



COUNCIL

25 JANUARY 2023



17 January 2023

Unless a majority of the Council resolve to extend the meeting before 10.00 pm it will automatically end at 10.00 pm in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.2.

NOTE: There will be limited public access to observe the meeting. Those wishing to do so must reserve a seat by completing a [Registration Form](#) by 4pm on the working day prior to the meeting. Access is also available via a live stream through the [Mid Sussex District Council's YouTube channel](#).

To all Members of the Council,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL** to be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** on **WEDNESDAY, 25TH JANUARY, 2023 at 7.00 pm** to transact the following business:

Yours sincerely,

KATHRYN HALL
Chief Executive

Pages

1. Opening Prayer.
2. To receive questions from members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 9.
3. To confirm Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 7 December 2022. **5 - 12**
4. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda.
5. To consider any items that the Chairman of the Council agrees to take as urgent business.
6. Chairman's Announcements.
7. Polling Districts and Polling Places For 2023. **13 - 18**

Working together for a better Mid Sussex

8. Appointment of Representatives to the Independent Remuneration Panel from 1st July 2023. 19 - 22
9. To receive the Leader's Report.
10. Report of Cabinet Members, including questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10.1
11. Questions from Members pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10.2

To: **Members of Council:** Councillors M Belsey (Chairman), P Coote (Vice-Chair), K Adams, G Allen, J Ash-Edwards, R Bates, J Belsey, A Bennett, L Bennett, A Boutrup, P Bradbury, P Brown, H Brunsdon, R Cartwright, P Chapman, R Clarke, E Coe-Gunnell White, M Cornish, R Cromie, J Dabell, R de Mierre, B Dempsey, J Edwards, S Ellis, R Eggleston, A Eves, B Forbes, L Gibbs, I Gibson, S Hatton, J Henwood, S Hicks, S Hillier, T Hussain, R Jackson, J Knight, C Laband, Andrew Lea, Anthea Lea, G Marsh, J Mockford, A Peacock, C Phillips, M Pulfer, R Salisbury, S Smith, A Sparasci, L Stockwell, D Sweatman, C Trumble, N Walker, R Webb, N Webster and R Whittaker

Minutes of a meeting of Council held on 07 December 2022 from 7.00 pm

Present: M Belsey (Chairman)
P Coote (Vice-Chair)

K Adams	B Dempsey	Andrew Lea
G Allen	S Ellis	Anthea Lea
J Ash-Edwards	R Eggleston	G Marsh
R Bates	A Eves	C Phillips
J Belsey	B Forbes	M Pulfer
A Bennett	I Gibson	S Smith
P Brown	S Hatton	A Sparasci
R Cartwright	S Hicks	D Sweatman
P Chapman	S Hillier	C Trumble
R Clarke	T Hussain	N Walker
M Cornish	R Jackson	R Webb
R Cromie	J Knight	N Webster
R de Mierre	C Laband	R Whittaker

Absent: Councillors L Bennett, A Boutrup, P Bradbury, H Brunsdon, E Coe-Gunnell White, J Dabell, J Edwards, L Gibbs, J Henwood, J Mockford, A Peacock, R Salisbury and L Stockwell

The Council held a one-minute silence in remembrance of Edward Belsey, and another in remembrance of Pru Moore. The Leader of the Council paid tribute to both, commending their significant public service.

1. OPENING PRAYER.

The opening prayer was read by the Vice-Chairman.

2. TO RECEIVE QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 9.

Question from Ms de Lande Long (read by the Chairman in her absence).

At the Council meeting on November 2, Councillor Hillier referred to the work being done by the Sussex Local Nature Partnership on what will be needed for local nature recovery in this District. How quickly will this work be factored in to planning agreements with regard to the potential development areas that are outlined in the Draft District Plan? How will the Council ensure that the opportunity for preserving or creating essential wildlife corridors is not missed in relation to these sites?

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Net Zero

Thank you for your question. I agree with you that local nature recovery is important, and we must take a holistic approach. There are many aspects which are key to delivering nature recovery such as agreeing management and protection as part of determining planning applications and agreeing appropriate strategies for the management of any Council owned land which forms part of the network. The emerging draft District Plan sets out a range of new and updated policies to help us achieve improvements to biodiversity. New policies include a requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain and the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure including local nature recovery networks.

The weight we can give to emerging planning policies when considering planning applications is set out in legislation. Unfortunately, in the early stages of plan making only limited weight can be given to these policies but as the plan nears adoption, this begins to improve. At this stage of our plan making, we can only encourage developers to take these new policy requirements into account. However, once the new District Plan is adopted, all planning applications will be assessed against the updated policies – this would also include any site allocated in the Site Allocations DPD applying for permission after the District Plan is adopted.

Furthermore, as you know the Council has agreed a Sustainable Economy Strategy which sets a programme over the next three years to achieve our vision to balance social well-being, environmental protection, and sustainable economic growth. This Strategy sets out Mid Sussex District Council's commitment to "improve, manage and promote biodiversity and nature recovery" and there are a range of actions identified to help deliver this which go beyond the policies in the District Plan such as the commitment to refresh the Council's management Plans for our Countryside Sites to ensure that they deliver maximum benefit in terms of biodiversity and environmental impact.

Work on obtaining and mapping habitat data across the district is currently in progress and involves obtaining information from a wide range of sources such as the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre and from ecology studies. This work is being informed by best practice which is shared between the partner authorities within the Sussex Nature Partnership, of which Mid Sussex is a member. Once the data has been collated and mapped, it will inform a nature recovery network for Mid Sussex which itself will inform an emerging Local Nature Recovery strategy for Sussex, and which will include existing and potential wildlife corridors.

So, work on the Recovery Strategy will progress through the early part of 2023, with the intention to inform the next iteration of the District Plan Review (at the Regulation 19 stage).

Finally, and I am proud to say, the draft District Plan proposes Biodiversity Net Gain of 10% on all sites (in line with the requirements set out within the Environment Act) However, we will be seeking 20% on the three proposed 'significant sites' (West of Burgess Hill, Sayers Common and Crabbet Park).

I hope that this answers your question and gives you comfort that this authority is committed to, and on top of, its environmental obligations.

3. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 2 NOVEMBER 2022.

The Chairman noted an update provided by a Member on the fact that he left the previous meeting.

The minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 November 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. 39 Members voted in favour, with 2 abstentions.

4. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor Hillier declared an interest as a West Sussex County Councillor in relation to items mentioned in his Cabinet Member Report.

Councillor Webster declared an interest as an employee with the NHS in relation to items mentioned in his Cabinet Member Report.

Councillor Gibson declared an interest as a West Sussex County Councillor in relation to his questions during the Leaders Report.

5. TO CONSIDER ANY ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT BUSINESS.

None.

6. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Chairman highlighted two Chairman's events which took place in November and December.

7. REVIEW OF MEMBER'S ALLOWANCES FOR 2023/24.

Neil Gershon, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel, introduced the report, highlighting that the primary recommendation is an increase of the basic allowance to £5700, keeping it within the average compared with other Local Authorities in the area.

Councillor Ash-Edwards moved the item with the recommendations as set out below. This was seconded by Councillor Webster.

That Council:

1. Thanks the Independent Remuneration Panel for its work and recommendations;
2. Agrees that the scheme of members' allowances for the new Council term should be decided following the work of the Constitution Review Group, so that any constitutional changes can be reflected in the scheme of members' allowances;
3. Agrees that the Independent Remuneration Panel's report should be considered at the first available Council meeting after a decision has been made on the Constitution Review;

4. Agrees the principle that the overall budget for members' allowances should not increase at the current time.

Discussion was held on the mechanism for reviewing the allowances following the Constitution review.

The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations as set out above which were approved with 40 in favour and 1 abstention.

RESOLVED

The Council:

1. Thanked the Independent Remuneration Panel for its work and recommendations;
2. Agreed that the scheme of members' allowances for the new Council term should be decided following the work of the Constitution Review Group, so that any constitutional changes can be reflected in the scheme of members' allowances;
3. Agreed that the Independent Remuneration Panel's report should be considered at the first available Council meeting after a decision has been made on the Constitution Review;
4. Agreed the principle that the overall budget for members' allowances should not increase at the current time.

8. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2023-24.

Councillor Ash-Edwards moved the item, noting that it is a formal report received in December each year to set the taxbase ahead of the budget setting process. The item was seconded by Councillor J Belsey.

There were no Members wishing to speak. The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations as set out in the report, which were approved unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed that pursuant to the Assistant Director Corporate Resources' report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2003, the amounts calculated by Mid Sussex District Council as its tax base for the whole area for the year 2023/24 shall be £64,664.1 and for each parish area for the year 2023/24 shall be:

Albourne	316.2
Ansty & Staplefield	1,416.5
Ardingly	763.0
Ashurst Wood	770.4
Balcombe	872.3
Bolney	664.4
Burgess Hill	12,623.9
Cuckfield	1,690.9
East Grinstead	11,836.9
Fulking	143.3
Hassocks	3,678.9

Haywards Heath	12,474.0
Horsted Keynes	720.0
Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common	3,281.3
Lindfield	2,848.9
Lindfield Rural	1,674.6
Newtimber	44.6
Poynings	131.8
Pyecombe	141.0
Slaugham	1,781.4
Turners Hill	664.4
Twineham	159.1
West Hoathly	961.7
Worth	5,004.6

9. STATEMENT OF GAMBLING POLICY.

Councillor Anthea Lea moved the item, noting that Councillors are required to review the policy every 3 years. This review has been endorsed by the Scrutiny Committee for Community, Leisure and Parking in September 2022, and has been out to public consultation. The item was seconded by Councillor Webster.

There were no Members wishing to speak. The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation as set out in the report, which was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council approved the Statement of Principles (Gambling Act) Policy at Appendix 1 for implementation on 1st January 2023.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2022.

Councillor Ash-Edwards moved the item, noting that current inflationary picture is having a significant effect on the Council's budget. This has been helped slightly by the positive impact from improved treasury management income but may not be the case going forward. The item was seconded by Councillor J Belsey.

There were no Members wishing to speak. The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendations as set out in the report which were approved unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council approved:

- (i) that £11,510 received from DLUHC in respect of Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme grant be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 27 of the Cabinet report;
- (ii) that £82,500 received from the Home Office in respect of Dispersal of Asylum Seekers grant be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 28 of the Cabinet report;
- (iii) that £5,200 received from DLUHC in respect of new burdens grant for Temporary Pavement Licencing. be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 29 of the Cabinet report;

- (iv) that £280,465 received from UK Health Security Agency in respect of Track and Trace Self Isolation Administration grant be transferred to Specific Reserves as detailed in paragraph 30 of the Cabinet report;
- (v) that £61,542 received from DLUHC for New Burdens Council Tax Rebate scheme be transferred to Specific Reserve as detailed in paragraph 31 of the Cabinet report;
- (vi) the variations to the Capital Programme contained in Table 4 of the Cabinet report in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure rule B3;
- (vii) to approve the use of the projected increase of £1,194,000 for Treasury Management income to finance the revenue budget, reducing the projected revenue overspend year end position to £41,000.

11. APPOINTMENT OF MONITORING OFFICER.

The Chairman welcomed Rachel Jarvis, Assistant Director of Corporate Resources and Section 151 Officer, and Kevin Toogood, Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services. Kevin Toogood left the meeting at 7.39pm prior to consideration on this item.

Councillor Ash-Edwards moved the item noting that it seeks to confirm Kevin Toogood as Monitoring Officer from 16th January 2023. The item was seconded by Councillor Webster.

There were no Members wishing to speak. The Chairman took Members to a vote on the recommendation as set out in the report, which was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED

Council agreed the designation of Kevin Toogood as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 16th January 2023

Kevin Toogood returned to the meeting at 7.42pm

12. TO RECEIVE THE LEADER'S REPORT

The Council received the Leader's update. In response to a few questions on the Government's proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), he acknowledged the need to strike the right balance on any decisions made, engage with Towns and Parishes, and have an evidence-based approach on how to proceed following the Government's NPPF consultation and the Council's consultation on the District Plan Review. Regarding target numbers he reiterated that the Council will need to explore the evidence base for the targets to determine the numbers required for the district, acknowledging the importance of ensuring appropriate affordable housing numbers. He also confirmed that it is not possible to split the Policy and Site Allocation elements at a Regulation 19 review as a complete plan must be presented.

With regards to questions related to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, he confirmed that details will be provided in the Member Information Service Bulletin. Regarding the bid for the Levelling Up Fund, he noted that a decision was still anticipated prior to the end of 2022.

13. REPORT OF CABINET MEMBERS, INCLUDING QUESTIONS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.1

The Council received the Deputy Leader's update.

The Council received the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth and Net Zero's update. In response to questions from Members, the Cabinet Member acknowledged the importance of continuing to provide public information in a format accessible to those without computer access. He also confirmed that Officers are providing support to local communities who wish to have help developing local economic development initiatives. The Cabinet Member agreed to provide a written report in response to a question related to the Science Park and the potential to bid for a catapult centre.

The Council received the Cabinet Member for Community's update. In response to a query regarding the NHS Integrated Care Board, he confirmed that he has attended several meetings with senior members of the Board and would like to arrange for them to provide an introductory session for Members in coming months.

The Council received the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Parking's update. In response to a Member's query, the Cabinet Member confirmed that she would be happy to be the Council's representative at the Active Haywards Heath meetings. Discussion was also held around electronic car charging points, why some may not yet be operational, and the rationale for the location of on-street chargers.

The Cabinet Member for Planning had sent apologies for the meeting and therefore no report was presented under this item.

The Council received the Cabinet Member for Housing and Customer Services' update.

In response to several Members' questions regarding Clarion Housing, the Cabinet Member requested that Members provide feedback via email ahead of a meeting scheduled with the housing provider. She also agreed to share further information on the Streetlink App. In response to a query regarding the publicity of Warm Hubs, the Cabinet Member confirmed that these will be publicised where known about, and encouraged Members share details of any hubs that they become aware of. Clarification was also given on the deadline for applications for community grant funding.

14. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 10.2

Councillor Eves and Councillor Alison Bennett withdrew their questions.

The meeting finished at 8.50 pm

Chairman

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POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES FOR 2023

REPORT OF: THE RETURNING OFFICER
Contact Officer: Terry Stanley, Head of Democratic Services & Elections
Email: terry.stanley@midsussex.gov.uk Tel: 01444 477415
Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: No
Report to: Council
25 January 2023

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out, and seeks Council's approval for, the polling places which are situated outside the district council wards for all electoral events in 2023.

Summary

2. Designation of polling districts and polling places is the responsibility of Council, last agreed by Council on 27th January 2021. The Mid Sussex polling scheme is regularly reviewed by Electoral Services, usually annually.
3. Following the Local Government Boundary Commission's (LGBCE) Electoral Review of Mid Sussex, and several Community Governance Reviews it was necessary for Electoral Services to re-design polling districts and to consider polling places to take account of the outcomes of these Reviews, which are effective 1st April 2023.
4. To satisfy a requirement to supply to Councillors the 2023 Electoral Register in December 2022, reflecting current and future wards, it has been necessary to divide some polling districts into further smaller parts for this year only. These smaller parts of primary polling districts are shown in brackets in the recommendations below. They will revert to their primary polling district letters (not bracketed) when the 2024 Electoral Register is produced.
5. The situation of polling stations within polling districts is the sole responsibility of the Returning Officer but Council must agree polling places that are situated outside of the district council ward. As is commonly the case in this District, there are insufficient suitable polling places in every district council ward: 8 of the 9 recommended polling places below have been used by us previously, the new station being required as a replacement for a previous station which was found to be unsatisfactory. The Returning Officer may make subsequent changes if any booked venues become unavailable or unsuitable prior to the 2023 local government elections.

Recommendations

6. **The polling places for all polling districts be defined as the entire District Council ward in which the polling district is situated, with the following exceptions:**
 - a) **Polling Place for Polling Districts BA and (BB) in Ashurst Wood & East Grinstead South Ward be designated Chequer Mead Arts Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead;**
 - b) **Polling Place for Polling Districts BCA and (BCD) in East Grinstead Herontye Ward be designated Chequer Mead Arts Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead;**

- c) **Polling Place for Polling District BCB and (BCC) in East Grinstead Herontye Ward be designated Chequer Mead Arts Centre, De La Warr Road, East Grinstead;**
- d) **Polling Place for Polling District BEC in East Grinstead Town Ward be designated East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead;**
- e) **Polling Place for Polling District BFA in East Grinstead Imberhorne Ward be designated Trinity Methodist Church, Lingfield Road, East Grinstead;**
- f) **Polling Place for Polling Districts BFB and (BFC, BFD, BFE) in East Grinstead Imberhorne Ward be designated Trinity Methodist Church, Lingfield Road, East Grinstead;**
- g) **Polling Place for Polling District EDB in Ardingly, Balcombe & Turners Hill Ward be designated Queens Hall, High Street, Cuckfield;**
- h) **Polling Place for Polling District GCB in Lindfield Rural & High Weald Ward be designated Lindfield Evangelical Free Church, Chaloner Road, Lindfield;**
- i) **Polling Place for Polling District HAB in Haywards Heath Franklands Ward be designated Haywards Heath Baptist Church, Sussex Road, Haywards Heath;**
- j) **Polling Place for Polling District HEA in Haywards Heath North Ward be designated Haywards Heath Methodist Church, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath;**
- k) **Polling Place for Polling District HEB in Haywards Heath North Ward be designated Dolphin Leisure Centre, Pasture Hill Road, Haywards Heath;**
- l) **Polling Place for Polling District IC in Lindfield Ward be designated Haywards Heath Methodist Church, Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath;**
- m) **Polling Place for Polling District KEB in Burgess Hill Dunstall Ward be designated St. Edward The Confessor Church, Royal George Road, Burgess Hill;**

Background

7. A statutory review of polling districts and polling places was carried out in late 2019 and its recommendations were agreed by Council on 29 January 2020.
8. Interim reviews are carried out annually by Electoral Services in each year that has scheduled large-scale elections to ensure that the assigned electorate numbers and geographical locations remain appropriate.
9. On this occasion, it was essential to design a new polling district scheme and reflect it in the 2023 Electoral Register, whilst also supplying it to Councillors for their existing wards.
10. The majority of these polling stations have been used before, however there is one new station at Kings Weald Community Centre. This is a newly built facility in Burgess Hill St. Andrews which provides a larger venue for a rapidly rising electorate at a lesser cost than the previous venue.

11. Haywards Heath United Reformed Church has become unsuitable and therefore Haywards Heath Methodist Church (Wesley Hall) has been sourced as an alternative. This venue was previously used in 2021.
12. In Ashurst Wood and East Grinstead South, following feedback from the 2021 election, an alternate venue has been proposed. This addresses issues raised by voters and stakeholders regarding the remote location and limited accessibility of the previous venue. Therefore Chequer Mead Arts Centre is now recommended as an alternative.
13. All selected polling stations are well-connected to the road network and public transport infrastructure.
14. All venues are visited and assessed against a series of suitability criteria (location, size, accessibility, secrecy, and facilities for voters and staff). Arrangements for the planned polling scheme have been discussed with Town and Parish Council and the proposed scheme was then provided to Electoral Agents in order to enable them to comment on the proposals. This consultation resulted in a further polling station being provided in West Hoathly (within the relevant ward).
15. Council is therefore asked to agree the polling districts and polling places situated outside of district wards. These polling stations are close to the respective wards. Electors who do not want to vote in-person or who envisage difficulty getting to a polling place are advised to consider applying for a postal vote; they do need to give a reason for doing so.

Definitions

16. A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a local authority into smaller parts. A UK Parliamentary constituency is made up of several polling districts, whilst an un-warded parish is normally comprised of a single polling district. Wards of Mid Sussex District Council are comprised of between one and six polling districts, depending on the parish arrangements below them. A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations are selected by the Returning Officer. A polling place within a polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across the polling district. Section 18B(4)(e) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 states that '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'. The Electoral Commission considers that polling places should be defined by designating the name of the polling place (normally a particular building or area and its environs).
17. A polling station is the room or area of the polling place in which voting is conducted. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the Returning Officer. The elections rules state that the Returning Officer decides how many polling stations are required for each polling place and they must allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as they think most convenient. However, the number of electors allocated to a particular polling station should not exceed 2,500.
18. Local authorities must comply with the following legislative requirements regarding the designation of polling districts and polling places:
 - each parish is to be a separate polling district, unless special circumstances apply

- 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
- 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)
- 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
- ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled

Roles and Responsibilities

19. The Local Authority.

Every principal local authority in Great Britain is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts and designating polling places for each polling district. The authority must review these arrangements at least once every five years and determine whether amendments are required as a result.

20. The Electoral Registration Officer.

If any amendments to polling districts are made by the local authority the Electoral Registration Officer must ensure that the Register of Electors is amended accordingly and publish a notice to that effect.

Policy Context.

21. The LGBCE is due to seek parliamentary approval for its final recommendations in the summer of 2023. A further review of polling districts and polling places will therefore be necessary in the autumn.
22. Electoral Services completed a statutory review of polling districts and polling places in 2019 in accordance with the statutory requirements. The next statutory review must be conducted in late 2024 and reported to Council in January 2025. This will invite input from all political stakeholders, registered electors, and others.

Other Options Considered

23. The LGBCE's Electoral Review of Mid Sussex, and several Community Governance Reviews necessitated that Electoral Services re-design polling districts and consider polling places to take account of the outcomes of these Reviews, which are effective 1st April 2023.
24. As set out in this report, the recommended polling places are the result of detailed consideration against the assessment criteria, and consultation with all political stakeholders.

Financial Implications

25. Any reduction in the number of polling stations would result in a decrease in the costs of venue hire and the cost of the Returning Officer's staff. However, this would likely be partially offset by an increase in the number of postal voters in some polling districts, increasing postage and processing costs. The recommendations of this report do not reduce the number of polling stations.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

26. Part of the review process is always to assess suitability of polling places for residents with accessibility needs. There are also new requirements for Voter ID and the facilities to check these in a culturally sensitive manner which have had to be taken into account in designing the scheme.

Background Papers

[The Mid Sussex \(Electoral Changes\) Order 2022](#) [LGBCE]

[The Mid Sussex District Council \(Reorganisation of Community Governance\) Order 2022](#)

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APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FROM 1ST JULY 2023

REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Contact Officer: Kevin Toogood, Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services Email: kevin.toogood@midsussex.gov.uk Tel: 01444 477050
Wards Affected: All
Key Decision No
Report to: Council
Date of meeting: 25 January 2023

Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out the Council's proposed process to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel.

Summary

2. The Council is required by law to establish a panel of at least three members, consisting of independent members of the public, to make recommendations to the Council on the allowances paid to its district councillors. Panel members are appointed for a 4-year term.

Recommendations

3. **Council is recommended to:**
 - (i) **agree the proposed approach to appoint the new Independent Remuneration Panel and;**
 - (ii) **appoint a panel of three Members (being the Leader, Cabinet Member for Community and the Leader of the largest minority party) to interview candidates and recommend three persons to form the new Independent Remuneration Panel for a 4-year term commencing 1 July 2023.**
-

Background

4. The Council is required to have an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider and advise on the level and type of allowances to be paid to Councillors. Mid Sussex District Council has had an independent remuneration panel of three people since 2001.
5. The current Panel membership is due to expire in June 2023 and to ensure that the Council is able to carry out its review of allowances and remuneration paid to district councillors, it is considered appropriate and timely to commence a recruitment process for a four-year term.
6. It is proposed that a fair and transparent recruitment process take place before the end of April 2023 to fill all three vacancies.

Recruitment Process

7. There are no particular formal qualifications required for a member of the public to be a panel member. The panelists should, however, be capable of assimilating financial and other information (for example benchmarking data against similar Districts) and formulating a methodology for making their recommendations. They must be capable of arriving at a properly evidenced conclusion on the matters before them and presenting this to the Council in a clear manner. Therefore, as a minimum we will expect candidates to possess either [A-level or equivalent] qualifications and/or appropriate work-based experience, to be assessed initially through written applications.
8. The Council will explore multiple channels for advertising, including traditional print and online methods, to ensure a wide reach to potential candidates.
9. Applications will be assessed by senior officers to ensure the requirements set out above are met. Successful candidates will be interviewed by a Member Panel, with the composition as recommended above.
10. Once the interview process is completed, the appointments will be presented to Council to approve, and the new panel members will serve a four-year term of office to 30 June 2027.
11. The Panel is then tasked to carry out their work in good time to enable it to recommend its findings to the Council in time for inclusion in the following year's budget.

Policy Context

12. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide for local authorities to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel. The Panel must consist of at least three members, but the 2003 Regulations do not specify how a local authority may go about finding members of its remuneration panel.

Financial Implications

13. There will be some costs associated with the recruitment process, but these will be minimal and within existing budgets.

Risk Management Implications

14. There are no risk management implications.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

15. The recruitment for new panel members in 2023 will be a fair and transparent process open to all eligible members of the public.

Sustainability Implications

16. None.

Other Material Implications

17. None.

Appendices

None.

Background Papers

None

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