

05 November 2019 at 7.00 pm

Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

Despatched: 28.10.19



Governance Committee

Membership:

Chairman, Cllr. Eyre; Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Pearsall
Cllrs. Barnes, Bayley, Clayton, Penny Cole and Harrison

Agenda

There are no fire drills planned. If the fire alarm is activated, which is a continuous siren with a flashing red light, please leave the building immediately, following the fire exit signs.

	Pages	Contact
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 July 2019, as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 2)	
2. Declarations of Interest Any interest not already registered		
3. Actions from the previous meeting (if any)		
4. Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling stations	(Pages 3 - 20)	Nicola Fletcher Tel: 01732 227188
5. Report of the 'Chairman Role' working group	(Pages 21 - 24)	Martin Goodman Tel: 017322 27245 Councillor Andrew Eyre
6. Work Plan	(Pages 25 - 26)	

EXEMPT INFORMATION

At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.

If you wish to obtain further factual information on any of the agenda items listed above, please contact the named officer prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact Democratic Services on 01732 227000 or democratic.services@sevenoaks.gov.uk.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019 commencing at 7.30 pm

Present: Cllr. Eyre (Chairman)

Cllr. Pearsall (Vice Chairman)

Cllr. Bayley

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Barnes, Clayton, Penny Cole and Harrison

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Perry Cole, Dyball, Edwards-Winsler, Esler, McArthur and Pender were also present.

1. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on the 12 February 2019 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations of interest were made.

3. Actions from the previous meeting

There were none.

4. The Chairman of the Council

Members considered a report recommending a working group be set up to consider defining the roles of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council. Members noted that any proposals for higher levels of expenditure would need to be budgeted as a growth item.

The Committee was addressed by the Vice Chairman of the Council who made several suggestions on how the role of the Chairman might be changed. The Chairman of Governance agreed to pass her ideas to the Working Group.

Resolved: That

- a) a Member working group be established to consist of the following four Committee Members: Cllrs Bayley, Eyre, Harrison and Pearsall, with the purpose of defining the roles of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council (other than as relates to the charring of Council meetings); and

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Governance Committee - 11 July 2019

- b) a report on the work of the Member working group and any recommendations be brought to a future meeting of the Governance Committee for consideration, such report to include a clear indication of proposed growth.

5. Work Plan

The work plan was noted.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.01 PM

CHAIRMAN

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

Governance Committee - 5 November 2019

Report of	Chief Executive
Status	For Decision
Also considered by	Council - 19 November 2019
Key Decision	No

Executive Summary:

The Council has conducted a statutory consultation under the requirements of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) regarding the polling districts and polling places within the District. The Council is legally required to undertake and conclude the review, by determining the geographical polling districts and agreeing to the locations of polling places.

This report makes recommendations to confirm the location of every polling place throughout the district, and to implement a minor change to one existing polling district. Members are invited to agree the recommendations, bringing the review to a formal close in line with the legislated timetable.

Contact Officers Jim Carrington-West, Ext. 7286
 Nicola Fletcher, Ext. 7188

Recommendation to Governance Committee

That Council be recommended to:

- (a) agree to the minor adjustment to the boundary between polling districts BZ (Lower St. John's) and CC (Upper St. John's) such that all properties are included in the same polling district;
- (b) all other polling district boundaries are retained unchanged; and
- (c) agree to the proposed polling places as shown in Appendix C .

Recommendation to Council that:

- (a) the minor adjustment to the boundary between polling districts BZ (Lower St. John's) and CC (Upper St. John's), be agreed;
 - (b) all other polling district boundaries are retained unchanged; and
-

(c) the proposed polling places as shown in Appendix C be agreed.

Reason for recommendation:

The Council has considered all responses from the statutory public consultation, along with the suitability and accessibility of all venues, and concludes that the revised polling districts and amended schedule of polling places best meets the requirements of the legislation, Electoral Commission best practice and the needs of the local electorate.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Every district council area is divided into geographical administrative areas known as polling districts. Each polling district must have a polling place assigned to it; this polling place is the location or venue in which a polling station will be placed.
- 2 All district councils are required by law to complete a review of polling districts and polling places every five years. The current statutory review must be completed by 31 January 2020. Best practice, however, dictates that the review should be concluded, where practicable, in advance of the publication of the next revised Register of Electors on 1 December 2019. This enables any changes to take effect from that date. Members are invited to note that should a major election take place before 1 December 2019, publication of the revised Register of Electors may be deferred until up to February 2020; in such a case any changes will take effect from that amended publication date.
- 3 The Electoral Commission have developed guidance to assist with determining polling districts and polling places (<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/polling-place-reviews>). This is based on the relevant legislation (the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended) which sets out the steps required within a formal review. This includes the following requirements:
 - Publish a notice formally initiating the public consultation as part of the review.
 - Consult the Acting Returning Officer for every parliamentary constituency which is wholly or partly in its area.
 - Publish all representations made by an Acting Returning Officer within 30 days of receipt by posting a copy of them at the local authority's office and in at least one conspicuous place in their area and, if the authority maintains a website, by placing a copy on the authority's website.
 - 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. Such persons must have an opportunity to make representations and to comment on the representations made by the Acting Returning Officer(s).

- On completion of a review, give reasons for its decisions and publish all information relevant to the review.
- 4 As such, there is a requirement to undertake a formal public consultation in which members of the public, elected representatives, and other statutory consultees are invited to respond to the draft recommendations.

Definitions

- 5 The following definitions apply throughout this review:
- A **polling district** is a geographical area. District councils are required to divide their area into polling districts for the purposes of elections. The polling district determines which polling station an elector must attend in order to vote in person. Each parish and parish ward must have a separate polling district.
 - A **polling place** is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer at an election. The district council must designate polling places for each polling district. Each polling place should be accessible to all electors, including those with disabilities, as far as practicable.
 - A **polling station** is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. These are chosen by the relevant (Acting) Returning Officer for a given election, and not by the council.
 - The **Returning Officer** is the individual who has responsibility for delivering free, fair, democratic elections in accordance with the relevant legislation. This role is independent of the council. At a Parliamentary Election, this individual is known as the Acting Returning Officer, hence the term '(Acting) Returning Officer' refers to the individuals responsible for delivering each level of election. This person is also known as the (A)RO.
- 6 It is important to note that polling districts determine to which polling place and polling station a voter must attend to vote in person. They are administrative areas within wards, and do not affect which candidate or party the elector may vote for.

Rules applicable to determining polling districts and polling places

- 7 Electoral Commission guidance states that each parish and parish ward is to be a separate polling district, and the boundaries and designations of

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polling districts should not adversely impact on an elector's ability to attend their polling station.

- 8 Polling places should be considered taking accessibility, location and suitability into account. In practice, polling stations have to meet basic standards in order to be suitable for use bearing in mind the requirements for staff working in those venues and the numbers of electors who may attend to cast their vote.

Draft proposals and consultation

- 9 In developing the draft proposals, officers visited every current and proposed polling place and assessed them for their suitability based on Electoral Commission templates. They also reviewed every polling district boundary using high resolution digital mapping.
- 10 Based on these assessments, draft proposals were developed for consultation.
- 11 As part of the statutory review, contributions from the Acting Returning Officers for the Parliamentary Constituencies that represent the district should be sought. As such, Sevenoaks District Council has consulted with the Acting Returning Officers for the Dartford, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling constituencies on the draft proposals.
- 12 In addition, the current proposal by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) for the realignment of parliamentary constituency boundaries would result (if that review receives Parliamentary approval in its current form) in part of this district being transferred from the Dartford parliamentary constituency to the Gravesham parliamentary constituency. As a result, Sevenoaks District Council has also consulted with the Acting Returning Officer for Gravesham. If the changes proposed by the BCE are implemented, that part of Sevenoaks District that is currently part of Tonbridge & Malling parliamentary constituency will form part of the new Tonbridge parliamentary constituency; the ARO will remain unchanged, however.
- 13 The draft proposals have also been sent, as part of the consultation process, as follows:
 - To all elected representatives of the district
 - District, parish and county councillors
 - Members of Parliament representing residents of this district
 - Members of the European Parliament for the South East Region
 - The Police & Crime Commissioner for Kent
 - Local political party representatives

- Local groups with expertise in disability and access issues, and a meeting held with the Sevenoaks District Access Group to discuss the proposals. This included:
 - Sevenoaks District Access Group
 - Alzheimer’s Society (West Kent)
 - Kent Association for the Blind
 - Avenues Group
 - Hft
 - IASK
 - Age UK
 - All keyholders for the existing and proposed venues were invited to confirm that their venues remain available for use as polling places.
 - Residents of the one property that would be affected by the proposed polling district boundary change.
- 14 Information about the consultation was also published on the Sevenoaks District Council website, and on public noticeboards. The draft proposals were published online and made available to view at the Council offices.
- 15 The public consultation ran from 31 July 2019 through to 1 October 2019.

Responses to the consultation

- 16 The Acting Returning Officers for the Parliamentary constituencies representing Sevenoaks District residents submitted their responses to the consultation as set out below. These were published along with the consultation documents as they were received. Note that the ARO for Sevenoaks is also the Chief Executive of Sevenoaks District Council and therefore the draft proposals were made in liaison with him.
- **Acting Returning Officer for Gravesham (non-statutory consultee):**
“We have no comments on the recommendations, and are happy with them.” (17 July 2019)
 - **Acting Returning Officer for Tonbridge & Malling:**
“I fully support and endorse the proposals prepared for this review of polling districts and polling places within the Tonbridge & Malling Constituency. I also endorse the comments attributed to each proposal.” (26 July 2019)
 - **Acting Returning Officer for Dartford:**
“I have reviewed the proposals by Sevenoaks District Council for the Dartford Parliamentary Constituency and support the recommendations

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which seem to offer effective arrangements which support the council's priority to encourage strong and involved communities, by enabling the electorate to effectively engage in the democratic process.

Where possible no more than 2500 electors should vote at any one polling station however; more than one polling station can be situated in a polling place and these proposals would facilitate this.

The election timetable has been demanding and will continue to be challenging over the next four years. In this time, Sevenoaks will need to continue to review these arrangements and make any necessary changes to polling places as the electorate in each area changes.

Each of the proposed polling places would offer a suitable facilities for the location of a polling station.” (7 August 2019)

- 17 In response to the submission from Dartford, Members are invited to note that the staffing allocations for a Parliamentary Election are the responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer for that constituency. However we remain confident that the venues are suitable for individual and, where appropriate, two or more polling stations, and we will continue to monitor this over time.
- 18 During the consultation we received a total of 11 additional responses (in addition to confirmations from keyholders that venues remain available for use). These, along with our responses, are included at Appendix A. To summarise, the majority of the responses supported our draft proposals. However, the following are worth noting:
 - Sevenoaks Community Centre is unavailable for use until 2021 due to building work. A suitable alternative, the Bat and Ball station building, has been identified and confirmed as suitable and available. I therefore **recommend** that the polling place be amended to reflect this.
 - Fordcombe village hall is likely to be unavailable due to building work. The community has limited alternative facilities, namely the Chafford Arms public house and the primary school. The Chafford Arms is unsuitable as it has no pavement access and is unlikely to be available for a short-notice poll at certain times of the year; it would also require temporary ramps to be installed, and the venue hire cost is prohibitive. The school is not ideal, as it has no step-free access and the layout of the building means that temporary ramps cannot be safely installed. However, of the two possible alternative venues the school is the only one considered suitable. Whilst we try to avoid using schools, in order to minimise disruption to staff and pupils, it is unfortunately unavoidable in this circumstance. That said, the exact timing of renovation work at the village hall is currently unknown. I therefore **recommend** that the polling place remain the village hall, with the caveat that when it is unavailable due to building work the primary school is used instead. This is likely to be for a limited period before

the village hall refurbishment is completed and the premises available again.

- District Councillors for Sevenoaks Eastern ward (response numbers 008 and 009) responded that the proposed polling place was not suitable for the Hillingdon polling district because of the distance that some residents must travel to get to it. Having reviewed the locations, the distance between the current venue and their alternative proposed site of a mobile venue is an 11 minute walk. Moving to Trinity school would also create the same issue for electors living nearer to the current polling place (the St Johns Church Hall) - they would have the same distance to travel as people who live near Trinity school and walk to St Johns Church Hall - as both venues are on opposite sides of the polling district. In addition, we try to minimise the use of schools as polling stations as far as possible to minimise disruption to students. There are issues with mobile polling stations, most notably in this location the lack of facilities for staff and electors. Whilst the current location of the venue is not ideal for residents of Hillingdon, Trinity school is no better, and a mobile or temporary venue creates more issues than it resolves for residents and polling staff. I therefore **recommend** keeping the venues as set out in the draft recommendations. Members are invited to note that the County Councillor for this area has also indicated (response 010) that they are happy with the draft proposals for polling places.
- Due to changes taking place at Swanley Youth Centre, the room currently used for elections may become unavailable in future. We have assessed the alternative room, and consider it would be suitable for use as a polling station when the main room is unavailable for use. I therefore **recommend** we retain the Swanley Youth Centre as a polling place, noting the actual room used may change depending on circumstances at the time of an election.

Final recommendations

- 19 It is worth noting that the authority to amend polling places is set by the Council; the decision as to exactly where in the polling place a polling station is located is determined by the (Acting) Returning Officer. Any changes close to an election (such as a venue being unavailable) can cause complications if the Council is required to meet to agree them; this is particularly difficult for unscheduled or short-notice polls. Whilst the (A)RO has authority to change a venue if required if there is insufficient time to consult Council, it is good practice to try to avoid such restrictions whilst retaining Council's overall responsibility for determining polling places. Some local authorities designate entire districts as their polling places; I do not agree that this gives a level of specificity required, and arguably does not fully comply with Electoral Commission guidance. I therefore recommend that each polling place is set as 'At or near...' the proposed

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venue. This gives some flexibility in setting exact locations for polling stations, particularly where short-notice changes are required whilst retaining Council's decision-making responsibility. For all practical purposes this does not affect the actual location of polling stations unless there are unavoidable necessary changes.

20 In addition, Members are invited to note that the polling districts and polling places in use are monitored on an ongoing basis and that if circumstances change (such as a large residential development) before the next scheduled formal review, changes to polling districts and polling places can be made in the interim.

21 My final recommendations are:

Polling districts. Adjust the boundary between polling districts BZ (Lower St John's) and CC (Upper St John's) such that all properties are included in the same polling district. **Polling places.** Set the polling places as shown in **Appendix C**. These take the consultation responses into account.

Publication of materials

22 The legislation requires that the council publishes all information relevant to this review of polling places and polling districts. In addition, the Council is required to publish copies of all correspondence sent to Acting Returning Officers and to individuals or organisations the local authority consulted with as they have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability; these are available online as background documents. The publication of this report, along with appendices, background documents and minutes of the Governance Committee and Council, satisfy this requirement. A copy of these documents will be made available online and at the council offices, in line with both normal practice and the statutory requirements for this review.

Key Implications

Financial

This is a statutory review. Costs associated with the conduct of the review are met from within existing budgets.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

This is a statutory review, conducted under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) and Electoral Commission guidance. There is a risk that, if the council does not take responses from the consultation into account, individuals

may appeal to the Electoral Commission. Given that all responses have been fully considered and where not taken on board we have set out our reasons, this risk is minimal.

Equality Assessment

The accessibility and suitability of each venue has been taken into account in the conduct of this review. As a result, the decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. Where access to venues is restricted, we have proposed temporary access changes where possible (such as ramps). In some locations this is unfortunately not possible. However all registered electors are entitled to request to vote by post, negating the need to attend the polling station. If an elector wishes to vote in person at a polling station with limited access, the polling station staff will assist them to enable them to vote in person, whilst ensuring the secrecy of the election. All polling station staff are trained prior to each election and reminded of their responsibilities in terms of supporting electors and enabling them to vote.

A very small number of the polling places are in venues that sell alcohol, and some are in churches or church halls. There may be some electors who are unwilling to visit such venues. However, there has been no change in the number or location of these venues from previous years, and in each case there is no suitable alternative venue. As noted above, all registered electors are entitled to request to vote by post, negating the need to attend the polling station in person.

Conclusions

This review of polling districts and polling places satisfies the legal requirement to undertake a review including completion of a public consultation and publication of all documents relating to the review. There is a legal requirement to agree to a new schedule of polling districts and polling places by the end of January 2020, taking the consultation into account and following Electoral Commission guidance.

Appendices	Appendix A - Summary of consultation responses and our comments thereon
	Appendix B - Recommended change to Polling District boundary
	Appendix C - Recommended polling places
Background Papers	Notice of Review as published
	Draft proposals as consulted upon
	Correspondence sent to statutory consultees

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<https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=289&MId=2409&Ver=4&J=2>

Electoral Commission guidance on these reviews is available from <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/polling-place-reviews>

Jim Carrington-West

Chief Officer Customer & Resources

Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations

Consultation responses

Please note that responses from venues solely confirming availability are not included.

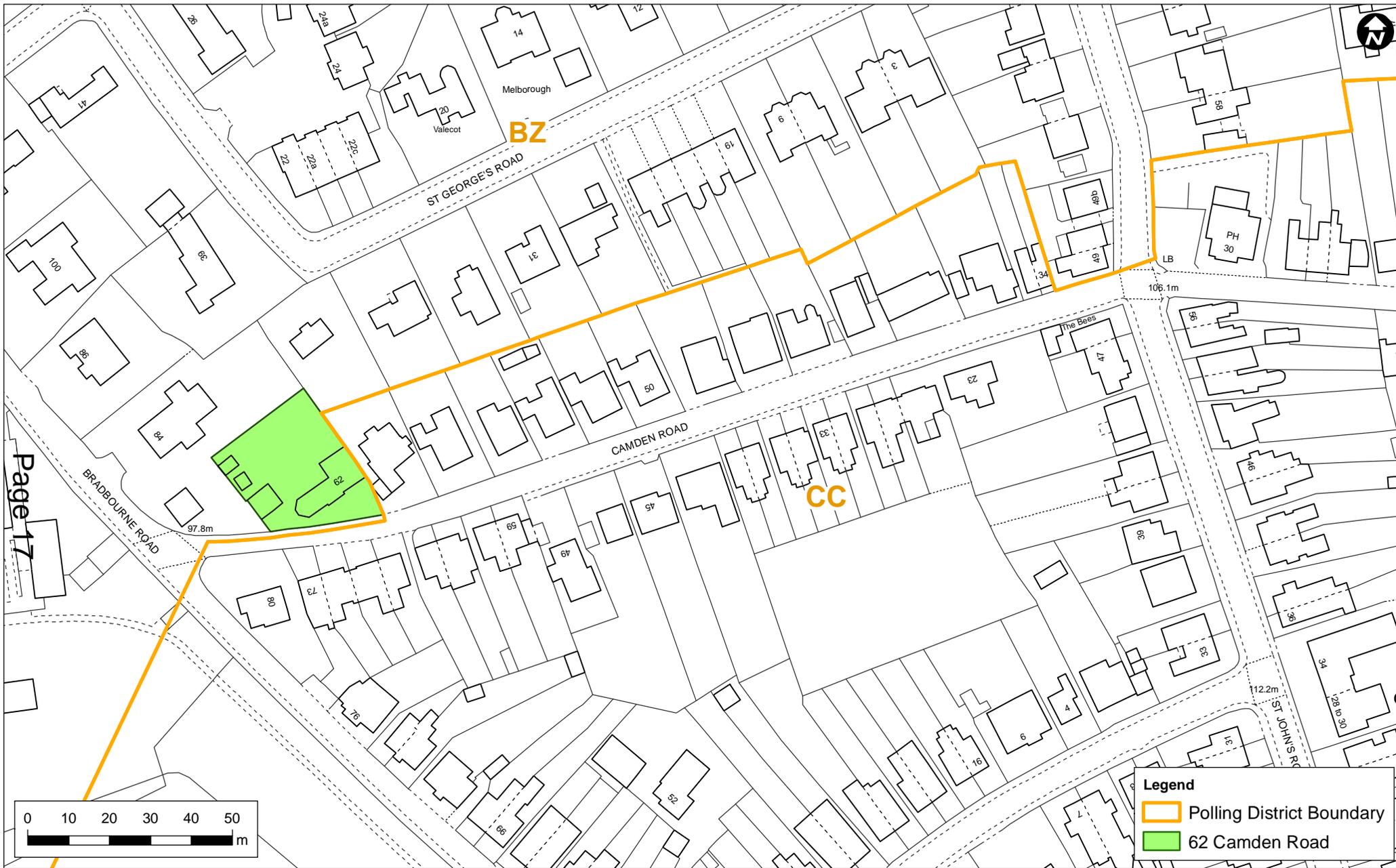
#	Date	Constituency / Ward	Respondent	Summary of comment	Response
001	27 July 2019	Sevenoaks / Northern Sevenoaks	District Councillor	The Polling station at Sevenoaks Community Centre will not be available for use until 2021 as it is being rebuilt. Perhaps the Bat and Ball Station building managed by the Sevenoaks Town Council might be suitable for that part of the Ward.	<p>The owners of the venue have confirmed that Sevenoaks Community Centre will not be available during 2019/2020 and have suggested the same alternative.</p> <p>Having visited and assessed the Bat and Ball Station building, I confirm it would be suitable for use as a polling station and therefore recommend that this be the new venue until such time as the community centre is available again. The (A)RO will ensure adequate signage and information on poll cards for all voters affected by this change.</p>
002	31 July 2019	Sevenoaks / Sevenoaks Rural North East county division	County Councillor	The proposed facilities in my division are fine.	
003	1 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Sevenoaks Kippington	District Councillor	I am happy with the proposed arrangements.	

#	Date	Constituency / Ward	Respondent	Summary of comment	Response
004	1 August 2019	Tonbridge & Malling / Penshurst, Fordcombe and Chiddingstone	District Councillor	I don't think you can be aware that Fordcombe village hall is currently closed and is going to be demolished and rebuilt. Should an election be called in the next eighteen months, a different venue will be necessary.	The exact timing for the temporary closure of the venue is not yet confirmed. Alternatives have been considered, with the primary school identified as the most suitable. I therefore recommend that the polling place remain the village hall, with the caveat that when it is unavailable due to building work the primary school is used instead. This is likely to be for a limited period before the village hall refurbishment is completed and the premises available again.
005	2 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Hextable	District Councillor	Hextable members have commented after this was looked at previously and given the well-known and existing central location of our polling station at St Peters church, I feel there would be no benefit from changing these arrangements.	
006	5 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Sevenoaks Northern	Venue	Sevenoaks Community Centre – This is now closed until late 2020 whilst refurbishment and extension works are carried out In place of the Sevenoaks Community Centre, Sevenoaks Town Council can offer the Bat & Ball Station. The Station has 2 rooms and I attach some information about it. I would think that the Booking Hall would probably be the	See response to 001, above.

#	Date	Constituency / Ward	Respondent	Summary of comment	Response
				better sized room for you. The address is Bat & Ball Station, Chatham Hill Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5AP	
007	5 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Fawkham & West Kingsdown	Venue	I confirm that this venue will be available for future use and many local people have commented that it is convenient with good parking available.	
008	9 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Eastern	District Councillor	An important fact which was apparent in the latest local elections in Eastern Ward was a significant difference in turnout on the day between the Hillingdon and Hollybush polling areas.	There tends to be a higher turnout (both in percentage and count of electors) in BV compared to BW. The venue remains suitable for two stations. The (A)RO is responsible for allocating staff for each election and will ensure sufficient staff at the busier station, taking into account historic turnout information.
009	12 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Eastern	District Councillor	I note that the Consultation document states that each polling station should be accessible for all electors. I believe that in Sevenoaks Eastern this is not the case, and voters from the Hillingdon (BV) end of the ward are at a disadvantage.	The alternative venue suggested is not suitable for use as a polling station venue. Whilst the current venue is not ideal for all electors, it represents the best location we can currently provide.
010	13 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Sevenoaks Town County Division	County Councillor	I have read the consultation document and am happy with the proposals for the wards in my KCC division – Sevenoaks Town.	

#	Date	Constituency / Ward	Respondent	Summary of comment	Response
011	14 August 2019	Sevenoaks / Swanley St Mary's	Venue	The venue (Swanley Youth Centre) is available at present. However, future building work is planned (no date is yet confirmed), at which point an alternative room in the same building will be available for use for a polling station.	We have assessed the alternative room, and consider it would be suitable for use as a polling station when the main room is unavailable for use. I therefore recommend we retain the Swanley Youth Centre as a polling place, noting the actual room used may change depending on circumstances at the time of an election.

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Legend

- Polling District Boundary
- 62 Camden Road



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 Ordnance Survey 100019428

Polling District Boundary Between Districts BZ and CC, North of Camden Road Sevenoaks TN13 3LX

Scale: 1:1,250 @ A4
 Date: July 2019

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Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks**Ward : Ash and New Ash Green**

AA	Ash	At or near The Village Hall, The Street, Ash, Kent, TN15 7HB	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Ash-cum-Ridley - Ash ward	314 (of which, postal voters: 16)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AC	New Ash Green North West	At or near New Ash Green Youth Centre, Ash Road, Ash, Kent, DA3 8JY	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Ash-cum-Ridley - New Ash Green North West ward	2063 (of which, postal voters: 181)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AD	New Ash Green South East	At or near New Ash Green Village Hall, Centre Road, New Ash Green, Kent, DA3 8HH	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Ash-cum-Ridley - New Ash Green South East ward	2253 (of which, postal voters: 223)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Ward : Brasted, Chevening and Sundridge

AF	Brasted	At or near Brasted Village Hall, High Street, Brasted, Kent, TN16 1JA	Sevenoaks West	Brasted parish	762 (of which, postal voters: 90)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AG	Toys Hill	At or near Toys Hill Village Hall, Puddledock Lane, Westerham, Kent, TN16 1PY	Sevenoaks West	Brasted parish	375 (of which, postal voters: 79)	Access to the venue is poor, with steps into the building. However no suitable alternatives exist in this rural location. It is not possible to place a temporary ramp, as doing so would cause a dangerous obstruction for other users of the venue and block access in the area. Given the small number of electors allocated to this station and the lack of suitable alternatives, there is a requirement to continue to use this venue as a polling place. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote. The (A)RO will consider mechanisms to alert the polling station staff to the presence of voters outside the station who are unable to ascend the steps.
AH	Chevening	At or near Chevening Church Hall, Homedean Road, Chipstead, Kent, TN13 2RU	Sevenoaks West	Chevening parish	2288 (of which, postal voters: 367)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CI	Ide Hill	At or near Ide Hill Village Hall, Ide Hill, Kent, TN14 6JG (Wheatsheaf Room)	Sevenoaks West	Sundridge with Ide Hill - Ide Hill	529 (of which, postal voters: 65)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible. The Wheatsheaf Room is down the corridor from the main entrance, but access is flat and smooth.
CJ	Sundridge	At or near Sundridge Village Hall, Main Road, Sundridge, Kent, TN14 6EJ	Sevenoaks West	Sundridge with Ide Hill - Sundridge	984 (of which, postal voters: 141)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks					
Ward : Crockenhill & Well Hill					
AN Crockenhill	At or near Crockenhill Village Hall, Stones Cross Road, Crockenhill, Kent, BR8 8LT	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Crockenhill parish	1329 (of which, postal voters: 154)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CH Well Hill	At or near Well Hill Mission Church, Well Hill, Orpington, Kent, BR6 7PR	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Shoreham - The Well Hill Hundreds	223 (of which, postal voters: 30)	The current polling place is suitable, although accessed via an unpaved road. There is a small step to access the hall, but it is not possible to place a temporary ramp. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote. There are no suitable alternatives available in this small rural polling district.
Ward : Dunton Green & Riverhead					
AO Dunton Green	At or near Dunton Green Village Hall, London Road, Dunton Green, Sevenoaks, TN13 2TE	Sevenoaks West	Dunton Green parish	2367 (of which, postal voters: 279)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BN Riverhead	At or near Riverhead Village Hall, Amherst Hill, Riverhead, Kent, TN13 2EL	Sevenoaks West	Riverhead parish	1827 (of which, postal voters: 358)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Eynsford					
AV Eynsford	At or near Eynsford Village Hall, High Street, Eynsford, Kent, DA4 0AA	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Eynsford parish	1507 (of which, postal voters: 207)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Farningham, Horton Kirby & South Darent					
AW Farningham	At or near Farningham Village Hall, High Street, Farningham, Kent, DA4 0DH	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Farningham parish	1146 (of which, postal voters: 122)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BE Horton Kirby	At or near Fighting Cocks Public House, The Street, Horton Kirby, Kent, DA4 9BY	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Horton Kirby & South Darent parish	951 (of which, postal voters: 115)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible. The room is quite dark, but the (A)RO provides temporary lighting for use in the polling station. Alternative venues have been considered, but are unable to guarantee availability for future elections so are not suitable for designation as a polling place.
BF South Darent	At or near Horton Kirby & South Darent Jubilee Hall, Horton Road, South Darent, Kent, DA4 9AZ	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Horton Kirby And South Darent parish	1757 (of which, postal voters: 288)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks**Ward : Fawkham & West Kingsdown**

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
AX Fawkham	At or near Fawkham Village Hall, Valley Road, Fawkham, Kent, DA3 8NA	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Fawkham parish	485 (of which, postal voters: 61)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CS East Hill	At or near Woodlands Church Hall, Tinkerpot Lane, West Kingsdown, Kent, TN15 6AA	Sevenoaks Rural North East	West Kingsdown - East Hill ward	274 (of which, postal voters: 60)	Access to the venue is not ideal, with steps into the building. However no suitable alternatives exist in this rural location. It is not possible to place a temporary ramp. Given the small number of electors allocated to this station and the lack of suitable alternatives, there is a requirement to continue to use this venue as a polling place. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote.
CU West Kingsdown East	At or near The Old School, School Lane, West Kingsdown, Kent, TN15 6JN	Sevenoaks Rural North East	West Kingsdown - East ward	1240 (of which, postal voters: 164)	There are two small steps into the building. However no suitable alternatives exist in this rural location. It is not possible to place a temporary ramp. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote.
CV West Kingsdown-Hever	At or near West Kingsdown Village Hall, London Road, West Kingsdown, Kent, TN15 6BZ	Sevenoaks Rural North East	West Kingsdown - Hever ward	2744 (of which, postal voters: 368)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CT Knatts Valley	At or near Woodlands Church Hall, Tinkerpot Lane, West Kingsdown, Kent, TN15 6AA	Sevenoaks Rural North East	West Kingsdown - Knatts Valley ward	223 (of which, postal voters: 25)	Access to the venue is not ideal, with steps into the building. However no suitable alternatives exist in this rural location. It is not possible to place a temporary ramp. Given the small number of electors allocated to this station and the lack of suitable alternatives, there is a requirement to continue to use this venue as a polling place. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote.

Ward : Halstead, Knockholt & Badgers Mount

AE Badgers Mount	At or near Badgers Mount Memorial Hall, Orpington-by-pass, Badgers Mount, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 7AH	Sevenoaks West	Badgers Mount parish	531 (of which, postal voters: 64)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AY Halstead	At or near Halstead Parish Council, The Centenary Pavilion, Station Road, Halstead, Kent, YN14 7DH	Sevenoaks West	Halstead parish	1284 (of which, postal voters: 151)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BI Knockholt	At or near Knockholt Village Centre, Main Road, Knockholt, Kent, TN14 7LG	Sevenoaks West	Knockholt parish	956 (of which, postal voters: 107)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible. We have been advised that the building may be redeveloped in future, but it remains accessible and available in the meantime.

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks					
Ward : Hextable					
BD Hextable	At or near St Peter's Church, College Road, Hextable, Kent, BR8 7RH	Swanley	Hextable parish	3336 (of which, postal voters: 375)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Kemsing					
BG Kemsing East	At or near Kemsing Parish Council St Ediths Hall, High Street, Kemsing, Kent, TN15 6NA	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Kemsing parish	1686 (of which, postal voters: 237)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BH Kemsing West	Kemsing Parish Council St Ediths Hall, High Street, Kemsing, Kent, TN15 6NA	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Kemsing parish	1585 (of which, postal voters: 227)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Otford & Shoreham					
BK Otford	At or near Otford Memorial Hall, High Street, Otford, Kent, TN14 5PQ	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Otford parish	2688 (of which, postal voters: 462)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible. Redevelopment work may be taking place during 2019, although the venue is still expected to be available for all scheduled polls.
CF Romney Street	At or near Shoreham Village Hall, 25 High Street, Shoreham, Kent, TN14 7TB	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Shoreham - Romney Street ward	168 (of which, postal voters: 48)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CG Shoreham	At or near Shoreham Village Hall, 25 High Street, Shoreham, Kent, TN14 7TB	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Shoreham - Shoreham ward	717 (of which, postal voters: 77)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Seal & Weald					
BP Seal	At or near Seal Village Hall, 17 High Street, Seal, Kent, TN15 0AL	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Seal - Seal ward	1330 (of which, postal voters: 161)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BO Seal St. Lawrence	At or near St. Lawrence Village Hall, Church Road, Stone Street, Kent, TN15 0LL	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Seal - St Lawrence ward	333 (of which, postal voters: 53)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BQ Underriver	At or near Underriver Village Hall, Carters Hill, Underriver, Kent, TN15 0SB	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Seal - Underriver ward	267 (of which, postal voters: 48)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CD Wildernesse	At or near Church Hall, St. John The Baptist Church, Quakers Hall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3NU	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Wildernesse ward	336 (of which, postal voters: 79)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CE Sevenoaks Weald	At or near Weald Memorial Hall, Long Barn Road, Sevenoaks Weald, Kent, TN14 6PT	Sevenoaks Rural South	Sevenoaks Weald parish	923 (of which, postal voters: 137)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks					
Ward : Sevenoaks Eastern					
BV Hillingdon	At or near Church Hall, St. John The Baptist Church, Quakers Hall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3NU	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Eastern ward	1297 (of which, postal voters: 221)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BW Holly Bush	At or near Church Hall, St. John The Baptist Church, Quakers Hall Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3NU	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Eastern ward	1747 (of which, postal voters: 309)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Sevenoaks Kippington					
BX Kippington North	At or near Christ Church United Reform Church, Littlecourt Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 2JG	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Kippington ward	1176 (of which, postal voters: 222)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BY Kippington South	At or near The Kippington Centre, Kippington Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 2LL	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Kippington ward	1096 (of which, postal voters: 218)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CA Sevenoaks Common	At or near Solefield School, Solefields Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1PH	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Kippington ward	1468 (of which, postal voters: 287)	The venue is accessible via a small step, for which the (A)RO should provide a temporary ramp to ensure access for disabled voters.
Ward : Sevenoaks Northern					
BR Bat & Ball	CHANGE At or near Bat & Ball Station, Bat and Ball Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 5AP	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Northern ward	788 (of which, postal voters: 88)	The proposed polling place is suitable and accessible.
BS Bradbourne	At or near Sevenoaks Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3QG	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Northern ward	1226 (of which, postal voters: 218)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BT Greatness	At or near Sevenoaks Town Football Club Pavilion, Greatness Playing Fields, Mill Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN14 5BU	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Northern ward	1222 (of which, postal voters: 135)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks**Ward : Sevenoaks Town & St Johns**

BZ	Lower St. John's Recommended minor change of polling district boundary.	At or near Sevenoaks Town Council Offices, Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3QG	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - St John's ward	910 (of which, postal voters: 138)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible. We propose to move one property from BZ to CC to match the other properties on the street.
CC	Upper St. John's Recommended minor change of polling district boundary.	At or near United Reformed Church, St Johns Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 3LW	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - St John's ward	1296 (of which, postal voters: 262)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible. We propose to move one property from BZ to CC to match the other properties on the street.
BU	High Street	At or near Stag Community Arts Centre, London Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1ZZ	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Town ward	1399 (of which, postal voters: 289)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CB	Tubs Hill	At or near St. Luke's Church Hall, St. Lukes Church, Eardley Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN13 1XT	Sevenoaks Town	Sevenoaks - Town ward	1377 (of which, postal voters: 225)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Ward : Swanley Christchurch & Swanley Village

CK	Christ Church	At or near Christ Church Centre, Kingswood Avenue, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8AN	Swanley	Swanley - Christchurch ward	2068 (of which, postal voters: 228)	The entrance into the building is step-free, although there are steps down into the hall in which the polling station must be placed. These steps are steep and there is no step-free alternative access. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and provides an accessible polling booth in the lobby area at the top of the steps to enable electors to be able to vote. There are no suitable alternatives available in this area.
CL	High Firs	At or near High Firs County Primary School, Court Crescent, Swanley, Kent, BR8 8NR	Swanley	Swanley - Christchurch ward	2265 (of which, postal voters: 284)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible, using a ramp available at the venue.
CO	Swanley Village	At or near The Lamb Inn, Swanley Village Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7NN	Sevenoaks North & Darent Valley	Swanley - Swanley Village ward	343 (of which, postal voters: 55)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Ward : Swanley St Mary's

CM	St. Mary's	At or near Swanley Youth Centre, St Mary's Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU	Swanley	Swanley - St Mary's ward	3262 (of which, postal voters: 367)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
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Ward : Swanley White Oak

CN	Swanley Lane	At or near ACF Centre, Swanley Lane, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7JQ	Swanley	Swanley - White Oak ward	1620 (of which, postal voters: 223)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible, although the car park is gravelled and fairly rough access.
CP	White Oak	At or near White Oak Indoor Bowls Centre (Captain's Room), Garrolds Close, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BF	Swanley	Swanley - White Oak ward	3184 (of which, postal voters: 406)	The venue is accessible via a small step, for which the (A)RO provides a temporary ramp to ensure access for disabled voters.

Parliamentary Constituency : Sevenoaks**Ward : Westerham & Crockham Hill**

CQ	Crockham Hill	At or near Crockham Hill Village Hall, Main Road, Crockham Hill, Kent, TN8 6RP	Sevenoaks West	Westerham - Crockham Hill ward	587 (of which, postal voters: 132)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
CR	Westerham	At or near Westerham Village Hall, Quebec Avenue, Westerham, Kent, TN16 1BJ	Sevenoaks West	Westerham - Westerham ward	2878 (of which, postal voters: 346)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

* Note that all polling districts that are currently within the Sevenoaks Parliamentary Constituency will remain in the Sevenoaks Parliamentary Constituency if the changes to the constituency boundaries as proposed by the Boundary Commission for England take effect.

Parliamentary Constituency : Dartford**Ward : Hartley & Hodsoil Street**

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
AB Hodsoil Street & Ridley	At or near Hodsoil Street And Ridley Village Hall, Greenfields, Hodsoil Street, Kent, TN15 7LE	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Ash-cum-Ridley - Hodsoil Street and Ridley ward	415 (of which, postal voters: 56)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AZ Hartley North	At or near Scout Hut, Larkwell Lane, Hartley, Longfield, Kent, DA3 7EH	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Hartley parish	2267 (of which, postal voters: 372)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BA Hartley South	At or near All Saints Church Hall, Ash Road, Hartley, Kent, DA3 8EL	Sevenoaks Rural North East	Hartley parish	2161 (of which, postal voters: 358)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

* Note that these three polling districts are currently within the Dartford Parliamentary Constituency; if the changes to the constituency boundaries as proposed by the Boundary Commission for England take effect, these three polling districts will be part of the Gravesham Parliamentary Constituency.

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
Parliamentary Constituency : Tonbridge & Malling					
Ward : Cowden & Hever					
AM Cowden	At or near Cowden Memorial Hall, Chantlers Mead, Cowden, Kent, TN8 7HU	Sevenoaks Rural South	Cowden parish	639 (of which, postal voters: 110)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible, using a mobile ramp stored at the venue.
BB Four Elms	At or near Four Elms Village Hall, Ide Hill Road, Four Elms, Kent, TN8 6NS	Sevenoaks Rural South	Hever - Four Elms ward	480 (of which, postal voters: 60)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BC Hever	At or near Hever Village Hall, Hever Road, Hever, Kent, TN8 7NH	Sevenoaks Rural South	Hever - Hever ward	521 (of which, postal voters: 86)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible, using a mobile ramp stored at the venue.
Ward : Edenbridge North & East					
AP Marlpit Hill	At or near St. Paulinus Church Centre, Hillcrest Road, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 6JS	Sevenoaks Rural South	Edenbridge - Edenbridge North & East ward	1542 (of which, postal voters: 211)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AS Spitals Cross	At or near The Eden Centre, Four Elms Road, Edenbridge Kent, TN8 6BY	Sevenoaks Rural South	Edenbridge - Edenbridge North & East ward	1241 (of which, postal voters: 122)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AU Town	Edenbridge WI Hall, Station Road, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5LX	Sevenoaks Rural South	Edenbridge - Edenbridge North & East ward	929 (of which, postal voters: 121)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Edenbridge South & West					
AQ Marsh Green	At or near St John's United Reformed Church, Marsh Green Road, Marsh Green, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5QR	Sevenoaks Rural South	Edenbridge - Edenbridge South & West ward	360 (of which, postal voters: 48)	Access to the venue is not ideal, with steps into the building. However no suitable alternatives exist in this area (the one other venue - the Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses - is not available for use as a polling station), and it is not possible to place a temporary ramp due to the height of the steps. Given the small number of electors allocated to this station and the lack of suitable alternatives, there is a requirement to continue to use this venue as a polling place. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote.
AR Pound Green	At or near Edenbridge Rugby Football Club, The Pavilion, Recreation Ground, Coomb Field, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5HZ	Sevenoaks Rural South	Edenbridge - Edenbridge South & West ward	1062 (of which, postal voters: 125)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
AT Stangrove & South End	At or near The Scout Hut, Station Road, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5HP	Sevenoaks Rural South	Edenbridge - Edenbridge South & West ward	1793 (of which, postal voters: 225)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
Ward : Leigh & Chiddingstone Causeway					
AJ Chiddingstone Causeway	At or near Chiddingstone Causeway Village Hall, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway, Kent, TN11 8JN	Sevenoaks Rural South	Chiddingstone - Chiddingstone Causeway ward	325 (of which, postal voters: 49)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
BJ Leigh	At or near Leigh Village Hall, High Street, Leigh, Kent, TN11 8RL	Sevenoaks Rural South	Leigh parish	1516 (of which, postal voters: 215)	The venue is accessible via a small step, for which the (A)RO should provide a temporary ramp to ensure access for disabled voters.

Appendix C

Polling district	Final recommendation: polling place	County division	Parish	Total electorate	Review of access
Parliamentary Constituency : Tonbridge & Malling					
Ward : Penshurst, Fordcombe & Chiddingstone					
AI Bough Beech	At or near The Wheatsheaf, Hever Road, Bough Beech, Kent, TN8 7NU	Sevenoaks Rural South	Chiddingstone - Chiddingstone ward	255 (of which, postal voters: 27)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible, using a mobile ramp stored at the venue.
AK Chiddingstone Hoath	At or near The Rock Inn, Hoath Corner, Chiddingstone Hoath, Kent, TN8 7BS	Sevenoaks Rural South	Chiddingstone - Chiddingstone ward	180 (of which, postal voters: 19)	The current polling place is to one end of the polling district, but the majority of electors are located in this area. Access to the venue is not ideal, with steps into the building. However no suitable alternatives exist in this rural location. It is not possible to place a temporary ramp, as doing so would cause a dangerous obstruction for other users of the venue and block access in the area. Given the small number of electors allocated to this station and the lack of suitable alternatives, there is a requirement to continue to use this venue as a polling place. The (A)RO will ensure the staff are trained with regards accessibility and able to support electors who may need their additional support at an election in order to be able to vote.
AL Chiddingstone Village	At or near Chiddingstone C of E Primary School, The Village, Chiddingstone, Kent, TN8 7AH	Sevenoaks Rural South	Chiddingstone - Chiddingstone ward	197 (of which, postal voters: 40)	The venue is accessible via a small step, for which the (A)RO should provide a temporary ramp to ensure access for disabled voters. The venue gets particularly busy at the start and end of the school day. Whilst we undertake to minimise the use of schools as polling station venues, there are no suitable alternatives in this case.
BL Fordcombe	At or near Fordcombe Village Hall, The Green, Fordcombe, Kent, TN3 0RT. For the duration of building works at this site, At or near Fordcome Church of England Primary School, The Green, Tunbridge Wells, TN3 0RY	Sevenoaks Rural South	Penshurst - Fordcombe ward	556 (of which, postal voters: 92)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.
BM Penshurst	At or near Penshurst Village Hall, High Street, Penshurst, Kent, TN11 8BP	Sevenoaks Rural South	Penshurst - Penshurst ward	768 (of which, postal voters: 136)	The current polling place is suitable and accessible.

* Note that all polling districts that are currently within the Tonbridge & Malling Parliamentary Constituency will remain in the Tonbridge Parliamentary Constituency if the changes to the constituency boundaries as proposed by the Boundary Commission for England take effect.

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REPORT OF THE 'CHAIRMAN ROLE' WORKING GROUP

Governance Committee - 5 November 2019

Report of	Chief Officer Customer and Resources Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Status	For consideration
Key Decision	No

Executive Summary: This item is for the Committee to receive the report of the Members working group on the roles of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council.

Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Fleming
Contact Officer	Martin Goodman, Ext. 7245

Recommendation to Governance Committee: That

- (a) the report of the Member working group and its recommendations be noted;
- (b) the recommendations of the Member working group be further recommended to Council for adoption but only subject to any necessary growth item being approved through the formal budget-making process;
- (c) Any recommendations for growth be referred to the next meeting of the Finance Advisory Committee for consideration.

Reason for recommendation: To progress the recommendations of the Member working group.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Chairman's role is defined in Part 2 to the Constitution. This sets out that the Chairman of the Council will carry out the ceremonial duties of the Council attending such civic and ceremonial functions as the Council and/or s/he determines appropriate.
- 2 The Chairman is the "first resident" of the District and takes precedence over others present at any function (except for the Sovereign or representative of the Sovereign). The Chairman is also responsible for Chairing Council meetings.

Agenda Item 5

- 3 The role of the Chairman of the Council was significantly reduced by Members during the 2011/12 budgeting process, resulting in a saving of £68,000 per year (SCIA 39). At that time Members voted for a major reduction in Chairman's activities with the ceasing of all civic events and the deletion of the Chairman's administrative support role.
- 4 It was understood by Members at the time that this would lead to a much reduced profile for the District's Chairman except for attendance at events at no cost. At the time, Members were reminded that a small Chairman's transport fund would remain available and could be used until it was exhausted, although it was noted that many former Chairmen had driven themselves to most events. Members also noted that the Chairman and Vice Chairman would still receive significant allowances they could spend as they wished to support their roles.

The Chairman

- 5 The Chairman is invited to a wide range of events both inside and outside the District. A large number of these are social in nature and a good number involve significant travel implications. There are at present no constitutional provisions limiting the scope of attendance at such events and it is unclear which events are supported by the Council's resources. There is no clarity on permissible travel expenses, for example by taxi, although there is a limited budget from which such claims may be paid.
- 6 Members will be aware that there is at present no secretarial or dedicated administrative support for the Chairman. Officers of Democratic Services offer limited assistance by way of diary and event management over and above their normal duties.

The Member working group

- 7 Members will recall that at the last meeting of the Governance Committee Members decided to form a working group to define the role of the Chairman and Vice Chairman. The intention was clarify what the Chairman's allowance was intended to cover and any travel expenses which may legitimately be claimed. The working group was set up in the understanding that any growth item would need to be considered through the budget setting process.
- 8 The working group was still producing its report at the time of publication. This will be made public when it is available.

Key Implications

Financial

Greater administrative support than is currently made available to the Chairman will need to be budgeted as a growth item. It is not possible to widen the scope of Officer support, or to provide greater support for travel expenses, without a growth item.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

No relevant legal implications or Risk Assessment.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

This report proposes a Member working group and makes no recommendations as to outcome.

Appendices Report of the Working Group - To follow

Background Paper None

Jim Carrington-West
Chief Officer Corporate & Resources

Martin Goodman
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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Governance Committee Work Plan 2019/20 (as at 08/10/19)

5 November 2019	4 February 2020	Summer 2020	Autumn 2020
Report back from the working group on Chairman Role Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations			

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