referred to the Council for debate.  The Council has received a petition of 425 signatures calling on the Council to <i>‘to reinstate monitored CCTV cameras in our Borough Town Centres’</i>

# Agenda Item 5

## Statutory Powers

1. The Localism Act 2011 revoked requirements placed on Councils in relation to petitions, however, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council made the decision to retain its then existing Petition Scheme.
2. The Council's then existing Petition Scheme , dated 13 March 2019, sets out how the Council will respond to petitions, and the type of response the Council will provide, based on the number of signatories to the petition.
3. The table below summarises the Council's approach:

Number of signatories	Response
Less than 20	Response from Officer (treated as standard correspondence)
20 - 199	Response from the relevant Member of the Executive
At least 200	Referred to the Executive
At least 400	Debated at a meeting of the Full Council

4. Procedure Rules 2, 3, and 4 in the Constitution require adherence to the Petition Scheme.
5. There are no statutory powers requiring the Council to have any CCTV system in use but where it does have a system a council must comply with The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## Key Information

### The petition

6. A petition was accepted on 5th October 2023 which requests Reigate & Banstead Borough Council:  
*To reinstate monitored CCTV Cameras in our Borough Town Centres*
7. The petition contends that:  
*Following the response by the Executive Member for Communities, Leisure and Culture, Cllr Rod Ashford, to a question at full Council from Cllr Mark Smith on 21st September 2023 regarding the removal of monitored CCTV from our Town Centres, we insist that the decision made in December 2020 be reversed. Relying on private businesses and individuals to record and capture images and video in our town centres is not right or deterrent enough.*
8. The petition suggests that:  
*Over the last 3 years since the then Council Executive made their decision to remove town centre CCTV from our Borough towns, out of 3869 total reported crimes in Redhill*

*Town, for example, 2119 of them were classed in the following categories: 'Investigation Complete: No suspect Identified' (1225) and 'Unable to prosecute suspect' (894). This means that 54.7% of reported crimes in Redhill Town alone HAVE NOT resulted in a prosecution. How many of these incidents would have resulted in a prosecution had there been evidence from monitored CCTV and how many of the 3869 reports of crime in Redhill Town Centre could have been dealt with quickly by Surrey Police if there had been an active system in place to deter, detect and gather evidence?*

9. It goes on to call for:
  1. *The Council reinstates monitored CCTV in our town centres and reverses this decision from 3 years ago based on the information that we have now, and not the information from December 2020 which was at the end of the Covid Lockdowns.*
  2. *The Council will insist that Surrey Police reinstate regular patrols around all our town centres.*
  3. *The Council, agrees to work with Police, local businesses, shop keepers and other stakeholders to set up and operate a form of Shopwatch as used to great effect in Guildford and Runnymede to deter, detect and gather evidence of anti-social behaviour, shop lifting and other unwanted behaviours in our Borough Town Centres.*
10. At its close on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 the petition had received 425 signatures, meaning that the threshold of reporting to the Council (400) had been exceeded.
11. In line with the Petition Scheme, details of the petition have been published and are available from the Council's website along with the e-signatories. The Petition Scheme provides that the Council will decide how to respond to the petition.
12. Council may decide to support the action the petition requests, or not, or refer the matter to the Executive (or the Executive decision maker) for further consideration. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of Council's decision.
13. Under the Petition Scheme, a spokesperson for the petitioners may present the petition and speak at the Council meeting for up to 5 minutes.
14. A representative of the Petitioners will be attending the meeting to address Council.

## **Background: Public Realm CCTV**

15. In December 2020 the Council's Executive agreed to rationalise public realm CCTV in the Borough. The rationalisation programme had two main elements:
  - a) Upgrade the CCTV cameras in Bancroft and Clarendon Road Car Parks as well as in Priory Park, Memorial Park and Lady Neville Park and put in place local recording; and
  - b) Decommission CCTV cameras elsewhere in the Borough.
16. The Executive's decision reflected a number of considerations:
  - a) In late 2018 Surrey Police announced to District and Boroughs that it no longer wanted to host and staff CCTV control rooms and that its reliance on public realm CCTV was very low. Surrey Police gave a 5-year timescale for councils affected by these changes to establish new CCTV arrangements. The Council worked closely with Surrey Police between the 2018 Police

# Agenda Item 5

announcement and the 2020 Executive decision to fully understand the Police's position on CCTV and to devise the proposals which were approved by Executive in December 2020.

- b) The CCTV system was based upon old technologies and needed upgrading for technological efficiency and resilience, and for consistency with current legislation. There is now a far wider proliferation of privately owned CCTV and image capturing capabilities than when the Council's public realm CCTV cameras were installed in 1995. In practice, nowadays, most images used by Police are from mobile phones and privately owned CCTV.
  - c) The CCTV system in place was expensive to maintain and would be very expensive to replace in full, with local monitoring being significantly more expensive if it was to be funded in full by the Council.
17. Whilst the Executive decision was taken during the Covid pandemic, the data that informed this decision pre-dated the pandemic. More recent crime data shows that there has been little change to the number of recorded incidents where CCTV was a detecting factor.
18. In light of the Executive decision, the Council procured a supplier to install the new cameras and local recording and decommission the remaining cameras. The new cameras were installed in Bancroft and Clarendon Road Car Parks as well as in Priory Park, Memorial Park and Lady Neville Park and local recording was put in place in the summer of 2023.
19. In 2021 the Council terminated its contracts with broadband providers for the cameras to be decommissioned. Despite this contract termination, the providers did not terminate the broadband feed, meaning that the majority of cameras have continued to be operational and monitored until October 2023. This continued broadband connection has not been at a cost to the Council.
20. In mid-October 2023 the police identified RAAC in Reigate Police station and as a result closed their CCTV control room at the end of October. All Reigate and Banstead public realm CCTV cameras that had been reviewed there until that point then ceased to operate.
21. Given the short notice of the closure of the CCTV control room and that this occurred in advance of the wider public realm cameras being decommissioned, the Council has put in place local recording for cameras in busy locations, initially on a 6 month basis. It will review the volume of requests and usage of the images requested in advance of recommencing the decommissioning work.
22. The cameras which are due to be decommissioned are at the end of their useful lives. Therefore, if a decision was taken to support the petitioner's request to reinstate monitored CCTV in our town centres, this would require:
- a) Circa 45 of the cameras that are currently scheduled to be removed to be replaced with cameras with appropriate modern technology and broadband connectivity. An indicative estimate of the capital cost of such works is in excess of £0.300m.
  - b) Arrangements to be put in place for live monitoring of these CCTV cameras. An indicative estimate of the revenue budget cost of live monitoring is in excess of £0.100m per annum if the Council outsourced this responsibility to a

third party, and would likely be more (plus additional capital set up costs) if the Council set up an in house CCTV monitoring function.

- c) Additional funds to be made available for the associated line rental costs, utility costs and maintenance of the cameras and associated equipment such as camera poles (and any RBBC owned monitoring equipment). An indicative estimated of these costs would be in excess of £0.050m per annum.

## **Background: Police patrols in town centres**

- 23. Reigate & Banstead Borough Council has a strong working relationship with Surrey Police, including through the Reigate & Banstead Community Safety Partnership. Our Joint Enforcement Team works closely with the Police's Safer Neighbourhoods Team to ensure a regular town centre presence. However, as a Council it is not appropriate for us to seek to direct the allocation of Police resources which is the responsibility of the Police's Borough Commander and ultimately the Police and Crime Commissioner.

## **Background: Shop Watch**

- 24. A Shop Watch scheme is a network of local businesses that come together to tackle the risks associated with business crime. They can operate in town or city centres or even out of town areas where a group of businesses have decided to work together. The scheme can provide a variety of services determined by the partners, from a radio communications network to a full suite of tools including app-based data sharing software.
- 25. In some areas local authorities and the police have partnered with local businesses to set these schemes up, including in Guildford and Horsham. These schemes often include a membership charge for the technology involved.
- 26. The Council continues to be open to discussions with local businesses, including local business guilds, and the police about the potential for such schemes.

## **Options**

- 27. The Petition Scheme provides that Council will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting. The options for the Council in relation to the petition are:
  - Option 1:** To refer the petition to the Executive or Executive decision maker for consideration;
  - Option 2:** To support the action requested on the petition, noting that the action that would arise from the petition could not proceed until funding is budgeted for (as explained in this report); or
  - Option 3:** To note the request of the petitioners and take no further action.

# Agenda Item 5

<b>Legal Implications</b>
28. The statutory implications are set out above.
<b>Financial Implications</b>
29. There are no additional budget implications in respect of continuing with the public realm CCTV provision as approved by Executive in December 2020.
30. Reversing the December 2020 Executive decision regarding CCTV would have significant capital and revenue budget implications.
31. Most of the equipment that is scheduled to be decommissioned has been in use for many years and would need replacement. Any reinstatement of live monitoring would also incur a very significant ongoing revenue budget cost to the Council. The staffing element of these revenue costs were previously borne by Surrey Police.
32. As outlined in paragraph 22 (a-c), it is estimated that these costs would be in the region of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in excess of £0.300m of capital budget growth;</li><li>• in excess of £0.150m per annum of revenue budget growth to fund running costs.</li></ul> These costs would be in addition to the cost of decommissioning the remaining non-town centre cameras which are due for removal.
33. Capital and revenue expenditure would be subject to approval of budget growth proposals as part of the annual service and financial planning process, or through a separate report to Council if approval is required outside the established budget-setting timetable. If approved outside the service and financial planning process, the revenue budget implications would require the identification of compensating budget savings to fund the growth.
<b>Equalities Implications</b>
34. An Equalities Impact Assessment Part 1 Screening was undertaken in 2020 on the CCTV Executive recommended option. It is not considered that the existing CCTV provision disadvantages any equality groups.
<b>Communication Implications</b>
35. The Communications team have responded to a number of enquiries and social media posts regarding CCTV and will continue to respond to future posts or enquiries.
36. There are no additional communications implications relating to the options arising from this petition.
<b>Environmental Sustainability Implications</b>
37. Options 1 and 3 above do not have any direct environmental implications.
38. However, Option 2 would have environmental sustainability implications from increased electricity consumption, with associated carbon emissions, from



# Agenda Item 5

equipment use and from the handling and storage of the recorded data. There will also be implications from the production and ultimate disposal of the equipment.

## **Risk Management Considerations**

39. There are no additional risk management considerations relating to the options arising from this petition.

## **Policy Framework**

40. The Policy Framework position is set out in paragraphs 1 and 2 of this report.

## **Background Papers**

1. <https://reigate-banstead.moderngov.co.uk/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?ID=61&RPID=3638366&HPID=3638366>

This page is intentionally left blank

# Agenda Item 6



<b>Signed off by</b>	Mari Roberts-Wood, Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for Reigate and Banstead
<b>Author</b>	Alex Vine, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
<b>Telephone</b>	Tel: 01737 276067
<b>Email</b>	alex.vine@reigate-banstead.gov.uk
<b>To</b>	Council
<b>Date</b>	Thursday, 18 January 2024

<b>Key Decision Required</b>	Yes
<b>Wards Affected</b>	Banstead Village; Hooley, Merstham and Netherne; Horley West and Sidlow; Meadvale and St. John's; Nork; Reigate; Redhill East; and, Tattenham Corner and Preston.

<b>Subject</b>	Interim Polling Place and District Review 2023/24
----------------	---

<b>Recommendations</b>
That the premises and final recommendations set out in <b>Annex 1</b> be designated the polling places for the polling districts stated with effect from 31st January 2024.
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b>
To ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities for voting in elections at the forthcoming Borough Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and Parliamentary elections in 2024, according to the rationale provided for each proposed change within <b>Annex 1</b> to this report.
<b>Executive Summary</b>
Following the Boundary Commission for England's review of the parliamentary boundaries, this interim review seeks to ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities for voting in elections at the forthcoming Borough Council, Police and Crime Commissioner and Parliamentary elections in 2024. The review includes:

# Agenda Item 6

- (i) Polling districts, which are the areas created by the division of wards into smaller sections. Within each polling district a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.
- (ii) Polling places, which are the locations, normally the buildings, in which polling stations are sited.

**The above recommendations are subject to approval by Full Council.**

## **Statutory Powers**

1. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district.
2. The Electoral Administration Act 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years. Reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 2013.
3. Under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983, the next compulsory review must be undertaken within a 16-month window between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.
4. Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 sets out all the steps that must be undertaken to complete a review. Officers have also had regard to guidance published by the Electoral Commission.

## **Background**

### **Definitions**

5. The following definitions may be helpful when reading the report and Appendices.
  - (i) The “Electoral Registration Officer” is the statutory officer responsible for maintaining the electoral register and absent voting arrangements within the Reigate and Banstead electoral area. The Electoral Registration Officer is Mari Roberts-Wood.
  - (ii) The “Returning Officer” is the statutory officer responsible for the management and delivery of elections and referenda within the Reigate and Banstead electoral area. The Returning Officer is Mari Roberts-Wood.
  - (iii) “Polling districts” are geographical electoral areas into which wards and constituencies may be sub-divided. The designation of polling districts is determined by the Council (or by the Electoral Registration Officer under delegated authority where it is impractical to report to the Council).
  - (iv) “Polling places” are the buildings or areas designated by the council where electors in a polling district go to vote in person. The designation of polling places is determined by the Council (or by the Electoral Registration Officer under delegated authority where it is impractical to report to the Council).
  - (v) “Polling stations” are the number of issuing desks in the building or area that is the designated polling place. The arrangement of polling stations is determined by the Returning Officer for the respective election(s).

## Timing of the next statutory review

6. The intention of the legislation was reviews would be completed by the January before a UK parliamentary general election. However, since the repeal of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act 2011, there is no longer any certainty as to when the next general election will be.
7. The Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Act 2022 means:
  - (i) the UK Parliament can be dissolved by the King on request of the Prime Minister, at any time within the 5 years of the life of the Parliament.
  - (ii) the next general election must take place before Tuesday 28 January 2025, but it could happen at any point before then.
  - (iii) there is no longer a link between the timing of the compulsory polling district and places review falling in a 16-month period ending 3 months before a scheduled general election.
8. In addition, the [Boundary Commission for England has concluded a review of parliamentary constituency boundaries](#). The Commission has now published its final recommendations, and Orders for the new parliamentary constituency boundaries were made on 1 November 2023.
9. Now that the Orders for new parliamentary constituencies have been made, the new boundaries will be used for the next General Election.
10. If a parliamentary by-election is called in the meantime, it would be run on existing boundaries.
11. These issues mean it is important that a polling district and places review is carried out as early as possible, so that the Council has agreed polling districts and places to be used for the next parliamentary election, as well as the scheduled local elections and Police and Crime Commissioner elections on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 and has a polling scheme in place which reflects the new constituencies.
12. A further review will take place from Autumn 2024 following the conclusion of the [review of Surrey County Council boundaries](#) to comply with the requirement to undertake a statutory review before 31 January 2025, and in readiness for the next scheduled Surrey County Council elections in May 2025. As the final recommendations for the Surrey County Council boundaries have yet to be determined, this interim review does not include the arrangement of future county boundaries.

## Interim reviews

13. Local authorities may undertake interim reviews of polling places and districts as required (for example, after the conclusion of parliamentary boundary reviews) to ensure the arrangement of polling places and districts are suitable for any by-elections or scheduled elections in the interim.

# Agenda Item 6

## Key Information

### Methodology

14. Whilst this interim review is not a full statutory review (planned to take place from Autumn 2024, see paragraph 12), it should follow the same steps as a statutory review as referred to in paragraph 4. This includes:
- (i) Publication of a Notice of the Review and initial proposals arising from a preliminary review conducted by the Electoral Services team ([published on 13 October 2023](#)).
  - (ii) A public consultation (conducted from 13 October – 30 November 2023). Further information is provided under paragraphs 45 - 47.
  - (iii) Consultation of Acting Returning Officers for parliamentary constituencies which overlap with the Reigate and Banstead electoral area. Further information is provided under paragraph 48 and **Annex 3**.
  - (iv) Seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. Further information is provided under paragraph (v).
  - (v) Preparation of the final proposals to be recommended to the Full Council for approval, as set out within this report under **Annex 1**.

### Evidence for consideration

15. This report will consider:
- (i) The recommended proposals, as set out under **Annex 1**. As no representations seeking changes or proposing alternatives were made during the public consultation from 13 October – 30 November 2023, these are unchanged from the initial proposals published on 13 October 2023.
  - (ii) The completed Electoral Commission template evaluation forms from site visits conducted by the Electoral Services office, provided at **Annex 2**.
  - (iii) Any comments from the Acting Returning Officer with regards to the suitability of polling places and districts. Only one representation was made by the Acting Returning Officer for the East Surrey constituency, which is provided under paragraphs 49 - 50.

### Preliminary review, scope, and initial proposals

16. The recommended proposals were drafted based on the Electoral Commission's guidance for the conduct of Polling Place and District Reviews, which states that –

*“The local authority should undertake a preliminary review of the current polling districts and polling places with a view to establishing their suitability and identify any potential alternatives where required. This may be done before the start of the specified review period.”*

17. As part of the preliminary review, the Electoral Services team conducted site visits of:
- (i) any existing polling places which Electoral Services considered may be unsuitable for a General Election, based on stakeholder feedback from

previous elections or if the electorate based at a particular polling station was particularly large; and,

- (ii) Potential, new polling places which may be better suited to a high turnout election event where any concerns had been raised –
  - using the Electoral Commission’s checklists to assess the suitability of those polling places. Copies of the completed checklists for any new potential polling places are provided under **Annex 2**.

18. The preliminary review of suitable polling places identified the following premises which were visited and evaluated, if possible:

**Table 1 - List of premises considered or evaluated for suitability as a polling place.**

Borough Ward	Polling District	Polling place
Banstead Village	BAN3	- Banstead Community Hall ( <b>Annex 2</b> )
Hooley, Merstham and Netherne	HMN5	- ( <b>NEW</b> ) St Teresa's, Merstham Football Club ( <b>Annex 2</b> )
Horley West and Sidlow	HRW3	- Pathfinder Scout Hall ( <i>no visit required, consulted polling staff who confirmed the building was still suitable</i> ).
Meadvale and St John's	MSJ1 & 2	- Redhill Baptist Church ( <i>not available</i> )
	MSJ4 & 5	- St John the Evangelist Church Centre ( <i>no response</i> ).
Nork	NOR1	- ( <b>NEW</b> ) Nork Community Association ( <b>Annex 2</b> ).
Redhill East	RDE2	- ( <b>NEW</b> ) Carrington School ( <b>Annex 2</b> ).
	RDE3	- ( <b>NEW</b> ) St John's Ambulance Centre ( <b>Annex 2</b> ).
Reigate	RGT3	- Reigate Methodist Church ( <i>not available</i> ).
	RGT4 & 5	- Colman Redland Centre ( <i>no visit required, consulted polling staff who confirmed the building was still suitable</i> ).
Tattenham Corner and Preston	TCP1	- St Mark`s Church Hall ( <i>no visit required, consulted polling staff who confirmed the building was still suitable</i> .)
	TCP2	- Tadworth Leisure Centre ( <i>no visit required, consulted polling staff who confirmed the building was still suitable</i> ).

**Relevant considerations in respect of polling districts:**

# Agenda Item 6

19. The following should be considered as part of the assessment of the suitability of polling district boundaries:

- (i) Do the polling districts follow the different electoral boundaries (such that the Returning Officer can manage the different combinations of elections and referenda within each geographical area), such as parish and town council wards, borough wards, county divisions and parliamentary constituencies (both current and future)? For instance, a borough ward may overlap with multiple town or parish council wards, and therefore the division of polling districts within that borough ward must allow each combination of those polls to take place together, if required.
- (ii) Are the boundaries well-defined? For example, do they follow the natural boundaries of the area? If not, is it clear which properties belong in the polling district?
- (iii) Are there suitable transport links within the polling district, and how do they relate to the areas of the polling district that are most highly populated?
- (iv) Are there any obstacles to voters crossing the current polling district and reaching the polling place e.g., steep hills, major roads, railway lines, rivers?

## Relevant considerations in respect of polling places:

20. There are a number of factors that will need to be considered when reviewing existing polling places or when assessing new polling places, including:

Factor	Consideration
<b>Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Is it reasonably accessible within the polling district?</li> <li>ii. Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.?</li> <li>iii. Are there any convenient transport links?</li> </ul>
<b>Size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv. Can it accommodate more than one polling station if required?</li> <li>v. If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place capable of accommodating all voters and staff required to provide a good service to voters?</li> <li>vi. Is the size sufficient to provide necessary private areas or privacy screens for photographic identification checks?</li> <li>vii. Is the size big enough to ensure the flow of voters and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?</li> </ul>
<b>Availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>viii. Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?</li> <li>ix. Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>x. Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?</li> </ul>



- xi. Can the building accommodate any equipment provided to support disabled voters?

## Use of schools

21. It should be noted that the Acting Returning Officer is entitled to use, free of charge, schools maintained or assisted by a local authority as well as those schools that receive grants from funds provided by Parliament. This includes academies and free schools.
22. It is the policy of this local authority to avoid using schools where possible to minimise disruption to education services within the borough, however in some cases it may be unavoidable if there are no suitable alternatives in a particular polling district.
23. Over the past ten years, the local authority has subsequently reduced the number of schools designated as polling places across the borough.
24. In cases where use of a school is unavoidable, the Electoral Services office will consult with the school to conduct a risk assessment to identify any health and safety or safeguarding risks and agree how best to mitigate them. For instance, this could include a temporary closure of the school (e.g. inset day) or location of the polling station in a separate, secure area of the site with the provision of security staff to manage voter access.
25. The only school currently designated as a polling place is the Westvale Park Primary Academy School in the HRW4 polling district (Horley West and Sidlow ward). There is a lack of suitable alternatives currently within the West Park development area until the completion of a proposed community hall within the development has completed, which will be considered as part of a future review. The school is considered to be suitable polling place for the next General Election and is therefore not proposed to change as part of this review.
26. This review proposes to designate the Carrington School on Noke Drive (formerly the Warwick School) in the Redhill East ward as the polling place for one polling station taken from St Joseph's Church (which currently supports three polling stations). This location was used as a polling place for several years in the past, including for parliamentary General Elections, and is considered to be a suitable polling place. Further details about the suitability of this venue are provided under [Annex 1](#) and [Annex 2](#).

## Implementing polling district changes

27. If approved by the Council, the changes proposed within this polling district and places review will result in new polling districts being created and existing polling district boundaries being amended.
28. If the council makes any alterations to the polling districts in its area, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) must amend the register of electors accordingly (Section 18A (5) Representation of the People Act 1983).
29. The changes to the register take effect on the date the ERO publishes a notice stating that the adaptations have been made. It is intended that alterations to polling districts will be included when the register of electors is republished on 1 December 2024 (including the renumbering of elector numbers).

# Agenda Item 6

30. Where polling districts have been created to support the implementation of boundary changes, the register will need to be constructed in a way that is capable of reflecting the existing and new boundaries. This is to ensure that any parliamentary by-elections can be run on the existing boundaries, until the new boundaries come into force at the next General Election.

## Options

31. To approve the recommendations for the reasons set out on page 1. If approved, a full list of the proposed polling places for the next scheduled elections on 2 May 2024 is provided at **Annex 3** for completeness.
32. To reject the recommendations. This is not recommended, as the current arrangement of polling districts and polling places is not considered to be suitable for the next General Election. In doing so, the local authority would be at risk of failing in its duty to ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities for voting, in accordance with the Electoral Commission's guidance which it must have regard to.

## Legal Implications

33. Local authorities must comply with the following legislative requirements regarding the designation of polling districts and polling places:
- (i) each parish in England and community in Wales is to be a separate polling district, unless special circumstances apply
  - (ii) the council must designate a polling place for each polling district, unless the size or other circumstances of a polling district are such that the situation of the polling stations does not materially affect the convenience of the electors
  - (iii) the polling place must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district (for example, if no accessible polling place can be identified in the district)
  - (iv) the polling place must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station

## Financial Implications

34. This report proposes a minor increase in the number of polling districts and polling places, which will require the Returning Officer to pay additional costs for the rental, equipment and staffing of polling stations to administer future elections.
35. However, if adopted these changes will not require additional growth in the Returning Officer's budget for the delivery of future elections and referenda.
36. There are therefore no specific financial implications to consider.

## Equalities Implications

37. Local authorities have a duty to review the accessibility of all polling places to disabled voters and ensure that every polling place, and prospective polling place, for which it is responsible is accessible to disabled voters 'so far as is reasonable and practicable'.

## Agenda Item 6

38. According to the Equalities and Human Rights Commission the duty to make reasonable adjustments comprises three requirements.
39. For service providers and those exercising public functions, these requirements are:
  - (i) Where a provision, criterion or practice puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with those who are not disabled, to take reasonable steps to avoid that disadvantage.
  - (ii) Where a physical feature puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled to avoid that disadvantage or adopt a reasonable alternative method of providing the service or exercising the function.
  - (iii) Where not providing an auxiliary aid, for example a ramp for wheelchair user, puts disabled people at a substantial disadvantage compared with people who are not disabled, to provide that auxiliary aid.
40. Every person should be able to vote without facing barriers. By identifying and understanding the physical, psychological and information barriers disabled people may face when voting, Returning Officers will be better able to make appropriate arrangements to help support them.
41. As part of this review, the local authority must consider the accessibility of potential polling stations when considering designating or reviewing a polling place. In doing so it must seek to ensure that:
  - (i) all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
  - (ii) so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.
42. Access to the polling station is still a barrier to some disabled people who want to cast their vote in person. Some of the main physical access issues which were considered as part of this review (during the preliminary review by Electoral Services) included:
  - (i) polling places and stations with steps into the entrance, or otherwise inaccessible
  - (ii) narrow doorways and corridors
  - (iii) lack of space within the polling place that did not enable motorised wheelchair manoeuvrability
  - (iv) lack of space and secrecy for the elector and their companion to discuss the elector's choice of vote
  - (v) lack of low level polling booths or booths/tables that didn't provide disabled voters with confidence that they could cast their vote in secrecy as they were positioned close to the polling station staff
  - (vi) a lack of chairs to enable people to rest
  - (vii) a lack of a clear display of guidance or aids (such as tactile voting devices) to enable people to feel confident about the process

# Agenda Item 6

(viii) inadequate lighting

43. The assessment of these criteria is provided within the evaluation forms in respect of each of the recommended changes under [Annex 2](#).

## Communication Implications

44. Any changes to the designation of polling districts and places will be communicated with voters as part of the Returning Officer's:
- (i) publicity campaign (e.g. website, social media, press releases, leaflets at community centres, surgeries, and borough news articles and other materials);
  - (ii) briefing and frequently asked questions documentation provided to the customer contact team and polling station staff;
  - (iii) election materials provided to voters (e.g. a change of polling place will be highlighted on poll cards); and,
  - (iv) equipment provided at polling stations (e.g. additional signage around both the previous and new polling place) to direct voters to the correct location.

## Consultation

45. The length of the review process is not prescribed, provided all the steps required by the legislation can be undertaken within it.
46. However, the time allowed for consultation should be sufficient to enable interested persons and groups to read and understand the proposals, gather comments and respond with any alternative arrangements that they may wish to submit.
47. In addition to a [press release](#) promoting the public consultation on 25 October 2023, the following stakeholders were contacted in writing when the consultation period started on 13 October 2023 inviting them to comment on the proposals, including:
- (i) All Borough and County Councillors within the Reigate and Banstead area;
  - (ii) Political parties;
  - (iii) Members of Parliament for constituencies within the Reigate and Banstead area;
  - (iv) Parish and Town Councils; and,
  - (v) Residents' Associations.
48. Consultation of Acting Returning Officers for constituencies overlapping with the Reigate and Banstead electoral area included the Acting Returning Officers for:
- (i) The Reigate Constituency (revised boundaries).
  - (ii) The East Surrey Constituency (revised boundaries).
  - (iii) The Dorking and Horley Constituency (a new constituency which will take effect at the next General Election).
  - (iv) The Epsom and Ewell Constituency (no longer forming part of the Reigate and Banstead electoral area at the next General Election).

- (v) Consultation of community groups with particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability included:
- (vi) Surrey Coalition of Disabled People; and,
- (vii) SCOPE.

49. There were no representations from any of the stakeholders referred to above, or from members of the public in response to the public consultation, except from the Acting Returning Officer for the East Surrey constituency. Their comments were:

*“The amended East Surrey Parliamentary Constituency, of which I am the Acting Returning Officer, includes the Hooley, Merstham & Netherne Ward of Reigate and Banstead. I agree with the proposal to use St Teresa Church Community Room as a polling station for voters in polling district HMN5. The venue is suitable located within the polling district and appears to have the necessary facilities for use as a polling station.*

*As the polling station for HMN4 (Merstham Community Hub) is located within HMN5, it will be important that the Council, if agreeing to this proposal, ensure there is suitable communication sent to voters within HMN5 about their new polling station. A number of voters will have to pass Merstham Community Hub, a venue they are used to voting at, in order to vote at St Teresa Church Community Room. Clear communication about their new polling place will ensure voters are less likely to attempt to vote at the Community Hub.”*

50. Whilst the Acting Returning Officer for the East Surrey constituency is supportive of these proposals, the Electoral Registration Officer for the Reigate and Banstead electoral area will take action to address their comments in respect of ensuring the changes are communicated effectively with voters in advance of future parliamentary elections (as detailed under paragraph 44).

This page is intentionally left blank



# **Reigate & Banstead Borough Council**

## **Interim Polling Place & District Review October 2023**

# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## Table of Contents

<b>What are we reviewing</b> .....	3
<b>Consultation</b> .....	3
<b>Timetable for the review</b> .....	3
<b>Proposed Changes</b> .....	4
<b>1. Summary of proposed changes</b> .....	4
<b>2. Banstead</b> .....	6
<b>3. Hooley, Merstham &amp; Netherne</b> .....	7
<b>4. Nork</b> .....	8
<b>5. Redhill East</b> .....	9
<b>6. Reigate</b> .....	10



# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## What are we reviewing

Following the Boundary Commission for England's review of the parliamentary boundaries, this review seeks to ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities for voting in elections which are practicable in the circumstances and so far as it is reasonable and practical seeks to ensure that every polling place is accessible to electors who are disabled.

The review will cover:

1. Polling districts, which are the areas created by the division of wards into smaller sections. Within each polling district a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.
2. Polling places, which are the locations, normally the buildings, in which polling stations are sited.

The review does not cover the changes required to implement the proposed Surrey County Council boundary changes. These changes will be the subject of the in depth five-year Statutory Polling District & Place Review which will be conducted mid-2024.

## Consultation

Comments on the initial proposals may be submitted via email to [elreg@reigate-banstead.gov.uk](mailto:elreg@reigate-banstead.gov.uk) or by post to Electoral Services, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, Town Hall, Castlefield Road, Reigate, Surrey RH2 0SH when the consultation opens on 13 October.

## Timetable for the review

As part of the review there will be a period of public consultation that runs for an 8-week period between 13 October 2023 until the 30 November 2023.

Timetable	Date
Notice of Review	13 October 2023
(A)RO's Proposals/Comments	13 October 2023
Consultation Period	13 Oct-30 Nov 2023
Consider Responses	15 December 2023
Prepare final proposals	5 January 2024
Council meeting and decision	18 January 2024
Conclude Review	22 January 2024
Republish Register	1 February 2024

## RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

### Proposed Changes

#### 1. Summary of proposed changes

Ward	Polling Districts	Issue	Proposed Change	Impact
<b>Banstead</b>	BAN1 & BAN2	The total number of electors is not balanced across the two polling districts.	Move the boundary between BAN1 & BAN2 to balance the number of electors between the two polling districts. Both polling districts will continue to use the Banstead Civic Centre.	Administrative change to rebalance the allocation of electors in a double polling station, which will therefore operate more efficiently. No change to the designation of polling place for voters.
<b>Hooley, Merstham &amp; Netherne</b>	HMN4 & HMN5	The Oak Room in Merstham Community Hub (MCH) cannot host two polling stations which will be required for a parliamentary election.	Proposed to continue to use MCH for polling district HMN4 and add an additional polling station at St Teresa's Community Room on Weldon Way for HMN5.	Additional polling station in Merstham.
<b>Nork</b>	NOR1	NOR1 has an electorate of almost 5,400 with all electors allocated to a single polling place, St Paul's Church Hall, Warren Road.	Split NOR1 into two polling districts, splitting along Reigate Road and use Nork Community Centre, Nork Way, as the designated polling station for the western partition of NOR1.	Additional polling district and polling station in Nork
<b>Redhill East</b>	RDE1, RDE2, & RDE3	Approx. 6,330 electors are allocated to a single site, St Joseph's on Ladbroke Road.	1. RDE1 (currently 3,500 electors) to be split into two polling districts, dividing the district along the railway line from north to south so that Watercolours forms a new polling district. Both polling districts to be allocated to the polling place at St Joseph's. [note Corfe Hall,	Two additional polling stations for Redhill East.

## RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

35

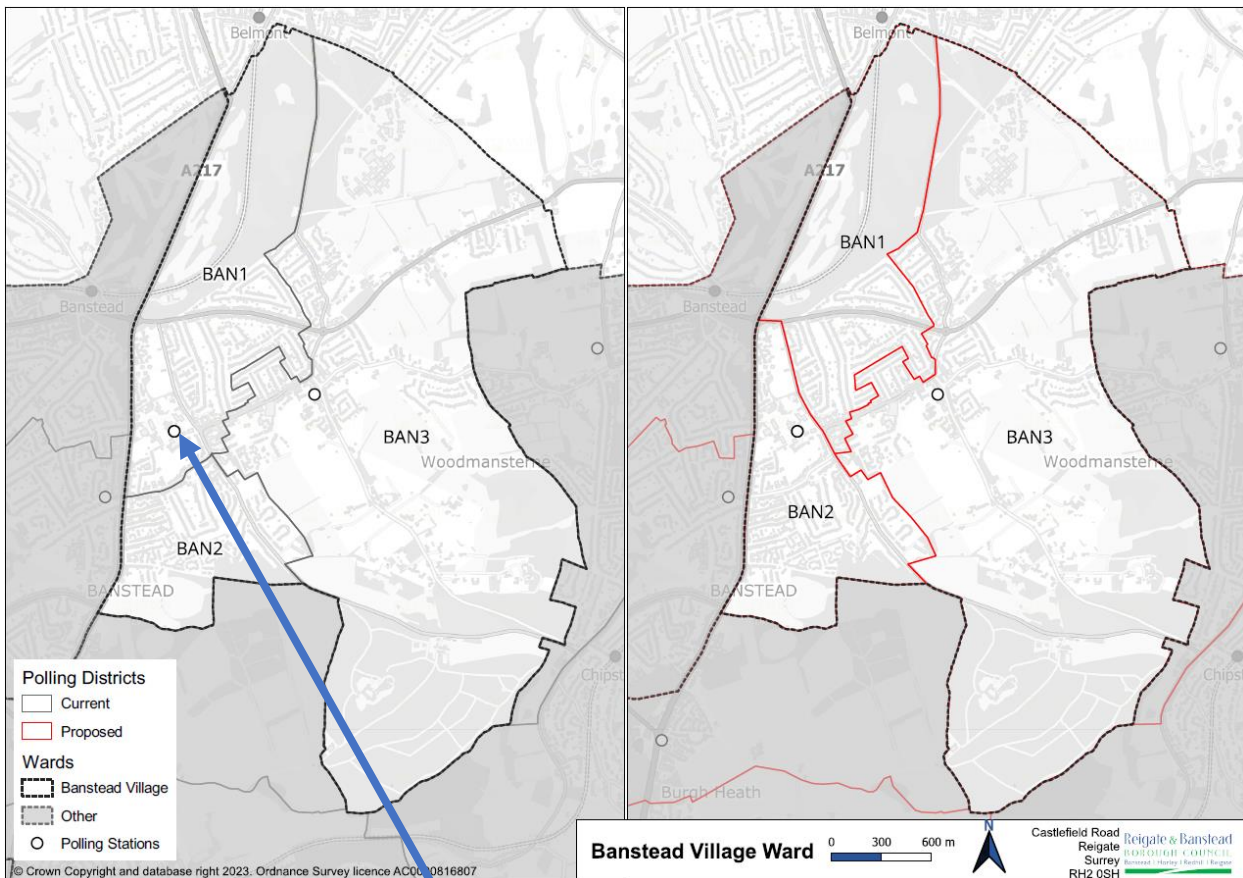
			<p>Watercolours, was rejected a possible polling station due to limited parking.]</p> <p>2. Propose expanding RDE3 to include all streets south of the A25 (Redstone Hill/ Nutfield Road) increasing RDE3 from approx. 600 electors to 900 and reducing RDE2 from approx. 2350 to 2050 electors. Designate a polling station at St John's Ambulance Centre in Kingsway Business Park, Hooley Lane.</p> <p>3. Propose that RDE2 is allocated to a polling station in the Carrington Academy, Noke Drive</p>	
<b>Reigate</b>	RGT4 & RGT5	<p>Currently allocated to St Mary's Church Centre on Chart Lane which where MSJ3 is also allocated. This results in approx. 4,150 electors St Mary's</p>	<p>Propose to move the electors from RGT4 &amp; RGT5 to the Colman Redland Centre.</p>	<p>Designated polling place change for RGT4 &amp; RGT5 polling districts.</p>

# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## 2. Banstead

**Proposal:** Expand BAN2 by splitting BAN1 from A2022 along Bolters Lane up to Garratt's Lane and merge this section with BAN2.

No change to the polling station designated for both polling districts, the Banstead Civic Centre.

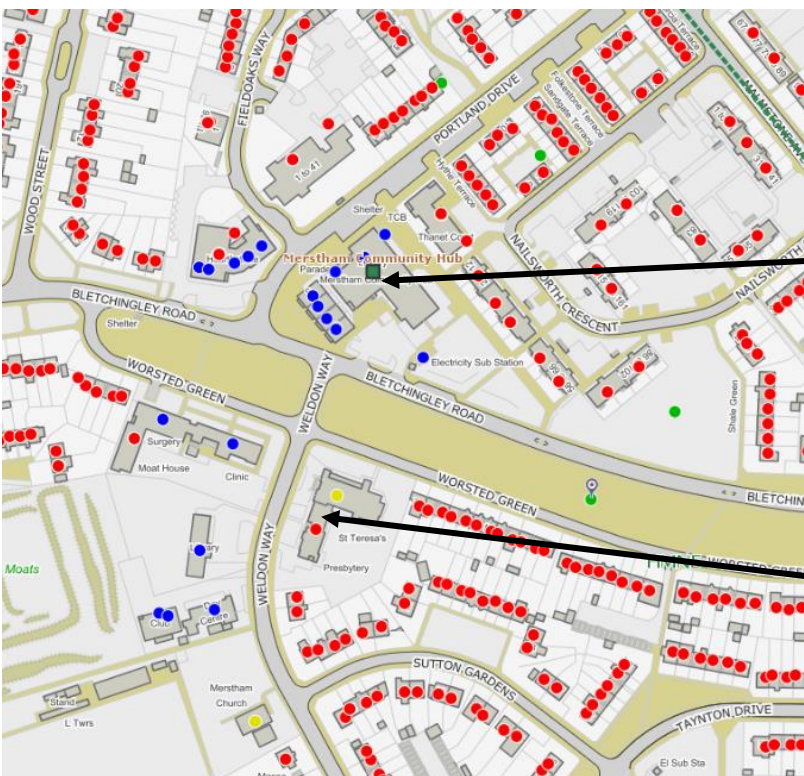
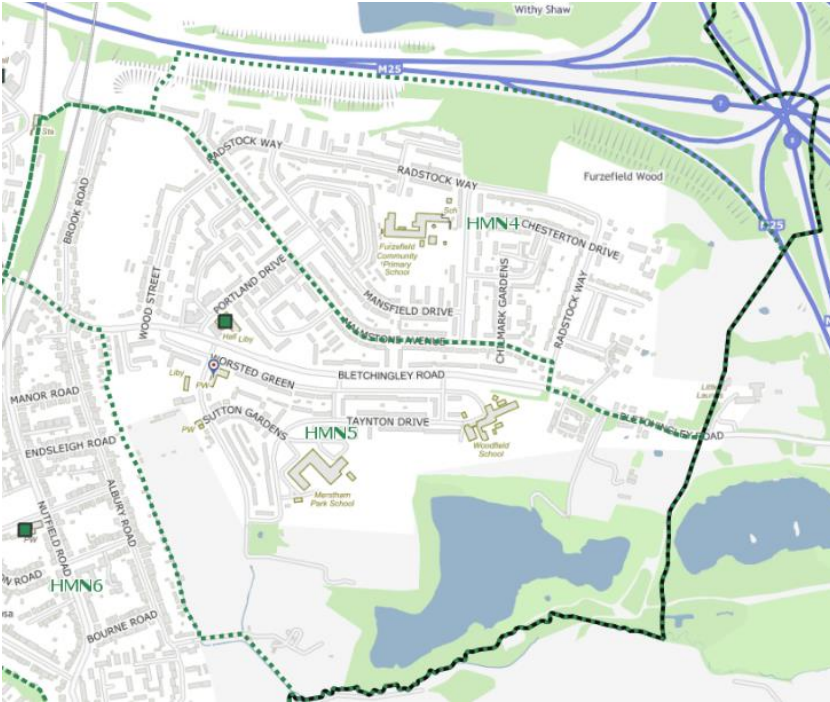


Banstead Civic Centre, The Horseshoe, Bolters Lane

# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## 3. Hooley, Merstham & Netherne

**Proposal:** To use St Teresa Church Community Room as a polling station for polling district HMN5. Polling district HMN4 will continue to use the Merstham Community Hub as a polling station.



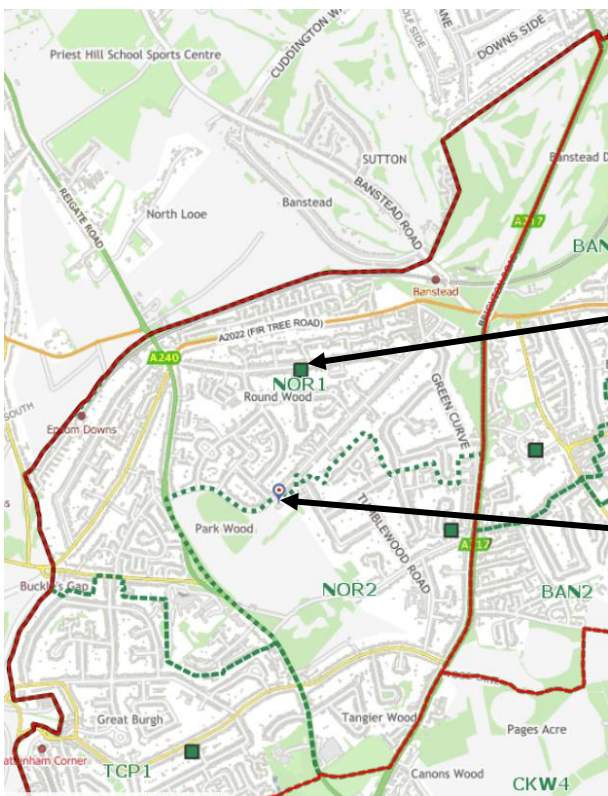
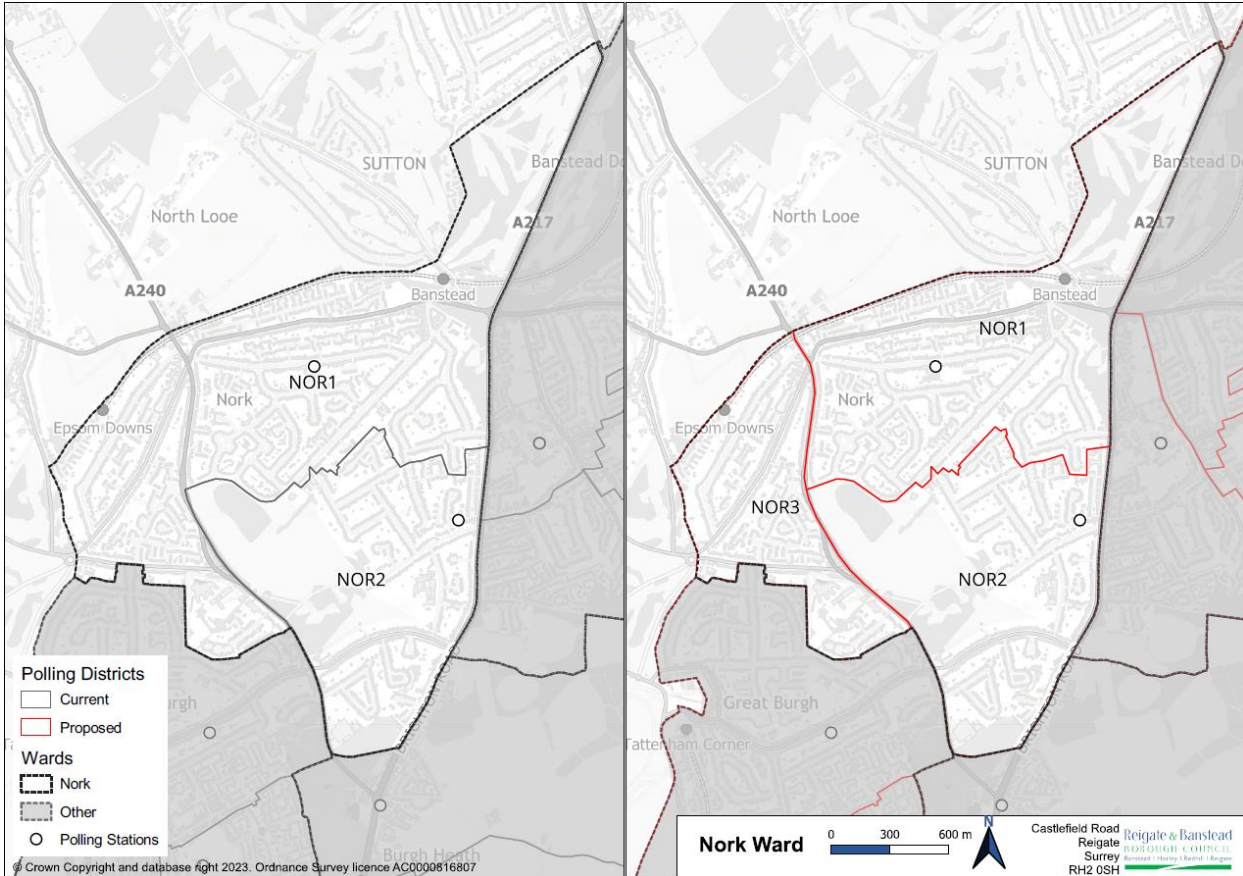
Merstham Community Hub

St Teresa Church Community Room

# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## 4. Nork

**Proposal:** Split the polling district NOR1 into two polling districts, splitting along Reigate Road and use Nork Community Centre as the designated polling station for the new polling district NOR3, (the western partition of NOR1.) No changes are proposed to polling district NOR2.



St Paul's Church Hall, Warren Road

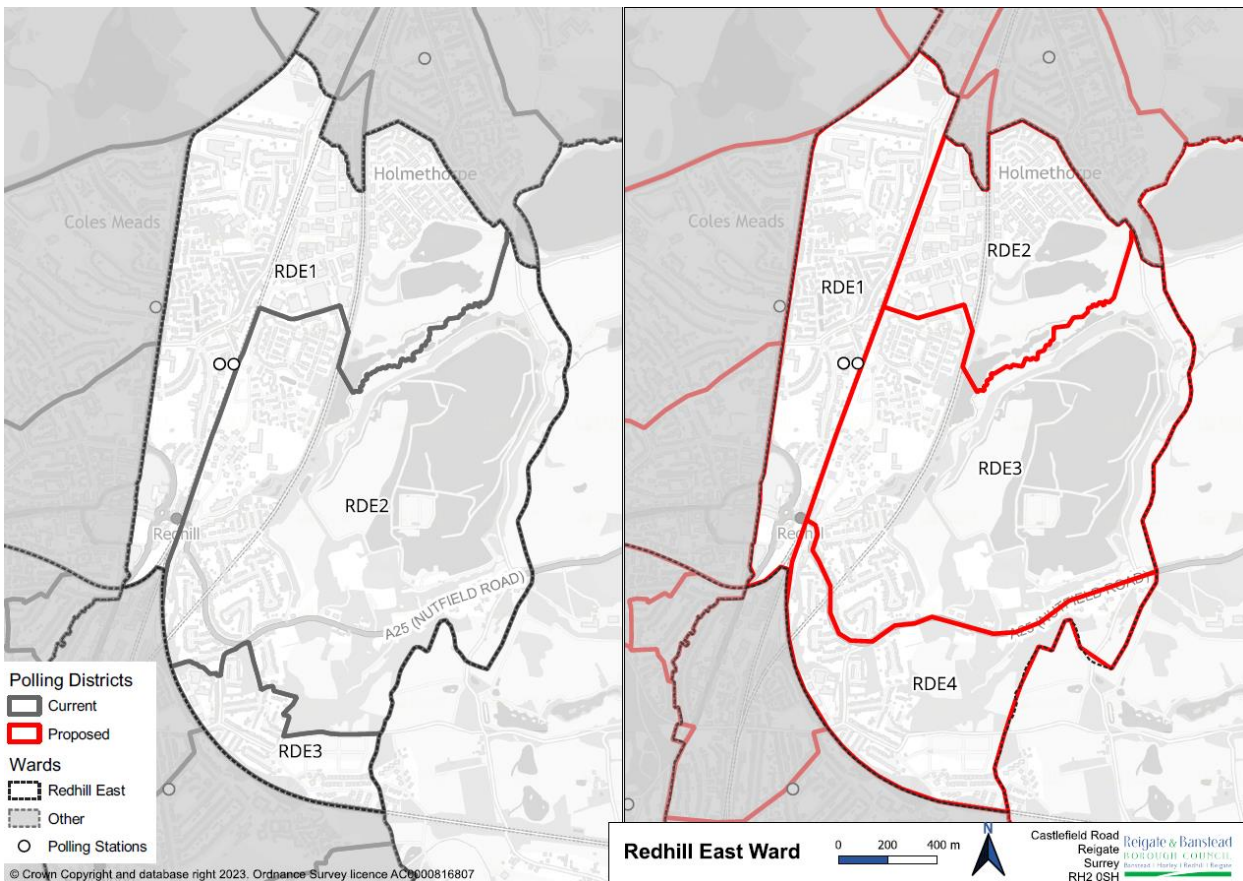
Nork Community Centre, Nork Way

# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## 5. Redhill East

### Proposals:

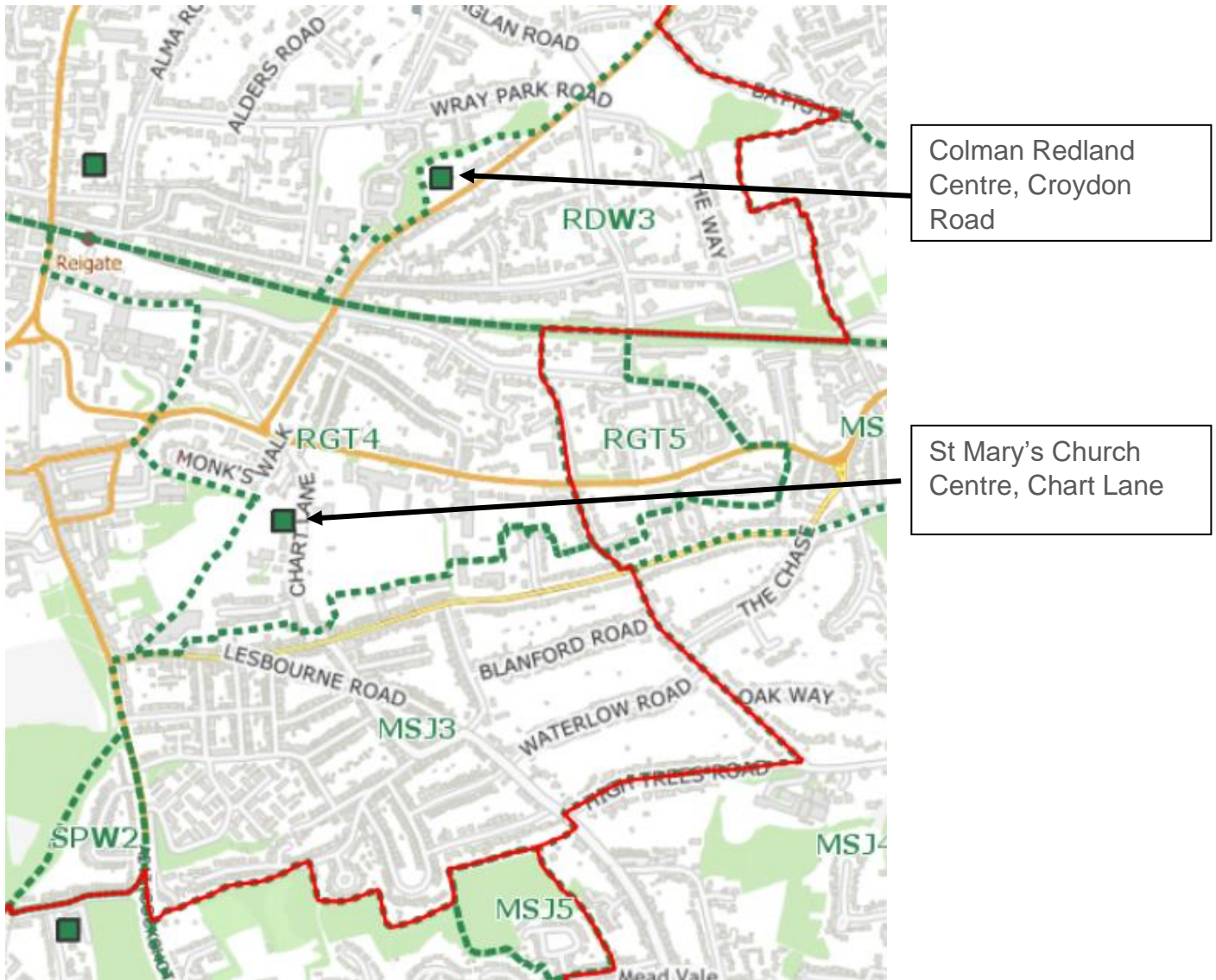
1. RDE1 (currently 3,500 electors) to be split into two polling districts, dividing the district along the railway line from north to south so that Watercolours forms a new polling district. Both polling districts to be allocated to the polling place at St Joseph's. [note Corfe Hall, Watercolours, was rejected a possible polling station due to limited parking.]
2. Propose expanding RDE3 to include all streets south of the A25 (Redstone Hill/ Nutfield Road) increasing RDE3 from approx. 600 electors to 900 and reducing RDE2 from approx. 2350 to 2050 electors. Designate a polling station at St John's Ambulance Centre in Kingsway Business Park, Hooley Lane.
3. Propose that RDE2 is allocated to a polling station in the Carrington Academy, Noke Drive



# RBBC Interim Polling District & Place Review

## 6. Reigate

**Proposal:** Currently RDW2 & RDW3 comprising of only 890 electors are allocated to the Colman Redland Centre. It has a large hall with plenty of parking and can cater for two polling stations. Propose to move RGT4 & RGT5 to Colman Redland Centre.





Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

## Evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details		
Polling place identifier	BAN3	
Polling place name	Banstead Community Hall	
Polling place address	Park Road, Banstead, SM7 3AJ	
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	2,400 1946 Station Voters 454 Polling Station Voters	
Building availability for future elections/referendums	Yes	
Polling place review		
Check		Comment
• Are there suitable transport links?	√	
• Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.?	No	
• Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment? If so, could it accommodate all allocated voters going in and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?	Yes	Questioned asked must you the main hall for all elections a yes was confirmed. Personal suggestion only use the main hall and the mead room if required for 2 polling stations.
• Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?	Yes	
• Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?	?	Lease ran out in August 2023 waiting on council for renewal information.

***Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events***

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

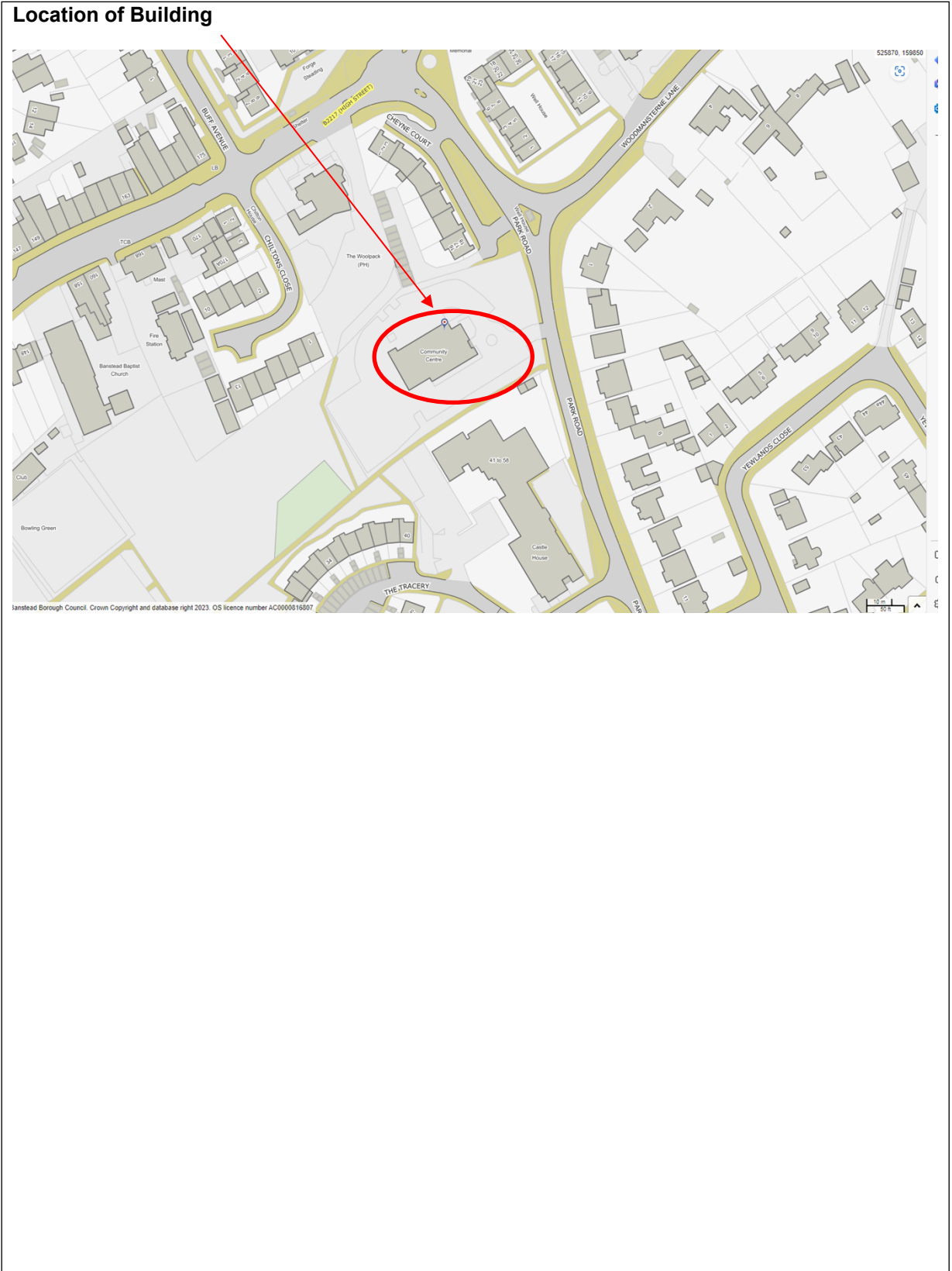
Part B – External areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Are there good public transport links to the polling place?		
• Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?	Yes	
• Is the building clearly identifiable?	Yes	
• Is additional signage required between street and entrance?	No	
• Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?	Yes	
• Are there parking facilities for disabled people?	Yes	
• Are there parking facilities for polling staff?	Yes	
• Does the approach to the building have external lighting?	Yes	
• Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no –	Yes	
• Has a purpose built ramp been installed?		
• If so, does it have a handrail?		
• Does the ramp have a gentle slope?		
• Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?		
• Is the entrance door wide enough for a disabled person using a motorised wheelchair?	Yes	
• Are the doors light enough for frail/elderly voters to open?	Yes	
• Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises, as required by the election rules?	Yes	
• Are there any external security concerns?	No	
• Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	Yes	

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

## External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.



Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

**Main Building**



Main building  
entrance through  
double doors

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Main Entrance into lobby and building close up of double door access.

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Part C – Internal areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Are all doors easy to open (including by wheelchair users) or do they need to be permanently locked back?	Yes	
• Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	No	
• Are any doormats level with the floor?	Yes	
• Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	Yes	
• Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	No	
• Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	Yes	
• Are there toilet facilities?	Yes	
• Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	Yes	
• Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	Yes	
• Is there adequate space for signage?	Yes	
• How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	2	
• Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	Yes	

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

## Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

Show internal areas of the building, excluding the actual polling station where voting will take place, including corridors that link to the polling station, kitchen and toilets, and highlight any possible signage requirements and potential hazards. Also indicate door swing direction and ease of opening, any areas of poor lighting, and any areas of uneven floor, etc.

Main entrance into lobby area



Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Part D – The polling station(s)		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Is there sufficient space to accommodate and manage the flow of a high volume of electors in the case of a high turnout of electors?	Y	
• If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?	Y	
• Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?	Y	
• Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?	Y	
• Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?	Y	
• Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?	Y	



Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

• Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?	Y	
• Can the official notices be clearly displayed, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s)?	Y	

## Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the size and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.



Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

**Main access to hall through double doors**



Main hall to be used instead of the mead room.  
Main hall room size 16.2m x 10.8m  
14 plug sockets centred around the room at head height when standing so extension leads required.

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Main double doors entrance into main hall.



Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Fire exist at the back of the main hall exist out into the car park.

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Kitchen Area

Date reviewed:26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

Comment	Name/organisation	Response by (A)RO

***Additional comments from (A)RO***

**Banstead community Hall has 3 fire exits and a defibrillator.**

**Chairs are available for use at the polling station. Table availability TBC.**

**There are plenty of plug sockets on the walls centred around the main hall at situated at standing high level (extension leads required) 14 in total. The use of the main hall instead of the Mead room for all elections has been confirmed and will be available to hire.**

## Polling place / polling station – evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details	
Polling place identifier	
Polling place name	St Teresa's Church Community Room
Polling place address	32 Worsted Green, Merstham, Redhill RH1 3PW
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	Polling district HMN5 1,644 total electors 1,431 station electors
Building availability for future elections /referendums	Yes

### Polling place review

Check	✓	Comment
Are there suitable transport links?	✓	
Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.?	No	
Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment to provide a good service to voters?	No	It is possible to implement a one-way system using the emergency exit.
Is the size sufficient to provide necessary private areas or privacy screens for photographic identification checks?	✓	
Is the size big enough to ensure the flow of voters and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?	✓	
Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?	✓	
Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?	No	

#### Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events

The Oak Room in Merstham Community Hub is not large enough to host 2 polling stations which will be required for a parliamentary election.

## Part B – External areas access and facilities

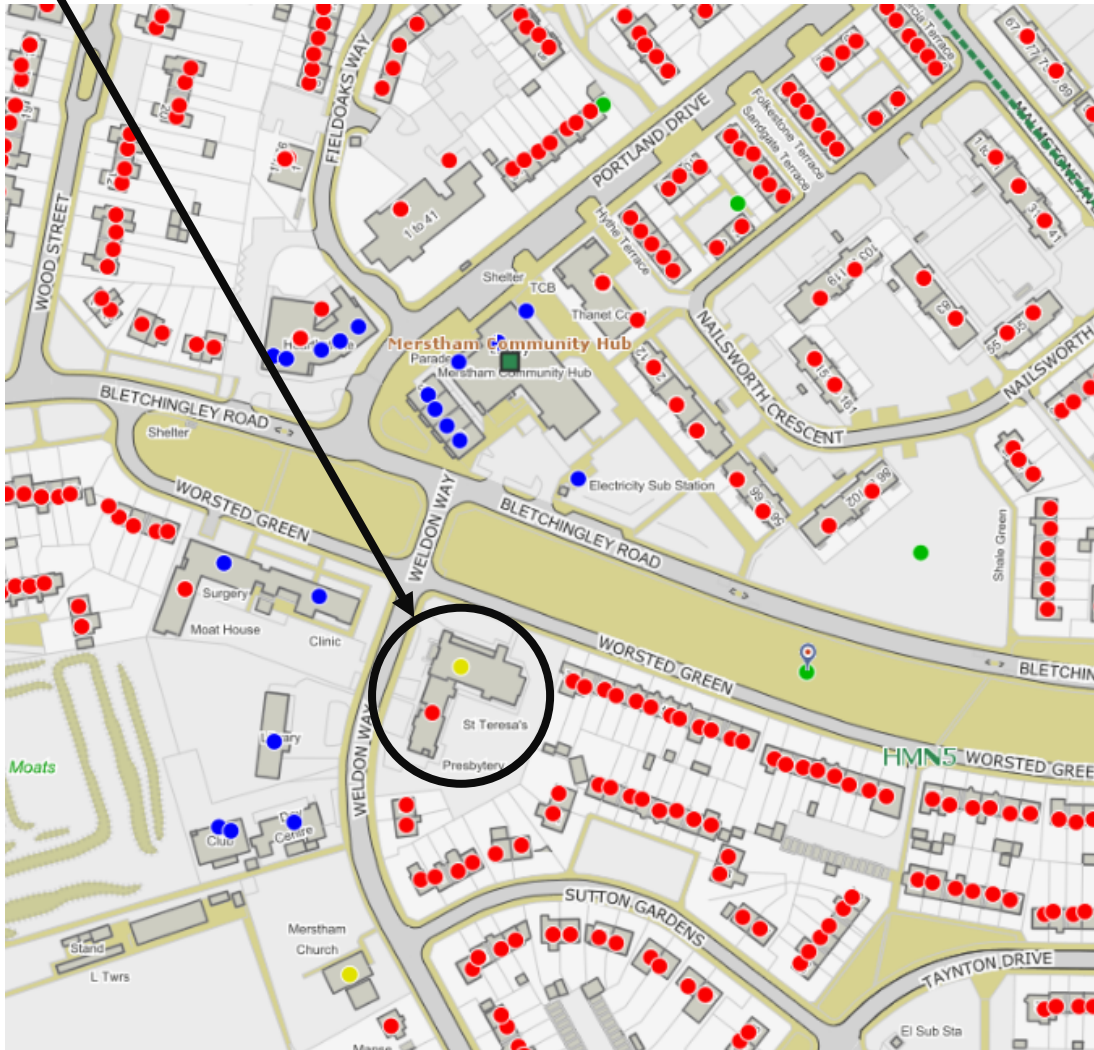
Check	✓	Comments
Are there good public transport links to the polling place?	✓	
Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?	✓	
Is the building clearly identifiable?	✓	
Is additional signage required between street and entrance?	No	
Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for disabled people?		None, on street parking
Are there parking facilities for polling staff?	✓	
Does the approach to the building have external lighting?	✓	Building & street lights
Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no –	No	
Has a purpose built ramp been installed?	✓	
If so, does it have a handrail?	✓	
Does the ramp have a gentle slope?	No	
Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?	No	
Is the entrance door wide enough to ensure good access for all?	✓	
Are the doors light enough for all voters to open?	✓	
Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises in a position so it can be read by all voters?	✓	
Does the building have a hearing loop installed?	No	
Are there any external security concerns?	No	
Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	✓	



# External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

## Situation of building



The church building & signage on corner of Weldon Way & Worsted Green



The Community Room entrance



External lights

Access ramp



Access via Weldon Way, on street parking



Emergency exit door & path.  
One shallow step



**Part C – Internal areas access and facilities**

<b>Check</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Are all doors easy to open for all users or do they need to be permanently locked back?	✓	Propose to use the emergency door on the side of the hall for direct access into the polling station.
Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	No	
Are any doormats level with the floor?	✓	
Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	✓	
Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	No	
Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	✓	
Are there toilet facilities?	✓	
Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	✓	
Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	✓	
Is there adequate space for signage?	✓	
Is there seating available if an elector needs to sit down?	✓	
How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	1	
Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	No	

# Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

**Front Door – internal view**



Community Room  
entrance

**Entrance to the Community Room from the hallway, gentle slope with handrails**





The kitchen, hob, oven, fridge & microwave.



Toilets

**Part D – The polling station(s)**

<b>Check</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>Comments</b>
If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?	n/a	
Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?	✓	
Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?	✓	
Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?	✓	
Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?	✓	
Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?	✓	
Can the official notices be clearly displayed and positioned, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s) so it can be read by all voters?	✓	
Is there sufficient space to accommodate a private area or privacy screens for photographic identification checks?	✓	
Is there enough space to ensure the flow of voters having their photographic ID checked and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?	✓	Plenty of space to queue inside the building

## Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

**The Community Room, Looking towards the entrance door**



**Emergency Exit door – potential exit**





Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Name/organisation</b>	<b>Response by (A)RO</b>

***Additional comments from (A)RO***

This page is intentionally left blank

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

## Evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details		
Polling place identifier	NOR1	
Polling place name	Nork Community Centre	
Polling place address	Nork Community Association, 38 Nork Rise, Banstead, SM7 1JN.	
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	5,430	
Building availability for future elections/referendums	Yes	
Polling place review		
Check		Comment
• Are there suitable transport links?	√	
• Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.?	No	
• Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment? If so, could it accommodate all allocated voters going in and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?	Yes	One large main hall also has a smaller hall which can be accessed in the main hall at the side of the hall with accessibility via a wide sliding into smaller hall. Smaller hall also has a narrow door that leads out into the lobby to exist the building.
• Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?	Yes	
• Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?	No	

**Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events**

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Part B – External areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there good public transport links to the polling place?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?</li> </ul>	Yes	Concrete slope that leads to the entrance of the building
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the building clearly identifiable?</li> </ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is additional signage required between street and entrance?</li> </ul>		Building situated on a residential road
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?</li> </ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there parking facilities for disabled people?</li> </ul>	Yes	2 bays marked a 3 <sup>rd</sup> made can be made available for disabled parking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there parking facilities for polling staff?</li> </ul>	Yes	Approx. 50 parking spaces onsite
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the approach to the building have external lighting?</li> </ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no –</li> </ul>	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a purpose built ramp been installed?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If so, does it have a handrail?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the ramp have a gentle slope?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the entrance door wide enough for a disabled person using a motorised wheelchair?</li> </ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the doors light enough for frail/elderly voters to open?</li> </ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises, as required by the election rules?</li> </ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there any external security concerns?</li> </ul>	No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?</li> </ul>	Yes	

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

## External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

### Location of building



### Main Access to building



The Building and front entrance step access via gate from main footpath and long concrete slope access from main car park.

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

**Full picture of main building**

Front of the  
main building  
and front  
entrance



Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Main access through double doors entrance into the lobby and main hall.



Main access entrance into the car park

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

--

Part C – Internal areas access and facilities		
Check	(√)	Comments
• Are all doors easy to open (including by wheelchair users) or do they need to be permanently locked back?	Yes	
• Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	No	
• Are any doormats level with the floor?	Yes	
• Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	Yes	
• Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	No	
• Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	Yes	
• Are there toilet facilities?	Yes	Mens, Woman and a disabled toilet. Disabled toilet is locked only unlockable with radar key.



Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

		A key will be provided in case access is required.
• Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	Yes	
• Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	Yes	
• Is there adequate space for signage?	Yes	
• How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	2	Maybe 3 if additional smaller hall is to be used it will be available as all classes will be cancelled for the day for the whole building.
• Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	No	

## Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

Show internal areas of the building, excluding the actual polling station where voting will take place, including corridors that link to the polling station, kitchen and toilets, and highlight any possible signage requirements and potential hazards. Also indicate door swing direction and ease of opening, any areas of poor lighting, and any areas of uneven floor, etc.

**Lobby area where toilets are situated.**

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Lobby area access into main hall and exist out of main building. Toilets are situated in main lobby.

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Toilets in lobby area



Toilet will remain locked Radar key will be provided.



Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

--

Part D – The polling station(s)		
Check	(√)	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Is there sufficient space to accommodate and manage the flow of a high volume of electors in the case of a high turnout of electors?</li></ul>	Yes	50 parking spaces and 2 disabled spaces, a third disabled parking space can be made available if required.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?</li></ul>	Yes	There is the main hall and smaller hall.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?</li></ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?</li></ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?</li></ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?</li></ul>	Yes	18 Trestle tables available. (Need to check number of chairs)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?</li></ul>	Yes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Can the official notices be clearly displayed, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s)?</li></ul>	Yes	

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

## Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the size and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.



View of the main hall and main exit into the lobby area to exist the main building through double doors.  
Wide sliding door for access into the smaller hall.

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

**Main H**



Fire exist at the back of the main hall, not suitable for wheelchair access once outside as ground outside uneven and a small concrete lip onto the grass back out into the park at the side of the main entrance of the building.

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Another exit door back out into main lobby and exit out of the building as well as a large exit door back into main hall through wide sliding door.



Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



In the small hall looking out to the main hall kitchen at the side. Kitchen can be accessed and locked from main hall and small hall.

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB



Kitchen area picture taken from small hall.

Date reviewed: 26/09/2023

Officer initials: MCB

Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

Comment	Name/organisation	Response by (A)RO

**Additional comments from (A)RO**

Double plug sockets situated in the middle of the main hall on the left- and right-hand side of the hall these are high up on the wall for safety reasons extension leads will be required. Further plug sockets are situated at the back of the hall in the stage. Wi-Fi has been confirmed as excellent.

A defibrillator is available.

The disabled toilets are locked, the only access is to unlock with a radar key a key will be provided on the day. There is a lamp post outside of the main car park useful for signage. There is a food fast food van that is parked just inside the car park entrance every day and will be in the car park on the day of poll as it is used by residents daily.

CCTV cameras are situated outside of the building in the car park.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Polling place / polling station – evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details	
Polling place identifier	
Polling place name	Carrington School
Polling place address	Carrington School, Noke Drive, Redhill RH1 4AD
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	
Building availability for future elections /referendums	Should be available for all

### Polling place review

Check	✓	Comment
Are there suitable transport links?	✓	
Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.?	X	
Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment to provide a good service to voters? Is the size sufficient to provide necessary private areas or privacy screens for photographic identification checks? Is the size big enough to ensure the flow of voters and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?	✓	
Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?	✓	
Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?	X	

**Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events**

## Part B – External areas access and facilities

Check	✓	Comments
Are there good public transport links to the polling place?	✓	
Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?	✓	
Is the building clearly identifiable?	✓	
Is additional signage required between street and entrance?	✓	Signs on the main gate pointing ahead with signs around the building
Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for disabled people?	✓	Yes, but not for other electors
Are there parking facilities for polling staff?	✓	
Does the approach to the building have external lighting?	✓	
Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no – Has a purpose built ramp been installed? If so, does it have a handrail? Does the ramp have a gentle slope? Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?	X  ✓ ✓ ✓	
Is the entrance door wide enough to ensure good access for all?	X	Entrance has a ramp, but the door may not be wide enough for larger accessibility vehicles. Will have to confirm with school if it's possible to open a separate entrance for any electors affected.
Are the doors light enough for all voters to open?	✓	Door will be 'locked' open. Station will need heaters in colder weather.
Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises in a position so it can be read by all voters?	✓	
Does the building have a hearing loop installed?	X	
Are there any external security concerns?	X	
Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	✓	There is space for tellers to stand nearby the entrance

## External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

***Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.***

Unable to take photographs during visit due to presence of students.

## Part C – Internal areas access and facilities

Check	✓	Comments
Are all doors easy to open for all users or do they need to be permanently locked back?	N/A	Polling station would be accessed directly from the exterior.
Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	N/A	
Are any doormats level with the floor?	X	
Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	X	
Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	X	
Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	✓	
Are there toilet facilities?	✓	For staff only
Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	✓	Not a full kitchen. Only kettle and microwave.
Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	✓	
Is there adequate space for signage?	✓	
Is there seating available if an elector needs to sit down?	✓	Chairs available inside the station if needed
How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	1	Could be used as a double station
Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	✓	

### Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

Show internal areas of the building, excluding the actual polling station where voting will take place, including corridors that link to the polling station, kitchen and toilets, and highlight any possible signage requirements and potential hazards. Also indicate door swing direction and ease of opening, any areas of poor lighting, and any areas of uneven floor, etc.

***Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.***



**Part D – The polling station(s)**

<b>Check</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>Comments</b>
If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?	✓	The room could be divided into two single stations
Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?	✓	
Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?	✓	
Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?	✓	
Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?	✓	
Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?	✓	
Can the official notices be clearly displayed and positioned, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s) so it can be read by all voters?	✓	
Is there sufficient space to accommodate a private area or privacy screens for photographic identification checks?	✓	
Is there enough space to ensure the flow of voters having their photographic ID checked and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?	✓	

## Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the size and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.

### Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Name/organisation</b>	<b>Response by (A)RO</b>

***Additional comments from (A)RO***

This page is intentionally left blank

## Polling place / polling station – evaluation checklist

Part A – Current polling place details	
Polling place identifier	
Polling place name	St John's Ambulance Centre
Polling place address	Molly Brewer House, Unit E, Kingsfield Business Centre, Philanthropic Road, Redhill, Surrey, RH1 4DP
Number of electors (If more than one polling station within the polling place, identify split of electors)	Approx. 900
Building availability for future elections /referendums	Yes, pre-booked for next 5 years.

### Polling place review

Check	✓	Comment
Are there suitable transport links?		
Are there any access issues regarding main/busy roads, railways, rivers, etc.?	No	
Is the polling place capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment to provide a good service to voters? Is the size sufficient to provide necessary private areas or privacy screens for photographic identification checks? Is the size big enough to ensure the flow of voters and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?	✓	Very large hall but parking would limit this to a single polling station.
Is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections?	✓	
Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development?	No	

**Identify any complaints/comments received from stakeholders at previous electoral events – N/A**

## Part B – External areas access and facilities

Check	✓	Comments
Are there good public transport links to the polling place?		
Is the approach to the building safe and free from obstructions and does it have a dropped kerb?	✓	As it is a business park there are times of the day when trucks/vans bring/collect goods.
Is the building clearly identifiable?	✓	
Is additional signage required between street and entrance?	✓	Additional signage would be needed on Hooley Lane as centre is at the back of the business park
Is there the facility to put up the required signage for polling day?	✓	
Are there parking facilities for disabled people?		None specifically marked
Are there parking facilities for polling staff?	✓	
Does the approach to the building have external lighting?	✓	
Does the building have level access? Yes/No. If no –	No	
Has a purpose built ramp been installed?	✓	
If so, does it have a handrail?	✓	
Does the ramp have a gentle slope?	✓	
Does the building require a temporary ramp or is there an alternative disabled access?	No	
Is the entrance door wide enough to ensure good access for all?	✓	
Are the doors light enough for all voters to open?	✓	
Can the 'Guidance for voters' notice be clearly displayed outside the premises in a position so it can be read by all voters?	✓	
Does the building have a hearing loop installed?	No	
Are there any external security concerns?	No	Site is open 24 hours a day as it is used a rest stop by The South East Coast Ambulance staff (SECAM).
Can tellers be accommodated outside the building?	✓	

# External plan – B1

Show external layout, street name(s), car parking (including disabled car parking), ramps, steps, lighting, appropriate places for signage, etc.

### Situation of building

The building

### Car Park



### Front of Building





## Part C – Internal areas access and facilities

Check	✓	Comments
Are all doors easy to open for all users or do they need to be permanently locked back?	✓	Propose to use the emergency door on the side of the hall for direct access into the polling station.
Are there any internal steps or obstructions/hazards?	No	
Are any doormats level with the floor?	✓	
Is the floor covering non-slip (including in wet weather)?	✓	
Are there any corridors that may cause access problems?	No	
Is there adequate lighting in the corridors?	✓	
Are there toilet facilities?	✓	Shared with SECAM
Is there a kitchen that staff can use?	✓	Shared with SECAM
Is the area adequately lit for day and night time?	✓	
Is there adequate space for signage?	✓	
Is there seating available if an elector needs to sit down?	✓	
How many polling stations can the building accommodate?	3	But parking would be an issue
Does the building have a telephone available (land line) in the event of mobile network problems?	No	

## Internal access leading to polling station(s) – C1

*Sketch layout; provide photographs as appropriate.*

**Proposed entrance/exit, Hall emergency exit which leads to the car park**





The kitchen





View of main front door, from the lobby



Lobby which leads to the hall, toilets, kitchen and the front door

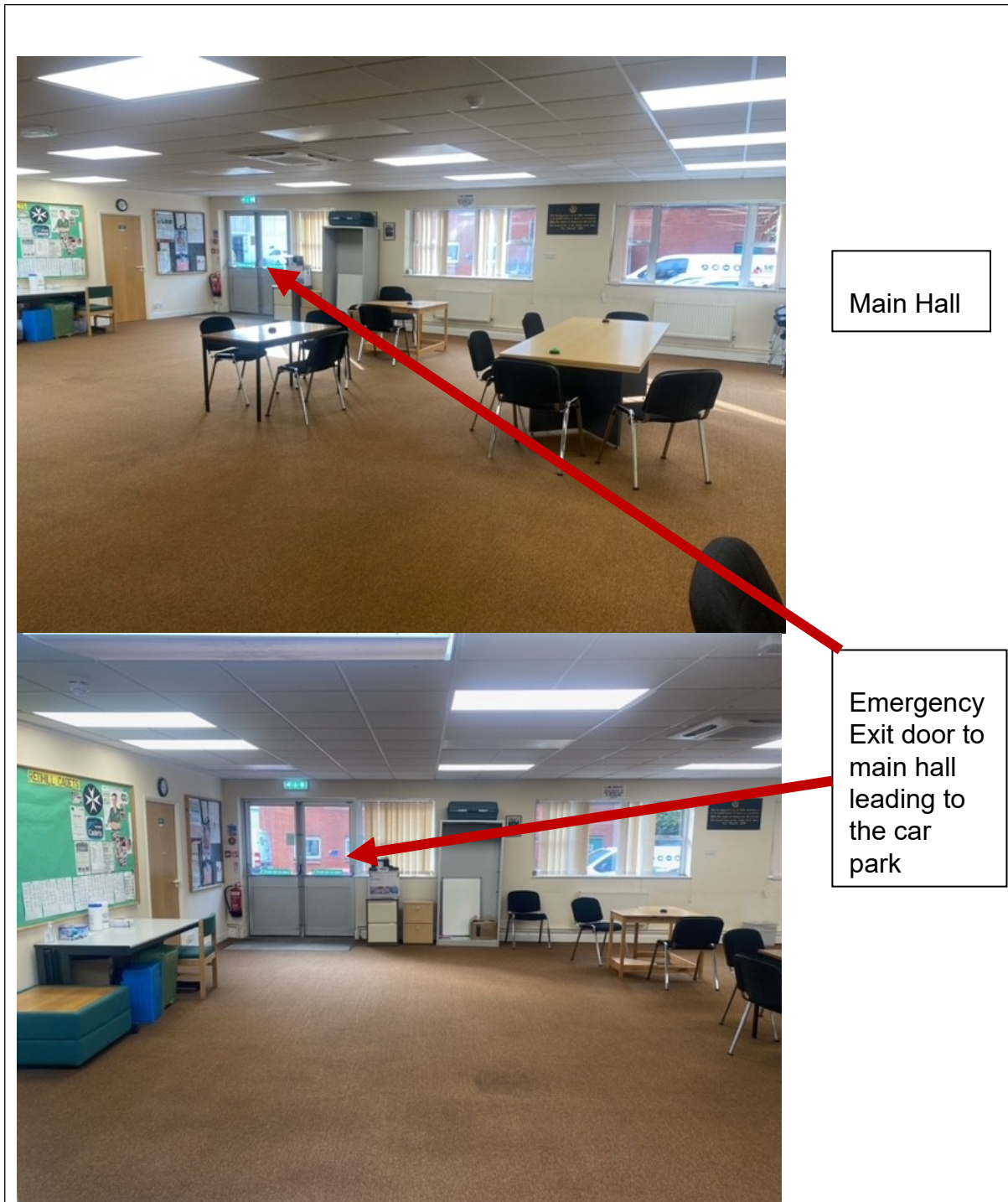


**Part D – The polling station(s)**

<b>Check</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>Comments</b>
If multiple polling stations need to be provided, are there other rooms available, or can the space be clearly divided to provide adequate room for more than one polling station?	✓	The very large hall can be split using sliding doors if required. Parking would be an issue if there was more than 1 station
Is there sufficient space inside the polling station to comfortably accommodate staff, voters, polling agents and observers?	✓	
Could ballot booths be positioned in a way that would preserve the secrecy of the ballot, even where there may be a high volume of electors?	✓	
Is there adequate lighting for day and night time?	✓	
Is there suitable furniture (tables and chairs) available for all types of election for polling staff and for those voters who may need to rest?	✓	
Could motorised wheelchairs be accommodated?	✓	
Can the official notices be clearly displayed and positioned, including the large-print version of the ballot paper(s) so it can be read by all voters?	✓	
Is there sufficient space to accommodate a private area or privacy screens for photographic identification checks?	✓	
Is there enough space to ensure the flow of voters having their photographic ID checked and reduce the risk of congestion and queues even where there is a high turnout?	✓	

## Internal – The polling station(s) – D1

Identify the size and shape of the area available for polling. Include the position of the door(s), any windows and how the furniture and equipment should be laid out to accommodate all those entitled to be inside the polling station, taking into account access requirements for all voters, including those in wheelchairs, and demonstrating how the space should be used to ensure the most efficient flow of voters and the effective administration of the voting process.





Halls  
combined



Part E – Comments from stakeholders during consultation

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Name/organisation</b>	<b>Response by (A)RO</b>

***Additional comments from (A)RO***



## Annex 3 – Full (amended) list of polling places

\* 'Electorate' column refers to the estimated polling station electorate of these proposed arrangements, as of 1 September 2023.

Ward	Polling District(s)	Electorate*	Polling Place
<b>Banstead Village</b>	BAN1		Banstead Civic Centre, The Horseshoe, Bolters Lane, SM7 2BQ
	BAN2		Banstead Civic Centre, The Horseshoe, Bolters Lane, SM7 2BQ
	BAN3		Banstead Community Hall, Main Hall, Park Road, SM7 3DL
<b>Chipstead, Kingswood and Woodmansterne</b>	CKW1		Woodmansterne Village Hall, Carshalton Road, SM7 3HH
	CKW2, CKW3		Peter Aubertin Hall, Elmore Road, CR5 3SG
	CKW4		War Memorial Hall, Brighton Road, KT20 6BU
	CKW5		Kingswood Village Hall, Waterhouse Lane, Kingswood, KT20 6EB
<b>Earlswood and Whitebushes</b>	EWB1		Earlswood Baptist Church, St John's Road, Earlswood, RH1 6DZ
	EWB2, EWB3		Earlswood Baptist Church, St John's Road, Earlswood, RH1 6DZ
	EWB4		Redhill Football (Social) Club, Kiln Brow, Three Arch Road, RH1 5AE
	EWB5		Whitebushes Village Hall, Masons Bridge Road, RH1 5LL
<b>Hooley, Merstham and Netherne</b>	HMN1		Hooley Village Hall, St. Margaret`s Road, Hooley, CR5 3RB
	HMN2		Netherne Village Hall, Cayton Road, CR5 1LT
	HMN3		Merstham Village Hall, Station Road, RH1 3ED

Ward	Polling District(s)	Electorate*	Polling Place
	HMN4		Merstham Community Hub, 2B Portland Drive, RH1 3HY
	HMN5		St Teresa's Church Community Room, Weldon Way, Mwerstham, RH1 3QA
	HMN6, HMN7		Canada Hall, Battlebridge Lane, RH1 3LH
<b>Horley Central and South</b>	HRC1		Regent House Community Centre, Albert Road, RH6 7JA
	HRC2		Edmonds Hall, Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, RH6 7HZ
	HRC2		Edmonds Hall, Albert Rooms, 92 Albert Road, RH6 7HZ
	HRC3		St Francis Church Hall, Balcombe Road, RH6 9AY
<b>Horley East and Salfords</b>	HRE1, HRE2		Salfords Village Hall, Honeycrock Lane, RH1 5DG
	HRE3, HRE4		Tanyard Barn Community Centre, The Acres, Brookfield Drive, RH6 9TA
	HRE3		Tanyard Barn Community Centre, The Acres, Brookfield Drive, RH6 9TA
<b>Horley West &amp; Sidlowand</b>	HRW1		Emmanuel Church, Reigate Road, RH2 8PN
	HRW2		St Wilfrid`s Church, Horley Row, RH6 8DF
	HRW3		Pathfinder Scout Hall, Baden Drive, RH6 8SD
	HRW4		Westvale Park Primary Academy School, Cavell Way, Webber Street, RH6 8SU

Ward	Polling District(s)	Electorate*	Polling Place
<b>Lower Kingswood, Tadworth and Walton</b>	KTW1		St John`s Church Hall, The Avenue, KT20 5AA
	KTW1		St John`s Church Hall, The Avenue, KT20 5AA
	KTW2		The Community Centre, Breech Lane, KT20 7SD
	KTW3, KTW4		Church of the Wisdom of God Church Hall, Buckland Road, KT20 7DN
<b>Meadvale and St. John`s</b>	MSJ1, MSJ2		Donyngs Indoor Bowls Club, Linkfield Lane, RH1 1DP
	MSJ3		St Mary`s Church Centre, Chart Lane, RH2 7RN
	MSJ4, MSJ5		St John the Evangelist Church Centre, Church Road, RH1 6QA
<b>Nork</b>	NOR1		St Paul`s Church Hall, Warren Road, SM7 1LG
	NOR2		Banstead Methodist Church, The Drive, Banstead, SM7 1DA
	NOR3		Nork Community Centre, Nork Way, Banstead, SM7 1JB
<b>Redhill East</b>	RDE1		PNL Centre, St Joseph`s Church, 122 Ladbroke Road, RH1 1LF
	RDE2		Carrington School, Noke Drive, Redhill, RH1 4AD
	RDE3		St John Ambulance Training Centre, Mollie Brewer House, Unit E Kingsfield Business Centre, Philanthropic Road, Redhill, RH1 4DP
	RDE4		PNL Centre, St Joseph`s Church, 122 Ladbroke Road, RH1 1LF

Ward	Polling District(s)	Electorate*	Polling Place
<b>Redhill West and Wray Common</b>	RDW1, RDW2, RDW3		Colman/Redland Centre, Croydon Road, RH2 0NA
	RDW4		Holy Trinity Church Centre, Carlton Road, RH1 2BX
	RDW4		Holy Trinity Church Centre, Carlton Road, RH1 2BX
	RDW5		Donyngs Indoor Bowls Club, Linkfield Lane, RH1 1DP
<b>Reigate</b>	RGT1, RGT2		St Mark`s Church Hall, Reigate, Alma Road, RH2 0DA
	RGT3		St Philip`s Church Hall, Nutley Lane, RH2 9HA
	RGT4, RGT5		Colman/Redland Centre, Croydon Road, RH2 0NA
<b>South Park and Woodhatch</b>	SPW1, SPW2		Reigate Park Church, Park Lane East, RH2 8BD
	SPW1		Reigate Park Church, Park Lane East, RH2 8BD
	SPW3, SPW4		Woodhatch Community Centre, Whitebeam Drive, RH2 7LS
	SPW5		Woodhatch Community Centre, Whitebeam Drive, RH2 7LS
<b>Tattenham Corner and Preston</b>	TCP1		St Mark`s Church Hall, Great Tattenhams, KT18 5RD
	TCP1		St Mark`s Church Hall, Great Tattenhams, KT18 5RD
	TCP2		Tadworth Leisure and Community Centre, Preston Manor Road, KT20 5FB



<b>Signed off by</b>	Head of Legal and Governance
<b>Author</b>	Liane Dell, Democratic Services Officer, Annette Wiles, Deputy Democratic Services Manager
<b>Telephone</b>	Tel: 01737 276182
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:democratic@reigate-banstead.gov.uk">democratic@reigate-banstead.gov.uk</a>
<b>To</b>	Council
<b>Date</b>	Thursday 18 January 2024
<b>Executive Member</b>	Leader of the Council

<b>Key Decision Required</b>	N
<b>Wards Affected</b>	(All Wards)

<b>Subject</b>	Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances for 2024/25
----------------	---

<b>Recommendations – Members’ Allowances for Reigate and Banstead Borough Council by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), Annex 1</b>	
<p>(i) That Recommendations 1 to 8, listed on page 5 of the Independent Remuneration Panel report at Annex 1 be adopted;</p> <p>(ii) That the Managing Director be authorised to make any necessary changes to the Members’ Allowance Scheme for 2024/25 (approved under Recommendation 1 above) arising from any amendment or non-adoption of the IRP’s recommendations;</p> <p>(iii) That the effective date of any changes for all allowances is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024; and</p> <p>(iv) That the IRP be thanked for its report.</p>	
<b>Reasons for Recommendations</b>	
<p>The recommendations of the IRP are considered to support the objectives for the Council’s Members Allowances Scheme of allowing people to become an elected Member without risk of undue financial hardship, and of allowing existing councillors to fulfil their role to the best of their ability.</p>	
<b>Executive Summary</b>	

# Agenda Item 7

This report sets out proposals on the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 following a review by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

The IRP's report contains eight recommendations for Council to consider, as detailed on page 5 of their report. The Financial Implications section of this covering report sets out the budget implications for 2024/25 of the recommendations.

The IRP recommend that adopted changes apply from 1 April 2024, except for any changes to the Mayoral Allowance which is changed in line with the Municipal Year.

**Council has authority to approve the above recommendations.**

## Statutory Powers

1. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 and guidance from the government, the Council is required to have a Members' Allowances Scheme recommended by its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The IRP has undertaken a review of the Authority's Members' Allowances and its report is attached at Annex 1.
2. The IRP report has undergone initial consideration by the Council's Management Team and Group Leaders and is now before the Council to consider.
3. The authority for determining the Scheme of Members' Allowances is reserved to the full Council.

## Key Information

4. This report to Council comprises the following:
  - (i) This covering report; and
  - (ii) Annex 1 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) *Reigate and Banstead Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme*.
5. The IRP's report comprises the following:
  - Appendix 1 – A profile of the Members of the IRP.
  - Appendix 2 – Terms of reference of the IRP.
  - Appendix 3 – Methodology, detailing the general principles of the review, interviews conducted, and evidence considered.
  - Appendix 4 – Commentary on changes, detailing the IRP's rationale.
  - Appendix 5 – Evaluation of the Member drop-in session and South East Employers' data.
6. The Report of the IRP at Annex 1 contains 8 recommendations on page five. These relate to the following matters:
  1. The Basic Allowance be increased from £5,956 to £6,135 (3%).
  2. The Leader of the largest Opposition Party should be paid an SRA based on a percentage of the Leader's SRA £3,130 to replace the 'per member'

model within the Group Leaders' allowance for the Opposition Group Leader only.

3. The Leaders of the Minority Parties continue to receive the per member allowance.
4. The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Leader of the Council be increased to £15,800, inclusive of the 'per member' Group Leaders' allowance for the Leader.
5. The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Budget Scrutiny Review Panel be combined and be increased from £3,162 + £441 to £3,603.
6. The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chair of the Licencing Committee be increased from £441 to £1,500.
7. Dependent Carers' Allowances. ~The minimum age for carers be raised to 18.
8. That the Scheme of Allowances be reviewed in 12 months' time. Page 7 at appendix 1 sets out the Panel's future work plan.

### Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25

7. Should Council agree to adapt or amend the IRP recommendations, then the Members' Allowances Scheme will need to be updated. Delegation of this matter to the Managing Director is proposed (Recommendation 2 of this report).

### **Legal Implications**

8. The Local Government Act 2000 requires each local authority to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel for the purpose of considering a scheme for the payment of Members' Allowances.

### **Financial Implications**

9. The budget for Member Allowances in 2023/24 is £422,800, comprising £400,700 for Allowances and £22,100 for other costs (e.g. travel and subsistence expenses claims).
10. Approval of the Panel's recommendations will result in a budget growth requirement of £11,511. This can be accommodated in the Draft Budget proposals for 2024/25.
11. The revised budget for Member Allowances (excluding travel and subsistence) will comprise:

	£
Basic Allowance (increased, see recommendation 1)	276,075
Leaders of Political Groups (increased, see recommendations 2 & 3)	816
The Leader of the largest Opposition Party (changed) - to be paid an SRA based on a percentage of the Leader's SRA £3,130 to replace the 'per member' model within the Group Leaders' allowance for the Opposition Group Leader only. (increased, see recommendations 2 & 3)	3,130
Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Leader of the Council (increased, see recommendation 4)	15,800
Deputy Leader (unchanged)	11,557
Portfolio Holders (unchanged)	66,038
Mayoral Allowance (unchanged)	5,700
Chair of Planning (unchanged)	5,442

# Agenda Item 7

The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Budget Scrutiny Review Panel (combined, see recommendation 5)	441 + 3,162
Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny (unchanged)	957
Chair of Audit Committee (unchanged)	3,162
Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chair of the Licencing Committee (increased, see recommendation 6)	1,500
Chair of the Licencing Sub-Committee (unchanged)	1,540
Members of the Planning Committee (unchanged)	11,256
<b>Total Budget Requirement</b>	<b>406,576</b>

12. The budget includes provision for travel and subsistence costs and ancillary expenses. These historically been claimed at a relatively low rate and are not expected to increase in 2024/25. If such claims exceed projections, this may lead to a small budget overspend, which can be accommodated within the service's other approved budgets.
13. It should be noted that the cost of the Members' Allowance scheme cannot be forecast with complete certainty because some Members choose not to claim allowances to which they are entitled.

## Equalities Implications

14. The Council is asked to have regard to their duties under the Equality Act 2010. This requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:
  - a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act;
  - b. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
  - c. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
15. The Panel considered these duties in relation to the nine protected characteristics (age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage/civil partnership status; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion; sex; and sexual orientation).
16. During the review, it was highlighted that the role of a Councillor was not a salaried one. However, the payment of allowances is generally expected to allow and encourage people from the widest possible range of backgrounds to serve as councillors. The Panel considered how their recommendations to the Scheme would enable all persons to be able to serve as a Councillor.

## Environmental Sustainability Implications

17. There are no direct environmental sustainability implications arising from this report.

## Communication Implications

18. The Local Authorities' (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations place certain duties on local authorities in connection with publicising the recommendations made by their Independent Remuneration Panel, their scheme of allowances and the actual allowances paid to Members in any given year.
19. The Regulations require that as soon as reasonably practicable after receiving a report, setting out the IRP's recommendations, local authorities must ensure copies of the report are available for inspection at their principal office. Local authorities must also publish a



# Agenda Item 7

notice giving details of the availability of the report and the Panel's recommendations. Local authorities are also required to repeat this process as soon as reasonably practicable after determining a scheme of allowances.

20. The Guidance states that all of these publicity requirements are statutory minimum requirements, and that local authorities should publicise more widely the report from their Panel, their scheme of allowances and the sums paid to each Member.

## **Risk Management Considerations**

21. The determination of allowances is a sensitive subject both from the perspective of Councillors themselves and the public who elect them. In view of this it is important that any scheme adopted is objectively reasonable and based upon a logical and fair mechanism.

## **Human Resource Implications**

22. There are no Human Resource implications.

## **Consultation**

23. Appendix 3 (Methodology) of the IRP Report details the consultation methodology used by the IRP in the forming of its recommendations. This included:
  - (i) An all-Member drop-in consultation with the IRP in Nov 2023; and
  - (ii) Interviews with Group Leaders and senior officers in Nov 2023.

## **Policy Framework**

24. There are no policy framework implications.

## **Background Papers**

25. None

## **Annexes**

1. Report of the Independent Remuneration panel on Members' Allowances for 2024/25

This page is intentionally left blank

**TWENTY-FOURTH REPORT OF THE  
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL  
ON  
MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES  
FOR  
REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

January 2024

## Contents

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL .....	1
Introduction.....	3
The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).....	3
Executive Summary .....	3
Recommendations .....	5
Effective Date for Changes .....	5
Budget Impact .....	6
50% Rule.....	6
One Allowance Only.....	6
Renunciation .....	6
Future Reviews .....	7
Acknowledgements .....	8
Appendix 1 - Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel .....	9
Appendix 2 - Terms of Reference .....	10
Appendix 3 - Methodology.....	11
General Principles .....	11
Interviews.....	11
Information requested.....	12
Appendix 4 - Commentary on Changes .....	13
Appendix 5 – Evaluation of Member drop-in session and SEE data.....	14
Drop-In Session to be updated.....	14
SE Employers’ Data .....	14

## Introduction

1. Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Local Authority ('the Council') is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The purpose of the Panel is to consider and make recommendations to the Council about the allowances paid to Members under its Scheme of Allowances, hereafter referred to in this report as "the Scheme". The Council must make the final decision on its Scheme but in doing so it must have regard to the advice of the IRP before making any changes.

## The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

2. The current IRP was appointed by the [Full Council in September 2023](#). The Panel consists of three Members: John Thompson (Chair), Carmel Briody and Margaret Waller. The Members of the Panel come with a wide range of experience. Their profiles are at Appendix 1 - Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel'.

## Executive Summary

3. This year the Panel carried out a light touch review following the full review of the Scheme of Allowances last year. This year's review was preceded by a training session for the Panel. This training also included a desktop review of the current Scheme of Allowances in view of relevant legislation, guidance and best practice, which recommended some improvements, some of which will be included within the full review next year. A timeline of future reviews is provided under paragraph 14.
4. Meetings were held with Group Leaders; Senior Officers and a drop-in session was provided for Members. Reference was also made to comparisons with other Surrey and Southeast authorities. A summary of the outcomes of these activities is at 'Appendix 5 – Evaluation of Member drop-in session and SEE data.'
5. This report contains 8 recommendations, which are set out on page 5. In arriving at these, the Panel considered a range of issues including:
  - a) With rising energy costs and other costs of living increases, the Council is faced with greater challenges in setting a balanced budget for 2024-25 and beyond.
  - b) In previous years, the Members voted to forego the recommended increases on the grounds that, at a time when many people were suffering financial and other hardships it was inappropriate to award themselves any increase.
    - i. [For 2022/23, Members agreed to an increase of 2% in the Basic Allowance.](#)
    - ii. [For 2023-24 Members agreed to an overall increase of 2.99%](#)
  - c) The Panel accepts that its role is to make recommendations and it is for the Council to decide what to do with the Panel's recommendations.
  - d) The Panel believes that access to democracy is an important objective - while people should not take on public office to make money, good candidates should not be put off standing by financial pressure If the Members' allowance

scheme does not fairly remunerate incidental expenses for the conduct of Members' activities, this disadvantages those who cannot afford the cost of their official duties and may result in a lack of diversity in the democratic representation of the local community.

- e) The results of the consultation exercise provided no clear indication on areas for change. There was no appetite for significant increases – certainly not in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) (4.6% in October 2023)<sup>1</sup> and Retail Price Index (6.1% also in October 2023). Although popular in some Authorities, there is very limited appetite for linking increases in allowances to Officers' Pay. The consensus is that an increase in the Basic Allowance only of a maximum of 3% would fairly reflect the current workloads, the recent pay award to Officers, the current RPI and the reduced increases in past years.
- f) The matter of the Information Technology Allowance was raised with the Panel. There is £400 annually within the current Basic Allowance to cover IT costs. About four years ago the Council issued all Members with tablets. The aim being that everyone would be using the same technology. These tablets are at the end of their working life and are being withdrawn. Members are now expected to use the IT element of the Basic Allowance to meet their IT needs. The Council has set a minimum specification for hardware, and for broadband connectivity as meetings are still held using MS Teams. Microsoft 365 applications and access to Modern Gov is provided by the Council. The Panel's view is there is adequate provision for IT in the Basic Allowance.
- g) The Panel raised the issue of the Leader of the Opposition's Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA). Usually, the Leader of the Opposition is also the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and of the Budget Review Committee. All three posts attract an SRA. Also a small allowance per Member of each party is made to all Group Leaders. This last allowance is almost unique among Local Authorities who normally restrict it to Minority parties.
- h) The SRAs paid to the Chair of Licencing and the Chairs of Licencing Sub Committees needed some clarification as the Licencing workload is demanded.
- i) There was no request to change the Travel and Subsistence allowances. The awareness of, and administrative arrangements for claiming these allowances were highlighted in the review as in need of further consideration by officers. Democratic Services have duly considered this feedback and that the administrative procedure cannot be streamlined further without compromising the necessary accounting and audit arrangements. In terms of awareness activities, Members are briefed on how to make expenses claims during the annual induction briefing after each scheduled elections in May, with forms and guidance published on the Council's web library on the Modern.Gov website
- j) Similarly, the arrangements for claiming Dependents' Carers Allowance were highlighted in the review as in need of attention.
- k) The review recommended that the Council set a co-opted Members Allowance to cover allowances paid to Members on specialist panels and non-Members

---

<sup>1</sup>(published by the Office for National Statistics on)

invited to attend Committees. The Panel was advised that such an allowance had never been paid: no recommendation is made.

- l) The four-year cycle of reviews of the Members' Scheme of Allowances providing the programme of work for the Panel over the next four years ensures that allowances stay up to date.
- m) No mention is currently made of the request that Members be given access to the Cycle to Work scheme.

## **Recommendations**

6. The Panel considered the Scheme in line with the Terms of Reference laid out in ‘

7. Appendix 2 - Terms of Reference' and the Methodology and general principles in 'Appendix 3 - Methodology'.

7. The Panel's recommendation for each allowance paid are as follows:

<b>Recommendation 1:</b>	<b>The Basic Allowance be increased from £5,956 to £6,135 (3% increase)</b>
<b>Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)</b>	
<b>Recommendation 2:</b>	<b>The Leader of the largest Opposition Party should be paid an SRA based on a percentage of the Leader's SRA £3,130 to replace the 'per member' model within the Group Leaders' allowance for the Opposition Group Leader only.</b>
<b>Recommendation 3:</b>	<b>The Leaders of the Minority Parties continue to receive the per member allowance.</b>
<b>Recommendation 4:</b>	<b>The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Leader of the Council be increased to £15,800, inclusive of the 'per member' Group Leaders' allowance for the Leader.</b>
<b>Recommendation 5:</b>	<b>The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Budget Scrutiny Review Panel be combined and be increased from £3,162 + £441 to £3,603</b>
<b>Recommendation 6:</b>	<b>The Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Chair of the Licencing Committee be increased from £441 to £1,500</b>
<b>Recommendation 7:</b>	<b>Dependent Carers' Allowances. ~The minimum age for carers be raised to 18.</b>
<b>Recommendation 8:</b>	<b>That the Scheme of Allowances be reviewed in 12 months' time.</b>

## Effective Date for Changes

8. The Panel recommend that the effective date for changes to the Scheme be 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2024, except for any changes to the Mayoral Allowance which is changed in line with the Municipal Year.

## Budget Impact

9. The net cost of these changes is £11,511 for both the Basic Allowance and Leader's SRA increases. The proposed increase to the Dependent Carers' Allowance is not expected to impact the budget, as the number of Members claiming this allowance is very small. The recommendations for 2024/25 represent a 2.9% increase to the 2023/24 cost for the Scheme.

## 50% Rule



10. Some Authorities have a rule whereby no more than 50% of Members may receive an SRA. As 33 (73%) of the 45 Members of the Council are in receipt of an SRA, the 50% rule should not apply.

### **One Allowance Only**

11. Nearly 75% of Districts & Boroughs in the South-East operate a one SRA per Member Rule. This Council does not. This applies to a small number of Members who receive a second SRA.

### **Renunciation**

12. Any Member may, on notifying the Managing Director, renounce all or part of any allowance to which they are entitled.

## Future Reviews

13. It was agreed with Group Leaders in July 2023 that a full review of Members' allowances be carried every four years. The Panel will be considering the following issues during future reviews:

Year	2023	2024	2025	2026
<b>For allowance scheme effective:</b>	2024-25 municipal year	2025-26 municipal year	2026-27 municipal year	2027-28 municipal year
<b>Status</b>	<b>AGREED</b> within the current work programme ending 2024)	<b>AGREED</b> within the current work programme ending 2024)	<b>AGREED</b> in the new work programme 2025-2026	<b>AGREED</b> in the new work programme 2025-2026
<b>Type of review:</b>	<p>Training to be provided to new IRP Members appointed for 2023-2027 term of office.</p> <p>To complete a 'light touch' interim review of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council allowance scheme</p>	<p>To complete a full review of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council allowance scheme, including member survey, face-to-face interviews.</p> <p>Aim to report to Council in December 2024, with a view to adopting new allowance scheme from April 2025.</p> <p>May include a provision that the allowances increase in line with an index for the following (fallow) year, unless a discretionary review is called.</p>	<p>Discretionary (if requested by Group Leaders – agenda item to be scheduled for decision by Group Leaders in July 2025)</p>	<p>To complete a 'light touch' interim review of the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council allowance scheme</p> <p>To complete a review of the Town and Parish Council allowance scheme (last reviewed in 2022).</p>

## **Acknowledgements**

14. The Panel is grateful for the support and co-operation received from Group Leaders, Members and Senior Officers and for the excellent assistance of Alex Vine, Annette Wiles and Liane Dell in Democratic Services.

## **Appendix 1 - Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Panel Members are:

1. Margaret Waller MCIPD - has worked in five Local Authorities and a Police Force in Human Resources with a combined service of 30 years. Ten of these were spent primarily dealing with pay and grading issues. Has Chaired two other local authority IRP's.
2. Carmel Briody – a Solicitor of 30 years standing. Has worked mostly in the public sector and now provides advice on professional regulation. She has been a school governor and Trustee of a Scout group.
3. John Thompson MBE, Chair – has worked in the public, private and charity sectors. Has been on IRPs and an Independent Person for various Authorities since 2001. He is the Lay Member of the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership and Youth Justice Board and a School Governor. He was appointed to the Board of Governors of Chichester University in July 2022 and is the Non-Executive Chair of Arun Arts which runs the Alexandra Theatre complex in Bognor Regis.

## **Appendix 2 - Terms of Reference**

The Independent Remuneration Panel's Terms of Reference are to consider and make recommendations:

1. to the Council as to the amount of Basic Allowance that should be payable to its elected members
2. to the Council about the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance
3. to the Council about the duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance
4. as to the amount of co-optees' allowance
5. as to whether the Council's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined.
6. on whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended
7. as to whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run to make recommendations as to which members of a Council are to be entitled.

The Panel should also have regard to:

1. the nature and type of role and responsibility of Elected Members and the level of commitment involved.
2. the difference in responsibility and time commitment of Leading Members; Portfolio Holders and back-bench Members and the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council and other Members with specific responsibilities.
3. schemes operating in similar authorities elsewhere.
4. the level of remuneration paid for other types of public duties.
5. whether allowances should be payable to meet Members' out of pocket expenses
6. the need to attract and retain Members of appropriate calibre and representative of the demographic make-up of the district.
7. the need to ensure that the scheme is straight-forward; economic to operate and justified in terms of affordability (in the public's perception) and working within existing budgetary constraints.
8. a scheme that aims to compensate for the time put into the roles and responsibilities undertaken – bearing in mind that there should be an element of public service.
9. a scheme that encourages Councillors to work flexibly and to develop themselves and their role in the community.

## Appendix 3 - Methodology

1. The Panel considered the outcomes of [previous Panel Report presented to the Full Council at its meeting held on 9 February 2023](#). This information was helpful and was used as a significant element of the evidence upon which the Panel has based its report and recommendations.

### General Principles

2. The Panel typically consider the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to be the most appropriate benchmark. This is the rate at which the prices of goods and services bought by households, excluding housing, rise or fall and is estimated by using price indices. The data is obtained from the Office for National Statistics.
3. The Panel advocate that Members' allowances should be based on an external benchmark, as this ensures Allowances are maintained at a level appropriate to the wider economic landscape. The consistent use of one external benchmark also allows for decisions to be removed from the political arena and local pressures.
4. The Panel reflected on the importance of the role of elected Members and the importance of clarity in identifying and setting out these roles. This was considered particularly about ensuring that potential future Councillors were able to access information on the requirements of the role, and in ensuring that the Scheme of Allowance is consistent with the expectations of these roles. With this in mind, the IRP were provided with the Council's Member role profiles.
5. Recruitment of Members has always been recognised as an important part of the Panel's consideration. The introduction of the current national Scheme in 2000 was driven by the need to make engagement in local governance more widely accessible.
6. Voluntary Service Element is a reduction in the Basic Allowance paid to all Members to reflect that part of a Councillor's work should be voluntary and not remunerated. There is no statutory requirement to show a discount and only a third of Authorities covered by the Southeast Employers do so. It is important that some element of the work of Members continues to be voluntary - that some hours are not remunerated. This must be balanced against the need to ensure that financial loss is not suffered by elected Members, and further to ensure that, despite the input required, people are encouraged to come forward as elected Members and that their service to the community is retained. In this regard, Reigate and Banstead BC applies a voluntary service element of 40%, which has remained unchanged since 2003/4.

### Interviews

7. The Panel met and/or corresponded with the following Members and Officers to explore any issues regarding allowances:
  - Councillor Biggs, Leader of the Council and Leader of the Conservative Group
  - Councillor Harrison, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Leader of the Residents' Association Group
  - Councillor Essex, Leader of the Green Group
  - Councillor Kulka, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
  - Mari Roberts-Wood, Managing Director and Head of Paid Service, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council

- Pat Main, Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer.
- Alex Vine, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
- Annette Wiles, Deputy Democratic Services Manager

**Information requested.**

8. The Panel was additionally provided with the following information for consideration:

- Committee list detailing the Members of each committee.
- Members Role Profiles (job descriptions)
- The Municipal Calendar
- Copies of previous Independent Remuneration Panel Reports
- Extracts of Full Council Minutes
- Schedules of Payments to Members
- Southeast Employers' Survey of Allowances Paid to Members
- Committee Agendas and Minutes
- The Five Year Corporate Plan
- Recent Quarterly Reports against the Plan
- Key Service Performance Indicators

## Appendix 4 - Commentary on Changes

1. There is no overwhelming demand for an increase in the **Basic Allowance**. However, the Panel noted that Members had declined or taken low increases in the recent years. The increase is between CPI and RPI and Officers' Pay all suggested an increase of 3% is justified. The Basic Allowance is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in Surrey.
2. Leaders of All Political Groups receive an SRA based on the number of Members in their Group (£58 per member), plus £147. As far as we can tell and based on the review referred to above, this arrangement is unique to Reigate and Banstead. The Panel proposes that this allowance is paid only to the Minority Party Leaders and the Leader's and Leader of the Opposition's SRA are revised. The Leader's SRA is considered below.
3. We propose that the **Leader of the Opposition** receives an SRA of £3,130 which is 20% of the Leader's SRA and 3<sup>rd</sup> out of the seven of Surrey Districts and Boroughs that pay this allowance.
4. There was some support for an increase in the **Leader's SRA**. The SRA paid to the Leader is £15,632 (made up of £14,151, plus £58 for 23 members and the £147 as Group Leader) is in the mid-range SRAs paid to Leaders in Surrey. This SRA should be set at a reasonable level so that good candidates are attracted to applying when elections take place. We propose an increase to £15,800. This is in the second quartile of SRAs paid to Leaders in Surrey.
5. The SRA paid to the **Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget Scrutiny Review Panel** (invariably the same person) should be added together. These SRAs are usually (but not currently) paid to the Leader of the Opposition. This again is an unusual situation as the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny tends to be an experienced backbench member who is not tied to represent the official opposition. There is no cost associated with this recommendation. The combined is in the mid-range of SRAs paid in Surrey.
6. The SRA paid to the **Chair of Licencing** is too low and based on regulatory responsibility an increase to £1,500 is proposed this still one of the lowest paid in Surrey.
7. The ability to claim **Childcare and Dependent Carers' Allowance** has a potentially significant impact on the ability of people to stand for election who might not otherwise be able to. The minimum age should be increased to 18 years of age and the maximum limit removed. Adults Care allowance should continue unchanged. The cost to the Council is low as there are few claimants. In this regard, we note that good and accessible Dependent Allowances contribute to inclusion and diversity of membership of the Council.
8. The Panel recommends that we continue the four-year cycle of reviews of the Scheme of Allowances set out above under the 'Future Reviews' subheading on page 7. The programme of work for the Panel over the next four years should ensure a well informed and equitable Scheme.



## **Appendix 5 – Evaluation of Member drop-in session and SEE data.**

A summary of feedback from the drop-in session and the Southeast Employers' data.

### **Drop-In Session**

1. 15 Members attended the Drop-In session offered by the Panel. The main points were:
  - a. Concerns about the costs to Members of having to buy and maintain their own IT equipment – covered in the Report.
  - b. Administrative support for the Opposition Leader – not within the scope of this report.
  - c. Travel and Subsistence- clarification of the rules – this was passed onto Democratic Services.
  - d. Workloads and times of meetings – The Panel has recommended an increase in the Basic Allowance. Timings of meetings is matter for the Chair of the meeting to agree with members.

### **SE Employers' Data**

This data set provides some interesting, but limited external comparisons. The only relevant comparisons are:

2. Within Surrey, but excluding Mole Valley which did not submit complete data, Reigate and Banstead spends £2.65 per member of the population on Members' Allowances (eighth out of 10 Authorities) and £8,900 per member (second out of eight)
3. Looking at Surrey Districts and Boroughs the rankings of key SRA holders is:
  - a. Leader 4 out of 11 authorities paying this SRA.
  - b. Deputy Leader 3 out of 9
  - c. Portfolio Holder 3 out of 7
  - d. Chair of Planning 5 out 11
  - e. Chair of Audit 7 out of 10
  - f. Chair of Licencing 8 out 10
  - g. Chair of OSC 4 out of 8.
4. All authorities pay travel and subsistence (the majority pay the HMRC maximum of 45p a mile) and run schemes that allow claims for childcare and maternity, paternity and adoption. Most deal with these claims on a case-by-case basis.
5. Almost all Authorities have the opportunity to pay a Co-optees Allowance in their Scheme of Allowances

This page is intentionally left blank