

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

25 January 2023

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Delegated

1 AMENDMENT TO FINAL PROPOSALS FOR REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

Following agreement of the final proposals of the Ward Boundaries and Polling Districts at the General Purposes Meeting of 12 September 2022, on making the technical changes in the Elections software, it brought to light some amendments required for 3 parish wards polling districts.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Review of Ward Boundaries and Polling District/Places Boundaries

1.2 Final Polling Districts/Places

1.2.1 At **Annexe 1** is a list of the new wards and the amended final proposed Polling Districts and Polling Places that are within each Polling District.

1.2.2 At **Annexe 2** is the final proposed Polling Districts and Polling Places map. For clarity, the red lines are the new ward boundaries, the blue lines are the proposed polling district boundaries, and the green lines are parish boundaries.

1.2.3 The main changes are as follows: -

- New Polling District called Walderslade Woods
- New Polling District called Aylesford Station.
- New Polling District called Snodland Central

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) requires borough councils to undertake reviews of polling districts and polling places at least every four years and following a Local Government Boundary Review, where warding arrangements are changed.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The cost of this review will be met from existing budgets. Failure to correctly undertake this review could impose considerable financial penalties on the (Acting) Returning Officers due to problems at elections; this would trigger a series of events bringing cost and reputational damage to the Council.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 The requirements of electors are essential and a failure to correctly undertake this review could result in disenfranchising electors or making it more difficult for them to vote.
- 1.5.2 Any failure in the process or consideration of comments made during the consultation stage could result in the Electoral Commission over-ruling the decisions of the Council.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 The selection of polling places takes into account the needs of electors with disabilities and as far as is reasonably practicable, efforts are made to ensure all eligible electors are able to access polling stations. Risk assessments of all polling places are being undertaken, and this includes a series of access questions. Presiding Officers at polling stations also provide feed-back on accessibility of polling stations at elections. There are no additional polling buildings required as a result of these changes.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 To endorse the amendments to the final proposals, as set out in paragraph 1.2.3 and Annexe 1.

Background papers:

contact: Daune Ashdown

Annexe 1 & 2

Julie Beilby
Electoral Registration Officer
Chief Executive