

SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Rob Walker – Acting Returning Officer

To: South Holland District Council Wednesday, 20 January 2021

(Author: Rhonda Booth, Deputy Acting Returning Officer)

Subject Changes to Polling Places for Polling Districts CRD2 and SMK2

Purpose: To agree the changes to the polling places for Polling Districts CRD2 and SMK2.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That Council agree to designate the Snowden Pavillion in Crowland as the Polling Place for Polling District CRD2.
- 2) That Council agree to designate Monkshouse Scout Hut, Spalding as the Polling Place for Polling District SMK2.
- 3) To delegate authority to the (Acting) Returning Officer, Rob Walker in consultation with the relevant Ward Members to approve any amendments to polling places prior to the next compulsory review.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a requirement for local authorities to undertake a review of their Parliamentary polling districts and polling places every 4 years. Subsequent amendments to this legislation by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 now means that all local authorities must undertake a review at least every 5 years. The last review was undertaken and agreed by Council on 22 January 2020. Amendments can be made to Polling Places outside of these compulsory reviews when required.
- 1.2 A 'Polling Place' is the area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer and is the responsibility of the Council to designate.
- 1.3 A 'Polling Station' is the area within the Polling Place where voting takes place, and are the responsibility of the Returning Officer to designate.
- 1.4 It has become necessary to bring this report to council as notice was given that the Royal British Legion Hall in Crowland was closing and an alternative Polling Place would need to be identified. An alternative suitable venue was unable to be located in the Polling District. The Snowden Pavilion has been identified as a suitable replacement in an adjoining Polling District within the Crowland District Ward. The relevant Ward members have been advised of the recommended change.

1.5 To avoid disruption to children's education the Returning Officer avoids using schools as polling stations where possible. An alternative premises has been identified and therefore we are proposing to move the current venue from Monkshouse Primary School to Monkshouse Scout Hall, Spalding. The relevant Ward members have been advised of the recommended change.

1.6 In carrying out this review, the Council has sought to ensure that :

- all the electors in the area have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- the changes to both polling places are as far as reasonable and practicable accessible to electors who have a disability
- The polling place is within the area of the polling district, unless circumstances make it necessary to designate somewhere else.

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 To approve the two changes to the Polling Places.

2.2 To approve alternative arrangements to the Polling Places.

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 To comply with the legislative requirements and to ensure suitable facilities are in place for voters.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 To ensure that Compliance with legislative requirements.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.1 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.1.1 As part of the review the Returning Officer has sought to ensure that all the electors in the area have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. Also, to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, both polling places are accessible to electors who have a disability and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of those with a disability.

5.2 **Financial**

5.2.1 No additional financial resources as the two polling places are replacements

5.3 Stakeholders / Constitution / Timescales

5.3.1 Changes to Polling Stations will be highlighted on elector's poll cards and on the council website.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 Crowland and Deeping St Nicholas (Crowland West Ward) and Spalding Monkshouse.

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 None.

Background papers:- n/a

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Key Decision: N

Exempt Decision: N

This report refers to a Mandatory Service