

Governance Committee Agenda

6 November 2019 at 6.30pm

**Marconi Room, Civic Centre,
Duke Street, Chelmsford**

Membership

Councillor H. Ayres (Chair)
Councillor N.M. Walsh (Vice-Chair)

and Councillors

R.H. Ambor, K. Bentley, N.A. Dudley, D.G. Jones and I. Wright

Parish Council Representatives

**Councillor V. Chiswell (Great Baddow Parish Council
Councillor P.S. Jackson (Great Waltham Parish Council
Councillor J. Saltmarsh (Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre Parish
Council**

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City. There will also be an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. If you would like to find out more, please telephone Daniel Bird in the Democracy

Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606523 email

Daniel.bird@chelmsford.gov.uk, call in at the Civic Centre, or write to the address above. Council staff will also be available to offer advice in the Civic Centre for up to half an hour before the start of the meeting.

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GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**6 November 2019****AGENDA****PART I****1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE****2. MINUTES**

To receive the minutes of the Meeting held on 22 July 2019.

3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Any member of the public may ask a question or make a statement at this point in the meeting. Each person has two minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes is allotted to public questions/statements, which must be about matters for which the Committee is responsible.

The Chair may disallow a question if it is offensive, substantially the same as another question or requires disclosure of exempt or confidential information. If the question cannot be answered at the meeting a written response will be provided after the meeting.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

All Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

5. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**6. POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW****7. CONSTITUTION PART 5.6: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES/WORKERS****8. MONITORING OFFICER REPORT****9. COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS IN PUBLIC LIFE REPORT****10. WORK PROGRAMME****11. URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

PART II (EXEMPT ITEMS)

To consider whether the public (including the press) should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following agenda items on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information specified in the appropriate paragraph or paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated in the Agenda item.

12. INDEPENDENT PERSON RECRUITMENT

Category: Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (Information relating to any individual)

Public interest statement: It is not in the public interest to disclose the content of this report because the information in it concerns the interests and circumstances of an individual who has an expectation that such information would not normally be released to the public. To do otherwise would establish a precedent for the future treatment of personal information.

MINUTES

of the meeting of the

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

on 22 July 2019 at 2 p.m.

Present:

Councillor H. Ayres (Chair)

Councillors R.H. Ambor, K. Bentley, N.A. Dudley, D.G. Jones, N.M Walsh and I. Wright

Also in Attendance –

Parish Councillors, V. Chiswell and J. Saltmarsh

Designated Independent Person:

Mrs. C. Gosling

1. **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Councillor Jackson and the complainant, Parish Councillor Fleming. No substitutions were made.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 18 June 2019 were signed as a correct record by the Chair.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

All members were reminded to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or other registerable interests where appropriate in any of the items of business on the meeting's agenda.

4. **Chair's Announcements**

No announcements were made.

5. **Standards Complaint**

The Committee considered a report asking them to determine the complaints made against Councillor Hart by way of a hearing, pursuant to the procedure detailed at Part 5.1.2 Annex 5 of the Constitution.

The Chair explained the processes under the hearing procedure at Part 5.1.2 Annex 5 of the Constitution. The Committee was informed that after hearing the necessary information the Committee would consider the information in private and determine whether the code had been breached. The Monitoring Officer highlighted to the Committee that after receiving the external investigators report it was agreed that some elements of the complaint would not be considered. It was confirmed and detailed to those present on the presentation screen, that the following elements of the complaint were to be considered;

- *1 – Whether Councillor Hart properly registered his position as a trustee of the two charities associated with Bell Field, his ownership of the village hall and its car park, his title of the “Lordship of the Manor of Rettendon” in his register of Members Interests. It is noted that Councillor Hart’s register of interests was updated during the investigation to reflect these interests and that the form Councillor Hart was invited to complete was not fit for purpose.*
- *4 – Whether Councillor Hart failed to declare the appropriate interest when discussing matters related to the Trust at a Parish Council meeting on 28 November 2017.*
- *6b – Whether Councillor Hart threw a padlock aggressively across the table at the Parish Council meeting on 6th March 2018 and in doing so brought his office into disrepute.*
- *8 – Whether Councillor Hart failed to treat Councillor Fleming with respect by calling him a liar at Parish Council meetings on 19 December 2017 and 6 March 2018.*

At this point in the hearing, Cllr Hart was asked to confirm if he still disputed all four elements of the complaint being considered. He confirmed that he did still dispute each element of the complaint. The external investigator for the case was then invited to present his case to the Committee. He confirmed that there was clearly an underlying dispute in the background but clarified that this was not the forum to resolve those issues.

In introducing his report, Mr Oram went through the background to the complaint and detailed his views on the four elements of the complaint still being considered. For the first element, Mr Oram stated that Cllr Hart had not been aware his form was incorrect until the investigation. The Committee was informed that Cllr Hart met with the Monitoring Officer and updated the form accordingly. It was noted that he had been open and honest and there was no evidence that he had been trying to hide anything. It was also confirmed that the form issued had been incorrect and that this was a mitigating factor. However, it was still technically a breach of the code.

Mr Oram confirmed that the second element of the complaint being considered was also a breach of the code. He confirmed that the detail should have been registered and should have been declared at the meeting in question. It was noted that Cllr Hart felt everyone knew of his interest but that did not excuse the requirement to actively declare it at the meeting. It was noted that this would have made it clear to everyone present, including members of the public that Cllr Hart had an interest in the matter.

The Committee was informed by Mr Oram that the final two elements could essentially be considered together. He stated that there was no dispute as to the padlock being cut off and presented at a Parish meeting. Mr Oram stated that on its own this probably was not disrespectful but in combination with the other allegations including calling Cllr Fleming a liar it could be viewed differently. It was highlighted that in his report Mr Oram had provided other examples of failures to treat someone with respect. He also stated though that in local politics, members should expect to be challenged by others in their role as an elected representative. Mr Oram stated that the accusation made by Cllr Hart did not leave Cllr Fleming with any room to respond however. It appeared to be pre meditated and raised at an inappropriate time to be provocative, therefore combined with the padlock issue could have brought the authority into disrepute.

At this point in the hearing Cllr Hart was asked if he had any questions for the external investigator. He confirmed he did not. In response to questions from the Committee, Mr Oram confirmed that;

- The issue with the football club was not what was being considered today, but he felt the lease was called into question by the argument over who were the legitimate trustees of the field.
- He had not interviewed everyone from the meeting as it would not have been proportionate and costly for the authority. He also confirmed that Cllr Fleming had not felt he was in any physical danger.
- When the padlock was slid across the table, no prior notice had been given to Cllr Fleming that the matter would be raised. Therefore, the issue was raised without prior notice leaving Cllr Fleming with a limited opportunity to respond.
- The matter of who were custodians of the playing fields was not the matter to be considered and was being resolved elsewhere.
- The two meetings in question were open to the public and public attendees were at both meetings.
- Cllr Fleming was in the chair for both meetings and it could be argued that he should be prepared for robust challenge in the role. It was viewed as a breach though due to the type of language used.

At this point in the hearing, Cllr Hart was asked to present his case on the four elements of the complaint. In response to the first element of the complaint, he confirmed that he corrected this error as soon as he was made aware of it. He stated there had been no ill intent and apologised for the oversight on the form. In response to the second element, he confirmed that he thought everyone was aware of his interest at the meeting. In response to the third element he stated that he did not aggressively throw the padlock. He confirmed that it was slid across the table from no further than 6 foot away. In response to the fourth element he stated he had been abrupt because Cllr Fleming was simply not telling the truth. He confirmed that he had an email detailing this and that Cllr Fleming had been misleading. Cllr Hart was invited to ask questions of any witnesses. One of the witnesses confirmed that the padlock had been slid across the table not thrown aggressively.

The external investigator confirmed he did not have any questions for Cllr Hart. He stated that he had been very cooperative throughout the investigation and had answered any questions honestly and openly. In response to questions from the Committee, Cllr Hart confirmed that;

- When referring to 'they' in terms of who was trying to close the football ground, he meant the Parish Council.
- Cllr Fleming had been in the chair at both meetings in question. At the first meeting he claimed to have no knowledge of what Cllr Hart was referring to and at the second referred to a problem with travellers encroaching on the fields.

At this point in the hearing, the external investigator and Cllr Hart were given the opportunity to sum up before the Committee would determine the complaints in private. The external investigator summarised that on the first two matters there were clear breaches of the code by Cllr Hart. For the third element of the complaint Mr Oram felt that the authority had been brought into disrepute by Cllr Hart. This was due to the matter not even being on the agenda to be discussed and the manner in which it was raised. In summarising the fourth element Mr Oram also felt there had been disrespect shown and that Cllr Hart had crossed the line in calling Cllr Fleming a liar. He had also not given Cllr Fleming any chance to respond and left no room for discussion. Mr Oram stated that he had considered the complaints objectively and that aspects of Cllr Hart's behaviour had crossed the line.

Cllr Hart summarised that he felt Cllr Fleming had crossed the line by placing the padlock on the changing room doors. He also stated that he was one of the properly appointed trustees of the playing fields and could prove this. He informed the Committee that he did not throw the padlock and had slid it across the table instead.

The Committee retired at 3.23pm to determine the complaints.

The hearing resumed in open session at 4.11pm. The Committee confirmed that they had found breaches for the first two elements of the complaint but were not going to take any further action. The Committee also confirmed they had found breaches in the final two allegations and allowed Cllr Hart an opportunity to make representations on these before making a final decision. Cllr Hart stated that he stood by not throwing the padlock and apologised for any rudeness. He stated that he still stood by what he had said.

The Committee retired to consider the representations made by Cllr Hart on the final two complaints. The hearing resumed and the Chair provided those present with their final determination and recommendations on the complaints.

RESOLVED that the Committee found four breaches of the code of conduct by Cllr Hart and made recommendations as detailed below;

The Committee reached the following decisions:-

Allegation 1 – it was held that there was a technical breach by Parish Councillor Hart in that he had failed to register his interests correctly. It was noted that Cllr Hart had co operated with the Monitoring Officer subsequently to rectify this issue, the form issued was old and not fit for purpose and as a result of this no further action should be taken against Cllr Hart in relation to the technical breach of the code of conduct. It was raised that there were others within the Parish Council similarly failing to ensure their register of interests was correctly completed in accordance with the Code of Conduct and statutory requirements. In light of the latter point and mindful of the fact that some new parish councillors had joined the Parish Council this year, the committee recommended that the Parish Council through their clerk takes steps to make sure all parish councillors have the correct form, guidance and training necessary to enable all parish councillors to properly complete the register of interests.

Allegation 4 – it was also held that there was a technical breach by Parish Councillor Hart in that he failed to declare the appropriate interest at the two meetings. It was noted that this had been a genuine oversight not for any personal or other gain and that Cllr Hart's interests were generally well known by others at the Parish Council. It was determined that no further action should be taken against Parish Councillor Hart for this technical breach of the Code of Conduct. Notwithstanding this the committee was conscious that there is generally a good level of public attendance at public meetings in this parish and therefore likely that the public would have been in attendance so it was important for transparency and compliance reasons for Cllr Hart (and other parish councillors) to ensure that the rules for declaring interests are in future strictly followed to the letter. The Committee recommends that the Parish Council (through their clerk) takes all steps to ensure that members are aware of the requirements to declare interests and that dispensations for councillors are considered eg with a view to ensuring there is a consistent approach to participation in any items of parish business relating to this dispute. The committee also recommends that the Parish Council through their clerk ensures that only items on the agenda are permitted to be discussed at the parish meeting.

Allegation 6b – it was held (by majority as Cllr Wright did not agree that there was a breach of the code of conduct) that Parish Councillor Hart had brought his office into disrepute by the way he raised an item not on the parish council agenda, namely through sliding a padlock across the table at a parish meeting. The padlock related to the long running dispute and had been put in place by the Parish Council. The intent behind the return of the padlock in this manner was provocative and designed to let others know in no uncertain terms that Parish Councillor Hart would not accept the parish council approach. Parish Councillor Hart was cautioned by the committee and reminded that he should in future conduct himself more professionally and appropriately when he was acting as a Parish

Councillor. It was recommended that all Parish Councillors are also similarly reminded of appropriate behaviour when they are acting in their official capacity.

Allegation 8 – it was held that Parish Councillor Hart had called Cllr Fleming a “liar” at two public meetings. It was noted that this was not appropriate language nor manner (eg without notice) in which to raise concerns about whether Cllr Fleming was being truthful in the comments made at an earlier meeting. Parish Councillor Hart was cautioned by the committee and reminded that he should in future think more carefully about the language and manner of raising concerns about other parish councillors more when acting as a Parish Councillor. It was recommended that all Parish Councillors are also similarly reminded of appropriate language when they are acting in their official capacity.

Committee members expressed concern about wider parish issues and particularly hearing that there are two sides/camps to a long running dispute relating to Bell Fields trust and how this was affecting Parish Council business to the point where the parish council is generally regarded as dysfunctional. Members noted at the meeting that the Chair had to remind attendees in the public gallery to not interrupt and make comments to keep order on a number of occasions and that emotions ran high on both sides to the dispute which is understood to be before the High Court. For this reason, the Committee recommended that the Parish Council considered the use of mediation to try to find a middle ground for all interested parties to agree upon that enabled parish business to focus upon and best serve the local community and the public interest.

Parish Council representatives reminded the Committee of the support available from the Association of Local Councils and nationally from NALC. Clarification and guidance could also be sought from the Monitoring Officer.

6. **Urgent Business**

There were no matters of urgent business to discuss.

The meeting closed at 4.30 p.m.

Chair

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

6 November 2019

AGENDA ITEM 6

Subject	POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACE REVIEW
Report by	NICK EVELEIGH, THE RETURNING OFFICER

Enquiries contact: Murphie Manning, Electoral Services Officer Tel. (01245) 606510
Email: murphie.manning@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline the current polling arrangements within the local authority and recommend where improvements can be made.

Recommendation(s)

1. The amendments outlined within this report are approved and implemented on publication of the full register for future elections, including the reallocation of polling district codes for administrative purposes.
2. The decision will be taken to postpone the implementation of the amendments should an early general election be called.

Corporate Implications

Legal:	Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 as set out in the body of the report.
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities and Diversity:	Relevant age, disability and accessibility requirements have been considered in undertaking this review. No changes proposed or existing arrangements will adversely or disproportionately impact on any protected groups.
Health and Safety:	All relevant health and safety issues are considered in relation to individual polling places.

IT:	None
Other:	None

Consultees	The consultees of this review include: various local and community groups, political parties, charities, elected members and the general public. The full list of consultees can be found within the appendices.
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Policies and Strategies
Not applicable.

1. Chelmsford City Council – Polling District and Polling Place Review 2019
- 1.1 In accordance with Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 Chelmsford City Council is currently carrying out a review of polling districts and polling places within the City of Chelmsford. As delegated by full council, this committee has been authorised to consider these recommendations and approve any amendments.
- 1.2 The purpose of the review is to seek to ensure that:
 - all electors in the City have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
 - so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places in the City are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled.
- 1.3 The guidelines as to how to complete a polling district and polling place review are set out by The Electoral Commission. Full details of the requirements and guidance outlined can be found under Background Papers.
- 1.4 Further to the guidance provided by The Electoral Commission the council has also made use of turnout statistics for each polling district and staff feedback from the recent Local and European Parliamentary Elections 2019.
- 1.5 Chelmsford currently has 78 polling districts within the local authority boundaries. They remain the same for all types of elections. If the recommendations of this report are approved, this will increase to 81 polling districts.
- 1.6 A map outlining the current arrangements and the initial proposals can be viewed on our website. Further to this, the final recommendations will be presented to the committee using visual aids to reflect any amendments to the current polling arrangements.
- 1.7 If approved, these amendments will be implemented on the electoral register on 1 December 2019; if an election is to be called whilst the changes are being implemented it is recommended that the current polling arrangements are used to deliver any such election.
- 1.8 Full details of the considerations and the comments received are outlined in the appendices and the key recommendations are outlined as follows:

2. The polling district Good Easter and Mashbury is to be divided into 2 separate polling districts: Good Easter and Mashbury.
 - 2.1 This is proposed to avoid future confusion between the 2 areas with different political arrangements, as Good Easter is served by a parish council and Mashbury is served by a parish meeting.
 - 2.2 It is noted that the new polling district of Mashbury will contain a very small electorate with approx. 80 electors currently registered within the new boundary area. Therefore, it is proposed that an additional polling place is not allocated to serve this polling district. Instead, the electors will be allocated to vote in the Chignal and Mashbury Village Hall, alongside electors in the neighbouring polling district, Chignal.
 - 2.3 The decision to relocate the polling place from the current venue in Good Easter was taken as the venue in Chignal has recently undergone redevelopment and is well placed on the route to central Chelmsford, thus making it more suitable to facilitate polling for additional electors.
 - 2.4 The clarity regarding the boundaries within this ward was raised by the ward Councillor as part of the review and this amendment seeks to resolve the issue.
3. The polling place allocated to the polling district Dorset Avenue will be relocated to the site of Larkrise Primary School.
 - 3.1 The proposal to move the polling place was taken to centralise the venue for electors, improving accessibility and reducing confusion amongst electors.
 - 3.2 Additional considerations and resources will be taken in order to allow the school to continue to operate during polling, with the potential for the external dance studio to be used.
 - 3.3 The current arrangements were explored as a result of comments received by ward Councillors raising concerns highlighted to them by electors regarding the confusion regarding current polling arrangements in this ward. This is due to the fact that the current polling place (Hamptons Sport and Leisure Ltd) is allocated outside the boundaries of this polling district, requiring some residents to walk past a polling place to vote in their allocated venue.
4. The polling place allocated to the polling district Beehive lane will be relocated to St Pauls Church.
 - 4.1 The use of St Pauls Church is recommended to increase convenience for electors within the polling district, as the venue is located in the densely populated area within the boundaries. Therefore, more electors may consider walking to the polling place, or may use the public transport links that are well placed outside the church.
 - 4.2 As well as increasing accessibility for electors in the area, the use of the church will also relieve the local school (Beehive Lane Primary School) of the duty to assist in the delivery of elections. This is a key concern of The Returning Officer as it is noted that polling can be disruptive to schools.

- 4.3 During the consultation period concerns were raised by ward Councillors regarding access to the car park, as the entrance is located close to a busy junction. Further to a site visit it was recognised that this may be an issue at peak times, that the church has taken precautions to avoid during events. Therefore, in order to reduce the risk of traffic build up it is recommended that the car park is closed, other than for disabled use, and on road parking is encouraged where electors are required to drive.
5. Specified areas within the current polling districts Civic and Rectory Lane will become a new polling district named Fairfield.
- 5.1 The additional polling district is recommended to accommodate for the housing developments that are currently being completed within the ward. The new electorate will be allocated to a polling place within the Cramphorn Theatre.
- 5.2 The new boundaries of the proposed polling district have been updated since the initial proposals were presented. This is to include Tower Avenue, amongst other areas, which are currently allocated to the polling district Boarded Barns, electors living in this road are required to travel to the North Avenue Youth Centre to vote.
- 5.3 The theatre is to be used as it is well placed a short walk from the station and is a well-recognised community building for new residents which has been used in the recent elections to successfully deliver polling. Further to this, as the venue is owned by the council, assurance can be offered to the availability of the venue.
- 5.4 Comments in support for the updated polling arrangements were received during the consultation period.
6. The polling place for the polling district St John's will be relocated to Chelmsford Museum.
- 6.1 The Chelmsford Museum is considered to be a suitable venue for polling for this area as it is well served by a large car park alongside being a well-recognised community centre.
- 6.2 The venue has been used to deliver polling at recent elections due to the unavailability of the usual venue for hire. Therefore, in order to provide stability for electors it is recommended that the museum is used permanently moving forward, as this can provide stability for electors.
- 6.3 Although the venue is not centrally located within the boundaries it is suggested that the benefits outlined above are to be considered valuable to electors. A ward Councillor raised comment in support of this during the drop-in sessions.
7. The polling district currently known as Victoria Road will be divided to create 2 new polling districts: Victoria Road and Wharf Road.
- 7.1 The recently adopted polling place, The Essex Records Office was allocated as a temporary venue in place of Riverside, whilst redevelopment was completed. The intention was to then return polling to Riverside, if possible.

- 7.2 During the recent elections it was noted that The Records Office offered a suitable venue for polling for electors, including the new housing development in the southern area of the polling district, whilst those in the northern area had quite far to travel.
- 7.3 Therefore, as Riverside is now open and is able to offer the creche area for use for polling it is recommended that the area is divided so that the electors in the northern area may return to the original arrangements at riverside, and electors in the southern area can make use of the additional venue.
- 7.4 As well as increasing accessibility for electors this proposal relieves growing pressure on the polling station staff in the area as it swiftly growing.
- 7.5 No official comments were submitted during the consultation period, but support was recognised during the drop-in session.
8. The polling place for the polling district Woodhall will be relocated to the site of St John Payne Catholic School.
- 8.1 The current polling place is a portacabin hired from an external company for each election. The hire of a portacabin as a venue for electoral purposes is costly and carries significant risk, including concerns for safety of staff and electors. Therefore, it was sought to avoid this in future cases.
- 8.2 The St John Payne Catholic school is well located within the polling district to serve electors as it is centrally located and is well known in the area. Further to discussion with the school and a meeting on site it was agreed that there are multiple areas within the site that can be separated from the main buildings. As a result of the successful agreements it is agreed that, unless special circumstances arise, electors will be able to use a separate entrance to the students and the school will be able to continue to operate during polling.
- 8.3 Support for this amendment was recognised during the drop-in session, although no official comments were submitted.
9. The polling place in the polling district Collingwood will be relocated to the site of Collingwood Primary School.
- 9.1 Under the current polling arrangements all residents living in the polling district Collingwood are required to travel to the Chetwood Centre in the neighbouring polling district to vote. This is not considered the most accessible location for electors as there is a public venue available to The Returning Officer within the area.
- 9.2 It is recommended that to the polling place for Collingwood is reallocated to the Collingwood Primary School. This venue is more conveniently located for electors in the area and decreases the margin of error at elections, as there are currently 4 polling stations operating in 1 venue.

- 9.3 During a meeting with the school concerns were raised regarding safeguarding of the pupils and it was not concluded whether the school would close or remain open during polling as this is a decision that the school must take. Further to this, comments were received during the consultation period regarding the disruption that polling may have on the education of the pupils. It was agreed that the council will provide notice of the planned elections to allow the school to potentially organise their timetable around this.
- 9.4 On the other hand, support was received for the addition of this polling place from the local Town Council, political groups and ward Councillors.
10. The polling district currently known as Holy Trinity will be divided to create 2 new polling districts Holy Trinity and Springfield Park.
- 10.1 The current polling place serving electors in this area is well suited to do so, on a busy road with an allocated car park. However, it is noted that as the church is located on the border of the polling district, many electors are required to travel quite far to vote.
- 10.2 Therefore, with support of a local Councillor that has a close relationship with Holy Trinity Church we are able to offer an additional polling place to serve electors that currently live in the far end of the electoral area.
- 10.3 The church is well equipped to facilitate polling as it offers a spacious hall in a residential area, with newly a newly allocated car park area on site.
- 10.4 No official comments were received in response to this recommendation during the consultation period. However, during the drop-in session support for the amendment was offered.
11. The boundaries of the polling district Writtle North and Writtle South will be redrawn.
- 11.1 The current polling arrangements in Writtle require electors living in the northern polling district to pass the polling place allocated to serve the southern polling district in order to get to their allocated polling place which causes confusion amongst electors.
- 11.2 Therefore, it is proposed that the boundaries are redrawn slightly to reallocate these electors to be included in the southern polling district, allowing them to vote at the Writtle Community Association.
- 11.3 Comments received by ward Councillors during the consultation period recommend that as part of the review all electors in Writtle vote at the village green. The suggestions for this include using both the church and the parish hall or selecting one venue. Unfortunately, when considering this alongside the requirements outlined by the electoral commission it was deemed that the suggestions would not offer the most convenient location for voting for electors and may cause congestion in the area.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 This brief report outlines only 10 of the key considerations of the full review, to determine the full process undertaken as part of the review, broken down by ward, refer to the full report and the consultation comments found in the appendices. This report includes details of initial proposals that have not been progressed alongside the assessments made of polling districts that were not subject to any recommendations for improvement.
- 12.2 It is requested that the committee considers the proposals outlined above and makes a decision on the recommendations independently.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Full report of Final Recommendations.

Appendix 2 – Full list of Consultees and Consultation Comments.

Background Papers

[Guidance on the review of polling districts and polling places – The Electoral Commission.](#)

Chelmsford City Council - Polling District and Polling Place Review 2019

In accordance with Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 Chelmsford City Council is currently carrying out a review of polling districts and polling places within the City of Chelmsford.

The purpose of the review is to seek to ensure that:

- all electors in the City have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places in the City are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled.

The following Guidelines are also recognised as good practice, but may not always be obtainable:

- Suitable transport links within the polling district and conveniently located for the polling place.
- Polling place's ability to accommodate additional seating or more than one polling station.
- Premises readily available in the event of unscheduled elections.
- A polling station should not be allocated an electorate of greater than 2,500 electors. In these circumstances, double polling stations can be adopted within the polling place.

The guidelines as to how to complete a polling district and polling place review are set out by The Electoral Commission. Full details of the requirements and guidance outlined can be found at: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/electoral-administrator/polling-place-reviews

Further to the guidance provided by The Electoral Commission the council has also made use of turnout statistics for each polling district and staff feedback from the recent Local and European Parliamentary Elections 2019.

Chelmsford currently has 78 polling districts within the local authority boundaries. They remain the same for all types of elections. If the recommendations of this report are approved, this will increase to 81 polling districts.

This report outlines the City Council's initial proposals for amendments to the current polling arrangements that were set out by the review completed in 2014.

All comments have now been considered, and a report with any recommendations for changes to the current arrangements will be presented to Governance Committee 6 November 2019. That Committee has been delegated the decision-making power to approve any proposals by full Council.

If approved, these amendments will be implemented on the electoral register on 1 December 2019; if an election is to be called whilst the changes are being implemented it is recommended that the current polling arrangements are used to deliver any such election.

Representations should be made in writing to:

Electoral Services, Chelmsford City Council, Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford CM1 1JE or via our website: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/voting-and-elections/pollingdistrict-review>

The final amendments will be implemented on the electoral register on 1 December 2019; any election called before that date would be delivered under the current arrangements.

A Glossary can be found at the end of this report and a full list of consultees and official comments received are attached.

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1.1.

Polling District: Bicknacre (MA)

Polling Place: Bicknacre Memorial Hall

Ward: Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1870 electors (246 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -18 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MA1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most populated area of the polling district is the southern half of the village, but this area is residential, with no venues available for hire.

However, the Memorial Hall is easily accessible for all electors, as it is well located for a bus stop served by numerous bus routes and has a large car park for those who cannot or do not wish to walk. The hall also offers a large space, in which polling staff can set up rest areas for electors, and if necessary, an additional polling station.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Bicknacre Memorial Hall satisfactory and fully accessible.

1.2.

Polling District: Woodham Ferrers (MB)

Polling Place: Woodham Ferrers Village Hall

Ward: Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 426 electors (75 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +6 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MA2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most populated area of this district is Main Road, where the current polling place is located, followed by Lodge Road in the northern area. Those electors in the northern area are best served by The Village Hall, as it is closest to them. Further to this, The Village Hall is well located for public transport links and has an allocated car park.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Woodham Ferrers Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

1.3.

Polling District: East Hanningfield (MC)

Polling Place: East Hanningfield Village Hall

Ward: Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 900 electors 97 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -3 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MA3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most suitable alternative polling place venues available in this area is: The East Hanningfield Church of England Primary School.

The East Hanningfield Church of England Primary School is located next to the village hall, which is well located in this polling district. However, it is recognised that use of schools causes disruption and, in these circumstances, would not be in the best interest of electors as the current venue is well situated to facilitate polling.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The East Hanningfield Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

1.4.

Polling District: West Hanningfield – Temple Grove (MD)

Polling Place: Portacabin, Bakers Lane

Ward: Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 432 electors (47 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -6 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MA4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The hire of a portacabin as a venue for electoral purposes is costly and carries significant risk. Such temporary buildings require The Returning Officer to rely on external companies, alongside the

enrolment of additional staff to connect electricity ports. They are also difficult to adapt for wheelchair users. Further to this, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported this temporary building to be problematic due to power and safety issues.

The alternative venues that may be approached in place of this are: Templeton Park and Berkeley Park mobile home parks and The Jehovah's Witness Temple Farm Development.

Templeton Park advise that the only venue that they have that may be suitable has pre-existing bookings on Thursdays, therefore they would not be able to accommodate the use as a polling place. Similarly, Berkeley Park representatives advise that they had no suitable venues available for hire.

It was decided that the Temple Farm Development office would not be approached on this matter. This is due to the abstinence of the residents from democratic engagement, on religious grounds.

In view of the unsatisfactory nature of the existing polling place and as there is no suitable polling place within the current polling district, it was initially proposed that the polling district boundaries be redrawn. West Hanningfield – Temple Grove (MD) would be merged with West Hanningfield Village (ME), with the West Hanningfield Village Hall serving all 996 electors.

The distance between Templeton Park and West Hanningfield is approx. 8 minutes if travelling by car and fourteen minutes by bicycle. There are also good public transport links running, with the 13 and 13A buses running regularly from the end of Bakers Lane to Church Road, where the polling place is located.

However, further to the completion of a site visit and comments received as part of the consultation period it was recognised that the route is not easy to travel on foot or bicycle, therefore it was not considered accessible for the electors in West Hanningfield – Temple Grove.

Therefore, it is proposed that the current polling arrangements continue to serve electors in this area, with additional resources and signage provided to improve safety at the polling place. This is to be considered again at the next review.

1.5.

Polling District: West Hanningfield Village (ME)

Polling Place: West Hanningfield Village Hall

Ward: Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 564 electors (63 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +91 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MA5 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place serves the electors of ME appropriately as it is a well-recognised community hub with a large car park allocated for electors and is on a bus route that regularly runs from central Chelmsford, through the village.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The West Hanningfield Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

2.1.

Polling District: Boreham North (SA)

Polling Place: Boreham Village Hall

Ward: Boreham and The Leighs

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 1029 electors (90 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +27 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements at this stage; the proposed community centre will be looked into once complete.

The polling district code will be changed to SA1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is well located and fully accessible to all electors in the polling district as it is central to the area and well served by public transport links and a large car park.

It is noted that this is an area that will be expanded by housing developments in the next 5 years. With this in mind, it is understood that a community centre will be built as part of the developments, although it is not yet confirmed where. Therefore, this will be explored in greater detail at a later date.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Boreham Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

2.2.

Polling District: Boreham South (SB)

Polling Place: Boreham Church Hall

Ward: Boreham and The Leighs

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 1654 electors (186 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -67 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to SA2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most appropriate alternative venue available in this polling district is Boreham Primary School as it is geographically well located. However, it is recognised that the use of schools can be disruptive, and strategies should be adopted to minimise disruption to the community.

With this in mind, the school premises are within a housing estate, which is not convenient for public transport links or footfall. The Church Hall on the other hand, is located on a main road through the village, with a bus stop close by and some parking available.

It is expected that this area will be impacted by a housing development of approx. 120 properties in the next 3 years. This has been considered and it is concluded that no additional resources are required as the total electorate will not exceed the recommendations. However, this is something that The Returning Officer will be cautious of at the next review.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Boreham Church Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

2.3.

Polling District: Great and Little Leighs (SC)

Polling Place: Leighs Village Hall

Ward: Boreham and The Leighs

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 2005 electors (206 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -17 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements at this stage, but the proposed community centre will be considered once complete.

The polling district code will be changed to SA3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place serves the electors currently in this area well as it is located centrally to the most populated area of the polling district and has parking available for those who are travelling from the outer areas of the village.

Taking into account the draft local plan, it is apparent that this area is expected to grow quite significantly in the next 5 years, with an estimated 420 dwellings being delivered. This will have a significant impact on the electoral arrangements in this area, so additional venues have been considered. Within the new developments it is anticipated that a new community centre will be built, which will be well placed to serve the residents.

Therefore, it has been requested that The Returning Officer be kept up to date with the progress of this development, the community centre in particular. If the circumstances arise that a large number of residents move in before the community centre is completed, then the use of The Chelmsford Racecourse or The Leighs Free Church as additional or replacement polling places will be considered in the interim period.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Leighs Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

3.1.

Polling District: Broomfield North (SD)

Polling Place: Chelmer Valley High School
Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams
Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden
Total Electorate July 2019: 1323 electors (188 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -13 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to SB1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

It is recognised that the use of schools for polling can be disruptive to pupils and the community if they take the decision to close. However, Chelmer Valley High School has been able to remain open on polling day for recent elections. It is The Returning Officer's intention to continue to work with schools to agree the most appropriate arrangements for all parties involved.

The current polling place is located centrally within the polling district and is served by a car park for electors and a bus route to the city centre. Further to this, as the school is still able to operate, it will be convenient for electors in the area where their children attend the school.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported Chelmer Valley High School to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

This polling district is expected to be impacted by the expansion of the Beaulieu Park development and other housing developments. This considered, the current polling arrangements will remain suitable whilst the housing developments are being built, but this should be evaluated again at the next review.

3.2.

Polling District: Broomfield Village (SE)
Polling Place: Broomfield Village Hall
Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams
Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden
Total Electorate July 2019: 2289 electors (302 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -39 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to SB2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is conveniently located for electors in the area as it is located on the main route of access for the area, with a bus stop outside with numerous buses running regularly.

It is noted that this venue was not available for the short notice European Parliamentary election in May this year, due to a pre-existing booking on this date. In place of this the Broomfield Methodist

Church was used. This venue is also located on Main Road, served well by bus routes. This site is however smaller than the village hall, with a significantly smaller car park available.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the polling places reported both venues to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

It is expected that the electorate within this polling district will increase as a new housing development is to be built in the eastern area, which is currently agricultural/unoccupied land. As a result of this, the possibility of an additional polling place in this area will need to be considered at subsequent reviews, as there is currently no infrastructure in this area.

3.3.

Polling District: Church End (SF)

Polling Place: Great Waltham Village Hall

Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 1240 electors (150 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +7 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to SB3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is well located within the polling district, a short walk for those living centrally to the village and has a large car park allocated for use on polling day.

The most appropriate alternative venue available in this polling district is Great Waltham C of E Primary School which is located on the same road as the village hall. However, it is recognised that the use of schools can be disruptive, and in these circumstances, would not be in the best interest of electors in the area.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. The member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Great Waltham Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible, provided The Returning Officer continues to be able to allocate a ramp to aid disabled access.

3.4.

Polling District: Ford End (SG)

Polling Place: St John The Evangelist's Church

Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 548 electors (90 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +8 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to SB4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most appropriate alternative venue available in this polling district is Ford End C of E Primary School which is located on the main road. However, it is recognised that the use of schools can be disruptive, and strategies should be adopted to minimise disruption to the community.

The church is well located within the polling district, approx. a 10-minute walk for electors living within the village. Further to this, the venue benefits from good public transport connections and has a large car park allocated for electors to use on polling day.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported the St John The Evangelist's church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

3.5.

Polling District: Little Waltham (SH)

Polling Place: Little Waltham Memorial Hall

Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 988 electors (144 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -3 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to SB5 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place serves the electors central to the village well. The venue is a well-recognised community hub, with an allocated car park and on a regular bus route from the city centre through the village.

It is noted that the allocated polling place was not available for hire for the short notice election in May, due to prior arrangements. In place of this the Little Waltham Sports and Social Club was the only available venue within the polling district. Unfortunately, concerns regarding disabled access were raised, thus meaning this venue cannot be considered until this is resolved.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent Local and Parish Elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported the Little Waltham Memorial Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

Alongside other polling districts, the outskirts of this polling district are expected to be impacted by new housing developments in the next 5 years. This is a matter that is best considered at the next review, when community and commercial sites have been allocated to the new area.

3.6.

Polling District: Belsteads (SR1)

Polling Place: Channels Golf Club (Essex Barn)

Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden
Total Electorate July 2019: 150 electors (21 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +150 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements at this stage, any new community buildings will be investigated once complete.

The polling district code will be changed to SB6 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Currently, The Channels golf club is used to serve both Belsteads SR1 and Broomfield East SR2. This venue serves the electors Belsteads appropriately, as the only venue currently available for hire in the area. However, this venue is not best located for electors in the neighbouring polling district Broomfield East.

The venue does have a large car park allocated for polling and is located approx. 5-minute walk to a bus stop which is part of a city-wide route.

The returning officer has explored the option of relocating both polling stations to the Beaulieu Community Centre, currently the polling place for Armistice, CAR. This is a well-recognised community hub in the area, situated amongst shops and schools. However, as this would mean that polling stations serving 3 separate parishes and 2 parliamentary constituencies would all be operating from the same place, it was considered a high risk.

As this area continues to develop, there are reports that additional community buildings are to be allocated, which may be considered in future reviews.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent Local and Parish Elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Channels Golf Club to be to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

The only issue that was raised by staff was the risk of stray golf balls as electors pass the golf course. However, it has been reported that this venue will in future only be operating for event hire.

3.7.
Polling District: Broomfield East (SR2)

Polling Place: Channels Golf Club (Essex Barn)

Ward: Broomfield and The Walthams

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 592 electors (66 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +592 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements at this stage, any new community buildings will be investigated once complete.

The polling district code will be changed to SB7 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Currently, The Channels golf club is used to serve both Belsteads SR1 and Broomfield East SR2. This venue serves the electors Belsteads appropriately, as the only venue currently available for hire in the area. However, this venue is not best located for electors in the neighbouring polling district Broomfield East.

The venue does have a large car park allocated for polling and is located approx. 5-minute walk to a bus stop which is part of a city-wide route.

The returning officer has explored the option of relocating both polling stations to the Beaulieu Community Centre, currently the polling place for Armistice, CAR. This is a well-recognised community hub in the area, situated amongst shops and schools. However, as this would mean that polling stations serving 3 separate parishes and 2 parliamentary constituencies would all be operating from the same place, it was considered a high risk.

As this area continues to develop, there are reports that additional community buildings are to be allocated, which may be considered in future reviews.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent Local and Parish elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Channels Golf Club to be to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

The only issue that was raised by staff was the risk of stray golf balls as electors pass the golf course. However, it has been reported that this venue will in future only be operating for event hire.

4.1.

Polling District: Brook End (CA)

Polling Place: The Chelmers Village Hall (double station)

Ward: Chelmer Village and Beaulieu Park

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 3258 electors (438 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -100 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to CA1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

As this polling place currently holds 2 polling stations, it would be good practise to explore dividing the polling district and allocate an additional venue to electors in the southern area of the polling district. Unfortunately, there is no appropriate premises currently available for hire in the southern area. Therefore, it is proposed that this venue continues to serve as a double polling station, but extra resources and training will be provided to staff to ensure polling can be delivered with ease.

The Chelmers Village Hall is located on a village square alongside a supermarket, doctors' surgery and shops, which is a convenient location as residents on this area will be passing through regularly.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chelmers Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

4.2.

Polling District: Chancellor Park (CB)

Polling Place: Chancellor Park Pavilion

Ward: Chelmer Village and Beaulieu Park

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1496 electors (178 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -23 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CA2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most suitable alternative polling place venue available in this area is Chancellor Park Primary School, next to the community hall. However, use of schools causes disruption and, in these circumstances, would not be in the best interest of electors as it is no more suitable than the current venue.

The Chancellor Park Pavilion is suitably located to serve the electors in the area as a polling place. The large site offers plenty of car parking spaces that electors may use on polling day. In addition to this, the venue is a short 10-minute walk for electors in the farthest roads within the polling district, so is also a convenient for those on foot.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chancellor Park Pavilion to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

4.3.

Polling District: Dukes Farm (CC)

Polling Place: Barnes Farm Junior School

Ward: Chelmer Village and Beaulieu Park

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2196 electors (270 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +75 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CA3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The use of this polling place was carefully considered prior to the recent elections as complaints have previously been received regarding the use and potential closure of the site.

As a result of this, a full assessment of the area was completed, reflecting that an area within the site of the school was the only option available to the Returning Officer. After a site visit and further discussion, it was successfully agreed that the hall on the right-hand side of the site could be used for polling, with additional safeguarding measures implemented. This allowed the school to stay open during polling.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported Barnes Farm Junior School to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

4.4.

Polling District: Beaulieu Park (CD)

Polling Place: Beaulieu Park Pavilion

Ward: Chelmer Village and Beaulieu Park

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1251 electors (168 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +28 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements at this stage, any new community buildings will be investigated once complete.

The polling district code will be changed to CA4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only available venue within the boundaries of this polling district and there is currently little opportunity to amend the boundaries as most of the neighbouring polling districts serve different wards.

The site is a 10-minute walk from public transport links and a 10-15-minute walk for electors in the farthest area of the polling district. However, parking is well accommodated for those who travel by car.

With this development still expanding, it is not yet confirmed whether additional community or commercial buildings that may be available for hire are to be built within the polling district, or convenient locations in the vicinity.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Beaulieu Park Pavilion to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

5.1.

Polling District: Chignal (SJ)

Polling Place: The Chignal and Mashbury Village Hall

Ward: Chelmsford Rural West

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 357 electors (36 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +100 electors

Proposal:

The area of Mashbury will become an independent polling district. Electors in this area will also be allocated the polling place The Chignal and Mashbury Village Hall.

The polling district code will be change to SC1 for administrative purposes and the new Poling District, Mashbury will be allocated the code SC2.

Evaluation:

Mashbury is a small village neighbouring Chignal and Good Easter, which is currently combined with Good Easter for electoral purposes. However, it is recommended that the boundaries are redrawn making Mashbury its own polling district. This is to ensure that clarity is made between the separate areas with different parish arrangements.

Electors in Mashbury area will also be allocated the polling place serving Chignal. This is because the communities are better connected, and the polling place allocated to serve Chignal is on the route that residents of Mashbury pass through to travel to the city centre.

The recommendation for each polling district to have a polling place is understood. However, in these special circumstances, the decision has been made for 2 polling stations to be set up in 1 venue. The reasoning for this is because Mashbury has an electorate of approx. 80 and is represented by a parish meeting.

With the expansion in mind, there are 2 suitable venues within this polling district that may be used for polling. The Chignal and Mashbury Village Hall and The Chignal Smealey URC. Both venues have been made use of for polling in recent years, as the village hall has undergone refurbishment.

The Village Hall is now open to the public again and The Chignal Smealey URC requested that the matter of accommodating polling be passed back to the village hall, and future bookings were mutually agreed.

Further to the recent refurbishment, the village hall has very good facilities to accommodate polling and no complaints were reported to the returning officer at the recent elections. The site and hall that are provided is also larger than that of the church, meaning that it will comfortably be able to welcome additional electors from the Mashbury area.

It is expected that the electorate within this polling district will increase as a new housing development is to be built in the western area, which is currently agricultural/unoccupied land. As a result of this, the possibility of an additional polling place in this area will need to be considered at subsequent reviews, as there is currently no infrastructure in this area.

5.2.

Polling District: Good Easter and Mashbury (SK)

Polling Place: Good Easter Village Hall

Ward: Chelmsford Rural West

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 374 electors (42 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -13 electors

Proposal:

The village of Mashbury will be removed from the polling district and the polling district will be renamed Good Easter.

The polling district code will be change to SC3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Mashbury is a small village neighbouring Chignal and Good Easter, which is currently combined with Good Easter for electoral purposes. However, it is recommended that the boundaries are redrawn to recognise Mashbury as a separate polling district to provide clarity regarding parish boundaries.

The polling place for the new area will be relocated to Chignal because it is geographically closer, and the communities are better connected. Further to this, the polling place allocated to serve Chignal is on the route that residents of Mashbury pass through to travel to the city centre.

The recommendation for each polling district to have a polling place is understood. However, in these special circumstances, the decision has been made for 2 polling stations to be set up in 1 venue. The reasoning for this is because Mashbury has an electorate of approx. 80 and is represented by a parish meeting.

The current polling place is the only suitable venue for this area, as it serves electors central to the village well and has parking available for those who may need to travel by car.

5.3.

Polling District: Highwood (SL)

Polling Place: Highwood Village Hall

Ward: Chelmsford Rural West

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 555 electors (75 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +45 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be change to SC4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the most suitable venue available within the polling district. The large village hall benefits from an allocated car park and convenient public transport links. Further to this, it is located on a busy road in a densely populated area of the rural village.

Although this venue is located approx. a 15-minute walk from other areas of the village, it serves these electors best as practicable as there are no appropriate buildings in this area. The village hall is also located close to the primary school within the village, which is advantageous for parents in the area.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Highwood Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

5.4.

Polling District: Roxwell (SM)

Polling Place: Roxwell Memorial Hall

Ward: Chelmsford Rural West

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden
Total Electorate July 2019: 843 electors (115 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +15 electors
Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be change to SC5 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

There are 2 alternative venues that are conveniently located within this polling district. St Michael and All Angels Church and Roxwell C of E primary school, both of which are located on the same road as the current polling place, centrally within the village.

The Roxwell Memorial Hall is well suited to serve as a polling place as it is a well-recognised and reliable community building with a large car park and good public transport connections. Therefore, it would not be beneficial to relocate this polling place to either the school or the church as this would cause disruption and confusion.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. Further to this, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Rowell Memorial Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible, provided The Returning Officer continues to be able to allocate a ramp to aid disabled access.

5.5.
Polling District: Pleshey (SN)
Polling Place: Pleshey Village Hall
Ward: Chelmsford Rural West
Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden
Total Electorate July 2019: 222 electors (37 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -6 electors
Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be change to SC6 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place suitably serves electors in this area, although it is not central to the area, it is only an approx. 10-minute walk for those living within the most populated area within the polling district.

Use of the village hall also means that parking can be provided for electors and staff on polling day. With appreciation of the geographical size of the polling district, this facility is vital to the allocated polling place. For this reason, the current venue is considered a better option than the alternative option that was explored, the Church of the Holy Trinity.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. Further to this, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Pleshey Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible, provided The Returning Officer continues to be able to allocate a ramp to aid disabled access.

6.1.

Polling District: Galleywood East (CE)

Polling Place: Galleywood Infants School

Ward: Galleywood

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2390 electors (237 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -+0 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CB1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The polling place for this polling district was well considered at the recent election and it was concluded that the site on which the Galleywood Infants School and St Michaels C of E Junior School operate was the only appropriately located venue available.

Therefore, discussion was held with both schools to negotiate the least disruptive and most effective arrangements for all involved. After a visit to the site and a full assessment it was recognised that a demountable classroom within the grounds of Galleywood Infants School could be used.

With the implementation of additional precautions, electors were able to gain access to the polling place via a separate gate to pupils and the school remained open. This is the preference of The Returning Officer as it accommodates the needs of the electors in the area well, whilst causing minimal disruption to the community.

The locality of 2 schools to this polling place again provides convenience for electors as parents in the area are likely to visit the site.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported Galleywood Infants School to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

6.2.

Polling District: Galleywood West (CF)

Polling Place: Keene Hall

Ward: Galleywood

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2023 electors (242 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -52 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CB2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The polling place currently allocated to this polling district serves electors in this area well as it provides a large hall, with space for an additional polling station if required, and a rest area for electors. This venue is also located on a busy central road within the area, with a bus stop served by a variety of bus routes, whilst also offering a car park at the back of the site.

The secondary option that may be considered is the Galleywood district and social club, located opposite the current venue. Although this site does still offer parking, it is smaller and may not be able to accommodate a high turnout election as well as the alternative.

Therefore, it was decided that although the social club would serve electors well, it should be approached only if the circumstances of the current venue were to change.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported Keene Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

7.1.

Polling District: Mildmay (CG)

Polling Place: Tile Kiln Church

Ward: Goat Hall

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 3019 electors (354 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -60 electors

Proposal:

The Tile Kiln Church will become a double station.

The polling district code will be changed to CC1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The alternative venue that is conveniently located within this polling district is the site of The Mildmay schools, neighbouring the current polling place.

The Church is well suited to serve as a polling place as it is a reliable community building with a large car park and public transport connections. Therefore, it would not be beneficial to relocate this polling place to the site of the schools as this would cause disruption and confusion.

It is noted that this polling place is currently host to a very large electorate, therefore it is proposed that a double station is set up. This would mean that electors may all still vote in the same place, but additional staff and facilities are allocated to support electors on polling day.

This option was considered better than dividing the polling district and adding an additional polling place as the current venue can accommodate a large number of electors, so there is no need to source an additional venue. Further to this, the close proximity of potential venues is likely to cause confusion for electors and staff on polling day.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Tile Kiln Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

7.2.

Polling District: Widford (CH)
Polling Place: Widford Village Hall
Ward: Goat Hall
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 1690 electors (197 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +207 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CC2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Although when assessing the geographical centre of this polling district it could be concluded that hire of the Chelmsford Golf Club for polling may be the most appropriate, it is proposed that the current arrangements are the most suitable for electors.

The current polling place is well located on a busy road that residents in the area make use of daily. Further to this, it has off road and on road parking available on polling day and is a short walk to very good public transport links.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Widford Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

8.1.

Polling District: Baddow Road (CJ)
Polling Place: Meadgate Church Centre
Ward: Great Baddow East
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 2410 electors (282 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -23 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CD1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The polling place currently allocated to serve this polling district serves the electors in the area well. It is well geographically and logistically located, as it is on a site with local shops with good public transport connections.

The alternative venue that may be used as a polling place is Meadgate Primary School, which is well placed in the central area. However, it is recognised that the use of schools can be disruptive, and in these circumstances, would not be in the best interest of electors in the area.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Meadgate Church Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

8.2.

Polling District: Great Baddow Village (CK)

Polling Place: Great Baddow Parish Hall (double station)

Ward: Great Baddow East

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 4145 electors (634 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -46 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CD1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

As highlighted by the comments received from a community group during the consultation period, this polling district serves a very high electorate, spread over a large geographical area. It was therefore initially proposed that this polling district is divided to create 2 polling districts.

The Great Baddow Parish Hall would continue to serve the northern area, and the southern area would be allocated a new polling place, St Mary's Church.

Further to a site visit and comments received during the consultation period it was decided that the proposal would not be carried forward as the Church has issues regarding accessibility, due to the lack of parking and the venue being on a busy main road.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Great Baddow Parish Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

However, due to the large geographical area that this polling district covers it is recommended that these arrangements are reviewed again at the next review, once new housing developments are completed.

9.1.

Polling District: Dorset Avenue (CL)

Polling Place: Hamptons Sport and Leisure Ltd

Ward: Great Baddow West

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2349 electors (328 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -101 electors

Proposal:

Polling place will be moved to Larkrise Primary School site, subject to the agreement between the school and The Returning Officer.

The polling district code will be changed to CE1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling arrangements within this ward cause confusion for electors, as the polling place allocated for Dorset Avenue is currently located in the neighbouring polling district, Beehive Lane. Such issues were raised multiple times in the initial consultation, by ward Councillors and local community group.

It has been suggested that the polling place should move to the site of Larkrise school. This venue is well located centrally within the polling district, with good public transport connections and a high footfall during school hours.

It is proposed that the school is approached for use of the external dance studio to be used for polling, with the intention that arrangements can be made to appropriately safeguard the pupils and the school may make the decision to continue to operate.

Alternatively, use the millennium community centre has been explored. However, this is not conveniently located within the polling district and is located on a playing field, so access may be an issue.

There were complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. The first issue being the risk of confusion regarding polling places amongst electors (reported by ward Councillors and community groups). Further to this, a ward Councillor reported that elderly electors found the walk to the venue to be problematic.

9.2.

Polling District: Beehive Lane (CM)

Polling Place: Beehive Lane Community Primary School

Ward: Great Baddow West

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2427 electors (336 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -26 electors

Proposal:

Polling place will move to St Paul's Church.

The polling district code will be changed to CE2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling arrangements within this ward cause confusion for electors, as the polling place allocated for the neighbouring polling district Dorset Avenue is currently located within the boundaries of Beehive Lane. Such issues were raised multiple times in the initial consultation by ward Councillors and a local community group.

The current polling place is Beehive Lane Community Primary School. At the May elections the school was able to remain open to pupils during polling, meaning that disruption to educational activities was kept to a minimum.

However, it is noted that this site is located in the southern area of the polling district, which is not as densely populated as the northern area, therefore it is not the most conveniently located venue for all electors.

St Paul's Church and Hamptons Sport and Leisure Ltd are both well positioned within the area and have been considered to be approached for polling. However, due to the concerns raised by a ward Councillor regarding accessibility, it was concluded that St Paul's Church may be better suited.

The church is happy to facilitate polling and a site visit has been completed of the venue. However, as part of the review concerns were raised by a ward Councillor regarding the safety of the car park at the venue. In order to reduce the risk of potential issues it is proposed that during polling the car park is only open for staff and disabled electors, with on road parking available for other visitors.

10.1.

Polling District: Little Baddow (MF)

Polling Place: Little Baddow Memorial Hall

Ward: Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1297 electors (216 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -6 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MB1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place serves the electors within the polling district suitably as it is a well-recognised community hub with an allocated bus stop and a large car park.

The alternative option that was considered was the King Edward VIII Scout Park, but as this is set down a single track ran, off the main roads, accessibility was seen as an issue.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Little Baddow Memorial Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

10.2.

Polling District: Danbury East (MG)

Polling Place: Danbury Mission Evangelical Church (Double Station)

Ward: Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 2610 electors (361 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -81 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MB2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

As this polling place currently serves 2 polling stations, consideration was given to dividing the polling district and adding an additional polling place. The venue that may be considered for this purpose is St John's C of E.

However, it was decided that the current arrangements are most suitable. The current polling place is well located on a main road alongside the local supermarket and public transport links whereas the school is in a more residential area.

Therefore, it is proposed that The Danbury Mission Evangelical Church continues to serve as a double polling station, but extra resources and training will be provided to staff to ensure polling can be delivered with ease.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Danbury Mission Evangelical Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

10.3.

Polling District: Danbury West (MH)

Polling Place: Danbury Sports and Social Centre

Ward: Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1457 electors (232 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +56 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MB3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the most suitable venue within the area as it is served by a large car park and is conveniently situated alongside a local supermarket and schools, thus meaning electors in the area will pass the venue regularly as part of their daily routines.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Danbury Sports and Social Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

10.4.

Polling District: Sandon (MJ)

Polling Place: Sandon Village Hall

Ward: Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 569 electors (49 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -32 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MB4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The Sandon Village Hall is a well-recognised community hub within the village which is located next to the local school, making it convenient for staff and parents in the area. It is approx. a 10-minute walk for residents living within the central area of the village and has a large car park to accommodate those who travel by car.

It is expected that this area will be expanded in the next 5 years by a housing development on the eastern side of the polling district. This has been considered and it is proposed that the current polling place will serve the new residents well and will be able to accommodate a higher electorate. The impact that the new development has made, and the expected electorate once the residents have moved in will then be considered again at the next review.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Sandon Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

10.5.

Polling District: Howe Green (MK)

Polling Place: Howe Green United Reformed Church

Ward: Little Baddow, Danbury and Sandon

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 666 electors (111 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -1 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MB5 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only available venue in the area. It is well located within the polling district and is able to provide parking for disabled electors. Further to this, it is also located on a road served by regular buses for those who use public transport.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Howe Green United Reformed Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

11.1.

Polling District: Boarded Barns (CN)

Polling Place: North Avenue Youth Centre

Ward: Marconi

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2282 electors (259 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +40 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CF1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is well located centrally to the polling district with convenient public transport links and parking allocated to electors. The centre is also host to various activities and a community café during the week, which attracts residents from the area to the polling place.

The use of the school close by within the polling district, Kings Road primary school, has also been considered. However, it is recognised that use of schools causes disruption and, in these circumstances, would not be in the best interest of electors. The operation of the school alongside polling may also be beneficial to turnout, as parents and staff frequent the area during school hours.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The North Avenue Youth Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

11.2.

Polling District: Civic (CP)

Polling Place: Chelmsford Spiritualist Hall

Ward: Marconi

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1983 electors (278 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +41 electors

Proposal:

Areas currently allocated to polling districts Civic and Rectory Lane will become a new polling district, named Fairfield.

The polling district code will be changed to CF2 for administrative purposes and the new polling district will be allocated the code CF4.

Evaluation:

As the central areas of the polling districts Civic and Rectory Lane have seen residential housing developments built and residents have begun moving in it is proposed that an additional polling district is made to accommodate this, with a new polling place allocated to those electors. The area that the new polling district would serve has been extended as a result of further investigation during the consultation period.

The polling place that will be allocated to serve these electors is The Civic Theatre, this venue is well located within the new polling district, close to the train station that many residents in the city centre rely on. There is no parking allocated outside of this venue for all electors, however there is disabled parking available and many residents living within the city centre do travel by foot. The Theatre was used for polling for the short notice elections in May and no complaints were reported by staff or electors.

The Chelmsford Spiritualist hall will still be allocated the polling place to serve electors in the existing polling district. There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported the hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

11.3.

Polling District: Rectory Lane (CQ)

Polling Place: Chelmsford Boys & Girls Club

Ward: Marconi

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1419 electors (125 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +399 electors

Proposal:

Areas currently allocated to polling districts Civic and Rectory Lane will become a new polling district, named Fairfield.

The polling district code will be changed to CF3 for administrative purposes and the new polling district will be allocated the code CF4.

Evaluation:

As the central areas of the polling districts Civic and Rectory Lane have seen residential housing developments built and residents have begun moving in it is proposed that an additional polling district is made to accommodate this, with a new polling place allocated to those electors. The area that the new polling district would serve has been extended as a result of further investigation during the consultation period.

The polling place that will be allocated to serve these electors is The Civic Theatre, this venue is well located within the new polling district, close to the train station that many residents in the city centre rely on. There is no parking allocated outside of this venue for all electors, however there is disabled parking available and many residents living within the city centre do travel by foot. The Theatre was used for polling for the short notice elections in May and no complaints were reported by staff or electors.

The Chelmsford Boys and Girls Club will still be allocated the polling place to serve electors in the existing polling district. There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported this venue to be satisfactory and fully accessible, provided The Returning Officer continues to be able to allocate a ramp to aid disabled access.

12.1.

Polling District: Anne Knight (CAP)

Polling Place: Chelmsford Central Baptist Church

Ward: Moulsham and Central

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 322 electors (40 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +297 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CG1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place serves electors in this area well as it is conveniently located for those who may use public transport for their commute and is amongst local supermarkets and shops that

residents may visit. As this venue is located in the city centre, it is noted that parking in this area is an issue, but there is no alternative venue that offers parking and the residential areas currently in the ward are approx. a 5-minute walk from the venue.

The electorate in this polling district is expected to grow significantly in the upcoming years, further to the completion of additional properties. However, as the electorate is currently very low, it is proposed that the current venue will be able to accommodate the additional electors.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chelmsford Central Baptist Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

12.2.

Polling District: Goldlay (CR)

Polling Place: Life Church

Ward: Moulsham and Central

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2825 electors (429 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +145 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CG2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Relocating the polling place for this area has been carefully considered, with 3 alternative venues explored: Chelmsford Presbyterian Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church and City of Chelmsford Mencap.

The issue noted with the polling place in this area is the limited-on road parking available. After exploring alternative options, it is evident that parking arrangements in this highly populated residential area is an issue for all venues. With this in mind, the decision was made not to relocate the polling place to avoid disruption to electors, as The Life Church is able to provide suitable facilities for a large electorate.

The proposal to divide this polling district was also explored, adding an additional station on the site of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This venue is in the neighbouring polling district Baddow Road and could be used to serve electors in the southern area. This amendment is not proposed due to the confusion that may be caused if the polling place is outside of the polling district boundaries and the requirement for electors to cross a busy main road that people may have difficulty with.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. However, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Life Church have parking issues, other than this it was deemed fully accessible.

12.3.

Polling District: Haigh Gardens (CS)

Polling Place: Christ Church United Reformed Church

Ward: Moulsham and Central
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 1707 electors (208 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -52 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CG3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only suitable venue that may be used for polling within the boundaries of Haigh Gardens. It is well located within the northern area of the polling district, which is the most densely populated area. The venue has parking available and good public transport links.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Christ Church United Reformed Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

12.4.

Polling District: St John's (CT)
Polling Place: St John's Church Hall
Ward: Moulsham and Central
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 1617 electors (178 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -61 electors

Proposal:

The Chelmsford Museum will be the allocated polling place for St John's.

The polling district code will be changed to CG4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place serves electors in this area well, it is centrally located with some on road parking available.

As this venue was not available for the short notice election in May, The Chelmsford Museum was used for polling. This venue is located in the eastern area of the polling district but is better served by a large car park and public transport connections.

Further to this, use of the Museum can be negotiated within Chelmsford City Council, thus meaning that the relocation of polling places between elections can be avoided, minimising confusion for electors.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent European Parliamentary Elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chelmsford Museum to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

12.5.

Polling District: Victoria Road (CU)
Polling Place: Essex Records Office
Ward: Moulsham and Central
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 1292 electors (207 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +157 electors

Proposal:

The current polling district will be divided to create an additional polling district Wharf Road. This will be allocated the polling district code of CG6.

The polling district code for Victoria Road will be changed to CG5 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

It is proposed that this polling district is divided to accommodate the residents that will be moving into the new residential dwellings that are currently being built. This is because the polling district currently covers a large area that was not previously residential, so the electorate is expected to increase significantly. This is a concern raised in the consultation period by a local community group.

The venue that is most appropriate to serve the northern area of the polling district that will remain as Victoria Road is a studio within the Riverside Ice and Leisure Centre. This is a well-recognised community hub with a large car park and good public transport links.

Further to this, use of the leisure centre can be negotiated within Chelmsford City Council, thus meaning that the relocation of polling places between elections can be avoided, minimising confusion for electors.

The Essex Records Office will still be allocated the polling place to serve electors in the southern area of the polling district as it is well positioned to serve the recently completed housing development. There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported this venue to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

12.6.

Polling District: Central (CV)
Polling Place: Our Lady Immaculate Parish Community Hall
Ward: Moulsham and Central
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 1058 electors (145 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +147 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CG7 for administrative purposes

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only suitable venue within the polling district. It is well located close to public transport routes and a local school which attracts local parents to the polling place. The site also has a car park allocated for electors on polling day.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Our Lady Immaculate Parish Community Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

13.1.

Polling District: St Luke's (CW)

Polling Place: 11th Chelmsford Scout Group

Ward: Moulsham Lodge

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2225 electors (287 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +39 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CH1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only suitable venue within the polling district. The venue is not located centrally within the polling district but is approx. 10-minute walk from the farthest point within St Luke's.

The 11th Chelmsford Scout Group is well located close to public transport routes and local shops which attracts local electors to the polling place. The site also has a car park allocated for electors on polling day.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The 11th Chelmsford Scout Group to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

13.2.

Polling District: Lime Walk (CX)

Polling Place: Moulsham Lodge Methodist Church Hall

Ward: Moulsham Lodge

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1308 electors (147 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -54 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CH2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The polling place currently allocated to serve this polling district is well situated to serve electors in the area. It is geographically central to the highly residential area, a short walk away from public transport connections and with a large car park on site to accommodate electors.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Moulsham Lodge Methodist Church Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

13.3.

Polling District: Longstomps (CY)

Polling Place: Moulsham Youth Centre

Ward: Moulsham Lodge

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 827 electors (132 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +15 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CH3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is a youth centre, on the edge of the site of 3 schools. The locality of the primary school to the polling place is also convenient for electors, as residents in the area are drawn to the site during school hours.

The Moulsham Youth Centre is the most appropriate site as it is conveniently located for electors on foot or making use of public transport but does not disrupt the schools operating in the area.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Moulsham Youth Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

14.1.

Polling District: Woodhall (CAA)

Polling Place: Portacabin, St Andrews Playing Field (double station)

Ward: Patching Hall

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 3406 electors (582 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -167 electors

Proposal:

The polling place will be moved to St John Payne Catholic School, subject to the agreement between the school and The Returning Officer.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to CJ1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections from electors. However, polling station staff reported dissatisfaction with the venue at both elections, reporting the

area to be poorly lit at night, thus making them feel unsafe. Similarly, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported this temporary building to be problematic due to power and safety issues.

Further to this, the hire of a portacabin as a venue for electoral purposes is costly and carries significant risk. Such temporary buildings require The Returning Officer to rely on external companies, alongside the enrolment of additional staff to connect electricity ports.

Notably, the 2 most appropriate alternative venues are: St John Payne Catholic School and Columbus School and College. Both venues are located centrally to the polling district and will be well known to electors in the area. However, the additional risk associated with the use of Columbus College has been considered and St John Payne Catholic School is considered a better option.

Further to a meeting with the site manager multiple areas within the site have been identified as options for use. All options agreed allow the electors to use a separate entrance to pupils. It is The Returning Officers intention that future hiring may go ahead with minimum disruption to the schools and their pupils, allowing the school to make the decision to stay open, where possible.

14.2.

Polling District: The Avenues (CZ)

Polling Place: Broomfield Road Evangelical Church (double station)

Ward: Patching Hall

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 3396 electors (575 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -41 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to CJ2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only suitable venue within the boundaries of the polling district. It is well located centrally in the polling district with good public transport links. The venue also has a car park allocated that electors may use on polling day. Therefore, it is proposed that this venue continues to serve as a double polling station, but extra resources and training will be provided to staff to ensure polling can be delivered with ease.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Broomfield Road Evangelical Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

15.1.

Polling District: Rettendon (ML)

Polling Place: Rettendon Memorial Hall

Ward: Rettendon and Runwell

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1638 electors (264 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +216 electors
Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MC1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is the only appropriate venue within polling district. The memorial hall is a well-recognised community hub within the village. It is well located for public transport links and a large car park.

The locality of the primary school to the polling place is also convenient for electors, as residents in the area are drawn to the site during school hours.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Rettendon Memorial Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

15.2.

Polling District: Runwell East (MM)

Polling Place: Runwell Village Hall

Ward: Rettendon and Runwell

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1410 electors (180 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +359 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to MC2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The allocated polling place in this area currently serves electors in both Runwell East and Runwell West, as the only available venue within the boundaries of Runwell West is Runwell Community Primary School. The Barnhall Community Association and Social Club was approached regarding potential future hiring's but were unable to facilitate polling due to prior arrangements with Basildon Borough Council.

The Runwell Village hall does have the space and facilities to accommodate electors from both polling districts. The venue has a large car park allocated for electors to use and is conveniently located on a busy road within the village with good public transport links. Therefore, it is proposed that this venue continues to serve both polling districts, but extra resources and training will be provided to staff to ensure polling can be delivered with ease.

However, it is noted that the area of Runwell East will be expanded by a new housing development in the next 5 years. Therefore, the current polling arrangements may have to be considered at the next polling district review, when the electorate begins to increase.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Runwell Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

15.3.

Polling District: Runwell West (MN)

Polling Place: Runwell Village Hall

Ward: Rettendon and Runwell

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1743 electors (246 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -51 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to MC3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The allocated polling place in this area currently serves electors in both Runwell East and Runwell West, as the only available venue within the boundaries of Runwell West is Runwell Community Primary School. The Barnhall Community Association and Social Club was approached regarding potential future hiring's but were unable to facilitate polling due to prior arrangements with Basildon Borough Council.

The Runwell Village hall does have the space and facilities to accommodate electors from both polling districts. The venue has a large car park allocated for electors to use and is conveniently located on a busy road within the village with good public transport links. Therefore, it is proposed that this venue continues to serve both polling districts, but extra resources and training will be provided to staff to ensure polling can be delivered with ease.

However, it is noted that the area of Runwell East will be expanded by a new housing development in the next 5 years. Therefore, the current polling arrangements may have to be considered at the next polling district review, when the electorate begins to increase.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Runwell Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

16.1.

Polling District: Stock (MP)

Polling Place: Stock Village Hall

Ward: South Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1747 electors (266 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -15 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MD1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most appropriate alternative venue available in this polling district is Stock C of E Primary School as it is geographically well located. However, it is recognised that the use of schools can be disruptive, and strategies should be adopted to minimise disruption to the community.

The current polling place is located within the village, a short walk to a bus stop and a main route through the village, with a large car park allocated for use on polling day. Further to this, the village hall is a well-recognised community hub for electors in the area.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Stock village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

16.2.

Polling District: Margaretting (MQ)

Polling Place: Margaretting Village Hall

Ward: South Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 695 electors (70 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +9 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MD2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most appropriate alternative venue available in this polling district is Margaretting C of E Primary School as it is geographically well located. However, it is recognised that the use of schools can be disruptive, and strategies should be adopted to minimise disruption to the community.

The current polling place is located within the village, approx. a 10-minute walk for electors living at the farthest point of the main residential area. There is also a large car park on site that electors may make use of if they do travel by car.

Further to this, the village hall is a well-recognised community hub for electors in the area that is situated on a route in/out of the village, meaning electors will regularly pass by.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Margaretting Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

16.3.

Polling District: South Hanningfield (MR)

Polling Place: South Hanningfield Village Hall
Ward: South Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting
Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon
Total Electorate July 2019: 221 electors (28 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +9 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MD3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling arrangements in this area suit the electors appropriately. The polling district is centred appropriately around the small village with the polling place situated centrally with a large car park and a short walk from public transport links.

The use of an area on the site of St Peter's Church as the allocated polling place for this area has been considered. However, it was decided that they would not be approached to discuss this further as the Village Hall is a well-known community centre that residents pass by regularly.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The South Hanningfield Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

16.4.

Polling District: Downham (MS)
Polling Place: Downham Village Hall
Ward: South Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting
Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon
Total Electorate July 2019: 433 electors (48 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +26 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MD4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Although this polling district covers a large area geographically, it has a small electorate that is focussed in the central village. The polling place allocated to serve these electors is the only suitable venue currently available to hire.

The village hall is well situated on the main residential road in the village, with a small car park and a bus stop allocated to the venue, just outside. As this area is built centrally around school road, where the polling place is located, residents in the area will be familiar with the venue and will be passing the hall regularly on polling day.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Downham Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

16.5.

Polling District: Ramsden Heath (MT)

Polling Place: Ramsden Heath Christian Growth Centre

Ward: South Hanningfield, Stock and Margaretting

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 1458 electors (151 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +14 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to MD5 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The Ramsden Heath Christian Growth Centre is well located within the boundaries of this polling district to serve the electors. This venue is on a main road through the village, with good public transport links and a large car park allocated for use on polling day.

The use of The Ramsden Heath Village Hall for future polling was considered. However, as it is not as conveniently located it was decided that unless circumstances with the Church are to change, the polling place will remain the same.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Ramsden Heath Christian Growth Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

17.1.

Polling District: Chetwood (MU)

Polling Place: Chetwood Centre (Double Station)

Ward: South Woodham Ferrers – Chetwood and Collingwood

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 2955 electors (351 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -158 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to ME1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The Chetwood Centre currently serves electors in both Chetwood and Collingwood, which causes confusion for electors and polling staff, as raised by a ward Councillor. Therefore, it is proposed that the polling place for Collingwood polling district is relocated.

The Chetwood Centre is well suited to serve electors in Chetwood as it is centrally located and is a well-recognised community hub with a large car park allocated to use for electors on polling day. This

venue is able to accommodate the double station to serve all residents in the area. Additional resources and training will be provided to polling station staff to ensure that double stations may continue to operate smoothly.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. However, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chetwood Centre to be problematic as the operation of 4 polling stations in the polling place lead to confusion. Further to this, it was raised during the consultation, by Samuel Coley, that the paving slabs outside may need replacing. The Council shall look into this further and work to resolve the issue.

17.2.

Polling District: Collingwood (MV)

Polling Place: Chetwood Centre (Double Station)

Ward: South Woodham Ferrers – Chetwood and Collingwood

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 3257 electors (436 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -118 electors

Proposal:

The Collingwood Primary School will be allocated as the polling place for this polling district, subject to the agreement between the school and The Returning Officer.

The polling district code will be changed to ME2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The Chetwood Centre currently serves electors in both Chetwood and Collingwood, which causes confusion for electors and polling staff, as raised by a ward Councillor. Therefore, it is proposed that the polling place for Collingwood polling district is relocated.

Notably, the most appropriate alternative venue is Collingwood Primary School, as suggested by The South Woodham Ferrers Taxpayers Association. This school is located centrally to the polling district and will be well known to electors in the area with on road parking available.

It is The Returning Officer's intention that future hiring may go ahead with minimum disruption to the schools and their pupils, allowing the school to make the decision to stay open, where possible.

During a meeting with the school concerns were raised regarding safeguarding of the pupils and it was not concluded whether the school would close or remain open during polling as this is a decision that the school must take. Further to this, comments were received during the consultation period regarding the disruption that polling may have on the education of the pupils. It was agreed that the council will provide notice of the planned elections to allow the school to potentially organise their timetable around this and additional resources have been offered.

On the other hand, support was received for the addition of this polling place from the local Town Council, political groups and ward Councillors.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections. However, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chetwood Centre to be problematic as the operation of 4 polling stations in the polling place lead to confusion.

18.1.**Polling District:** Elmwood (MW)**Polling Place:** Champions Manor Hall (Double Station)**Ward:** South Woodham Ferrers – Elmwood and Woodville**Parliamentary Constituency:** Maldon**Total Electorate July 2019:** 3542 electors (435 Absent Voters)**Electorate Difference Since Last Review:** -89 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to MF1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is well located, centrally within the polling district with good public transport links and a large car park allocated for use on polling day. This venue is the most suitable venue within the area for polling as it has the required facilities and is a well-known community centre situated on a main road.

The hall offers a large space and site that allows it to accommodate the double station with a high electorate. Therefore, it is not proposed that any additional venues are required to serve electors in this area, but extra resources will be provided to polling station staff to manage the double station.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Champions Manor Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

18.2.

Polling District: Woodville (MX)

Polling Place: South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall (Double Station)

Ward: South Woodham Ferrers – Elmwood and Woodville

Parliamentary Constituency: Maldon

Total Electorate July 2019: 2543 electors (267 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -118 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to MF2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall has the facilities to accommodate a double station, with a high electorate. The venue has a large car park allocated for visitors to use and has a spacious hall that the polling stations are set up in.

The other venue in the area that was considered for use as an additional polling place is The Woodville Primary School. However, as this site is not centrally located for electors, and may cause disruption, this option will not be perused.

It is noted that the northern area of this polling district will be impacted by the expected development of residential dwellings. As a part of this expansion, an additional community centre is proposed. This venue, once built, should be considered as an additional polling place to serve new residents, but the current arrangements will appropriately serve electors until completion of this.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The South Woodham Ferrers Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

19.1.

Polling District: Bowers Farm (CAF)

Polling Place: Springfield Parish Centre (double station)

Ward: Springfield North

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 3146 electors (303 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -110 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to CK1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The most suitable venue that could be used as the second polling station in this area is The North Springfield Baptist Church, located on Pump Lane in the south eastern area of the polling district. However, use of this venue would increase the distance that the electors in the western area of the polling district travel to vote.

As the current venue is a well-recognised community centre with a large car park, located conveniently next to the local primary school it is proposed that this venue is best suited to serve electors within this polling district. Further to this it is proposed that this venue continues to serve as a double polling station, but extra resources and training will be provided to staff to ensure polling can be delivered with ease.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Springfield Parish Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

19.2.

Polling District: Nabbots Farm (CAG)

Polling Place: Springfield Primary School (double station)

Ward: Springfield North

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 3377 electors (460 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -121 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

Additional resources will be allocated to ensure the double station is as clear as possible to both electors and polling station staff.

The polling district code will be changed to CK2 for administrative purposes

Evaluation:

As this polling place currently holds 2 polling stations the option of dividing the polling district and adding an additional polling place was explored. There are no other venues available for hire that could serve these electors, within the ward boundaries of Springfield North.

Springfield Primary School has been able to remain partially open on polling day for the recent elections and it is The Returning Officers Intention to ensure that we continue to work alongside schools to agree the most appropriate arrangements for all parties involved.

The convenience of the polling place being located at the school while it continues to operate for parents and staff that live in the area may increase turnout and promote engagement.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Springfield Primary School to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

19.3.

Polling District: Armistice (CAR)

Polling Place: Beaulieu Community Centre

Ward: Springfield North

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 541 electors (78 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +541 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CK3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The community centre is most suitable venue available to hire within the polling district. It is conveniently located amongst local shops and schools in the new housing development. The area has a large public car park and is served by a regular bus route to the city centre, with a railway line to be delivered in due course.

It is noted that this development is continuing to grow, and residents are still moving in. the current polling place will have the facilities to accommodate the rising electorate and expanding site.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Beaulieu Community Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

20.1.

Polling District: North Melbourne (CAB)

Polling Place: Newlands Spring Community Hall

Ward: St Andrews

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1334 electors (175 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -66 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CL1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The community hall is well located within the polling district to serve as a polling place, with a large car park available for use to electors throughout the day. The locality of the primary school to the polling place is also convenient for electors, as residents in the area are drawn to the site during school hours.

The most suitable alternative polling station venue available in this area is Newlands Spring Primary School, next to the community hall. However, use of schools causes disruption and, in these circumstances, would not be in the best interest of electors.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Newlands Spring Community Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

20.2.

Polling District: Rivers (CAC)

Polling Place: Chelmsford Community Church

Ward: St Andrews

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1296 electors (140 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -22 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CL2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current venue is the most suitable location for the polling place within the area. It is well located to serve electors in the area and has a small car park allocated for those who travel by car. The locality of the primary school to the polling place is also convenient for electors, as residents in the area are drawn to the site during school hours.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Chelmsford Community Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

20.3.

Polling District: Melbourne (CAD)
Polling Place: Parkside Community Hub
Ward: St Andrews
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 1122 electors (120 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +4 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CL3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

For the short notice European Parliamentary Election that took place 23 May the usual polling place was not available. In place of this, the next most suitable venue was used. This was a room within the grounds of Chelmsford City Football Club, located on Salerno Way, a short walk from the usual location.

The member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported concerns regarding accessibility for electors. The points in particular that were raised were the heavy traffic in the car park at certain times and lack of ability to put up signage.

The Parkside Community Hub is well placed to serve as a polling place as it is conveniently located within the polling district, with a large car park allocated for electors during polling and good public transport links outside of the venue.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the Local Election and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Parkside Community Hub to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

20.4.

Polling District: Hills and Highfield (CAE)
Polling Place: St Andrews Church (double station)
Ward: St Andrews
Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford
Total Electorate July 2019: 2966 electors (434 Absent Voters)
Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +9 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district Code will be changed to CL4 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

It is noted that the electors living in the southern area of the polling district do have to travel significant distance to vote. It would therefore be best to divide the polling district and find an additional venue to serve the southern area of the polling district. Unfortunately, the venues approached to discuss this were not able to accommodate polling.

The best available locations for the additional polling place are The Old Chelmsfordian Sport and Social Association or the RHP Bowls Club.

The Old Chelmsfordian Sport and Social Association is located on Lawford Lane, just outside of the polling district in the neighbouring polling district of Writtle North. The organisation was approached to discuss polling arrangements but advised they would not be able to accommodate.

The RHP Bowls club is located within the polling district, it has a car park on site and is a short walk for electors within the new polling district. The organisation has been contacted regarding hire but did not respond.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported St Andrews Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible. Therefore, it shall remain the polling place for electors.

21.1

Polling District: Springfield Chelmer (CAH)

Polling Place: Springfield Hall Park Club House

Ward: The Lawns

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2069 electors (351 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -29 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CM1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

This polling place serves the area of Springfield Chelmer as best as possible. However, it is noted that it is noted that the electors living in the southern area of the polling district do have to travel significant distance to vote.

The other suitable venue to serve electors in this area would be The 2nd Chelmsford Scout Group, on Lawn Lane. Located on the east side of the polling district, on the boundary of the polling districts Springfield Chelmer and Springfield Place

When exploring the polling district Springfield Place, it was discovered that there is also an alternative venue to The Tyrells Primary school that may be hired, All Saints Church, Springfield Green. Located on the west side of the polling district, again on the boundaries of the 2 polling districts.

In place of the current arrangements, the ward of The Lawns could be split into 2 new polling districts, with the dividing line running east-west. With the 2nd Chelmsford Scout Group serving the northern area and the All Saints Church serving the southern area. Both venues have been contacted regarding potential hire and are happy to discuss the matter further.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Springfield Hall Park Club House to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

Unfortunately, further to site visits, the proposals that were initially suggested cannot be carried forward as the venue does not have suitable facilities to host polling and limited parking is available.

21.2

Polling District: Springfield Place (CAJ)

Polling Place: The Tyrells Primary School

Ward: The Lawns

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2136 electors (309 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -54 electors

Proposal:

No Change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CM2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

This polling place serves the area of Springfield Place well as it is located centrally to the current polling district boundaries.

The other suitable venue to serve electors in this area would be The All Saints Church, Springfield Green, Lawn Lane. This is located on the west side of the polling district, on the boundaries of the polling districts Springfield Place and Springfield Chelmer.

When exploring the polling district Springfield Chelmer, it was discovered that there is also an alternative venue to Springfield Hall Park Club House that may be hired. This is the 2nd Chelmsford Scout Group, Lawn Lane. This site is located on the west side of the polling district.

In place of the current arrangements, the ward of The Lawns could be split into 2 new polling districts, with the dividing line running east-west rather than north-south. With the 2nd Chelmsford Scout Group serving the northern area and the All Saints Church serving the southern area. Both venues have been contacted regarding potential hire and are happy to discuss the matter further.

Unfortunately, further to site visits, the proposals that were initially suggested cannot be carried forward as there is no suitable venue for the other proposed polling district in the ward and the Church is not well located within the current boundaries.

The proposed option would relieve the school of hire as a polling place. This would avoid disruption to the school's curriculum and resolve electors' concerns. Alongside this, the re-alignment of the polling district boundaries centralises the polling places and increases accessibility for electors.

The member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Tyrells Primary School to be satisfactory and fully accessible. However, complaints were made to the returning officer and his staff regarding the use of this premises as a polling place. The concerns that were raised were regarding disruption to the pupils.

22.1.

Polling District: Holy Trinity (CAK)

Polling Place: Springfield Park Baptist Church

Ward: Trinity

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2800 electors (366 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -11 electors

Proposal:

The polling district will be divided to create the polling districts Holy Trinity and Springfield Park.

The polling district code for Holy Trinity will be changed to CN1 for administrative purposes, the additional polling district will be allocated the code CN2.

Evaluation:

It is proposed that the current polling district is divided to create an additional polling district. The current polling place serving electors in this area is well suited to do so, on a busy road with an allocated car park. However, it is noted that as the church is located on the eastern border of the polling district, many electors are required to travel quite far to vote.

The polling district code for Holy Trinity will be changed to CN1 for administrative purposes, the additional polling district will be allocated the code CN2.

The venues that were considered as an additional polling place in this area were Holy Trinity Church and Trinity Road Primary school, both located in the western area of the polling district.

The church is considered the best option as it is well situated for public transport routes and will cause minimal disruption to the community. Further to this, the locality of the primary school to this polling place provides convenience for electors as local residents may have children that attend the school. Further details of the properties that will be served by the new polling district can be explored via the interactive map on The Council website.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Springfield Park Baptist Church to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

22.2

Polling District: Timsons (CAL)

Polling Place: Women's Institute Hall

Ward: Trinity

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1880 electors (311 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -29 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CN3 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The alternative venue that may be used to serve electors in this area is The East Anglia Reserve Forces & Cadets Association, Springfield Road. This is a short walk from the current polling place but is closer to the southern area of the polling district, which is more densely populated.

Relocating the polling place to The East Anglia Reserve Forces & Cadets Association would be beneficial as it is more conveniently located for the electors in the southern area of the polling district and is located on a main road with good public transport links. The organisation was approached regarding hire but no response was received during the process of the review, therefore the proposal was not carried forward.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Women's Institute Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

23.1.

Polling District: Beechenlea (CAM)

Polling Place: Westlands Community Primary School

Ward: Waterhouse Farm

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 1912 electors (326 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: +52 electors

Proposal:

No change to current polling arrangements.

The polling district code will be changed to CP1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

Westlands community primary school is the only venue available within the boundaries of the polling district Beechenlea and it has closed to pupils at the recent elections to serve electors. It is The Returning Officer's intention to work with schools to agree the most appropriate arrangements for all parties involved. Therefore, the school administration will be approached to discuss additional resources and alternative options that may allow them to take the decision to remain open during polling.

The polling place serves most electors in this area well. However, there are residents within this polling district that are required to cross the river to access the polling place. As it is understood that this is not convenient for electors, alternative options were explored. Unfortunately, there are no suitable venues in this area and polling district boundaries cannot be redrawn as it would interfere with ward boundaries.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Westlands Community Primary School to be satisfactory and fully accessible, provided The Returning Officer continues to be able to allocate a ramp to aid disabled access.

23.2.

Polling District: Westlands (CAN)

Polling Place: Church of The Holy Spirit, Widford Parish Centre

Ward: Waterhouse Farm

Parliamentary Constituency: Chelmsford

Total Electorate July 2019: 2783 electors (278 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -40 electors

Proposal:

The Widford Parish Centre will become a double station.

The polling district code will be changed to CP2 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling place is conveniently located within the polling district and is served well by public transport links. This venue is located in the northern area of the polling district, which serves electors well as the southern area is an industrial estate.

The addition of a polling place at The Secret Garden Tea Room was considered, but unfortunately, they are unable to accommodate this,

It is noted that this polling place is currently host to a very large electorate, therefore it is proposed that a double station is set up. This would mean that electors may all still vote in the same place, but additional staff and facilities are allocated to support electors on polling day.

There were no complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections and the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Church of The Holy Spirit, Widford Parish Centre to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

24.1.

Polling District: Writtle North (SP)

Polling Place: Writtle Village Hall

Ward: Writtle

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 2035 electors (298 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -2 electors

Proposal:

The polling district boundaries in Writtle Ward will be redrawn.

The polling district code will be changed to SD1 for administrative purposes.

Evaluation:

The current polling places within the ward of Writtle serve the electors well. However, as the polling place allocated to serve Writtle south currently sits outside of the border, in Writtle North, it causes confusion with electors.

Under the current polling district boundaries, some electors in Writtle North are required to walk past the polling place allocated to serve Writtle South when they are travelling to vote. This causes confusion on election day and subsequent complaints.

Therefore, it is proposed that those electors who live in the area surrounding Longmeads House are reallocated to the polling district Writtle South. Further details of the properties that will be impacted by this change can be viewed via the interactive map on The Council website.

As the Village hall is a well-recognised community hub within the village that is well located for public transport links it will continue to be used as the polling place for electors in the northern area.

There were complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections regarding the location of the polling places in this ward. However, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported The Writtle Village Hall to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

Comments were received during the consultation period from ward Councillors suggesting that both polling places for the Writtle ward be relocated to the village green. Further to visiting the area, it was concluded that it would not be suitable for all electors to vote at the village green as recommended, as it would lead to confusion for electors and traffic build up. Therefore, the original proposals are considered the best amendments to simplify the process for electors in the area.

24.2

Polling District: Writtle South (SQ)

Polling Place: Longmeads House

Ward: Writtle

Parliamentary Constituency: Saffron Walden

Total Electorate July 2019: 2073 electors (353 Absent Voters)

Electorate Difference Since Last Review: -104 electors

Proposal:

The polling district boundaries in Writtle Ward will be redrawn.

The polling district code will be changed to SD2 for administrative purposes

Evaluation:

The current polling places within the ward of Writtle serve the electors well. However, as the polling place allocated to serve Writtle south currently sits outside of the border, in Writtle North, it causes confusion with electors.

Under the current polling district boundaries, some electors in Writtle North are required to walk past the polling place allocated to serve Writtle South when they are travelling to vote. This causes confusion on election day and subsequent complaints.

Therefore, it is proposed that those electors who live in the area surrounding Longmeads House are reallocated to the polling district Writtle South. Further details of the properties that will be impacted by this change can be viewed via the interactive map on The Council website.

The current polling place is regarded as the most suitable venue in the area to continue to serve electors as it is easily accessible to electors in the area with a large car park and a short walk from public transport links.

There were complaints reported to The Returning Officer at the recent elections regarding the location of the polling places in this ward. However, the member of staff allocated to supervise and assess the venue reported Longmeads House to be satisfactory and fully accessible.

Comments were received during the consultation period from ward Councillors suggesting that both polling places for the Writtle ward be relocated to the village green. Further to visiting the area, it was concluded that it would not be suitable for all electors to vote at the village green as recommended,

as it would lead to confusion for electors and traffic build up. Therefore, the original proposals are considered the best amendments to simplify the process for electors in the area.

It was also highlighted that the current venue may be undergoing renovation in the near future, as discussion regarding this has been held. In these circumstances it is recommended that an alternative venue (e.g. the local school) is sought whilst the renovation is completed with the intention to return once complete.

Appendix – Glossary

- **Electorate** – The residents in the area whom are registered to vote. **Absent Voter** – An elector that has opted to vote via post or proxy that will not vote in person on polling day.
- **Polling District** – A geographical area created by the sub-division of a UK Parliamentary constituency for the purposes of elections.
- **Polling Place** – a building or area in which polling stations will be situated. Each polling district must have a polling place allocated that is within easy reach to electors.
- **Polling Station** – The room or area within a polling place where voting takes place.
- **Parish** – The smallest unit of local government, largely functioning in rural areas.
- **Ward** – An administrative division of a city or borough that typically elects and is represented by a councillor or councillors.
- **Returning Officer** – The official in each constituency who conducts an election and announces the result.
- **Electoral Registration Officer** – A person who has the statutory duty to compile and maintain the electoral roll.
- **Electoral Commission** – The body charged with overseeing the implementation of electioneering process in The United Kingdom.

Full List of Consultees of Chelmsford City Council Polling District and Polling Place Review - 2019
Age Concern
Alzheimer's Society
Anglia Ruskin University
Barnes Farm Junior School
Beehive Lane Community School
Boreham Parish Council
Broomfield Parish Council
Chelmsford City Council Councillors (all)
Change UK – The Independent Group
Chelmer Valley High School
Chignal Parish Council
City of Chelmsford Mencap
Collingwood Primary School
Columbus School and College
Danbury Parish Council
Deafblind UK (Essex)
East Hanningfield Parish Council
Essex County Council Councillors (all)
Essex Community Foundation
Essex Police
Galleywood Infants School
Galleywood Parish Council
Good Easter Parish Council
Great and Little Leighs Parish Council
Great Baddow Parish Clerk
Great Waltham Parish Council
Green Party
Highwood Parish Council
Interact
John Whittingdale MP
Kemi Badenoch MP
Labour Party
Liberal Democrats
Limbless Association
Little Baddow Parish Council
Little Waltham Parish Council
Pleshey Parish Council
Priory Group
Purple
Rettendon Parish Council
Runwell Parish Council
SAFE
SANCTUS
Sandon Parish Council
South Hanningfield Parish Council
South Woodham Ferrers Parish Council
South Woodham Ferrers Tax Payers Tax Payers Association
Springfield Parish Council
Springfield Primary School
Stock Parish Council
The Brexit Party
The Change Project
The Conservative and Unionist Party
The Samaritans
The Tyrells Primary School
Trinity Road Primary School
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)
Vicky Ford MP
West Hanningfield Parish Council
Westlands Community Primary School
Woodham Ferrers and Bicknacre Parish Council
Writtle Parish Council
Writtle University College

Polling District: West Hanningfield Village and West Hanningfield - Temple Grove (MD & ME)	
Ward: Bicknacre and East and West Hanningfield	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"I confirm the current locations and arrangements are working well. I have had no concerns and that includes the portable station at Temple Farm, West Hanningfield, which I guess is one of your more interesting situations!"

Polling District: Nabbots Farm (CAG)	
Ward: Springfield North	
Consultation Comments:	
Local School:	"Using a school site is very hard when elections are called at short notice. This is then hard for parents providing child care as we need to close."

Polling District: All polling Districts in Chelmsford Rural West (SJ, SK, SL, SM, SN)	
Ward: Chelmsford Rural West	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"I think in Rural West we need to keep things as they are as there are five parishes."

Polling District: All polling districts in Marconi ward (CN, CP & CQ)	
Ward: Marconi	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"I'm happy with the polling stations in Marconi ward."

Polling District: All polling districts in Boreham and The Leighs (SA, SB & SC)	
Ward: Boreham and The Leighs	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"As one of the ward members for Boreham & The Leighs, I am happy that the current polling stations in these areas are adequate. Therefore I do not propose any amendments. I hope that helps."

Polling District: All polling districts in Chelmer Village and Beaulieu Park (CA, CB, CC & CD)	
Ward: Chelmer Village and Beaulieu Park	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	As a city councillor for Chelmer Village & Beaulieu Park, I would support the idea of an additional polling station to the south of Chelmer Village. It is unfortunate that there is no suitable building for that purpose at present, but the Village Square is accessible and the Chelmers Village Hall does seem to have sufficient capacity for our 3258 electors, which is also a tribute to the polling clerks who work so hard on the day. It is good that arrangements have been made at Barnes Farm Junior School to ensure that the school can continue to function normally on polling days. The intended change of District Codes, from CA, CB, CC, CD to CA1, CA2, CA3, CA4 for administrative purposes is noted. Thank you.

Polling District: Great Baddow Village- Great Baddow East (CK)	
Ward: Great Baddow East	
Consultation Comments:	
Parish Council:	"Great Baddow Parish Council wishes to submit the following comments: The council cannot understand why St Mary's is regarded as accessible as it has no carpark, the bus link is the same as the Parish Hall's and the carpark to use to walk to the church is the Vineyards also the same carpark that would be used for the Parish Hall. The Parish Hall was considered suitable and satisfactory last time, despite the large electorate with no issues as far as the council is aware and so the council cannot see why another venue is needed. If it is felt that another venue is essential and your only option is St Mary's the council feels it could cause much confusion for the electorate. If another option is required has the UCR Church in Great Baddow been considered? This has its own carpark as well. Great Baddow West have you thought about using the Millennium Centre in Great Baddow Recreation Ground. This has a big car park and is also very accessible for people walking or taking public transport as there are many bus stops along Baddow Road."
Ward Councillor:	"I have had a look at the proposals for Great Baddow East and West and I am happy with all the changes suggested."

	<p>"I am commenting on the proposals for splitting Great Baddow Village Ward into two polling districts, with a second polling station at St Mary's Church. I cannot see why St Mary's is regarded as accessible. It has no car park of its own and the CCC car park behind the church and Russells Restaurant is the only long stay car park left in the village. As such it rarely has more than the odd empty space and is often completely full. The only other car parks are those belonging to the Vineyards; the main one is directly opposite the existing polling station at the Parish Hall and the smaller one nearer the church would involve crossing the road from the car park on a dangerous blind bend. As the Parish Hall was considered satisfactory the last time, despite the large electorate, I cannot see the sense of splitting the polling district if the only other option is St Mary's. It is not convenient by car, does not have a good, reliable bus service and is not central to the proposed new district. I do not see who stands to gain from the proposed split. If you were still determined to split the district, the URC church would at least have the benefit of a small car park of its own, although is no better for public transport."</p>
Ward Councillor:	
	<p>"Great Baddow East St Mary's Church is some distance from the nearest road --Church Street. There is no parking in Church Street. the two shortest routes involve 1) lots of steps 2) a step difficult for wheelchairs 3) a steep slope. the parking area in the Chase is usually full. The existing polling station at the Parish is adequate with parking opposite despite it serving a large electorate."</p>
Ward Councillor:	
Local Community Group	<p>"large population and a relatively large urban area, polling station in Parish Hall is at one end of polling district, but other areas might be better served by an additional polling station, e.g. in one of the Baddow Hall schools."</p>

Polling District: Dorest Avenue - Great Baddow West (CL)	
Ward: Great Baddow West	
Consultation Comments:	
Community Group:	"Dorset Avenue: no polling station in the district itself, though there is a school in the district (Larkrise)"
Ward Councillor:	"I have had a look at the proposals for Great Baddow East and West and I am happy with all the changes suggested."
Ward Councillor:	<p>"As a councillor for Great Baddow West, the closeness of the two polling stations causes confusion for some residents. Elderly residents in the Galleywood Road area find Hamptons very difficult to get too. Some residents have to pass the polling station at Hamptons to get to their polling station at Beehive Lane school. This seems nonsense. The polling station was at Larkrise School. Has Essex Dance Theatre on the school site been approached? This would be much more central and accessible for Rothmans Ward."</p>
County Councillor:	<p>"In Great Baddow West during the last two elections the polling stations have both been in Beehive Lane, with people close to one polling station (Hamptons) being required to vote at Beehive Community Primary School, and people having to travel across the ward to vote. This caused confusion and annoyance among voters, not unsurprisingly. The polling stations definitely need to be looked at in this area and there needs to be another polling station on the other side of the ward."</p>

Polling District: Beehive Lane - Great Baddow West (CM)	
Ward: Great Baddow West	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"I have had a look at the proposals for Great Baddow East and West and I am happy with all the changes suggested."
Ward Councillor:	<p>"Great Baddow West --St Pauls Church -- There is no car park here. The last time this was used this location was considered dangerous with cars stopping and potentially other cars running into them having turned right from Beehive Lane. Hamptons would be better for this polling district (with the other polling district relocated to the dance theatre in Larkrise school as proposed)."</p>
Ward Councillor:	<p>"However, in Great Baddow West during the last two elections the polling stations have both been in Beehive Lane, with people close to one polling station (Hamptons) being required to vote at Beehive Community Primary School, and people having to travel across the ward to vote. This caused confusion and annoyance among voters, not unsurprisingly. The polling stations definitely need to be looked at in this area and there needs to be another polling station on the other side of the ward."</p>

Polling District: Civic and Rectory Lane - Marconi (CP & CQ)	
Ward: Marconi	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"I'm happy with the polling stations in Marconi ward."

Polling District: Victoria Road - Moulsham and Central (CU)	
Ward: Moulsham and Central	
Consultation Comments:	

Local Community Group:	<p>"Polling Station at Essex Record Office (ERO) is away from most of the population. Substantial new home building is underway near ERO, but also on Victoria Road some distance away. There is relatively a low population in this district at present, but once the population increases with the completion of the new homes, an additional polling station in the Waterloo Lane/Victoria Road/New Street area may be worthwhile."</p>
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Polling District: Collingwood - South Woodham - Chetwood and Collingwood (MV)	
Ward: South Woodham- Chetwood and Collingwood	
Consultation Comments:	
Individual:	<p>"Collingwood School is not central to the area that is covered for that ward in fact it is on the very periphery. Some people would find it necessary to take their cars in this case with the ensuing air contamination. With the polling station being in the centre of town, say William de Ferrers centre, where they have plenty of room for parking should people find it prudent to take cars into the area should they be on their homeward bound journey from work. Collingwood never had good parking even for residents let alone voters. Neighbours of the school will be up in arms again with regards to lost parking spaces."</p>
Individual:	<p>"Collingwood's 5 INSET days for 2019-2020 have already been agreed, communicated to parents and speakers have been booked. In view of the current political climate, there could be several polling days. Would these be taken in addition to INSET days? This would mean extra childcare costs for parents, loss of wages for staff and is detrimental to pupil's education. There are plenty of other available buildings in the local area ie The Scout Hut, The Rugby Club in Compass Gardens, The swimming Pool or Library and above shops in the town. These are all public buildings within 5 minutes walk from Collingwood School and would be more appropriate."</p>
Individual:	<p>"real concerns about Collingwood school being used a polling station, INSET days already set at the school, the impact that closing would have on the education and standards at the school, one days loss can be detrimental to a children as stated in leave of absence policies, children at the school have a range of needs that would be unsettling if the school was to stay in session for example safeguarding risk to the pupils with the public going in and out unsupervised, how does this fit the governments safeguarding agenda of pupils. There are also a number of pupils at the school that are at risk of significant harm from estranged parents and how can they be safeguarded if the public are in and out of the school. As a resident and voter at the Chetwood centre this is neither confusing or difficult to manage. If there have been no complaints during the recent voting other than officers and councillors, why would it even be a consideration to move the polling station."</p>
Individual:	<p>"1) How would the school manage the safety of all the pupils but especially children with SEN including my son who attends the school and has very challenging behaviour especially around strangers and loud noises and the school has an usually high number of SEN children attending due to its excellent reputation. 2) There is hardly any car parking near the school and the spaces available are minimal and I know that there are already issues with parents parking illegally on yellow lines and local residents complaining so this would dramatically increase the volume of traffic and the safety of the children coming out of school would then be a big issue. 3) As a parent I have already organised childcare around the school calendar which have already been confirmed and so have all the other parents that I know which would also cause huge problems for all of us."</p>
Individual:	<p>"I am concerned that you are considering using Collingwood Primary School as a voting station, I believe this to be detrimental to my child's education and make it extremely difficult for me to gain childcare as a working mum. In this current climate with the possibility of several voting possibilities I would like the council to seek elsewhere in the town as a possible venue, for the last few years we have been going to Chetwood who h is no longer a school, I'm not sure why this is no longer an option as it sits there as an empty building."</p>
Individual:	<p>"I am assume this will be ignored. However I am concerned about making Collingwood School a Polling Station. This school is a small school (I assume that the returning office has looked at the location to understand the size of the school and its usefulness) with not lots of space for a polling station. The only place I could see this occurring is in the middle of the school building. This raises a number of concerns around the safety for Primary School Children. With any person able to work on premise and off premise during the election, whilst Primary School children are on premise. Unless the school is to be closed and thus impacting the education of those students (Which I am surprised about, as taking a child out of school as a parent can result in a fine because education is so important). I must note the school in the last 5 years has moved from needing work to good. Therefore I know this is one day, but everyday of learning is a special day in a person so small. I would hope this would not impact that good work."</p>
Individual:	<p>"This is disruptive for the students at Collingwood. Not good for children having members of public walking on to the grounds."</p>
Individual:	<p>"It would be detrimental to the children's education to use Collingwood Primary school as a polling station- there are other buildings that could be used. Also it would mean parents incurring additional child care costs!"</p>
Individual:	<p>"Hello, I would like suggest that the polling station wouldn't be held in Collingwood primary school as this may result in days off for the schools pupils which may effect there learning development. I would suggest using a local hall instead of the school."</p>

Individual:	"I'm opposed to the use of Collingwood school as a polling station. My son has recently started there and I feel by closing the school for use on polling days it will be detrimental to his education. As well as saying inconvenience to my fellow parents who work and cannot easily arrange childcare."
Individual:	"I am against using Collingwood Primary School as a potential polling station. Children have enough time off school without adding an extra day. Plus the extra childcare costs incurred to parents. suggest using the school from 4pm till 10.00pm only so the school can still be open or perhaps use the library."
SWF Town Council:	"South Woodham Ferrers Town Council would like to raise the following comments: from reviewing the policy and experiences from the recent local elections. The Town Council would welcome the use of the Collingwood School to be used as a polling station due to the confusion of using the Chetwood centre as a polling station for dual wards. It was also noted that there was poor disabled access to the Chetwood polling station which was experienced personally by a Town Councillor he raised his concerns with the polling staff on the day of the election but when the polling station was used for another election the same experiences were encountered and the issues hadn't been addressed. Whilst it is appreciated that residents could request to have a postal vote in the case of an unforeseen injury there is not time to put these measures in place but also residents should not be deterred from visiting a polling station due to their disability."
SWF Tax Payers Association:	"Chetwood and Collingwood share the same polling station at the old Chetwood School. This is convenient for most residents. It would be difficult to find a suitable polling station in Collingwood ward other than the primary school or William de Ferrers neither of which are likely to want to host a polling station and neither would be as convenient. It is possible to park close to Chetwood and it has easy access for the disabled. The only improvement there would be to relay a few of the slabs outside the doors. The facilities for Elmwood and Woodville are also adequate and easily accessible with onsite parking etc. As long as all the sites remain available there is no need to change in South Woodham"
Ward Councillor:	"In SWF there are 4 Town Council Wards and Collingwood ward polling station is not located in the ward. This should be rectified as causes confusion amongst voters"
Ward Councillor:	"South Woodham Ferrers works very well with the present polling stations."

Polling District: Hills and Highfield - St Andrews (CAE)	
Ward: St Andrews	
Consultation Comments:	
Individual:	"RHP Bowls Club in Canterbury Way is a good location for south Hills & Highfield electors to vote at."

Polling District: Springfield Chelmer and Springfield Place - The Lawns (CAH & CAJ)	
Ward: The Lawns	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"As the current city councillor for the Lawns Ward it is interesting to see an additional polling station proposed at the Scout Hut on Lawn Lane. While I could understand that this MAY lead to an increase in turnout (due to ease of voting), I'm not sure it would be financially worth any additional costs. The ward is consistently has one of the highest turn-outs, and I'm not convinced an extra polling station would help that much, especially as the current polling station arrangements have worked well for a number of years, with no additional housing added recently, or proposed soon. Chelmer Village and Beaulieu - I am concerned over the number of times Barnes Farm school has to close due to elections, and the lost time for pupils (my two little ones being some of them!). I do feel this knocks on to their education. The Community Hall on the village square is literally only a few 100 metres away to walk, and would like to see combining the two being considered."

Polling District: Holy Trinity - Trinity (CAK)	
Ward: Trinity	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"Holy Trinity church is happy to host a polling station in its church centre."
Ward Councillor:	"Happy with proposals for Trinity Ward"

Polling District: Timsons - Trinity (CAL)	
Ward: Trinity	
Consultation Comments:	
Ward Councillor:	"Happy with proposals for Trinity Ward"

Polling District: Writtle North and Writtle South - Writtle (SP & SQ)	
Ward: Writtle	
Consultation Comments:	

Ward Councillor:	<p>"Writtle North (SP) and Writtle South (SQ). 1. Longmeads House is a poor choice for a Polling Station as it is in, and accessed only, from Writtle North, the pedestrian access from Writtle South to Longmeads, the Rollstones estate, having been closed some years ago. 2. There is no need to redraw the boundaries - they should be left as they are. 3. Both Polling Stations should be situated on The Green at either the Village Hall and/or the Christian Centre."</p>
Ward Councillor:	<p>"Before Longmeads House was used as the Polling Station for the South Ward, we voted at the School. I assumed that the move was because the School did not appreciate the disruption caused by voters! I may be wrong in my assumption.</p> <p>If the School is unwilling, I see no reason why the two halls around The Green should not be used, i.e. The Village Hall and/or The Christian Centre. The Christian Centre has a small hall with separate access."</p>
Ward Councillor:	<p>"I believe that the way the boundary between North and South is drawn and the inability to use Writtle School necessitates going against the advisory requirement to use a place within the same polling district! There are several reasons for this. If you look at all the houses bounded by Lodge Road, Paradise Road and Margareting Road, they are all far nearer to the Village centre (Green) than they are to their polling place in Redwood Drive! Many of the houses on the Brandocks (Rollestons estate) are also nearer to the Village centre (using the many footpaths) than they are to Redwood (where they would have to use the main roads as there are no footpaths!"</p>

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

6 November 2019

AGENDA ITEM 7

Subject	Constitution Part 5.6 : Code of Conduct for Employees/Workers
Report by	Louise Goodwin, Director of Connected Chelmsford

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Debbie Wootton, HR Services Manager

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the revised Code of Conduct for Employees/Workers (Part 5.6 of the Constitution) and for the Committee to recommend its submission to Council in December 2019 for approval.

Recommendation(s)

1. To note the changes to the revised Code of Conduct (Part 5.6 of the Constitution) and supporting Equality Impact Assessment
2. That the Council be recommended to approve the amendments to its constitution detailed in Appendix 1 of this report.

Corporate Implications

Legal:	None
Financial:	None
Personnel:	The revised Code of Conduct will be notified to all employees/workers to enable them to be aware of standards, values and behaviours they must adhere to
Risk Management:	By setting clear standards for employees/workers the risk of infringement of standards and behaviours is lessened. It will also enable the Council to have a clear, consistent and fair framework to deal with any issues.
Equalities and Diversity:	Please see Equality Impact Assessment attached
Health and Safety:	None
IT:	None
Other:	None

Consultees	Policy Working Group HR Services Manager The Legal and Democratic Services Manager The Digital Services Manager Unison The Council's Management team HR Business Partners
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Policies and Strategies

The report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the Council:

Relevant information to support the Code of Conduct is as follows:

Financial regulation
Employment Policies and Procedures
Health and Safety Responsibilities
Safeguarding
Data and Information
Council Constitution

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Code of Conduct applies to all Chelmsford City Council employees and workers. The Code sets out the standards of conduct that Chelmsford City Council employees and workers should adhere to when carrying out their work and duties. In addition, its purpose is to maintain and improve standards and protect employees from misunderstanding or criticism.
- 1.2 The review is part of a normal cycle of review of HR policies and other documents. Legal and Democratic Services have also updated the Code to reflect new guidance on the Registration of Officer Interests. The Form to enable Officers to declare Officer Interests will be reviewed by Legal and Democratic Services before publication of the Code of Conduct.

2. The Review Process

- 2.1 The review process has been undertaken by Human Resources following consultation as outlined above, culminating in a final review by the Council's Management Team.
- 2.2 The revision of the Code has enabled additional sections to be included and revisions made to existing sections of the Code.
- 2.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been developed to review the impact of the Code on employees/workers and service users.

3. Summary of amendments

3.1 The revised Code of Conduct includes new sections on the following:

- Principles of Public Life
- Disclosure of Criminal Convictions during employment
- Environmental impact
- Social Media
- Communications and Publication
- Working and contact with the media
- Safeguarding

3.2 Revisions to existing sections of the Code are:

- Reference to new Values and Behaviour framework
- Revised wording on the consumption of drugs and alcohol
- Standard of dress including the display of badges, insignia and inclusion of tattoo guidance
- Wording on disclosure of information to take account GDPR
- Expanded section on equality, diversity and inclusion
- Expanded section on the awarding of contracts including information on the anti-bribery and corruption policy
- Revised wording on outside work commitments including paid and unpaid work
- Inclusion of the word health in the security and safety section

4. Further Action

4.1 It will be important to ensure that the revised Code of Conduct is communicated to all employees and workers via the intranet, employee self-service, email and/or briefing where appropriate.

4.2 New recruits will be provided with Code of Conduct on appointment.

4.3 The Code of Conduct will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis unless amendments are necessary in the interim period due to legislative or policy change for instance.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 Code of Conduct for Employees and Workers

Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Human Resources

Code of Conduct for Employees/Workers

I

*references to employees also includes workers

Chelmsford City Council

Code of conduct for employees/workers

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Appendix I Registration of Officer interests

1. Introduction

1.1. Application

This Code of Conduct applies to all Chelmsford City Council employees* and workers irrespective of the job that they do or the grade that they are on.

1.2 Principles of public life

The 7 principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office holder. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>

These principles underpin the Council's policies, procedures and processes set out in this Code of Conduct and elsewhere.

This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in:

- the civil service
- local government
- the police
- the courts and probation services
- non-departmental public bodies
- health, education, social and care services

The principles also apply to all those in other sectors that deliver public services.

They were first set out by Lord Nolan in 1995 and they are included in the Ministerial code.

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest and not in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

*references to employees also includes workers

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

1.3. Purpose behind the Code

Chelmsford City Council is a public authority funded in the main from revenue raised by local and central government taxation. As such, the public, and all other individuals and organisations who come into contact with the Council, are entitled to expect from the Council's employees the highest standard of service in terms of integrity, efficiency, impartiality and courtesy.

This Code sets out the standards of conduct that Chelmsford City Council employees should adhere to when carrying out their work and duties. In addition, its purpose is to maintain and improve standards and protect employees from misunderstanding or criticism.

Employees should always bear in mind that it is not enough to avoid actual impropriety or improper conduct. Employees should always endeavour to avoid any occasion for suspicion and any appearance of improper conduct or impropriety.

1.4. Status of the Code

This Code has been formally approved and adopted by the Council.

The Council believes that the Code represents the standard against which the conduct of employees will be judged, both by the public and by their fellow employees. It is not an exhaustive listing of all standards expected of employees.

1.5. Non-Observance of the Code

Failure to adhere to the Code can bring the Council and indeed the whole local government service into disrepute. Such failure could also lead to a finding of maladministration on the part of the Council by the Local Government Ombudsman.

One of the purposes of the Code is to provide guidance to employees and protect them from misunderstanding or criticism. It is therefore in each employee's own interest to adhere to the Code. Employees should be aware that breach of the Code will constitute misconduct (and in certain circumstances, gross misconduct), which may lead to disciplinary action being instituted against the employee in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedures.

Furthermore, employees need to be aware that conduct which is contrary to certain provisions of the Code (e.g. those dealing with unauthorised disclosure of confidential information) could, depending upon the precise circumstances of the case, also amount to an offence under the criminal law and thus result in prosecution of the employee concerned.

1.6. Interpretation

The Code is to be interpreted in spirit as well as by the letter. An employee who is in any doubt as to whether a provision in the Code is applicable to their situation should, in the first instance, refer the matter to their manager.

2. Values and Behaviours

The Council has adopted certain values – Accountability, Creativity, Learning and Encouraging, Collaborative and Trust - which are at the core of how staff and the organisation are expected to behave. These are key to delivering the Council's vision and are the qualities that we expect from all staff. All employees have a responsibility for ensuring that they are aware of the Behaviours which underpin these values and that they actively support and demonstrate these. Information is available on the intranet or through employee self-service.

3. Customer Service and Standards

3.1. General

Employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public and local community and to abide by the customer care standards set by the Council. Employees who, during their employment, have contact with the public, whether face to face, over the telephone or by way of written

correspondence should always ensure that they deal with the individual(s) in an efficient and courteous manner, irrespective of the circumstances.

3.2. Standards of Dress

Employees should dress in a manner appropriate to their role to ensure, so far as is reasonably possible, that no offence is caused to individual members of the public, including members of minority groups. Employees should not wear any badges, jewellery or insignia which might give offence, or which could be taken to indicate that the wearer is a supporter of a particular political party or pressure group. Tattoos should not be displayed which give offence or indicate that the employee is a supporter of a particular political group or radical group which is contrary to the values of public service.

3.3. Consumption of Alcohol and Drugs

Employees should not consume any alcohol before or during their working day, including during their lunch break, if it is likely to have an adverse effect on their work or if it would be inappropriate. For employees whose role requires them to drive or operate machinery, then alcohol should not be consumed prior to, or whilst, driving or operating machinery. With the exception of prescription drugs, or pharmacy over the counter drugs, employees should not take drugs during work times.

3.4 Comments, compliments and complaints

Employees who, during their employment, have contact with the public should familiarise themselves with the Council's comments, compliments and complaints policy and procedure and, where appropriate, bring the procedure to the attention of the public.

Employees should be prepared to disclose to any member of the public their name and position with the Council unless in any case they have genuine cause to believe that such disclosure might compromise their own personal safety.

3.5 Hours and attendance

Reliability in time keeping, attendance and in reporting sickness are all critical to the success of Council services. Poor attendance and bad timekeeping increase costs, reduce service outputs and may undermine the reputation of the Council. Employees should ensure that they:

- Comply with the timekeeping requirement of their job ensuring accuracy of record keeping at all times.
- Are in the workplace and working when they should be

- Ask their manager if there is a need to take time off, for example for a doctor's visit
- Agree with their line manager in advance any leave or time off

3.6 Disciplinary standards

These disciplinary standards apply to all Chelmsford City Council employees irrespective of the job they do or the grade they are on.

They should be read in conjunction with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure and this Code of Conduct

Purpose behind the disciplinary standards

The Council accepts that most of its employees can be relied on to conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, irrespective of formal rules. However, in a large organisation such as the Council it is necessary for there to be standards which:

Identifies conduct which is unacceptable to the Council as an employer,

Indicates the likely consequences of such conduct; and

Provides a framework for managers and employees that helps ensure that the required high standards of job performance and conduct are met and maintained

4. Disclosure and use of confidential information

4.1. Information Security

All employees are responsible for keeping personal data, which they access or process, secure and up to date. Line managers have responsibility for the type of personal data they collect and how they use it. Managers are also required to ensure that staff are appropriately trained on how to process personal information in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016

Individuals who have access to personal data are required:

- to access only data that they have authority to access and only for authorised purposes;
- not to disclose data except to individuals (whether inside or outside the organisation) who have appropriate authorisation;
- to keep data secure (for example by complying with rules on access to premises, computer access, including password protection, and secure file storage and destruction);

- not to remove personal data, or devices containing or that can be used to access personal data, from the organisation's premises without adopting appropriate security measures (such as encryption or password protection) to secure the data and the device;
- not to store personal data on local drives or on personal devices that are used for work purposes; and
- to report data breaches of which they become aware to the Information Governance Team in line with the Council's Data Breach Policy and Procedure.

Failing to observe these requirements may amount to a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the Council's disciplinary procedure. Significant or deliberate breaches of this policy, such as accessing employee or customer data without authorisation or a legitimate reason to do so, may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Employees should communicate with the Council's Monitoring Officer, or their own Service Manager to raise concerns regarding a breach of conduct or other issue of concern related to the delivery of the Council's responsibilities. In some cases, the appropriate disclosure route may be raised by using the Council's Whistleblowing procedure.

4.2 Disclosure of criminal convictions during employment

Employees who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment (this includes outside of your working hours) with the Council are required to immediately notify their line manager in writing of the offence and the penalty.

This includes motoring offences which result in a court action and a driving restriction but not parking offences/fines where no penalty points are incurred.

The effect of any conviction or caution will be considered with regard to the post occupied and the nature and severity of the offence and penalty. Any action that may be taken by the Council will be in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

4.3. Use of Information by Employees

Employees should never use confidential or sensitive information obtained by them during their employment for personal gain or benefit or disclose it without permission to any third party.

5. Equality, diversity and inclusion

All members of the local community, customers and our employees have a right to be treated with fairness and respect.

The Council is fully committed to the elimination of unlawful and unfair

discrimination and values the differences that a diverse workforce brings to the organisation. The Council aims to create a work environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

The Council will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.

All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of equality, diversity and inclusion. Behaviour, actions or words that transgress the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the Council's bullying and harassment and disciplinary policies, and this Code of Conduct.

6. Political neutrality

6.1. When Carrying Out Work

Employees (whether or not their post is designated as politically restricted) should follow every lawful expressed policy of the Council and should not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with or influence their work.

6.2. Dealings with Elected Members

Employees should bear in mind that they serve the Council as a whole. They therefore serve all Elected Members and not just those of the controlling group and should ensure that the individual rights of all Elected Members are respected. It must be ensured that working relationships are kept on a professional basis.

6.3. Political Assistants

Political assistants appointed in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 are exempt from the standards set out in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2

7. Acceptance of gifts & hospitality

7.1. General

Except in the very limited circumstances employees should not accept any fees, gifts or other benefits on their own behalf or on behalf of a third party, from any member of the public, pressure group or other outside party. All employees are expected to make themselves aware of the guidance on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality which is available on the intranet or from HR.

7.2. Accepting Hospitality

Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if these are occasions on which they are gathering, imparting or exchanging information or representing the Council. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the Council should be seen to be represented. Attendance at such functions should be authorised in accordance with the procedure set out in the protocol for gifts and hospitality.

Employees should be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them **corruptly** to receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage **for doing, or not doing anything, or showing favour or disfavour to any person** in their official capacity. If an allegation is made then it is for the employee to demonstrate via an investigation process that any gift, loan, fee, reward received has not been corruptly obtained.

7.3. Giving of Hospitality

The giving of hospitality to visiting individuals, and during meetings with outside individuals/organisations which take place off Council premises, is acceptable provided that

- (i) the visit/meeting relates to Council business; and
- (ii) such hospitality is of a kind and proportionate to the circumstances.

In some cases, it may well be wrong not to offer hospitality. For example, the failure to offer a visitor basic refreshment (i.e. tea/coffee) would, in certain circumstances, be construed as discourteous, and possibly contrary to the Council's customer care ethos. Similarly, in the case of lengthy meetings the provision of a "working lunch" may well be appropriate. Hospitality should never be lavish or extravagant and should be proportionate to our role as public body. Employees should always have regard to how such hospitality might be perceived by members of the public - bearing in mind the Council is a public body funded in the main by local and central government taxation, and the need for impartiality in relations with contractors and potential contractors.

8. Personal interests - disclosure etc

8.1. The Underlying Principle

Employees should never use their positions with the Council to seek special favour or preferential treatment for themselves, or friends or relatives. Equally important, employees should not allow the impression to be created that they are, or may be, using their position to promote private or personal interests.

8.2. Disclosure Generally

Employees should disclose, in writing, to their manager any personal interest (whether financial or non-financial in nature) which may affect, or be considered by others to affect, an employee's impartiality in any matter relevant to his/her duties. Employees should make themselves aware of the guidance on registering their interests. The manager should ensure that the disclosure is recorded in the register of interests maintained by Democratic Services.

Note: Non-financial interests could, for example, include involvement with an organisation receiving grant aid from the Council, or involvement with an organisation or pressure group which is seeking to influence or change the Council's policies.

8.3. Statutory Duty to Disclose any Financial Interest in Contract

Employees must be aware that by law (Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972) they are required to disclose in writing to the Council any financial interest, whether direct or indirect, which they have in any contract which, to their knowledge, has been, or is proposed to be entered into by the Council. Failure to disclose such an interest is a serious criminal offence.

Democratic Services maintains a register for the disclosure of financial (pecuniary) interests. This register is open to inspection by the public.

Employees who are not sure whether disclosure is required should initially refer the matter to their manager.

9. Relations with outside contractors and proposed contractors

9.1. Familiarity with Contract Rules etc.

Employees who make or advise on purchasing decisions or are otherwise involved in the ordering of goods or services on behalf of the Council must ensure that they are familiar with the Council's Contract Rules and Financial Regulations relating to contracts and orders.

9.2. Awarding of Contracts and Orders

Employees who make purchasing decisions, or who are otherwise involved in the ordering of goods or services on behalf of the Council, must ensure that orders and contracts are awarded strictly in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules and that no special favour is shown, or preferential treatment given, to businesses run by partners, relatives, friends or former employees.

All employees should be familiar with the requirements of the Bribery Act and the Anti-Bribery and Corruption policy. The Council is committed to protecting the public purse and the services it provides from being abused.

We require that all staff, including those permanently employed, temporary agency staff and contractors:

- act honestly and with integrity always and safeguard the organisation's resources for which they are responsible
- comply with the spirit, as well as the letter, of the laws and regulations of all jurisdictions in which the Council operates, in respect of the lawful and responsible conduct of activities.

The Council will not tolerate fraud and corruption in the administration of its responsibilities, whether from inside or outside the Authority.

The Council's expectation of propriety and accountability is that staff at all levels will lead by example in ensuring adherence to legal requirements, rules, procedures and practices.

The Council also expects that individuals and organisations with which it comes into contact will act towards the Authority with integrity.

9.3. Disclosure of Private Work Carried out by Contractors - The General Principle

Corporate Directors, Service Managers, and any other employees who are involved in purchasing decisions (including the selection of persons invited to tender, and the evaluation of tenders etc) and who have, or have had, a private business relationship (as defined below) with a person or company whom they know has or is seeking to have a contractual relationship with the Council (whether for the supply of goods, services or construction works) should disclose that fact in writing to Democratic Services.

Democratic Services shall record the disclosure in a register which is kept for that purpose and which is open to inspection by the public.

Definition of Private Business Relationship

An employee shall be taken to have a private business relationship with a person or company if that person or company has been engaged to carry out work to the employee's home or that of his/her family or close friend(s); or to supply any goods or services to the employee or his/her family or close friend(s).

9.4. Exceptions

This part of the Code shall not, however, be taken as requiring an employee to disclose a private business relationship with:

- (1) any public utility company or statutory undertakers (e.g. British Telecommunications Plc, Eastern Electricity, rail operators and other public transport companies) where work done, or goods/services supplied is a kind which is provided or made available to a large section of the general population.
- (2) any bank or similar financial institution where the services provided are of a kind commonly provided or made available to other customers of the bank/institution.
- (3) any retail store or outlet (e.g. a supermarket or bookshop) where the private business relationship has arisen solely because the employee has purchased from the store/outlet (during its opening hours) goods or services which, at the time of purchase were on display or offer to the public at the same price and on the same terms.

9.5. Employees Who Supervise Contracts

Employees who supervise contractors should disclose in writing to Democratic Services any private business relationship (as defined in 9.3 above) which they have, or have had, with any of the contractors which come within their supervision. Democratic Services shall record the disclosure in a register which is kept for that purpose and which is open to inspection by the public.

10. Outside commitments

Employees should not engage in any outside work which means any paid or unpaid work including voluntary work which conflicts or may conflict with the Council's interests.

An employee who wishes to take up outside work, whether paid or unpaid, must obtain approval before accepting. A proforma for this purpose can be found in Appendix I.

If an employee already has other employment or commitments when they join the Council, including volunteering, they must make this known to their manager who must ensure that they are fully able to undertake their contractual duties.

The Council has an obligation to protect the welfare of its employees. When considering other work, all employees must comply with the Working Time Regulations which govern the total number of hours that can be safely worked as well as ensure that the required rest breaks under regulation can be taken

An employee undertaking secondary employment outside of the Council must complete a Working Hours declaration to ensure that the hours worked in total are permitted under legislation including required rest breaks.

An employee who works in more than one role for the Council will be required to comply with Working Time regulation in relation to hours work and to ensure that required rest breaks are taken.

I 1. Separation of roles during tendering

I 1.1. Separation of Roles

Employees involved in the tendering process and dealing with contractors should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles within the Council. Senior employees who have both client and contractor responsibilities must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.

I 1.2. Fairness and Impartiality

Employees in contractor or client units must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors.

I 2. Use of resources and council property etc

I 2.1. Use of Resources

Employees must ensure that they use public funds and resources entrusted to them in a responsible manner. They should always ensure value for money to the local community.

I 2.2. Commitment to the environment

The Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in July 2019 and expects its employees to consider the environmental impact of their actions and behaviour and, in particular, to contribute to reducing waste and reducing carbon emissions where possible when at work

I 2.3. Use of Council Property Etc

Except for cars provided in accordance with the staff car-lease scheme employees should not use Council property, equipment (including computer/word processing hardware and specialist software) and materials for their own personal gain or private purposes with the exception of accessing the internet during non-working time lunch breaks in accordance with the Council's Acceptable Use policy.

I 2.4. Security, health and safety

Employees should be mindful of the constant need to ensure, so far as is practicable, the security and health and safety of their fellow employees, and the safeguarding of Council property and buildings. Each employee should

endeavour to avoid acts or omissions on their own part which may be prejudicial to, or compromise, health, safety and security.

13. Close Personal Relationships at Work

13.1 Recruitment

Employees involved in recruitment must ensure that appointments are made based on merit. To avoid any possible accusation of bias, an employee must not be involved in making an appointment if they are related to, or have a close personal relationship with an applicant, in accordance with the Employment Rules in the Authority's Constitution

13.2 Other Employment Matters

Employees must not be involved in decisions relating to disciplinary, grievance, promotion or payment related matters, which relate to someone with whom they have a close personal relationship

13.3 Relations with Other Employees

Mutual respect and professional conduct between colleagues are essential to good local government. Employees are required to act in a professional manner and not allow personal relationships to impact on their work and professionalism.

Employees are asked to complete a declaration form regarding Close Personal Relationships at work, following which an assessment will be undertaken to set out arrangements to protect both the employee and the Council.

The Council reserves the right to address any issues arising from close personal relationships at work that cause ongoing work issues and take appropriate action to resolve the issue.

14 Social media, communications and working with the media

14.1 Social media

Using Social media on behalf of the Council

When engaging with customers or organisations on behalf of the Council through Social Media, employees should always remember that they are representing the Council. Employees should represent the Council ethically and with honesty and integrity.

Personal social media use

Employees should not post anything, in either their own time or during work time, that could adversely damage the image of the Council or have the potential to do so. Employees must not breach confidentiality by divulging any personal or sensitive information through social media.

14.2 Communications and publication

Employees must not publicise material which is confidential or against the Council's or our employee's interests.

14.3 Working and contact with the media

Employees should not speak, write, give interviews or take phone calls for information unless the communications team and your manager have given you permission to do so or unless this is part of your role for the Council.

15. Safeguarding

The Council provides a wide range of services and facilities and will promote the welfare and protection of children and adults at risk within all services by:

- Respecting the rights, wishes, feelings and privacy of children and adults.
- Taking seriously and responding appropriately and promptly to all concerns, incidents and allegations.
- Requiring organisations that the Council contracts to provide the Council with services, to have appropriate safeguarding procedures and training in place and adopt this policy.
- Ensuring that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and adults at risk through the Council's Safer Recruitment Procedure.
- Not tolerating harassment of any Council employees, elected Members, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, suppliers, consultants or children/adults who raise concerns of abuse.
- Preventing abuse by promoting good practice, creating a safe and healthy environment and avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse occur.

It is expected that all employees:

- Understand the different forms abuse as well as their roles and responsibilities under this Code of Conduct and the Safeguarding Policy.
- Know how to record and report safeguarding concerns, incidents or allegations.

16. Generally

If an employee has any doubt as to whether any action taken or contemplated on his/her part, or on the part of a third party, is likely to result or has resulted in a breach of this Code of Conduct then he/she should discuss the matter with his/her manager or Human Resources as soon as possible.

Relevant information to support this Code of Conduct is available on the intranet or via your line manager including the following:

- Financial regulation
- Employment policies and procedures
- Health and Safety responsibilities
- Safeguarding
- Data and Information
- Council Constitution



REGISTRATION OF OFFICER INTERESTS

[Guidance on the registration of interests](#)

Your name	
Your Directorate	
Your Service	
Your line manager's name	

I register the following interests pursuant to Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Employees Code of Conduct:

Interest	
1.	<p>Your membership of or the fact that you are in a position of general management and control of a body that falls within one or more of the following descriptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. to which you have been appointed or nominated by the City Council b. exercising functions of a public nature c. directed towards charitable purposes <p><i>The descriptions identified are alternatives, therefore you need to register any interests that falls within any of the descriptions in (a), (b) or (c). Under paragraph (a) there are a number of bodies to which the Council makes officer appointments such as Bradwell Local Community Liaison Council and the Essex Society for Archaeology and History. The organisations that should be included in paragraph (b) include those that lobby government to make changes to policy or laws, for example, an active member of the National Trust or AA which may seek to influence public policy. Under paragraph (c) this includes not only registered charities but other organisations that raise funds for charities such as Freemasons.</i></p>
	<p>Details</p>

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2.	<p>Any body of which you are a member or to which you have been elected personally or professionally:</p> <p>(a) receiving grant aid from the Council; or</p> <p>(b) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union).</p>
	<p>Details</p>
3.	<p>Any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, which you have in any contract, which has been or is proposed to be entered into by Chelmsford City Council</p> <p><i>If you have entered into any form of contract with the Council for the supply of goods or services this should be entered here but only if there are still obligations to be fulfilled such as payments to be made or services to be provided. Examples are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Use of Council commercial waste collection facilities by a body or company which you own.</i> - <i>Use of the Council's Building Control Team's services in relation to works at any property owned by a body/company in which you have an interest.</i>
	<p>Details</p>
4.	<p>Any body of which you are a member.</p> <p>Any firm in which you are a partner.</p> <p>A company of which you or a close relative are a remunerated director.</p> <p>A company run by a relative, friend, partner, or former employee or yours which has or is tendering for a contractual relationship with Chelmsford City Council (whether for the supply of goods, services or construction work).</p>
	<p>Details</p>

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5.	Any work or services provided to you in a private capacity (a private business relationship) by any business, partnership or sole trader which has tendered or is tendering for a contractual relationship with Chelmsford City Council (whether for the supply of goods, services or construction work).
	Details
6.	Any employment or business carried on by you in addition to your employment by Chelmsford City Council.
	Details
7.	Any organisation of which you are a member to which you have been elected or appointed professionally or personally which the Council could from time to time have any dealings with that are not covered in other categories above.
	Details

Your signature:

Date:

Your line manager's signature:

Date:

Monitoring Officer's signature:

Date:

Guidance Notes for Authorisation

Directors should consider the following:

- Does the additional employment conflict with the Council's interests i.e. benefitting from position of being a Council employee e.g. tendering for business?
- Does the additional employment conflict with the working time agreement e.g. the employee should not be working 7 days a week and must ensure that they can have the prescribed rest hours? Should the additional employment result in the employee working more than 48 hours a week, an opt out form should be completed.
- Could the business interest be seen to be promoted by their position within the Council?
- Does the contract preclude the member of staff from having additional employment or a secondary business interest?

Version Number	Creation Date	Changes Made	Changes Made By:	Authorised/Checked?	Date of Changes
2.7	Oct 2019	General review	J Corsham	Y	24/10/2019
2.6	Jan 2011	Amended to Disability Confident Logo	HR Team	Y	05/12/2016
2.5	Jan 2011	Updated to reflect new HR structure	J Ferguson	Y	17/09/2015
2.4	Jan 2011	Corrected reference errors in 6.3	H Dungate	Y	30/09/2014
2.3	Jan 2011	Safeguarding Element added	A Price	Y	31/10/2012

**Chelmsford City Council
Equality Impact Assessment**

APPENDIX 2

This form enables an assessment of the impact a policy, strategy or activity on customers and employees.

A: Assessor Details	
Name of policy / function(s):	Employee Code of Conduct
Officer(s) completing this assessment:	Jane Corsham, Human Resources
Date of assessment:	8 th October 2019

B: Summary Details	
Description of policy, strategy or activity and what it is aiming to do	<p>Chelmsford City Council is a public authority funded in the main from revenue raised by local and central government taxation. As such, the public, and all other individuals and organisations who come into contact with the Council, are entitled to expect from the Council's employees the highest standard of service in terms of integrity, efficiency, impartiality and courtesy.</p> <p>This Code sets out the standards of conduct that Chelmsford City Council employees should adhere to when carrying out their work and duties. In addition, its purpose is to maintain and improve standards and protect employees from misunderstanding or criticism.</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> new OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> existing (<i>If existing, when was the last assessment?</i>) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> internal OR <input type="checkbox"/> external (i.e. public-facing) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> statutory OR <input type="checkbox"/> non-statutory </p>
Policy Owner (service)	Human Resources

**Chelmsford City Council
Equality Impact Assessment**

APPENDIX 2

Scope: Internal - Service/Directorate/Council wide External – specify community groups	Internal/Council wide Whilst this is an internal document, the impact of the Code of Conduct is to enable a description of standards of service and behaviour to the Community
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C: Assessment of impact

Using the information above, assess if the policy / function could potentially disproportionately impact on different protected groups. Specify if the potential impact is positive, could adversely impact or if there is no impact. If an adverse impact, indicate how the impact will be mitigated.

Characteristic	Positive impact	Could adversely impact	No impact	How different groups could be affected	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Age What will the impact be on different age groups such as younger or older people?			x	The Code of Conduct applies to all employees and workers and sets out behaviours and standards that are the expectation of the Council for all employees and workers in the delivery of public services. This Code should not disproportionately impact on different protected groups within the workforce.	
Disability Consider all disabilities such as hearing loss, dyslexia etc as well as access issues for wheelchair			x	See above	

**Chelmsford City Council
Equality Impact Assessment**

APPENDIX 2

Characteristic	Positive impact	Could adversely impact	No impact	How different groups could be affected	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
users where appropriate					
Pregnancy and maternity Pregnant women and new and breastfeeding Mums			x	See above	
Marriage or Civil Partnership Could this policy discriminate on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership			x	See above	
Sex Is the service used by more than one gender and are the sexes given equal opportunity?			x	See above	
Gender reassignment Is there an impact on people who are going through or who have completed Gender Reassignment?			x	See above	
Religion or belief Includes not having religion or belief			x	See above	

**Chelmsford City Council
Equality Impact Assessment**

APPENDIX 2

Characteristic	Positive impact	Could adversely impact	No impact	How different groups could be affected	Actions to reduce negative or increase positive impact
Sexual Orientation What is the impact on heterosexual, lesbian, gay or bisexual people?			x	See above	
Race Includes ethnic or national origins			x	See above	
Are there any other groups who could find it difficult to access or make use of the policy / function? For example: low income / people living in rural areas / single parents / carers and the cared for / past offenders / long-term unemployed / housebound / history of domestic abuse / people who don't speak English as a first language / people without computer access etc.		x		There is a need to ensure that all employees are aware of the Code of Conduct. Some employees may not have ready access to a computer as part of their day to day work arrangements. We have some staff whose English is limited.	We will: Ensure the revised Code of Conduct is accessible on the intranet as well as employee self-service. We will issue the Code to line managers so that they can provide an appropriate briefing to their teams We will provide the Code of Conduct in alternative formats as needed.

D: Consultation process, information used to analyse the effects on protected groups/equality and key findings		
Please describe the consultation process and evidence gathered. You may attach copies or links to the data / research you are using.		
1.	<p><u>Consultation/engagement</u></p> <p>What consultation or engagement has been undertaken regarding this policy? <i>[Please summarise what, when and who was involved]</i></p>	<p>Consultation has been undertaken as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Policy Working group • Unison • HR Services Manager • HR Business Partners • The Legal and Democratic Services Manager • The Digital Services Manager • The Council's Management team
2.	<p><u>Key findings</u></p> <p><i>(Summarise the key findings of your consultation in relation to protected groups as outlined above).</i></p>	<p>Feedback has been received as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff should declare outside work, paid and unpaid, to enable the Council to monitor working arrangements, both hours and rest breaks, against working time regulations • Clarification on the acceptable use of the internet during rest breaks • Clearer wording about the importance of accuracy of timekeeping • Clearer wording about the consumption of alcohol and non-prescription drugs • Clearer wording on the declaration of criminal convictions including driving offences which result in a driving restriction
3.	<p><u>Data/Information</u></p> <p>What relevant data or information is currently available about the customers and employees who may use this service or could be affected by this policy? <i>(For example: equality monitoring, surveys, demographic data, research, evidence about demand/ take-up/satisfaction etc).</i></p> <p>What additional information could be collected which would increase your</p>	<p>The monitoring data for the Council is available here:</p> <p>https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/your-council/equality-duty-and-gender-pay-gap/</p> <p>This information shows the demographic of Council's employees. The Code of Conduct applies to all employees and workers and sets out behaviours and standards that are the expectation of the Council for all employees and workers. This Code should not disproportionately impact on different protected groups.</p> <p>As consultation has been undertaken with the Policy Working group and Unison, it is felt that sufficient consultation has been undertaken with representatives from all services and across</p>

	<p>understanding about the potential impact of the policy? <i>(What involvement or consultation with affected groups is still needed?)</i></p>	all employee groups.
4.	<p>For existing policies, strategy, activity only: What has changed since the last assessment? <i>(For example: evidence of public concern or complaints / new information has come to light / changes in service provision / changes in service users/ assessed impact on protected groups etc)</i></p>	<p>The revision to the Code of Conduct was to ensure that gaps in the Code of Conduct could be rectified. The revised Code of Conduct includes new sections on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principles of Public Life • Disclosure of Criminal Convictions during employment • Environmental impact • Social Media • Communications and Publication • Working and contact with the media • Safeguarding <p>Revisions to existing sections of the Code are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference to new Values and Behaviour framework • Revised wording on the consumption of drugs and alcohol • Standard of dress including the display of badges, insignia and inclusion of tattoo guidance • Wording on disclosure of information to take account GDPR • Expanded section on equality, diversity and inclusion • Expanded section on the awarding of contracts including information on the anti-bribery and corruption policy • Revised wording on outside work commitments including paid and unpaid work • Inclusion of the word health in the security and safety section

E: Relevance to the Equality Duty Aims: <i>Consider how the policy relates to the aims below (directly or indirectly), and if it could be adjusted to further meet these equality aims.</i>		
1.	To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	<p>The Code of Conduct sets out the expectations of all employees and workers regardless of any protected characteristic. The clarity in the Code will enable employees and workers to understand expected standards and behaviours in a clear format. The Code of Conduct also includes a clear statement about equality, diversity and inclusion and expectations for all employees to enable a fair and inclusive workplace.</p>
2.	To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not <i>(This means removing or minimising disadvantages, taking steps to meet needs of different people and encouraging participation. It can involve treating people better than others, e.g. disabled people).</i>	<p>N/A</p>
3.	To foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. If so, how? <i>(This means promoting understanding between different groups and tackling prejudice)</i>	<p>Clarity on the Councils' expectations in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, supported by the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, will enable an employee or worker to be held to account should their behaviour towards others be discriminatory or considered to be harassment or victimisation.</p>

F: Conclusion	
Decision:	Explanation:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue the policy with no changes <i>[For example: evidence suggests no potential for discrimination / all opportunities have been taken to advance equality.]</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Continue the policy with adjustments <i>[For example: Low risk of negative impact / actions or adjustments would further improve positives or remove a potential negative impact.]</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Adverse impact but continue <i>[For example: Negative impact has been objectively justified.]</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Suspend or withdraw the policy for further review / consideration of alternative proposals <i>[For example: High risk of negative impact for any group / insufficient evidence / need to involve or consult with protected groups / negative impact which cannot be mitigated or justified / unlawful discrimination etc.]</i>	

Approved by:

Lead Officer / Responsible officer: ...Jane Corsham, Senior HR Business Partner.....Date: 25th October 2019

Senior Manager: ...Debbie Wootton, HR Services ManagerDate: 25th October 2019

[Please save a copy and send one to Human Resources for publication on the website as appropriate]

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

6 November 2019

AGENDA ITEM 8

Subject	MONITORING REPORT
Report by	MONITORING OFFICER

Enquiries contact: Monitoring Officer - Lorraine Browne, 01245 606560,
Lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

To keep the Committee informed about progress with Standards regime issues and other work of the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

1. To note the current statistical information as to complaints made and agree this should be published on the Council's website as set out in the Appendix.
2. That the Monitoring Officer continues to withhold members home addresses from the register of interests on the website under Section 32 of the Localism Act 2011 (unless advised otherwise). That members consider whether to extend this to parish councillors.
3. To note the remainder of the report.

Corporate Implications

Legal:	These are set out in the report
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities and Diversity:	Complaints are monitored to ensure that there is no disproportionate dissatisfaction by the different equality target groups. This data is considered as part of the assessment process to ensure that there is no discrimination in service delivery.
Health and Safety:	None

IT:	None
Other:	None

Consultees	None
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Policies and Strategies

The report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the Council:

The Councillor Code of Conduct and the adopted Complaints Procedure

1. Complaints

- 1.1 The **Appendix** to this report sets out the latest statistical data related to complaints under the Standards Regime. One new complaint was received.
- 1.2 Subject to any questions raised, the Committee is asked to confirm that this information should be published as set out in **Recommendation 1**.

2. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)

- 2.1 Since the last Committee no new RIPA authorisations have been sought.

3. Members Home Addresses

- 3.1 The categories of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest includes any land within the area of the Council. This will often include the councillor's home address. Section 30 of the Localism Act 2011 provides that new councillors must provide the Monitoring Officer with details of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) within 28 days of taking up office. Upon re-election or re-appointment, existing councillors are also required to provide details of any new DPI. The Monitoring Officer is required to publish register of information details on the Council's website. These requirements are usually discharged by all councillors completing a new Register of Interest form which (subject to any redactions) is the put onto the Council's website.
- 3.2 Section 32 of the Localism Act 2011 makes provision for the Monitoring Officer to withhold information from the public register where the disclosure could lead to a member or a person connected with a member being subject to violence or intimidation.
- 3.3 The report by the Committee on Standards in Public Life earlier this year considered this issue and recommended that those accepting office should not be required publicly to disclose their home address. The report also states "instances of councillors being attacked and harassed, most notably on social media is an increasing trend and a very serious issue. There is anecdotal evidence from across the country that female leaders and councillors are subject to more abuse than their male counterparts". Further that "the fact that home addresses are public can also make threats made through electronic means, such as social media, more distressing". The report goes on to recommend that the legislation is changed to clarify that those accepting office are not required to publicly provide their home address.

- 3.4 Mindful of this and the availability of Section 32, the Monitoring Officer took the view that home addresses of city councillors should be redacted from the register under Section 32. Members are asked to consider whether a policy should be formulated to reflect this practice and in particular whether a similar approach should be taken in relation to parish councillors.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Statistical Information regarding complaints made

Background Papers

Nil

**Standards Enquiries and Investigations Statistics – Localism Act 2011
2019-2020 - 7.6.19 TO 29.10.19**

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish or Town Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
1. No formal complaint	0					
2. No further action required after consultation with one of the Independent Persons	1	6/19	Parish	4/9/19	Various allegations in connection with inaccurate information concerning the councillor's business interests which were not accurately disclosed in the Register of Interests	Following notification of the nature of the complaint and subsequent clarification from the Monitoring Officer concerning registration of interests the Councillor promptly updated the register of interests so as to include missing items. In Consultation with the Independent Person the decision was made that no further action was necessary.
3. Not able to legally pursue complaint	0					
4. Complaint on hold	0					

Status of Complaint Categories	Total No.	Case No.	City, Parish or Town Councillor	Date Issue First Raised	Alleged Breach or Issue Raised	Current Position
5. Decision as to appropriate action still awaited	0					
6. Complaints being investigated	0					
Total	1					

Formal Complaint Outcomes

	Case No. and Councillor	Committee Date and Decision	Date Issue First Raised	Current Position
Outcome of Investigations	7/2018 Parish Cllr Hart	22 July 2019 – Four breaches of code of conduct. The formal decision notice can be viewed here.	27.8.18	The Committee found four breaches of the Code of Conduct by Cllr Hart and made relevant recommendations to him and the Parish Council generally.
Other Action				

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

6 November 2019

AGENDA ITEM 9

Subject	LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHICAL STANDARDS
Report by	MONITORING OFFICER

Enquiries contact: Lorraine Browne Tel. (01245) 606560
Email: lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

The purpose of this report is for the contents of the report published by the Committee on Standards in Public Life regarding ethical standards in local government to be noted by the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

1. Members are requested to note the contents of the report and;
2. To note which recommendations are already being followed and the actions for others to be followed in the future

Corporate Implications

Legal:	None
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities and Diversity:	None
Health and Safety:	None
IT:	None
Other:	None

Consultees	Legal and Democratic Services Manager
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Policies and Strategies

The report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the Council:

Not applicable.

1. Background

- 1.1 In March 2018 the Governance Committee formally responded to consultation from the Committee on Standards in Public Life on ethical standards in local government.
- 1.2 The final report was published in January 2019 and a copy is available as a background paper.
- 1.3 The report detailed various recommendations along with best practice recommendations directed to local authorities. The best practice recommendations are set out below and members of the Committee are asked to note which ones the Council are already doing and how the others can be achieved.

2. Examples of best practice

- 2.1 **Best practice 1:** *Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.*

The current code of conduct includes a prohibition on bullying but does not refer to harassment. Inclusion of harassment, the definitions and examples will be considered when the Code is next updated.

- 2.2 **Best practice 2:** *Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.*

The current code of conduct does not include these provisions but both could be included when the Code is next updated.

- 2.3 **Best practice 3:** *Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.*

It is planned to program work for the committee over a two year period and to include a review of the Code of conduct within every two year cycle, unless there is a specific need for earlier review.

- 2.4 **Best practice 4:** *An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.*

This is already being followed.

- 2.5 **Best practice 5:** *Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.*

This is going to be in place from January 2020

- 2.6 **Best practice 6:** *Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.*

Various public interest considerations are included within the current assessment criteria against which allegations are filtered. A review of the current assessment criteria is planned within the proposed 2 year work plan to be brought forward.

- 2.7 **Best practice 7:** *Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.*

The Council makes provision for 2 Independent Persons. The recruitment to the current vacancy is being considered at tonight's committee.

- 2.8 **Best practice 8:** *An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation and should be given the option to review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.*

This is already being followed in practice. The complaints procedure currently only requires the Monitoring Officer to consult in relation to investigations although they may choose to do so in other cases. In practice the Monitoring Officer is consulting an Independent Person in filtering all cases and it is proposed that the complaints procedure will be updated to reflect this when it is next updated during the 2 year work plan cycle.

- 2.9 **Best practice 9:** *Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.*

This is already being followed.

- 2.10 **Best practice 10:** *A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.*

This is already being followed.

- 2.11 **Best practice 11:** *Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council as a whole rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.*

This recommendation to relevant parties is already being raised where the Monitoring Officer is consulted prior to the making of a complaint. It is proposed that the complaints procedures be updated to include this advice when it is next updated during the 2 year work plan cycle.

- 2.12 **Best practice 12:** *Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.*

This is already being followed.

- 2.13 **Best practice 13:** *A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.*

Arrangements are already in place through the Public Law Partnership for an appropriate officer at another authority or other external party to undertake such investigations.

- 2.14 **Best practice 14:** *Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.*

This recommendation does not currently apply to Chelmsford City Council.

- 2.15 **Best practice 15:** *Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.*

It has been agreed with the Mayoral Working Group that this meeting will happen periodically as a separate meeting to but immediately after the rising of the Mayoral Working Group.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 As detailed above, the Council are already following the majority of best practice examples. Through the Committee's work programme and the work of officers the remaining examples will be in place within a reasonable period.

List of Appendices

Nil

Background Papers

Local Government Ethical Standards – A Review by the Committee on Standards in Public Life

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

6 November 2019

AGENDA ITEM 10

Subject	WORK PROGRAMME
Report by	MONITORING OFFICER

Enquiries contact: Lorraine Browne, Legal & Democratic Services Manager, tel: 01245 606560, email: Lorraine.browne@chelmsford.gov.uk

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to receive members' comments on the Committee's future work programme.

Recommendation(s)

1. Members are invited to comment on the Committee's work programme, attached as **Appendix 1** to this report, and make any necessary amendments to it.

Corporate Implications

Legal:	None
Financial:	None
Personnel:	None
Risk Management:	None
Equalities and Diversity:	None
Health and Safety:	None
IT:	None
Other:	None

Consultees	Legal and Democratic Services Manager
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Policies and Strategies

The report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the Council:

Not applicable.

Corporate Plan Priorities

The report relates to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan

Attracting investment and delivering infrastructure

Facilitating suitable housing for local needs

Providing high quality public spaces

Promoting a more sustainable environment

Promoting healthier and more active lives

Enhancing participation in cultural activities

1. Background

- 1.1 The work programme (the Programme) is reviewed by the Committee at each meeting. The current version is attached at **Appendix 1** to this report and includes the proposed work for future meetings, based on the Programme content for recent years.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 Members are invited to comment on the Committee's work programme and make any necessary amendments to it.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Governance Committee Work Programme 2019/20

Background Papers

Nil

6 November 2019

- Monitoring Officer Report
- Polling District Review
- Constitution: Employee Code of Conduct
- Local Government Ethical Standards Report from Committee on Standards in Public Life
- Independent Person Recruitment
- Work Programme

22 January 2020

- Pre hearing procedure
-
- Review of Code of Conduct – initial scoping report and approach to review
-
- Monitoring Officer Report
- Annual Report on Whistleblowing
- Ombudsman Complaints
- Gifts and Hospitality Report
- Work Programme

11 March 2020

- Monitoring Officer Report
- RIPA Annual Review
- Review of Assessment Criteria and complaints procedure
-
- Work Programme

17 June 2020 (Joint Meeting with the Audit Committee)

- Review of Local Code of Corporate Governance and Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

17 June 2020

- Monitoring Officer Report
- Annual Report of the Committee

- Work Programme

14 October 2020

- Monitoring Officer Report
- Annual Report on Whistleblowing
- Ombudsman Complaints
- Work Programme

20 January 2021

- Monitoring officer Report
- Gifts and Hospitality Report
- Work Programme

10 March 2021

- Monitoring Officer Report
- RIPA Annual Review
- Work Programme

Ad hoc reports

- Politically exempt officer posts
- Training