

GOVERNANCE AND ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Meeting - 26 June 2018

Present: P Hogan (Chairman)

Dr W Matthews, D Anthony, J Lowen-Cooper, D Pepler and D Smith

25. MINUTES

The minutes of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee meetings held on 7 March and 16 May 2018 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

27. POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW

On 19 July 2017 the Council commenced a voluntary review of polling district and polling places. This was prompted by comments received after the UK Parliamentary General Election on 8 June 2017 relating to some of the buildings currently used as a polling station.

Comments and submissions on all polling districts and polling places in South Bucks District were invited from 19 July 2017 to 13 March 2018. Following consideration of those comments and submissions a report was published on 18 May 2018 proposing a change to one polling place. Comments and submissions were then invited on the proposals.

Members were asked to consider the proposal in the report to re-designate St Andrews United Reformed Church as the polling place for the polling district Iver Richings Park. This was considered a suitable building for use as a polling station and would replace the existing polling place, St Leonards Church Hall, which was used daily by Iver Village Infant School nursery and closed when polling took place. During the discussion it was felt that St Andrews United Reformed Church provided improved accessibility over the current building although positioned in a less central location.

The report also proposed retaining The Orchards Residential Park as the polling place for The Orchards Polling District. This was considered the most suitable venue for the polling district. A comment had been received from polling staff regarding the suitability of the building; however a review of the building had confirmed that

accessibility and access were suitable. There were limited alternative venues in the locality. It was noted that Harvey Memorial Hall had previously been used as an alternative venue; however lack of available public transport made this venue less convenient for some electors. Members supported the proposal to use The Orchards Residential Park as this was considered the most suitable location for electors in that polling district.

RESOLVED:

That St Andrews United Reformed Church be designated the polling place for the polling district (SIR) Iver Richings Park.

28. SBDC PARISH COUNCILS - COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

The Council received correspondence from Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal Parish Councils requesting that the electoral arrangements for their respective parish be changed. The requests related to council size (number of councillors) and warding arrangements.

A community governance review was the relevant mechanism for reviewing and proposing any changes to parish electoral arrangements. The purpose of a review was to secure an arrangement which would bring about improved community engagement, better local democracy and result in more effective and convenient delivery of local services. South Bucks District Council was the responsible authority for conducting the review.

The Committee were asked to decide whether or not to review the electoral arrangements of the parishes that had made requests.

During the discussion Members noted the statutory provisions and had regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Members considered whether the timing of a review was appropriate in light of the anticipated announcement from the Secretary of State regarding local government reorganisation in Buckinghamshire. There was a suggestion that the review be deferred pending the Secretary of State's decision. Members felt however that the Council should continue to carry out its functions and not delay a decision due to uncertainty surrounding local government reorganisation, particularly as one parish council had requested that the review conclude in time to take effect before the district and parish elections due to take place in May 2019.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the correspondence received from Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal Parish Councils be noted.**

- 2. That the Council conducts a Community Governance Review on the electoral arrangements for Denham, Stoke Poges and Farnham Royal Parish Councils.**
- 3. That authority to agree the Terms of Reference of the Community Governance Review, referred to in resolution 2, be delegated to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Chairman of the Governance and Electoral Arrangements Committee.**

The meeting terminated at 6.46 pm