



Agenda

Meeting: **Audit and Governance Committee**
Date: **18 September 2019**
Time: **7.00 pm**
Place: **Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone**

To: **All members of the Audit and Governance Committee**

The committee will consider the matters, listed below, at the date, time and place shown above. The meeting will be open to the press and public.

Members of the committee, who wish to have information on any matter arising on the agenda, which is not fully covered in these papers, are requested to give notice, prior to the meeting, to the Chairman or appropriate officer.

This meeting will be webcast live to the council's website at <https://folkestone-hythe.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcasts>.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members of the committee should declare any interests which fall under the following categories*:

- a) disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI);
- b) other significant interests (OSI);
- c) voluntary announcements of other interests.

3. **Minutes (Pages 3 - 22)**

To consider and approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2019.

Queries about the agenda? Need a different format?

Contact Sue Lewis – Tel: 01303 853265
Email: committee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk or download from our website
www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

4. Internal Audit Progress report from the Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership (Pages 23 - 44)

This report includes the summary of the work of the East Kent Audit Partnership (EKAP) since the last Audit and Governance Committee meeting together with details of the performance of the EKAP to the 30th June 2019.

5. Review of Corporate Risk Register and Risk Management Policy and Strategy (Pages 45 - 68)

This report presents an updated Risk Management Policy & Strategy for consideration by the Audit & Governance Committee, ahead of its adoption by Cabinet. The Policy & Strategy provides a framework the management of risk by Officers & Members. This report also provides an update to the Corporate Risk Register.

6. Review of polling districts and polling places 2019 (Pages 69 - 90)

Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by Part 4 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006) places a duty on the Council to conduct a review of polling places and polling districts every four years. The last review was concluded by Folkestone & Hythe District Council (as Shepway District Council) in November 2014. Report AuG/19/11 outlines the steps the Council is taking to comply with this duty and seeks approval from Council to approve the recommendations made.

*Explanations as to different levels of interest

(a) A member with a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) must declare the nature as well as the existence of any such interest and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated. A member who declares a DPI in relation to any item must leave the meeting for that item (unless a relevant dispensation has been granted).

(b) A member with an other significant interest (OSI) under the local code of conduct relating to items on this agenda must declare the nature as well as the existence of any such interest and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated. A member who declares an OSI in relation to any item will need to remove him/herself to the public gallery before the debate and not vote on that item (unless a relevant dispensation has been granted). However, prior to leaving, the member may address the meeting in the same way that a member of the public may do so.

(c) Members may make voluntary announcements of other interests which are not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b). These are announcements made for transparency reasons alone, such as:

- membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items, or
- where a member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or
- where an item would affect the well-being of a member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position.

Voluntary announcements do not prevent the member from participating or voting on the relevant item



Minutes

Audit and Governance Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 30 July 2019
Present	Councillors Mrs Ann Berry (Vice-Chair), Ray Field, Philip Martin (Chairman), Tim Prater and Lesley Whybrow
Apologies for Absence	None
Officers Present:	Paul Butler (Elections Manager), Kate Clark (Committee Services Officer), Gavin Edwards (Policy and Improvements Officer), Cheryl Ireland (Chief Accountant), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Tim Madden (Corporate Director - Customer, Support and Specialist Services), Mrs Christine Parker (Head of Audit Partnership), Mr Chris Parker (Deputy Head of Audit), Charlotte Spendley (Assistant Director) and Lee Walker (Group Accountant)
Others Present:	Elizabeth Jackson and Andy Ayre, Grant Thornton

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2019 were submitted and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Polling Districts, places and stations review**

The Representation of the People Act 1983 and Electoral Administration Act 2006 places a duty on the council to conduct a review of polling places and polling districts every four years. The last review was concluded by Folkestone & Hythe District Council (as Shepway District Council) in November 2014. A review will be taking place between July and September 2019, which will conclude at the revision of the published register on Sunday 01 December 2019.

A short presentation was given by Mr Paul Butler, Democratic Services Manager, outlining the consultation process and final stages of the review. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

Mr Butler explained that the review is based on the polling districts and not the district wards, parish and town councils boundary lines. He pointed out to members that this is a statutory review which must take place every four years as part of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and Electoral Administration Act 2006.

4. **Annual Governance Statement 2018/19**

Report AuG/19/08 Under the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 (as amended), local authorities are required to produce an Annual Governance Statement. The report describes the process followed and seeks approval for the Annual Governance Statement for the year 2018/19.

Proposed by Councillor Philip Martin
Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report AuG/19/08.**
- 2. To approve the draft Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19.**
- 3. To approve the council's corporate action plan outlined in Appendix 3 for 2019/20.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

5. **Applications for dispensations under the Code of Conduct for Directors of Oportunitas**

Report AuG/19/01 considers the application for dispensations under the code of conduct for councillors to speak and vote by councillors who are also directors of Oportunitas.

Mrs Amandeep Khroud, Assistant Director, outlined this report and clarified to members that a Director of Oportunitas cannot be a Cabinet member. Also the monthly allowance paid to directors is reviewed and set by the Independent Remuneration Panel. The IRP are due to meet in September 2019 to start their scheduled review of all member allowances.

Members agreed that further clarification is needed with regard to the current Directors of Oportunitas who cannot be a Cabinet Members. The following wording to be added to Point 2 of the Resolution;

A director of Oportunitas, current or proposed, cannot be a member of Cabinet.

Proposed by Councillor Philip Martin

Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry and

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **To receive report no AuG/19/01.**
2. **To grant dispensations under the code of conduct and under section 33 Localism Act 2011 to Councillors Patricia Rolfe, Connor McConville, Terrance Mullard and Peter Gane to allow them to speak and vote at meetings where company affairs are discussed. A director of Oportunitas, current or proposed, cannot be a member of Cabinet;**
3. **That the dispensations be time limited to 2 May 2023;**
4. **That in the event of a change of directors the monitoring officer be authorised to consider applications for and grant dispensations to any councillor who becomes a director of Oportunitas on the same terms provided that the councillor concerned is not a member of the cabinet and the dispensation is time limited in the same way.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

6. **Appointment of Independent Persons**

Report Aug/19/02 Under S 28(7) Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 the council must appoint an Independent Person to fulfil the functions set out in the Act and regulation. The report recommends the appointment of two Independent Persons and the person specification for the posts.

Proposed by Councillor Philip Martin
Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry and

Resolved:

1. **To receive and note report AuG/19/02.**
2. **To appoint two Independent Persons under the provisions of the S 27 (7) Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 and to advertise vacancies.**
3. **To approve the person specification for the Independent Person contained in appendix 1 to this report.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

7. **Update to the Corporate Risk Register**

Report AuG/19/07 presents a refreshed Corporate Risk Register based upon the updated Risk Management Policy & Strategy which was adopted by Cabinet in July 2018.

Members raised the following points:

- Business case for Otterpool. This will come forward to the Risk Register in Autumn 2019.
- East Kent Housing. It was noted this was not identified as a risk earlier, however the focus is on emerging risk and risks within the corporate plan. Compliance issues, health and safety and landlord services are specific issues which have now emerged.
- Climate change. Based on a successful motion at Full Council on 24 July this should be considered an emerging risk
- Motions at Full Council. A review of the strategy and process can include looking at any successful motions to be incorporated into the Corporate Risk Register where necessary.

Proposed by Councillor Philip Martin
Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry and

Resolved:

1. To receive and note report AuG/19/07.

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

8. Internal Audit Annual Report 2018-19

Report AuG/19/04 provides the summary of the impact of the work of the East Kent Audit Partnership for the year to 31st March 2019.

Mrs Christine Parker, Head of East Kent Audit Partnership, outlined this report which is a key source of assurance for the committee..

Members noted the following:

- 2018/19 Homelessness and Business Continuity had been deferred and this was due to systems changes. Changes are made to the audit plan from time to time.
- Health & Safety audit was completed in 2017/18 and is in the overall strategic plan for further review.
- East Kent Housing. The report shows six reviews undertaken. Four resulting in reasonable assurance and two with limited assurance which Mrs Parker confirmed are all evidence based conclusions. The opinions will reflect good arrangements and sound controls where they are evidenced..
- East Kent Housing Audit Plan for 2018-19 included contract management which was a new review added to the plan. Tenants' health, safety (including fire safety) features regularly in the overall strategic plan, and were currently a work in progress close to being finalised, The results of which will be brought forward to a future meeting of this committee.

Proposed by Councillor Philip Martin
Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry and

Resolved:

1. To receive and note Report AuG/19/04.

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

9. Internal Audit Progress Report from the Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership

Report AuG/19/06 includes the summary of the work of the East Kent Audit Partnership (EKAP) since the last Audit and Governance Committee meeting together with details of the performance of the EKAP to the 31st May 2019.

Mr Chris Parker, Deputy Head of EKAP outlined this report, which included 6 reviews and 4 follow up reviews. He said that the follow up review of East Kent Housing contract management arrangements had revised the assurance from previously Limited Assurance to a reasonable assurance overall with the Heating and gas service contract now at limited assurance.

Members requested sight of the EKH contract management recommendations the executive summary of this report had been presented to the December meeting of the committee as restricted documents. It was suggested that the following wording is added to the Resolution;

‘To welcome, after review, that the original partially outstanding recommendations of the review into EKH Contract Management are published as soon as possible.’

Mrs Parker confirmed the three partially outstanding recommendations resulting from this follow up review are in the public domain and will make arrangements to circulate the information to members. She clarified that as part of the original audit a sample of contracts were chosen and evaluated which resulted in a range of individual assurances, the Contract Management Arrangements were previously assessed as Limited overall. However, at the point of follow up, the conclusion is Reasonable Assurance overall and the partially limited assurance related to the Heating and Gas Servicing contracts.

As that contract for the Heating and Gas Servicing has ended, and new arrangements are in place a further follow up of the partially outstanding recommendations is no longer relevant.

Proposed by Councillor Tim Prater
Seconded by Councillor Lesley Whybrow and

Resolved:

1. To receive and note Report AuG/19/06.

2. **To welcome, after review, that the original outstanding recommendations of the review into EKH Contract Management are published as soon as possible. (Attached to these minutes).**
3. **To note the results of the work carried out by the East Kent Audit Partnership.**

(Voting: For 5; Against 0; Abstentions 0)

10. **External Audit Findings**

Report AuG/19/09 - Grant Thornton are required to issue a Report to those charged with governance, summarising the findings and conclusions of their audit work. They are also required by professional auditing standards to report certain matters before giving an opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019.

Elizabeth Jackson, Engagement Lead – Grant Thornton, presented the report in detail. She also introduced Andy Ayre, Audit Manager, who is responsible for the day to day process.

She made a point of advising members that a revaluation of housing stock has been adjusted at just under £6M.

The draft accounts were included in the original agenda pack, however an updated version of the draft accounts was circulated to members at the meeting. Ms Jackson assured members that although figures do change, she was absolutely satisfied that the draft accounts are accurate and will sign off accordingly, jointly with the S151 officer, that the accounts are materially fairly stated.

Proposed by Councillor Tim Prater
Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry

RESOLVED:

1. **To receive and note Report AuG/19/09.**
2. **To consider & note Grant Thornton's Audit Findings for Folkestone & Hythe District Council Year Ended 31 March 2019 report.**
3. **To approve the Letter of Representation and authorise the Chairman & Vice Chairman to sign the Letter on behalf of the Council.**

(Voting: For 4; Against 0; Abstentions 1)

11. **Statement of Accounts 2018-19**

Report AuG/19/03 In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 the council must consider and approve its Statement of Accounts no later than 31 July 2019. The Accounts have been subjected to audit, the details of which are set out in Grant Thornton's Audit Findings report.

It was noted that viewing the draft accounts by the committee to be arranged at the end of May each year. Mr Tim Madden, Corporate Director, did point out that the draft accounts are available to view online, however the committee members felt it would be useful to view and comment earlier in the year.

Members were assured that the final version of accounts are accurate and this was confirmed by the External Auditors, however an additional point to be added to the resolution as follows:

‘To note the changes post audit as reflected in the External Auditors report and as assured by the S151 Officer that these have been reflected in the accounts’.

Proposed by Councillor Tim Prater
Seconded by Councillor Ann Berry and

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note Report AuG/19/03.**
- 2. To note the changes post audit as reflected in the External Auditors report and as assured by the S151 Officer that these have been reflected in the accounts.**
- 3. To approve the Statement of Accounts 2018/19.**

(Voting: For 4; Against 0; Abstentions 1)

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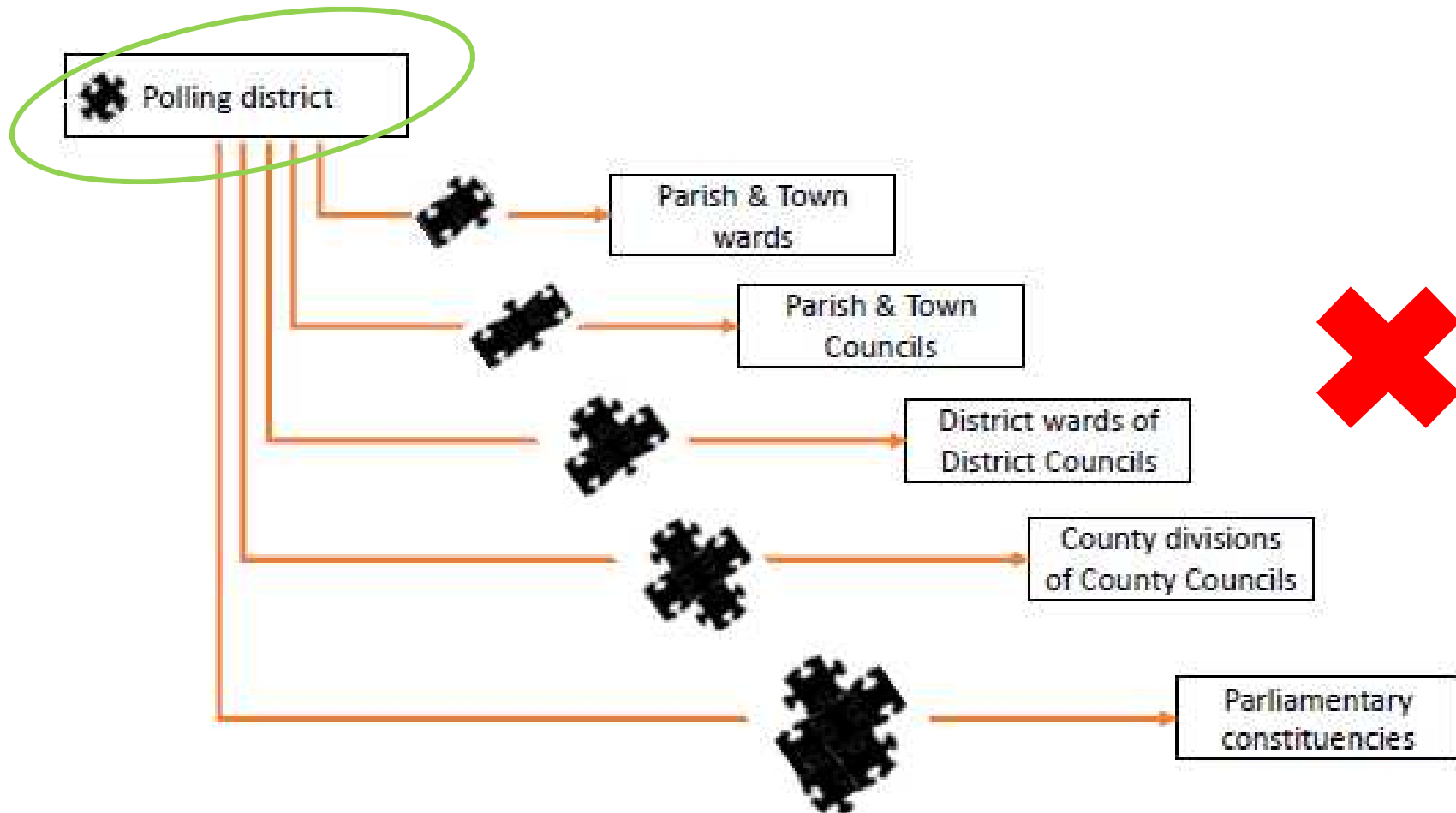
Review of Polling Districts, Places & Stations 2019

Paul Butler
Democratic Services Manager

Requirements

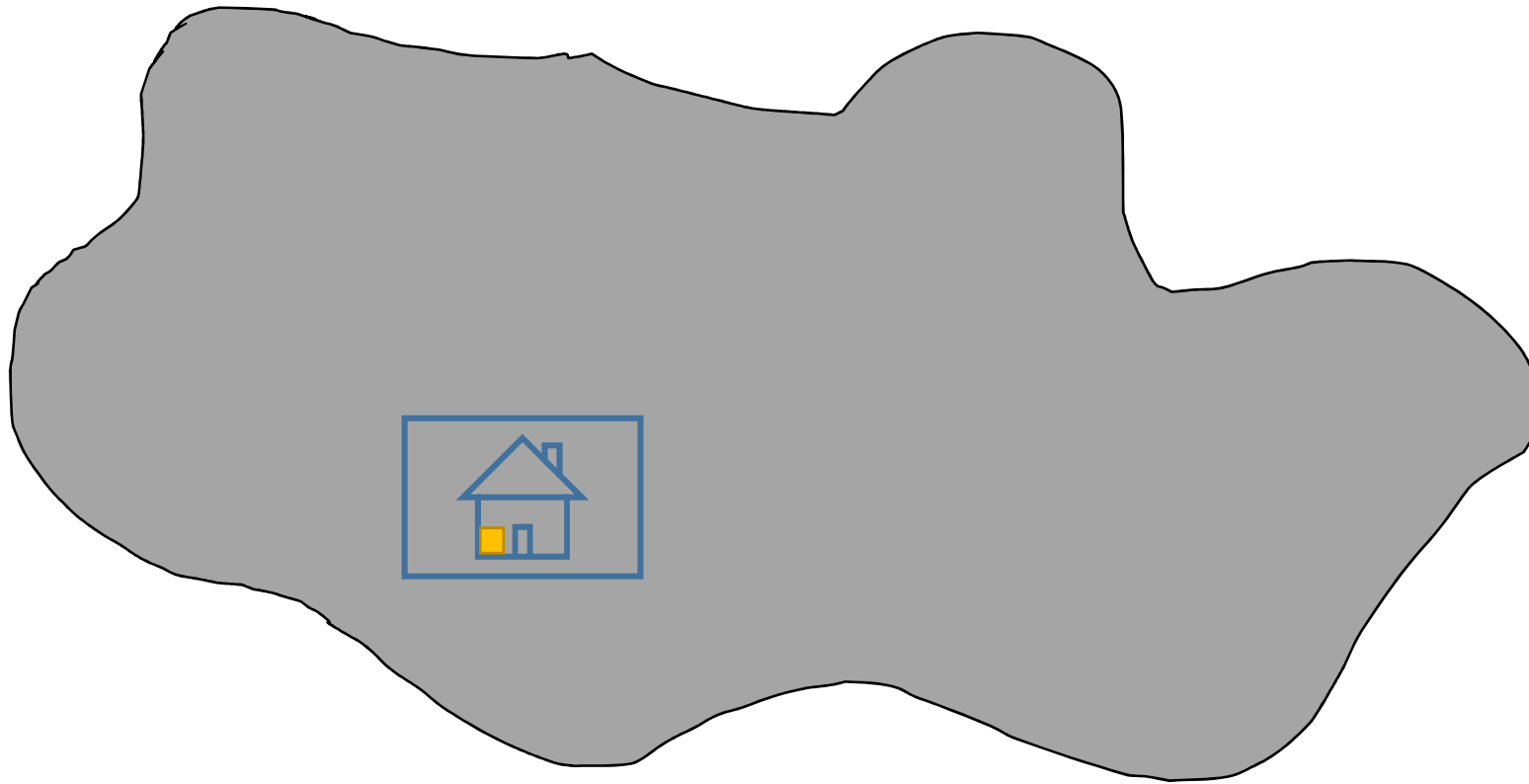
- Commitment to review current set up of:
 - Polling Districts
 - Polling Places
 - Polling Stations

Polling Districts



Polling Places & Stations

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Polling District A

Timetable

Notice of Review published & start of consultation Wednesday 3rd July 2019

Submission of Representation deadline Wednesday 14th August 2019

Submission of Comments on ARO statement deadline Wednesday 4th September 2019

Proposals submitted to Audit & Governance Committee Wednesday 18th September 2019

Recommendations reported to Full Council Wednesday 25th September 2019

Revised Electoral Register published with changes Sunday 1st December 2019

Progress so far...

- Pre-requisite work
- Notice published
- Consultation has started
- Webpages / Civic Centre documents
- ARO Statement published
- Written correspondences

What is left to do...?

Collate all evidence and representations

Finalise recommendations

Page 12
A&G Report

Full Council

Implement changes for 1st December 2019

Conclusion

Recommendations & correspondence published

New maps drawn (if needed)

Notice of conclusion

Appeals / EC

Questions?

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Internal Audit Progress Report from the Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership (Minute Item 9).

The three Partially Outstanding recommendations at the time of the Dover District Council meeting on 27 June 2019 are on pages 18, 19 and 20 of the following link: (the contract terminated on 3 July)

<https://moderngov.dover.gov.uk/documents/g3209/Public%20reports%20pack%2027th-Jun-2019%2018.00%20Governance%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

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This Report will be made public on 10 September 2019



Report Number **AuG/19/10**

To: Audit and Governance Committee
Date: 18 September 2019
Status: Non-Executive Decision
Corporate Director: Tim Madden – Customer Support & Specialist Services (S151)

SUBJECT: INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT FROM THE HEAD OF THE EAST KENT AUDIT PARTNERSHIP

SUMMARY: This report includes the summary of the work of the East Kent Audit Partnership (EKAP) since the last Audit and Governance Committee meeting together with details of the performance of the EKAP to the 30th June 2019.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because:
In order to comply with best practice, the Audit and Governance Committee should independently contribute to the overall process for ensuring that an effective internal control environment is maintained.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note Report AuG/19/10.
2. To note the results of the work carried out by the East Kent Audit Partnership.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report includes the summary of the work completed by the East Kent Audit Partnership (EKAP) since the last Audit and Governance Committee progress report, together with details of the performance of the EKAP to the 30th June 2019.

2. AUDIT REPORTING

- 2.1 For each Audit review, management has agreed a report, and where appropriate, an Action Plan detailing proposed actions and implementation dates relating to each recommendation. Reports continue to be issued in full to the relevant Heads of Service, as well as an appropriate manager for the service reviewed.
- 2.2. Follow-up reviews are performed at an appropriate time, according to the status of the recommendation, timescales for implementation of any agreed actions and the risk to the Council.
- 2.3. An assurance statement is given to each area reviewed. The assurance statements are linked to the potential level of risk, as currently portrayed in the Council's risk assessment process. The assurance rating given may be substantial, reasonable, limited or no assurance.
- 2.4 Those services with either limited or no assurance are monitored, and brought back to Committee until a subsequent review shows sufficient improvement has been made to raise the level of assurance to either reasonable or substantial. There is currently one review with such a level of assurance as shown in appendix 2 of the EKAP report.
- 2.5 The purpose of the Council's Audit and Governance Committee is to provide independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti fraud and anti corruption arrangements and to seek assurance that action is being taken to mitigate those risks identified.
- 2.6 To assist the Committee in meeting its terms of reference with regard to the internal control environment an update report is regularly produced on the work of internal audit. The purpose of this report is to detail the summary findings of completed audit reports and follow-up reviews since the report submitted to the last meeting of this Committee.

3. SUMMARY OF WORK

- 3.1. There have been five audit reports completed during the period. These have been allocated assurance levels as follows: one was classified as providing substantial/reasonable assurance, two reasonable, one was not applicable for an assurance and one was limited / no assurance. Summaries of the report findings are detailed within Annex 1 to this report.

- 3.2 In addition, three follow up reviews have been completed during the period. The follow up reviews are detailed within section 3 of the update report.
- 3.3 For the period to 30th June 2019 83.60 chargeable days were delivered against the planned target of 361.38 days, (including 46.38 days carried over from 2018/19) which equates to achievement of 23% of the planned number of days.
- 3.4 Other performance figures for the East Kent Audit Partnership for the period 2019/20 are shown in the balanced scorecard.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Non completion of the audit plan	Medium	Low	Review of the audit plan on a regular basis
Non implementation of agreed audit recommendations	Medium	Low	Review of recommendations by Audit and Governance Committee and Audit escalation policy.
Non completion of the key financial system reviews	Medium	Medium	Review of the audit plan on a regular basis. A change in the external audit requirements reduces the impact of non-completion on the Authority.

5. LEGAL, FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's comments (DK)

No legal officer comments are required for this report.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (TM)

Responsibility for the arrangements of the proper administration of the council's financial affairs lies with the Chief Finance Officer (S151). The internal audit service helps provide assurance as to the adequacy of the arrangements in place. It is

important that the recommendations accepted by Heads of Service are implemented and that audit follow-up to report on progress.

5.3 **Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership comments (CP)**

This report has been produced by the Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership and the findings / comments detailed in the report are the service's own, except where shown as being management responses.

5.4 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (CP)**

This report does not directly have any specific diversity and equality implications however it does include reviews of services which may have implications. However none of the recommendations made have any specific relevance.

6. **CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 6.1 Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact either of the following officers prior to the meeting.

Christine Parker, Head of the Audit Partnership
Telephone: 01304 872160 Email: Christine.parker@dover.gov.uk

Tim Madden, Corporate Director – Customer Support & Specialist Services (S151)
Telephone: 01303 853371 Email: Tim.madden@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

- 6.2 The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Internal Audit working papers - Held by the East Kent Audit Partnership.

Attachments

Annex 1 – Update report from the Head of the East Kent Audit Partnership.

INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT FROM THE HEAD OF THE EAST KENT AUDIT PARTNERSHIP

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 This report includes the summary of the work completed by the East Kent Audit Partnership since the last Audit and Governance Committee meeting, together with details of the performance of the EKAP to the 30th June 2019.

2. SUMMARY OF REPORTS

Service / Topic		Assurance level	No of recs	
2.1	Creditors	Substantial/Reasonable	C	0
			H	1
			M	1
			L	3
2.2	Financial Procedure Rules	Reasonable	C	0
			H	1
			M	4
			L	2
2.3	Civic Centre Security	Reasonable	C	0
			H	2
			M	5
			L	3
2.4	Special Projects 2018/19	Not applicable	C	0
			H	0
			M	0
			L	0
2.5	EKH Tenants Health & Safety	Limited / No	C	7
			H	9
			M	0
			L	0

2.1 Creditors - Substantial Assurance

2.2.1 Audit Scope

To provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the procedures and controls established in the systems to ensure that creditors payments are valid, authorised, accurate, timely and properly recorded and meet Council guidelines and legislation.

2.2.2 Summary of Findings

Management controls over the ordering of goods and services and the payment of invoices are reliant on the controls set up within the financial management systems; and user access permissions set up.

In 2017/18 a total of 10,802 payments were paid through the Creditors function totalling £32,117,688 (gross) and £24,172,489 (net) which includes refunds to businesses and residents. It reportedly took an average time of 23.5 days for invoices to be paid by the Creditors function.

Management can place Substantial Assurance on the system of internal controls in operation, with the exception of late payments that are being made which attracts Reasonable Assurance.

The primary findings giving rise to the Substantial Assurance opinion in this area are as follows:

- All payments to suppliers examined as part of the sample tested were authorised and processed correctly;
- There are suitable segregation of duties in place making fraud very difficult without involving substantial collusion;
- The audit trail of payments made is very strong allowing a good level of scrutiny of transactions where required; and
- No duplicate payments were detected during the review.

Scope for improvement was however identified in the following areas:

- The process for virements and application limits for external funding need to be reviewed.
- The financial procedure rules require a review and update to insure that they reflect organisational changes.

2.2 Financial Procedure Rules – Reasonable Assurance

2.2.1 Audit Scope

To ensure that the Council's Financial Procedure Rules are properly approved by the Council's executive function, covers all appropriate financial matters and provides sufficient guidance to Council Officers to enable them to comply with the approved rules and procedures in place.

2.2.2 Summary of Findings

The Financial Procedure Rules are a written code of procedures approved by Members at Folkestone & Hythe District Council to provide a framework for proper financial management. The Financial Procedure Rules form part of the Council's Constitution and set out rules on accounting, audit, administrative procedures and budgeting systems. It is good practice to review them from time to time to ensure they reflect legislative, policy, constitutional and other organisational changes, especially in the context of the Council's changing structure and methods of operating.

The primary findings giving rise to the Reasonable Assurance opinion in this area are as follows:

- The Financial Procedure Rules provide guidance on all significant financial aspects.
- The majority of the policies / strategies linked to the Financial Procedure Rules and reviewed as part of this audit are up to date.
- The Financial Procedure Rules are published and available to staff, third parties and the public.

Scope for improvement was however identified in the following areas:

- The process for virements needs to be reviewed.
- Further checks are required to establish whether the external funding limit as agreed by Full Council is being correctly applied and the Detailed Financial Procedure Rules updated accordingly.

2.3 Civic Centre Security – Reasonable Assurance:

2.3.1 Audit Scope

To evaluate the effectiveness of the internal controls present regarding the security of the Civic Centre, including the building and its contents, the Council's employees, elected Members, visitors and external bodies renting accommodation within the Civic Centre

2.3.2 Summary of Findings

Security arrangements are in place to protect both the Civic Centre building and its occupants. These have been further strengthened following the Council having let a number of offices within the building to third parties.

Observations during the review found that staff and tenants in general appear to abide to the security arrangements that have been communicated to them.

The primary findings giving rise to the Reasonable Assurance opinion in this area are as follows:

- The door access system enables management of the building by zones whereby enabling staff and tenants access to be restricted to only their authorised areas.

- Security arrangements have been effectively communicated to staff and tenants, with regular reminders issued.
- Fire safety procedures enable occupants and visitors to be accounted for the event of building evacuation.
- The fire detection, fire alarm and intruders alarm systems are regular inspected, with annual maintenance contracts in place.

Scope for improvement was however identified in the following areas:

- Reporting of all incidents of threatening and abusive behaviour towards staff could be improved.
- The Customers of Concern register is not being maintained or managed in line with agreed policy.
- Panic alarms are not being regularly tested.
- The risk assessment for the Civic Warden role needs updating, taking into account the security element of their duties.
- Notification for temporary staff who leave to enable prompt pass access deactivation could be improved.

2.4 Special Projects 2018/19 – An assurance is not applicable for this work

2.4.1 Audit Scope

To provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the contract processes and procedures that have been followed in respect of the expenditure relating to the various projects including Princes Parade that are undertaken by the Strategic Projects Team.

2.4.2 Summary of Findings

The review for 2018/19 concludes that procurement processes have been followed for high value contracts and in the main for lower value (=<£10,000) services. The main issue appears to be with lower value orders and the projecting or planning of expenditure over the project lifetime.

The current and proposed developments within Strategic Projects are the subject of public scrutiny attracting many Freedom of Information requests. Ideally expenditure for a particular service requirement should be planned, but where this is not possible it should be monitored so that the correct procurement procedures can be followed.

Procuring officers should seek advice from the Procurement team in instances where expenditure is likely to exceed thresholds for the number of quotes initially obtained, as a waiver is generally required where the scope of work and related costs extend beyond the initial proposal.

The majority of the team is saving documentation in an organised and accessible structure, however there are a few inconsistencies within the team. Readily

accessible information would ensure compliance with CSOs 3.1 and 5.2 to ensure there is a detailed audit trail of all purchases and that proper records are kept.

2.5 EKH Tenants Health & Safety – Limited / No Assurance

2.5.1 Audit Scope

To provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the procedures and controls established by East Kent Housing to ensure the safety of all residents in all properties for which they are responsible for is not compromised.

2.5.2 Summary of Findings

East Kent Housing (EKH) has been appointed by each of the councils in East Kent to undertake the management of all tenanted properties.

Testing undertaken during this review concludes that there are systemic failings in relation to the internal control of health and safety, and a number of the necessary systems of control surrounding fire safety, electrical safety, lifts and Legionella are currently absent.

Assurance levels for each area tested are as follows:

Area	Assurance
Gas Safety	Limited assurance
Fire safety	No assurance
Electrical Safety	No assurance
Lifts	No assurance
Legionella	No assurance

Urgent management intervention is required in all of the key areas tested as part of the review as each Council could be considered to be acting unlawfully in all of the areas tested due to non-compliance with the regulations applicable to each area tested.

It is the following findings which result in a conclusion of Limited or No Assurance in these areas.

- At the time of the audit there was a known issue with contractor failure and LGSRs expiring, this was resolved while the audit was underway.
- It is unlikely that the Councils will have a new permanent contractor for gas servicing and maintenance in place for 03 July when the current contract expires. Instead EKH will be relying on the use of temporary contractors until the new contractor is able to mobilise, and commence work under the newly tendered contract.

- Approximately 4,800 issues identified on fire risk assessments remain outstanding. While work is ongoing to rectify some of the less technical issues, approximately 800 of those are overdue their recommended completion dates.
- No action is being taken to repair emergency lighting identified as faulty as part of the annual emergency lighting testing process. The same emergency lights are being reported as faulty on subsequent tests. Audit testing estimates there to be in the region of around 2,000 faulty emergency lights across a combination of all 4 areas.
- Large parts of some buildings have faulty emergency lighting, and consequently the Council as landlord may be in breach of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 for failing to provide emergency lighting of adequate intensity.
- Action is not being taken to rectify faults identified on Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) where the overall condition is being reported as unsatisfactory. From 830 EICR reports on landlord blocks, around 230 of these are categorised as unsatisfactory.
- Action is not being taken to rectify electrical faults categorised as C1 & C2. A C1 fault is defined as Danger Present - Risk of injury. Immediate remedial action required. Testing identified C1 & C2 issues identified in April 2016 as still not having being rectified.
- Lift servicing is carried out at monthly intervals but lift examinations are not being completed by an independent person on passenger lifts at the 6 monthly intervals required by law, due to the insurance examiner not being able to safely examine the lift for a variety of different reasons. Despite the examinations being incomplete and therefore use of the lifts not being in accordance with the relevant regulations, lifts continue to be left in operation and available for use by tenants. Four lifts were found to be non-compliant with regulations due to a lack of independent examination reports yet still being used for 575, 426, 393 & 91 days.
- Remedial work identified on lift examination reports is not being carried out resulting in the same Category B defects being evident on the next examination six months later.
- Little or no action is being undertaken to address the 1,916 recommendations made on Legionella Risk Assessments, of which 930 have been categorised as high risk and date back to 2016.
- The summary evacuation sheets were out of date at the three of the 4 sites inspected as part of this review.

Management Response - Update on Compliance Issues

We would like to apologise to tenants for any worries caused to them as a result of the internal audit. The Board and management of East Kent Housing take this report extremely seriously, and we have worked very hard since we received it to ensure that we make progress as quickly as possible.

In their interim update report, we are pleased to see that the auditors say they have seen evidence of significant improvements. Resident health and safety remains our top priority. This reflects the efforts of EKH's staff, and everyone is committed to completing the remaining work as quickly as possible. For all areas where there is outstanding work needed, we have put in place mitigation measures to ensure that any risk to residents is minimised.

Gas Safety

Following the rapid deterioration in the performance of P&R, after they gave notice under the contract, we commissioned an independent review to ensure that we learnt any lessons from this. We are pleased that the performance under the interim contract is at 100%. We have asked internal audit to review this area of assurance.

Fire Safety

All fire risk assessments are, and have been, kept up to date. However there are a number of actions identified in the fire risk assessments as needing to be completed, and the two blocks with a substantial risk level are being prioritised. Until the work is completed, we are carrying out twice daily checks on these blocks, and we have asked the repairs contractor to prioritise any repairs which have a health & safety element to them.

The Council now has a contract in place which commenced on 1st September. They are currently working on a programme and surveying and ordering materials, which have a lead in time.

Water Hygiene

All blocks have a current water hygiene risk assessment, but there are still outstanding actions to be completed. Water hygiene was part of the P&R heating & hot water contract, and the Council has now contracted this separately. All actions are estimated to be complete by December 2019. Until the work is complete, we are carrying out additional checks and tank cleansing to ensure that tanks remain safe.

Electrical Works

All emergency lighting has been inspected and repaired/replaced where needed. Some properties require the electrical installations report to be renewed, and we are working with the Council to identify an appropriate contract for this work activity.

Lifts

There are 13 passenger lifts, and they are all compliant with legislation and have been checked by the Council's insurer.

Deborah Upton, Chief Executive, East Kent Housing

3.0 FOLLOW UP OF AUDIT REPORT ACTION PLANS

3.1 As part of the period's work six follow up reviews have been completed of those areas previously reported upon to ensure that the recommendations previously made have been implemented, and the internal control weaknesses leading to those recommendations have been mitigated. Those completed during the period under review are shown in the following table.

3.2

Service / Topic	Original Assurance level	Revised Assurance level	Original recs	Outstanding recs
EKH Risk Management	Reasonable	Reasonable	C 0 H 0 M 3 L 1	C 0 H 0 M 0 L 0
EKH Data Protection & Records management	Reasonable	Reasonable	C 0 H 3 M 0 L 0	C 0 H 0 M 0 L 0
Electoral Finance	Reasonable	Reasonable	C 0 H 4 M 1 L 1	C 0 H 0 M 0 L 0

3.3 Details of any individual Critical and High priority recommendations still to be implemented at the time of follow-up are included at Appendix 1 and on the grounds that these recommendations have not been implemented by the dates originally agreed with management, they are now being escalated for the attention of the s.151 officer and Members' of the Governance and Audit Committee.

The purpose of escalating high-priority recommendations which have not been implemented is to try to gain support for any additional resources (if required) to resolve the risk, or to ensure that risk acceptance or tolerance is approved at an appropriate level.

4.0 WORK IN PROGRESS

4.1 During the period under review, work has also been undertaken on the following topics, which will be reported to this Committee at future meetings: Constitution; Transformation Governance; Corporate Responsive Repairs; S106s; Industrial Estates; Taxi's & Private Hire; EKH Performance Management; EKH Repairs & Maintenance.

5.0 CHANGES TO THE AGREED AUDIT PLAN

- 5.1 The 2019/20 audit plan was agreed by Members at the meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee on 5th March 2019.
- 5.2 The Head of the Audit Partnership meets on a regular basis with the Section 151 Officer or their deputy to discuss any amendments to the plan. Members of the Committee will be advised of any significant changes through these regular update reports. Minor amendments are made to the plan during the course of the year as some high profile projects or high-risk areas may be requested to be prioritised at the expense of putting back or deferring to a future year some lower risk planned reviews. The detailed position regarding when resources have been applied and or changed are shown as Appendix 3.

6.0 FRAUD AND CORRUPTION

There are currently no reported incidents of fraud or corruption being investigated by EKAP.

7.0 INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE

- 7.1 For the period ended 30th June 2019, 83.60 chargeable days were delivered against the planned target of 361.38 days, (including 46.38 days that were carried over from the previous year) which equates to achievement of 23% of the original planned number of days.
- 7.2 The financial performance of the EKAP for 2019/20 is on target for Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

Attachments

- Appendix 1 Summary of high priority recommendations outstanding or in progress after follow up
- Appendix 2 Summary of services with limited / no assurances.
- Appendix 3 Progress to 30th June 2019 against the agreed 2019/20 Audit plan.
- Appendix 4 Balanced Scorecard of performance indicators to 30th June 2019
- Appendix 5 Assurance Statements.

SUMMARY OF CRITICAL /HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS OUTSTANDING AFTER FOLLOW-UP – APPENDIX 1		
Original Recommendation	Agreed Management Action , Responsibility and Target Date	Manager’s Comment on Progress Towards Implementation.
None		

SERVICES GIVEN LIMITED / NO ASSURANCE LEVELS STILL TO BE REVIEWED			
Service	Reported to Committee	Level of Assurance	Follow-up Action Due
East Kent Housing – Tenancy & Right to Buy Fraud	March 2019	Limited	Quarter 2

PROGRESS AGAINST THE AGREED F&HDC AUDIT PLAN 2019/20

Review	Original Planned Days	Revised Planned Days	Actual - 30/06/2019	Status and Assurance level
FINANCIAL SYSTEMS				
Bank Reconciliation	10	10		Quarter 3
Business Rates	10	10		Quarter 3
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	10	10	0.05	Quarter 2
Insurance	10	10		Quarter 4
Treasury Management	10	10	1.46	Work in progress
HOUSING SYSTEMS				
Housing Allocations	10	10	0.04	Quarter 2
ICT SYSTEMS				
ICT review	10	10		Quarter 4
HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEMS				
Employee Allowances & Expenses	10	10		Quarter 3
GOVERNANCE RELATED				
Financial Procedures Rules	10	10	9.74	Finalised - Reasonable
Constitution	10	10		Quarter 2
Counter Fraud Arrangements	2	2	0.24	Work in progress
Oportunitas Governance	10	10		Quarter 3
SERVICE LEVEL				
E-Procurement & Purchase Cards	10	10	0.14	Quarter 3
Corporate Responsive Repairs	10	10	5.35	Work in progress
Enforcement	10	10		Quarter 3
Engineers	10	10		Quarter 4
Grounds Maintenance	10	10		Quarter 4
Industrial Estates	10	10	0.08	Quarter 2
Land Charges	10	10		Quarter 4
Licensing	10	10		Quarter 4
Lifeline	10	10		Quarter 3
Security of the Civic Centre	8	10	9.21	Finalised - Reasonable
Special Projects 2018/19	10	27	29.69	Finalised – N/A
Sports Income	8	10		Quarter 2
Taxi's	10	10	2.99	Work in progress
Folkestone Community Works Grant	8	10	0.08	Quarter 3

Review	Original Planned Days	Revised Planned Days	Actual - 30/06/2019	Status and Assurance level
Waste Management	10	10	0.10	Quarter 2
OTHER				
Committee reports & meetings	10	10	2.20	Ongoing
S151 meetings & support	11	11	1.50	Ongoing
Corporate advice / CMT	2	3	0.54	Ongoing
Liaison with External Audit	1	1	0.14	Ongoing
Audit plan prep & meetings	10	10	1.80	Ongoing
Follow Up Reviews	15	15	0.46	Ongoing
Election duties		4	3.68	Completed – N/A
FINALISATION OF 2018-19 AUDITS				
Days under delivered in 2018/19	46.38			Allocated as required
Finalise 2018/19 audits				Allocated below
Sections 106s				Quarter 2
Transformation Governance		10	1.00	Work in progress
GDPR			12.50	Draft report
Creditors			0.61	Finalised – Substantial / Reasonable
Business Continuity				Quarter 4
Total	361.38	361.38	83.60	23% complete as at 30/06/2019

EAST KENT HOUSING LIMITED:

Review	Original Planned Days	Revised Planned Days	Actual - 30/06/2019	Status and Assurance Level
Planned Work:				
CMT/Audit Sub Ctte/EA Liaison	4	4	4.32	Work-in-progress throughout 2019-20
Follow-up Reviews	4	4	1.76	Work-in-progress throughout 2019-20
Rent Accounting, Collection & Debt Mngmt.	40	40	0.18	Quarter 2
Rechargeable Works	10	10	0	Quarter 3
Tenants' Health & Safety	15	15	17.63	Finalised - Ltd-No
Customer Contact	12	12	0	Quarter 4
East Kent Housing Improvement Plan	10	10	0	Quarter 3
Estate Management Inspection	15	15	0	Quarter 4
Anti-Social Behaviour	15	15	0	Quarter 4
Employee Health, Safety & Welfare	15	15	0	Quarter 2
Finalisation of 2018-19 Work-in-Progress:				
Days under delivered in 2018-19	0	19.50		Allocated
Staff Performance Management			4.93	Work-in-Progress
Welfare Reform			4.53	Work-in-Progress
Repairs & Maintenance			20.90	Work-in-Progress
Service Level Agreements			0.97	Finalised
Total	140	159.50	55.22	35% as at 30/06/2019



BALANCED SCORECARD

<u>INTERNAL PROCESSES PERSPECTIVE:</u>	<u>2018-19 Actual</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE:</u>	<u>2018-19 Actual</u>	<u>Original Budget</u>
	Quarter 1		Reported Annually		
Chargeable as % of available days	88%	80%	• Cost per Audit Day	£	£332.50
Chargeable days as % of planned days			• Direct Costs	£	£428,375
CCC	18.18%	25%	• + Indirect Costs (Recharges from Host)	£	£10,530
DDC	19.34%	25%			
F&HDC	23.68%	25%	• - 'Unplanned Income'	£	Zero
TDC	21.63%	25%			
EKS	23.36%	25%	• = Net EKAP cost (all Partners)	£	£438,905
EKH	34.61%	25%			
Overall	22.97%	25%			
Follow up/ Progress Reviews;					
• Issued	6	-			
• Not yet due	20	-			
• Now due for Follow Up	25	-			
Compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) (see Annual Report for more details)	Partial	Full			

<u>CUSTOMER PERSPECTIVE:</u>	<u>2018-19 Actual</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>INNOVATION & LEARNING PERSPECTIVE:</u>	<u>2018-19 Actual</u>	<u>Target</u>
	Quarter 1		Quarter 3		
Number of Satisfaction Questionnaires Issued;	12		Percentage of staff qualified to relevant technician level	75%	75%
Number of completed questionnaires received back;	6		Percentage of staff holding a relevant higher level qualification	36%	36%
	= 50%		Percentage of staff studying for a relevant professional qualification	14%	N/A
Percentage of Customers who felt that;			Number of days technical training per FTE	0.73	3.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews were conducted in a professional manner • The audit report was 'Good' or better • That the audit was worthwhile. 	100%	100%	Percentage of staff meeting formal CPD requirements (post qualification)	36%	36%
	100%	90%			
	100%	100%			

Definition of Audit Assurance Statements & Recommendation Priorities

Assurance Statements:

Substantial Assurance - From the testing completed during this review a sound system of control is currently being managed and achieved. All of the necessary, key controls of the system are in place. Any errors found were minor and not indicative of system faults. These may however result in a negligible level of risk to the achievement of the system objectives.

Reasonable Assurance - From the testing completed during this review most of the necessary controls of the system in place are managed and achieved. There is evidence of non-compliance with some of the key controls resulting in a marginal level of risk to the achievement of the system objectives. Scope for improvement has been identified, strengthening existing controls or recommending new controls.

Limited Assurance - From the testing completed during this review some of the necessary controls of the system are in place, managed and achieved. There is evidence of significant errors or non-compliance with many key controls not operating as intended resulting in a risk to the achievement of the system objectives. Scope for improvement has been identified, improving existing controls or recommending new controls.

No Assurance - From the testing completed during this review a substantial number of the necessary key controls of the system have been identified as absent or weak. There is evidence of substantial errors or non-compliance with many key controls leaving the system open to fundamental error or abuse. The requirement for urgent improvement has been identified, to improve existing controls or new controls should be introduced to reduce the critical risk.

Priority of Recommendations Definitions:

Critical – A finding which significantly impacts upon a corporate risk or seriously impairs the organisation's ability to achieve a corporate priority. Critical recommendations also relate to non-compliance with significant pieces of legislation which the organisation is required to adhere to and which could result in a financial penalty or prosecution. Such recommendations are likely to require immediate remedial action and are actions the Council must take without delay.

High – A finding which significantly impacts upon the operational service objective of the area under review. This would also normally be the priority assigned to recommendations relating to the (actual or potential) breach of a less prominent legal responsibility or significant internal policies; unless the consequences of non-compliance are severe. High priority recommendations are likely to require remedial action at the next available opportunity or as soon as is practical and are recommendations that the Council must take.

Medium – A finding where the Council is in (actual or potential) breach of - or where there is a weakness within - its own policies, procedures or internal control measures, but which

does not directly impact upon a strategic risk, key priority, or the operational service objective of the area under review. Medium priority recommendations are likely to require remedial action within three to six months and are actions which the Council should take.

Low – A finding where there is little if any risk to the Council or the recommendation is of a business efficiency nature and is therefore advisory in nature. Low priority recommendations are suggested for implementation within six to nine months and generally describe actions the Council could take.

This report will be made public on 10 September 2019

Report number **AuG/19/11**

To: Audit & Governance
Date: 18 September 2019
Status: Non key decision
Head of service: Charlotte Spendley, Assistant Director – Finance, Customer & Support Services
Cabinet Member: Cllr David Monk, Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF CORPORATE RISK REGISTER AND RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY

SUMMARY: This report presents an updated Risk Management Policy & Strategy for consideration by the Audit & Governance Committee, ahead of its adoption by Cabinet. The Policy & Strategy provides a framework the management of risk by Officers & Members. This report also provides an update to the Corporate Risk Register.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

A clear framework as outlined within the Strategy will ensure consistency in approach across the organisation, provide clarity of roles with respect to Risk Management and enable progress towards an embedded Risk Management culture within the organisation.

It is essential that the Committee regularly review the Risk Register to consider progress made against agreed actions, and consider the key risks faced by the organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note the updated Corporate Risk Register.
2. To propose to Cabinet the adoption the updated Risk Management Policy & Strategy.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Risk Management Policy and Strategy was last refreshed in June 2018. At this time a full review of the Policy Statement and Strategy was undertaken.
- 1.2 Effective risk management is a key framework in the management of a complex organisation such as Folkestone & Hythe District Council. The strategy seeks to provide Members and officers with a clear framework by which to work within, as well support the development of a risk management culture within the Council.
- 1.3 The Financial Procedure Rules state:
“It is the overall responsibility of the Cabinet to approve the Council’s Risk Management Policy and Strategy, review it on an annual basis and to promote a culture of risk management awareness throughout the Council.”
- 1.4 Whilst overall responsibility to approve the Policy & Strategy rests with the Cabinet, the Audit & Governance Committee have through their Terms of Reference a duty to “consider the effectiveness of the authority’s risk management arrangements”.

2. CHANGES TO THE POLICY & STRATEGY

- 2.1 The objectives of the Policy are to create a mature approach to risk management within the Council, where risk based decision making is undertaken and risk management becomes proactive and embedded in our normal management and business processes. The proposed documents are appended to this report (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Limited changes to the Policy & Strategy are proposed at this time. There are a number of ‘housekeeping’ updates proposed. In addition some changes have been made to Section 8 including the inclusion of a requirement to review Cabinet & Council decisions when updating the risk register.
- 2.3 The documents were re-written last year to ensure they were reflective of the organisation & its needs. Officers have been receiving training over the year to ensure they are aware of their role and how to fulfil it. The process established has been found to be broadly effective and therefore limited changes are proposed at this time to enable officers to continue to build their confidence in the process. The Strategy & Policy will be tabled to Cabinet for agreement following consideration by Audit & Governance Committee.

3. UPDATE TO CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

- 3.1 The Corporate Risk Register has been reviewed and is appended to this report (Appendix 2).
- 3.2 There are no proposed changes to the risk scores at this time. The register was last considered in July, therefore there has been limited time in this

instance to progress actions sufficiently to change the scoring. However there are a number of changes to the written elements of the register to reflect progress or new actions identified.

4. SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 It is encouraging to see the progress made in respect of risk management over the last 12 months. All Managers have now received training on their role and the process for the management of risk. The Corporate Risk Register has been considered by Audit & Governance Committee in December 2018, March & July 2019. Additionally most departments have developed their Operational Risk Registers which are published alongside guidance on the intranet.
- 4.2 There is further progress to be made in embedding Risk Management more fully in our day to day processes and developing our appetite for risk but good progress has been made in a short period due to the participation at all levels within the organisation.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

5.1

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Failure to have a current Risk Management Policy & Strategy adopted will cause inconsistencies in approach across the Council	High	Low	A revised Policy & Strategy document has been prepared and relevant officers consulted.
Failure to have a current Risk Management Policy & Strategy adopted will affect the Councils ability to deliver effectively on its Corporate Plan objectives	High	Low	A revised document has been prepared for adoption that provides for the management of Corporate Plan Objective risks.

6. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report

Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Diversities and Equalities Implications (CS)

There are no direct implications of this report.

7. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Charlotte Spendley, Assistant Director – Finance, Customer & Support Services

Telephone: 01303 853420

Email: charlotte.spendley@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Risk Management Policy & Strategy

Appendix 2: Corporate Risk Register

Corporate Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Pre-mitigation Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Post mitigation Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
C1	Organisational Instability	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	High levels of staff turnover & loss of professional/organisational expertise in some key roles. Changes in political make-up of the Council, greater political complexity.	Corporate Communications and Engagement Strategy adopted. Staff Survey indicates improved morale. Experienced Transformation Manager appointed. Phase 1 consultation commenced. Majority of new Member training delivered providing organisation context and outlining the role of Councillor.	3	3	9	Treat	Continue with plans to support staff through development and training; Conclude phase 1 consultation ahead of implementation during October 2019. Continue with training for new Members to ensure they understand the Council & the role of Councillor; continued work between Group Leaders and Senior Officers to understand wider political priorities. Planned Group Leaders meeting to discuss long term planning (September)	September 19 & ongoing	2	2	4
Page 49													
C2	Shortage of skills to deliver new agenda	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Geographical location restricts available pool; recruitment difficulties (terms & conditions); shortage of specialist skills including project management, insight, business case preparation and evaluation, commercial appraisal. Emerging skills required at a time many organisations are looking due to national / international issues (such as Brexit Emergency Planning & Climate Emergency)	Alternative staff incentives on offer such as flexible working, F&H Rewards. Appointment of Business Analysts to support process mapping & re-design. Significant (£450k over 2 financial years) training provision made available. Staff training on competency based interview techniques concluded.	2	3	6	Treat	Transformation and ICT implementation plans to identify training programmes for skills gap within team - linking with Learning and Development team; People Strategy to consider alternative recruitment options and how it can support and develop a more 'digital' workforce. Recruitment process underway to identify suitable candidates to support both Brexit & lead Climate Emergency work including evaluating existing staff skill base for cross training.	Key milestone October 19 & ongoing	1	2	2
C3	Failure to deliver Otterpool Park development	John Bunnett (Strategic Director); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Delivery of a Garden Town which will present complex planning issues, financial exposure risks and require new connections to be established with key partners to enable delivery e.g.inward Investment required to facilitate infrastructure	Experienced dedicated Strategic Development projects team with embedded Legal & Financial representation on working group. Work has commenced building connections with Homes England and MHCLG. Engaging specialist advice where required. Land acquired to date has an agricultural value. Collaboration agreement with key partner established.	3	3	9	Treat	Detailed financial model currently being developed. Future Cabinet reports to be considered ahead of project commencement. Continue to engage specialist advice where required. Specific advice has been commissioned to progress Joint Venture feasibility. Funding options will need to be assessed ahead of commencement of delivery of project. Ensure adequate Planning resources and access appropriate specialist advice.	Ongoing	1	3	3

Corporate Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Pre-mitigation Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Post mitigation Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
C4	Medium Term Financial Uncertainty	Tim Madden (S151 Officer) Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Fair funding review will fundamentally change LG funding but detail unknown at present. Will need to plan with within climate of uncertainty which may only become clearer close to budget setting time. Lack of certainty on Business Rates Localisation/Retention and other funding streams. Delay announced for 3 year spending review.	Officers regularly attending briefings on future LG funding. Updated MTFS to be considered by Cabinet/Council in October and Budget Strategy considered in November. S151 Officer part of Kent wide working group for Business Rates Retention. Investment Strategy & Capital Strategy agreed by Full Council in February, alongside balanced GF budget for 2019/20.	3	3	9	Treat	Officers will continue to attend briefings on LG Funding and brief members. Staff and Members to be provided with regular updates on MTFS and assessment of updates to Fair Funding proposals.to address Peer review feedback.	Ongoing	2	2	4
C5	Brexit/Wider Market Conditions	John Bunnett (Strategic Director) & Cllr Wimble (Economy)	Recession. Labour issues (most relevant to Housing Responsive Repairs & Waste contracts). Volatility of housing market (Impact on key Strategic Project delivery). Economic risk to district of Brexit due to key infrastructure links to Europe eg M20/Eurotunnel/Stack. Major disruption to Kent road network. Issues with getting staff to work to carry out essential and statutory services in event of No-Deal Brexit.	Project plans in place for retender of Responsive Repairs & Waste Contracts. Key Strategic Projects modelled with tolerances for market volatility. Attending local and regional contingency planning meetings on Brexit including multi-agency planning days. FHDC working closely with KRF and other stakeholders to ensure plans are effective. Table top exercises have been carried out. Key staff have received tactical and strategic training. Business continuity plans have been updated. Rotas for key staff have been formulated. All staff mapped for where they live to highlight potential issues. £600k of Brexit funding secured from Central government.	3	4	12	Treat	Await clarity on Brexit deal. Meet with key stakeholders at appropriate time once detail understood and impacts can be modelled. Progress with Strategic Projects, ensure market conditions evaluated at full business case appraisal stage. Continue working closely with KRF and other Key Stakeholders. Clear communication through the South East Chief Execs group and central Gov. Attendance / dial in with strategic and tactical meetings as required. Key comms messages out to staff.	Ongoing	2	4	8
C6	Capacity to deliver competing demands	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Balance between business as usual activity and aspiration including emerging commercial agenda	Member awayday defined key priority areas from Corporate Plan for 2018/19 with further Cabinet awayday held in July to agree future planning.	2	2	4	Tolerate	Monitor against agreed priorities to ensure there is no mission creep. Group Leaders future planning session scheduled for September 2019. Continue work required with Group Leaders & Council Leader / CLT to establish wider political priorities.	Ongoing	2	2	4

Corporate Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Pre-mitigation Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Post mitigation Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
C7	Capacity & Financial Resilience of key partners	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr J Hollingsbee (Communities); Cllr Godfrey (Housing)	Pressures faced by many public services impact upon our ability and capacity to deliver against Corporate Plan including Police who are key to ASB duties; "Health Matters" links to NHS & GP issues locally, coastal district with natural & historic sites so Appearance matters outcome partially reliant on other agencies. Outsourced Landlord service difficulties (see C13).	Key Strategic Partnerships established including Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership, Local Childrens Partnership Group and South Kent Coast Health and Wellbeing Board. Corporate Plan and priorities have been agreed with members. Regular close liaison with EKH Chief Executive / Board & joint owners (meeting held in August). Initial options paper considered in July.	3	3	9	Tolerate	Monitor Corporate Plan delivery plan and appropriate Service Plans against agreed priorities to ensure there is no mission creep & teams remain focused on agreed input. Protocols established for role of Council with partner organisations. Continued liaison with EKH Chief Executive / Board & Joint Owners, review commissioned & report to be prepared on future options for Members.	Ongoing	3	1	3
C8	Failure to deliver Transformation change including key components of ICT & People Strategy	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader), Hollingsbee (Communities) & Cllr Meyers (Digital Transformation & Customer Service)	Transformational change is not delivered by the agreed timescales, to agreed budget, project objectives or fails to make required savings. IT delivered is not customer focused or fit for the future (as well as current requirements). The People Strategy does not deliver cultural change required to support new operating model.	Transformation governance reviewed. Transformation Board established to track project progress against milestones and budget. IT Strategy agreed and first phase of implementation commenced. ICT implementation work streams monitored by Technology Board exception report to Transformation Board. Digital Strategy agreed. Experienced Project Manager appointed to lead transformation. Implementation timescales for phase 1, 2 & 3 agreed by Transformation Board. Skype for Business & new Customer Contact Centre ICT in place.	2	3	6	Treat	Phase 1 Consultation has commenced for implementation in October. Process redesign underway and to continue throughout 2019.	Key milestone October 2019 & ongoing	1	3	3
C9	Failure to deliver Strategic Projects due to complexity	John Bunnett (Strategic Director); Cllr David Godfrey (Housing, Transport & Special Projects)	Ambitious Strategic Development projects agenda identified of a complex nature presenting planning risks, financial exposure risks and require new connections to be established with key partners to enable delivery e.g.inward Investment required to facilitate infrastructure	Experienced dedicated Strategic Development projects team. Work has commenced building connections with Homes England and MHCLG with some funding already agreed. Engaging specialist advice where required.	2	3	6	Treat	Stakeholder map to be drafted to identify connections that exist and need to be built. Detailed Business cases to be developed and considered by Cabinet ahead of project commencement. Continue to engage specialist advice where required.	Ongoing	1	3	3

Corporate Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Pre-mitigation Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Post mitigation Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
C10	Risk of non compliance	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	FHDC operates in a complex regulatory and legislative environment. Risk of challenge over Planning decisions (Secretary of State or Judicial Review) or potential intervention into Core Strategy Review and Places and Policies Local Plan that would delay projects and landlord statutory obligations.	Core Strategy Review consultation complete. Legal support embedded in project teams for key projects. External Advice sought where required. Interim LGSR arrangements procured and commissioned and service being delivered and monitored. Commission tendered to review the arrangements for resident health and safety and statutory compliance for the council's tenants and leaseholders in East Kent. Procurement exercise undertaken for gas servicing and heating installations contract, with a recommendation to award.	4	4	16	Treat	Continued External Advice sought when required. Use of professional specialists (Legal, Finance, Procurement) in key projects (e.g. Waste Contract, Strategic Development). Review findings and recommendations resulting from the full review into service failures in relation to LGSRs and the wider service failures identified by the work completed by EKAP.	Ongoing	1	3	3
C11	Reputational Risks	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader) & Cllr Meyers (Digital Transformation & Customers)	Failure to deliver key Corporate objectives and Financial plans. Key contracts to deliver (2020/21 Waste & Recycling and Housing Responsive Repairs) risks include procurement challenge, Member agreement to proposals, effective shared working with EK Councils/EKH, financial impact. Reputational risks associated with implementation of Strategic Projects. Customer satisfaction falls during Transformation changes. Risk of partner / service failure, referral / investigation from regulatory body.	Quarterly KPI monitoring and exception reporting to CLT, OSC and Cabinet. Working Groups established early to progress key contract delivery by agreed timeframes. Procurement expertise on working group with external advice being sought as required. SoS have now confirmed they will not call in Princes Parade Business Case for delivery agreed by Cabinet in February 19.	4	3	12	Treat	Project Governance and oversight of key contracts to be agreed with CLT. Independent review commissioned into LGSR & wider compliance issues.	Ongoing	2	2	4

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Corporate Risk Register

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Pre-mitigation Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Post mitigation Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
C12	Non-compliance with ESIF regulations for the Folkestone Community Works (FCW) programme	John Bunnett (Strategic Director) & Cllr Wimble (Economy)	FHDC is the accountable body with management responsibilities for the FCW programme. As a result it forward funds approved project spend and recoups quarterly from DWP and MCHLG, as the managing authorities for ESF and ERDF. Any non-compliance could result in financial risk to the council	Indepth scrutiny of ability and systems of project lead organisations to undertake EU compliant projects; FHDC decision panel to scrutinise assessments of lead organisations and projects prior to approval; robust Grant Funding Agreements with project lead organisations; regular quarterly monitoring by the programme management team and oversight by the LAG; LAG to regularly monitor the more detailed operational risk register for the FCW programme	3	2	6	Treat	Ensure that the mechanisms in place to reduce the risk are operationalised by undertaking checks and check that their effectiveness with Managing Authorities during the quarterly claims process	Ongoing	1	2	2
C13	Landlord Service Failure	Susan Priest (HoPS); Cllr David Monk (Leader) & Cllr Godfrey (Housing) & Cllr Collier (Estates & Assets)	The council is a landlord and has tenants in its own buildings, in those owned by Oportunitas, and its social landlord functions are managed by East Kent Housing Ltd, a jointly owned Council company. Significant statutory compliancy issues have been identified with EKH, in addition to issues being identified with contract management within the organisation. The issues present legal & moral issues for the Council in its role as landlord, in addition to potential financial issues, reputational damage, as well as the implications of the partner owners decisions regarding the future of the service delivery model. Discharging all landlord functions appropriately is necessary, as is acting immediately to reports of non-compliance across a variety of health and safety issues.	Robust estate and asset management functions for properties managed by the council. Contractual arrangements in place for asset management functions for Oportunitas and EKH. Weekly meetings with partner owner Councils & senior representation from EKH to address reported non-compliance issues. Interim arrangements in place at EKH with contractors to ensure LGSR compliance. Additional senior resource has been identified internally to manage the ongoing work required. Review of all H&S compliance matters commissioned. External legal advice sought.	4	4	16	Treat	On-going review of council landlord functions. Conclusion of EKH review & actions to be agreed. Continue close working with Councils and EKH on matters of non-compliance and Improvement Plan performance. Review findings and recommendations resultings from the full review into service failures in relation to LGSRs and the wider service failures identified by the work completed by EKAP. Future housing service delivery options to be evaluated for financial & legal implications and considered by Members in the autumn 2019.	Ongoing	1	2	2

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Matrix - Corporate Risk Register

Likelihood	Very Likely (4)			C11 - Reputational	C10 - Non-Compliance C13 - Landlord Service Failure
	Likely (3)		C12 - FCW ESIF regulations	C1- Organisational Instability C3 - Otterpool Park delivery C4 - Financial Uncertainty C7 - Key Partner Capacity	C5 - Brexit / Market Conditions
	Unlikely (2)		C6 - Competing demands	C2 - Shortage of skills C8 - Transformation C9 - Complexity of Projects	
	Rare (1)				
		Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Severe (4)
	Impact				

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Risk Management Policy & Strategy

August 2019



Risk Management Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Risk Management Policy of Folkestone & Hythe District Council (FHDC) is to adopt best practice in the identification, evaluation, and cost effective control of risks.

Risk is a factor of every-day life and can never be eliminated completely. FHDC is exposed to risk through threats to service provision, failure to deliver its strategic objectives and from the potential of lost opportunities.

All employees must understand the nature of risk and accept responsibility for risks associated with their area of authority. The necessary support, assistance and commitment of senior management will be provided.

Ultimately, effective risk management will help ensure the Council maximises its opportunities and minimises the risks it faces, improving our ability to achieve our strategic objectives and have an effective and sound system of governance in place. This framework will be particularly helpful in moving towards a more commercial approach.

2. Objectives

The council's risk management objectives are to:

1. Develop risk maturity and establish an appropriate risk appetite focussed on identifying, managing and mitigating risks which may prevent the Council from achieving its strategic objectives.
2. Manage risk in accordance with best practice.
3. Embed risk management in our normal management & business processes
4. Anticipate and respond quickly change.
5. Minimise the total cost of risk.

These objectives will be achieved by:

1. Establishing a risk management organisational structure to act in an advisory and guiding capacity and which is accessible to all employees.
2. Adopt processes, which demonstrate the application of risk management principles across the whole council.
3. Providing risk management training as necessary.
4. Devise and maintain contingency plans in key risk areas to secure business continuity where there is a potential for an event having a major impact upon the council's ability to function.
5. Have a proactive approach to managing and anticipating events before they happen through maintaining effective communication and the active involvement of councillors and officers.
6. Monitor arrangements continuously, learning from our mistakes and near misses.

3. Review period

In line with our policy to follow best practice, the Risk Management Strategy will be reviewed annually, so as to capture developments in relevant risk management approaches.

Section 2 – Risk Management Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 Risk management will help identify and deal with key corporate risks facing the organisation in the pursuit of its objectives; it is a key part of good management, not simply a compliance exercise.

2. What is risk management?

2.1 “It is the process whereby organisations methodically address the risks attaching to their activities with the goal of achieving sustained benefit within each activity and across the portfolio of all activities.” (*A Risk Management Strategy* by the Institute of Risk Management)

2.2 In layman terms, risk management is about ensuring that processes, projects, services and activities are delivered in the best possible manner, while reducing the probability of failure and maximising opportunities.

3. The benefits of good risk management

3.1 Good risk management supports the achievement of the council’s objectives and has a crucial role to play in ensuring that Folkestone & Hythe District Council is well run. Risk management is about managing the threats that may hinder delivery of our priorities and core services, and maximising the opportunities that will help deliver them. It is important that risk management is aligned to the service plans, MTFS, Corporate Plan, policy making, performance management and strategic planning of the organisation.

3.2 The key benefits of a systematic approach to risk management are:

- Protects and enhances the reputation of Folkestone & Hythe District Council
- It provides a framework for future activity to take place in a consistent manner
- Contributes to a more efficient use of capital and resources
- Assists in the protection and enhancement of assets
- Optimises operational efficiency and focus

4. Types of risk – corporate, operational, project and partnership

4.1 Risk Management is integral to corporate planning, specific projects and service management. Categories of risk to be considered are:

4.2 Corporate risks

These are risks that need to be taken into account when looking at the medium to long term objectives of the council. Corporate risks would typically be identified and addressed within the council's Corporate Plan or Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). These risks can be identified through the following sub-categories (this is not an exhaustive list but intended to provide guidance):

- Political – those associated with a failure to deliver either local or central government policy.
- Economic – those affecting the ability of the council to meet its financial commitments.
- Social – those relating to the effects of demographic changes on the council's ability to deliver its objectives.
- Technological – includes the consequences of internal technological failures on the council's ability to deliver its objectives.
- Legislative – those associated with current or potential changes in national or European law.
- Environmental – those relating to environmental consequences of progressing the council's Corporate Objectives.
- Competitive – those affecting the competitiveness of the service and/or its ability to deliver best value.
- Customer – those associated with the failure to meet the current and changing needs and expectations of customers.
- Reputation – those relating to public confidence and failure to recruit high calibre staff.

4.3 Operational (**Departmental**) risks

These are generally identified and managed by Assistant Directors, **Chief Officers** and Service Managers as part of their operational business remit. These are risks that managers and staff will encounter in the daily course of their work and can be identified through the following sub-categories:

- Professional – those associated with the particular nature of each profession.
- Financial – those associated with financial planning and control and the adequacy of insurance cover.
- Legal – those related to possible breaches of legislation, breach of contract, negligence, etc.
- Physical – those related to fire, security, accident, prevention and health and safety.
- Contractual – those associated with the failure of contractors to deliver services or products to agreed cost and specification.

- Technological – those relating to reliance on operational equipment.
- Environmental – those relating to pollution, noise or the energy efficiency of ongoing service operations.
- Human Resources – those relating to staff issues.

4.4 Partnership risks

Folkestone & Hythe District Council works with a range of partners to deliver services. It is important that those partners are brought into the risk management framework to ensure that risks to the council are not overlooked. Risks are identified and addressed in formal partnership agreements and contracts as appropriate. The primary risks are:

- Financial – failure to understand the potential financial liabilities associated with partnership arrangements.
- Reputation – loss of public confidence.
- Contractual – contract requirements not delivered.
- Legal – failure to understand the potential legal liabilities associated with partnership arrangements.
- Service failure – the associated risk of increased costs.

4.5 Project risks

Folkestone & Hythe District Council has a number of major strategic projects that require risk mapping. These projects will have inherent risks and opportunities. Where the project poses a significant risk or is of strategic importance to the delivery of the Corporate Plan an overall risk should be identified within the corporate risk register. The project itself should have a project risk register that is managed by the Project lead/ Project Sponsor and regularly reviewed by the wider project team.

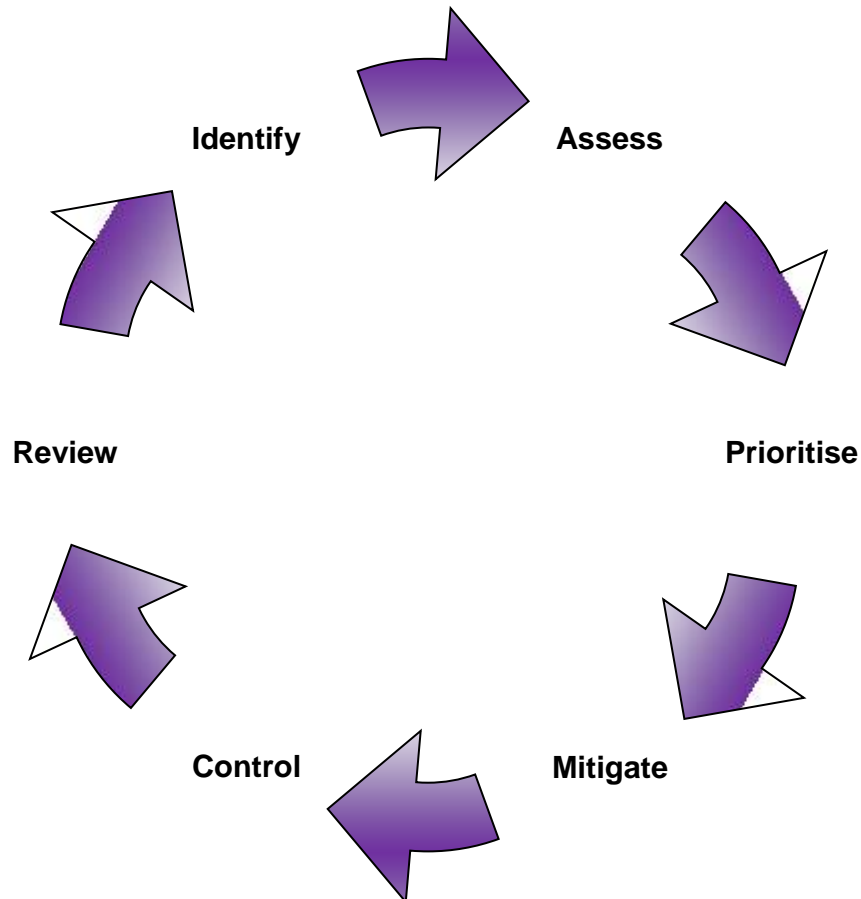
5. Risk management cycle

5.1 There are a number of steps in the cycle of identifying and managing risks within the council. These should be as follows:

- **Identify** – a need to identify the potential risks that may arise if informed decisions are to be made about policies or service delivery methods.
- **Assess** – available data should be used to provide information to help assess the probability of any risk arising or the potential impact on activities undertaken.
- **Prioritise** – action determined on the tolerance and aversion to risk, balanced against the availability of limited resources.
- **Mitigate** – should the risk be terminated, tolerated, treated or transferred.
- **Control** – once the appropriate action is determined for each risk, the process of controlling that risk can commence. This will either involve minimising/eliminating the risk and/or alleviating its potential impact.

- **Review** – risk management needs to be seen as a continuous process. It is essential that the incidence of risk be reviewed to see whether it has changed over time.

5.2 The risk review cycle is captured in the diagram below, which emphasises the need for risk to be embedded as an ongoing process throughout the organisation (diagram 1):



6. Risk identifying, assessing and prioritising

6.1 Risk assessment is about asking:

- What can go wrong?
- What are the opportunities that may be missed?
- What is the likelihood of it going wrong?
- What is the impact should it go wrong?
- What can be done to mitigate the risk?

6.2 This approach can be applied to decisions made every working day, at all levels of the council. However, to ensure appropriate risk management is embedded throughout the organisation formal risk identification is also necessary to capture the key risks faced and identify appropriate mitigation.

6.3 Risks are scored out of four for their likelihood and potential impact. These two figures are multiplied together to give the risk score. This is shown in the Risk Scoring Matrix below. The risk scores then provide an overall ranking for each risk.

6.4 Risk Management Matrix (diagram 2)

Likelihood	Very Likely (4)	Moderate (4)	High (8)	Extreme (12)	Extreme (16)
	Likely (3)	Low (3)	Moderate (6)	High (9)	Extreme (12)
	Unlikely (2)	Very low (2)	Low (4)	Moderate (6)	High (8)
	Rare (1)	Very low (1)	Very low (2)	Low (3)	Moderate (4)
		Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Severe (4)
	Impact				

6.5 The definitions of likelihood and impact are outlined below, these are intended as guidance:

Likelihood

Rating	Score	Likelihood
Very Likely	4	More than 85% chance of occurrence Regular occurrence Circumstances frequently encountered
Likely	3	More than 65% chance of occurrence Likely to occur within next 12 months Circumstances have been encountered
Unlikely	2	31%-65% chance of occurrence Likely to happen within next 2 years Circumstances occasionally encountered
Rare	1	Less than 30% chance of occurrence Circumstances rarely encountered or never encountered before

Impact

Rating	Score	Impact
Severe	4	Loss of service for a significant period Fatality to an employee, service user or other Failure to meet major corporate objective Breach of law Financial loss in excess of £500k
Significant	3	Financial loss in excess of £250k Intervention in running a single service area Significant or disabling injury Failure to achieve a high profile major service objective Breach of contractual arrangement
Moderate	2	Service interruption Injury to employee, service user or other Financial loss between £50k-£250k Adverse media coverage/ high levels of service user complaints Failure to achieve a service objective
Minor	1	Minor service disruption/ short term inconvenience Financial loss less than £50k Isolated service user complaints Failure to achieve a team objective

6.6 Once risks have been scored, decisions can be made on the appropriate mitigating action (see Section 7 below).

7. Mitigating actions to control the risk

- 7.1 Once a risk has been identified analysed and profiled, there are four ways to control the risk:
- **Treat** – identify and put in place mitigating actions that reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
 - **Transfer** – the risk is transferred partially or fully to a third party (e.g. contractual agreement/ insurance) to share the risk exposure. This may have a cost attached and whilst the financial risk may be transferred, a reputational risk may remain with the authority.
 - **Tolerate** – Some risks can be tolerated without any further action being taken. For some risks, no further action may be possible or the cost may be disproportionate to the potential benefit gained (consideration should be given to a contingency plan for handling the impact if the risk crystallises).
 - **Terminate** – stop the activity or function that gave rise to the risk (where possible).
- 7.2 If the option is to treat or control the risk, then a decision needs to be made on the best control to put in place. Controls need to be proportionate to the risk and need to give reasonable assurance that the loss will be confined to within an acceptable level for the authority.

8. The Corporate Risk Register

- 8.1 The council's Corporate Risk Register is the core element of the arrangements laid out in this strategy as it represents an articulation and assessment of key risks facing the organisation. As such only the key risks identified in the council's Corporate Plan and MTFS would typically be included in the Corporate Risk Register. In addition where appropriate emerging or changing operational or partnership risks identified by **Chief Officers / Assistant Directors** that have a significant bearing on the organisation will be discussed with CLT (Corporate leadership Team) to determine whether these risks need to be included on the Corporate Risk Register.
- 8.2 **On reviewing the Corporate Risk Register, officers will have reference to both Cabinet reports and decisions taken, as well as reviewing motions and decisions taken by Full Council to ensure all corporate risks are given due consideration and captured in the register if relevant.**

9. Responsibility and ownership of risk management

Clear identification of roles and responsibilities is paramount to ensuring the successful adoption of risk management and its embedding into the culture of the council. This strategy supports the roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Financial Procedure Rules, Section C.1. In addition this section sets out how these responsibilities are to be applied.

9.1 Cabinet and Elected Members

Cabinet and Elected Members are to oversee the effective management of risk throughout the council. As such Cabinet will review the council's Risk Policy and Strategy and Corporate Risk Register annually, following these documents being reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team and Audit and Governance Committee. It is also expected that relevant risks are discussed at monthly Portfolio Holder Meetings with Corporate Directors / Assistant Directors.

9.2 Corporate Leadership Team

The council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) are to ensure that the council manages risk effectively through the development and embedding of the Risk Management Strategy plus monitoring its implementation and development. CLT will review the council's Risk Policy and Strategy and Corporate Risk Register annually, ahead of these documents going to Cabinet and Audit and Governance Committee.

CLT will undertake a formal quarterly review of the corporate risk register but will also actively consider emerging or changing risks on a regular basis.

9.3 Assistant Directors/Chief Officers

The Assistant Director – Finance, Customer & Support Services will have overall accountability for overseeing the council's risk management framework and ensuring that the ownership and governance arrangements outlined within this strategy are adhered to.

Assistant Directors and Chief Officers are to manage risk effectively in their service areas. It is also their role to consider risks to services being delivered in partnerships and to work with partnerships to develop partnership risk registers. As such it is expected that Heads of Service work with their Managers and Team Leaders to develop and maintain Operational (Departmental) Risk Registers for their business unit, as well as lead or commission project/partnership risk registers where appropriate. Chief Officers / Assistant Directors will also be responsible for determining when operational risks reach such a level that they should be escalated to CLT for consideration of their inclusion in the council's Corporate Risk Register.

Chief Officers & Assistant Directors are responsible for ensuring their risk registers remain current and relevant and are encouraged to have emerging risks as a standing item on their Team Leader meeting agendas.

9.4 All Council Staff

All council staff are expected to manage risk effectively in their day-to-day tasks and to liaise with their line manager to assess areas of risk within their role. Also council staff should also be familiar with the council's Risk

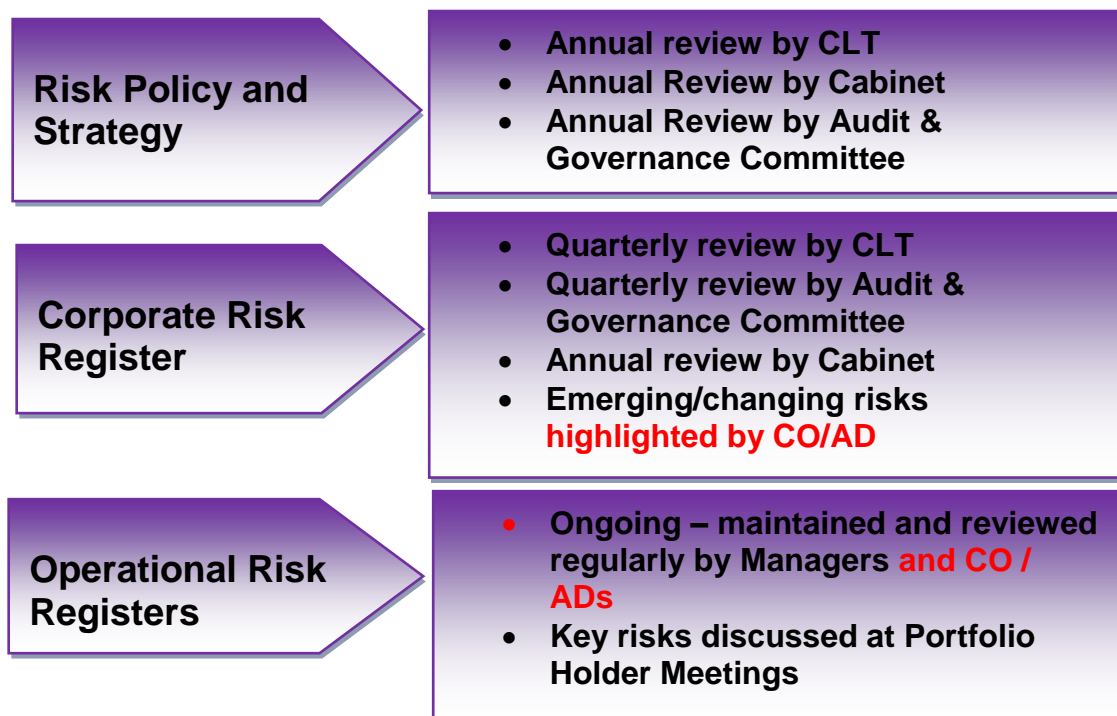
Management Strategy and to comply with Health and Safety procedures. If any staff member feels they require training on either Risk or Health and Safety they are to raise this in their monthly one-to-one with their Team Leader. Staff should also take responsibility to escalate risks to their manager so appropriate controls can be agreed.

9.5 Audit and Governance Committee

Audit and Governance Committee are to consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements, and to seek assurance that action is being taken to mitigate those risks identified. As such an update on the Corporate Risk Register will be presented at each Quarterly Audit and Governance Committee. In addition Audit and Governance Committee will review the council's Risk Policy and Strategy and Corporate Risk Register annually, ahead of these documents going to Cabinet.

10. Governance and Reporting

In line with the responsibility and ownership details outlined above the following diagram (diagram 3) details the governance and reporting timetable arrangements for both the Risk Management Policy and Strategy and the Corporate Risk Register.



11. Supporting Documents

Corporate Risk Register
Financial Procedure Rules, Section C.1

Folkestone & Hythe District Council- Risk Register layout

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description /Trigger	Actions in place	Pre-mitigation Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Post-mitigation Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total

This Report will be made public on 10 September 2019



Report Number **AUG/19/12**

To: Audit & Governance
Date: 18 September 2019
Status: Non-Key Decision
Responsible Officer: Paul Butler – Democratic Services Manager
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2019

SUMMARY: Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by Part 4 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006) places a duty on the Council to conduct a review of polling places and polling districts every four years. The last review was concluded by Folkestone & Hythe District Council (as Shepway District Council) in November 2014. This Report outlines the steps the Council is taking to comply with this duty and seeks approval from Council to approve the recommendations made.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To approve the final proposals for revised Polling Districts, Polling Places and Stations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report AuG/19/12.
2. To approve the proposals listed in this report as the Polling Districts, Polling Places and Stations for the next four years, or until an ad-hoc review triggered by the Council in the interim.
3. To adopt the proposals as outlined in Appendix 2, with the implementation to coincide with the revision of the register on 01 December 2019.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Local authorities are responsible for dividing their constituency into polling districts for UK Parliamentary elections. Polling districts, polling places and polling stations are kept under review to maintain electorate balance and the suitability of venue choices. There is a duty on the Council of the local authority to conduct a review at least once every four years. The compulsory review period started on 01 October 2018 and will end on 31 January 2020.
- 1.2 The last review concluded in November 2014, with the current set up of polling districts and stations proposed as final recommendations. The current review started on Wednesday 01 July 2019 and will conclude at the revision of the Electoral Register on Sunday 01 December 2019.
- 1.3 The length of the review process is not prescribed under legislation, provided that all points in the review schedule are covered and a suitable consultation period is planned to allow sufficient time for anyone wishing to submit their comments on matters are able to.
- 1.4 There are currently 62 polling districts, 54 polling places and 58 polling stations across the Folkestone & Hythe Parliamentary constituency.
- 1.5 In line with the Council's constitution, the responsibility of this review is with the Audit and Governance Committee. A presentation by the Democratic Services Manager on Tuesday 30 July 2019 outlined the details of this review and the importance of keeping to the regulations set by the Representation of the People Act 1983 and Electoral Administration Act 2006.
- 1.6 This review concentrates on the following elements of a parliamentary constituency:
 - 1.6.1 Polling district

A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts. The "administrative" boundary lines of a polling district can be changed, however the governed lines that form Parish, District and County wards/divisions can't be changed as part of this review.
 - 1.6.2 Polling place

A polling place is a building or geographical area in which a polling station is located. It is good practice to specify where a polling place is, as a building instead of an area to ensure there is a clear indication to electors within and outside of a polling district.
 - 1.6.3 Polling station

A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Polling stations are chosen by the Returning Officer for each election, and not by the Council.

2. CONSULTATION

- 2.1 The consultation for this review began at the publishing of the review notice on Wednesday 03 July 2019. A notice was placed on the Parish, Town and District notice boards and on the website which was shared via Facebook and Twitter. A press release was also published to newspapers to invite representations.
- 2.2 In addition to a notice, a total of 46 organisations and charities from the area were contacted directly to seek their views on the current set up of our polling places/stations. The following were also contacted:
- Damian Collins MP
 - Kent County councillors for the Folkestone & Hythe area
 - District and Parish/Town councillors
 - All Parish and Town councils and meetings
 - All political parties that took part in the last local election
 - Susan Priest, the (Acting) Returning Officer for the Parliamentary constituency of Folkestone & Hythe area
- 2.3 The Acting Returning Officer's representation, which included various proposals based on pre-requisite work carried out by the elections team, was published on Wednesday 24 July 2019 on the website and was also available to view at the Civic Centre. Anyone could make comment on this representation up until 04 September 2019.
- 2.4 General representations from the public, and those people, organisations and charities personally invited had until Wednesday 14 August 2019 to submit their views to the Democratic Services Manager. The representations and comments that were received in time can be found in Appendix 3 of this report.

3. REVIEW SCHEDULE

- 3.1 Legislation sets a specific review schedule that must be adhered to, I am happy to confirm that Folkestone & Hythe DC have conducted this review within these obligations.
- 3.2 The review timetable, against the guidelines set by legislation is below for your information:

Notice of Review published & start of consultation	Wednesday 03 July 2019
Acting Returning Officer's representation published	Wednesday 24 July 2019
Submission of Representation deadline	Wednesday 14 August 2019
Submission of Comments on ARO statement deadline	Wednesday 04 September 2019
Proposals submitted to Audit & Governance Committee	Wednesday 18 September 2019
Recommendations reported to Full Council	Wednesday 25 September 2019
Revised Electoral Register published with changes	Sunday 01 December 2019

4. REVIEW

- 4.1 A total of 18 representations and 3 comments on the Acting Returning Officer's representation were received during the consultation period. Each representation was used to consider any changes that could be introduced for future elections. Officers will comment on each representation at the meeting.
- 4.2 In addition to the representations and comments, information collected at polling stations during the full local elections and European Parliamentary elections was utilised to form a better understanding of how staff and visiting electors perceive the current venue choices.
- 4.3 Statistical data and information was collected as part of this review to establish the potential for an increase or decrease in electorate over the next 4 years. The Electoral Commission guidance recommends that a manageable number of electors allocated to a polling station is capped at 2,500.
- 4.4 All polling districts boundary lines were considered (where possible) to understand where amendments may have been made to the lineage to group electors differently to balance out numbers and avoid breaching the 2,500 recommended by the Electoral Commission.
- 4.5 Using the current list of polling places, polling stations and any contributory information known to the elections team. A check of the historic availability of each premises has been considered going forward, likewise some information received on certain polling stations has been considered when sourcing potential replacements or alternative venues.
- 4.6 This review has resulted in proposals that affect the following polling districts:

CH2	Cheriton West
CH3	
EF1-3	East Folkestone
FC1-4	Folkestone Central
HY1	Hythe East
NR2	New Romney Town
NDE6 & NDE10	Swingfield and Acrise
NDW9	Lyminge
WDM8	Lydd

5. RISKS/CONTROLS

- 4.1 In light of the fact that there are minimal proposals as part of this review, there are no significant risks identified.

7. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

7.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

The legal issues have been dealt with in the Report.

7.2 Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

The author of this report has confirmed to Finance that any financial implications arising from this report can be contained within existing budgets.

7.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (PR)

The outcome and recommendations of a review of polling districts and polling places are specifically designed to ensure that all voters are able to exercise their right to vote and, in particular, where voters chose to vote in person at polling stations, that these are accessible to all regardless of disability.

8. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Paul Butler
Democratic Services Manager
Telephone: 01303 853497
Email: paul.butler@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

- The Representation of the People Act 1983
- The Electoral Administration Act 2006
- Electoral Commission Guidance – Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Notice of Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations – dated 01 July 2019

Appendix 2: Polling district and polling stations proposals

Appendix 3: Representations and comments received

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NOTICE OF REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS



Notice is hereby given that Folkestone & Hythe District Council is conducting a review of the polling districts, polling places and polling stations that fall in the Folkestone & Hythe Parliamentary constituency.

In accordance with The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006, the Acting Returning Officer will be invited to make a statement on the existing arrangements and any proposals made. In addition, we are seeking feedback from electors, political representatives, town and parish councils, community organisations and political parties from within the District area. Representations should include views and opinions on:

- the proposals regarding the structure of our current polling districts;
- current polling places;
- the accessibility of our current polling stations;
- alternative venues to use as polling stations; and
- Acting Returning Officers comments and/or proposals.

Any representations must be received in writing by **14 August 2019**. Comments are also welcomed on the Acting Returning Officer's statement and must be submitted by **04 September 2019**.

If you wish to make representation or comment, please send your correspondences as follows:

By post: Democratic Services Manager
Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, CT20 2QY

By email: elections@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

We would also like to welcome the views of any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability.

A timetable, and other documents relating to this review can be inspected at the Council offices at the below address, or online at www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/elections/polling-review.

Decisions relating to the review will be made in November and the review will conclude on Sunday 01 December 2019.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone
CT20 2QY

Dated: Wednesday 03 July 2019

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**POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES
AND POLLING STATIONS REVIEW 2019**

APPENDIX 2



RECOMMENDATIONS

This document contains the final proposals for the polling districts, polling places and polling stations in the Folkestone & Hythe District Council area.

Please note the following points before reading this document:

- Electoral Commission guidance recommends a maximum polling station electorate of 2,500.
- The enclosed maps relate to the polling districts that have had an administrative change only.
- The electorate figures in this report have been reduced by 20% to accommodate the average amount of postal voters in an area. Postal voters do not attend a polling station to vote.
- Any polling district, polling place or station not mentioned in this document does not have a recommendation for change, therefore current polling arrangements used at previous elections will remain in place.
- Identified housing developments carry an average of 2 electors per household, this has been considered for future electorate calculations.
- Natural population growth is set at 1.07% in line with the national average for areas without large housing developments.

Paul Butler
Democratic Services Manager

Initial Draft: 15 August 2019
Revised: 05 September 2019

Ward: Cheriton West ward of Folkestone Town Council, Cheriton District ward

Polling districts: CH2, CH3

Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
CH2	2265	2619	Tower Theatre North Road Cheriton, CT20 3HL	Change the current polling place to: 1 st Cheriton Scout Hut Hawkins Road / Firs Lane Cheriton, CT19 4JA
Comments:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The exponential growth in electorate will be caused by natural progression and the housing development plans in the area. The Scout Hut is central to this densely populated area of Cheriton, with suitable access from two roads and ample parking on firs lane or in the Range car park. The new location can also facilitate a double polling station if required based on the potential growth of electorate in the area. 				

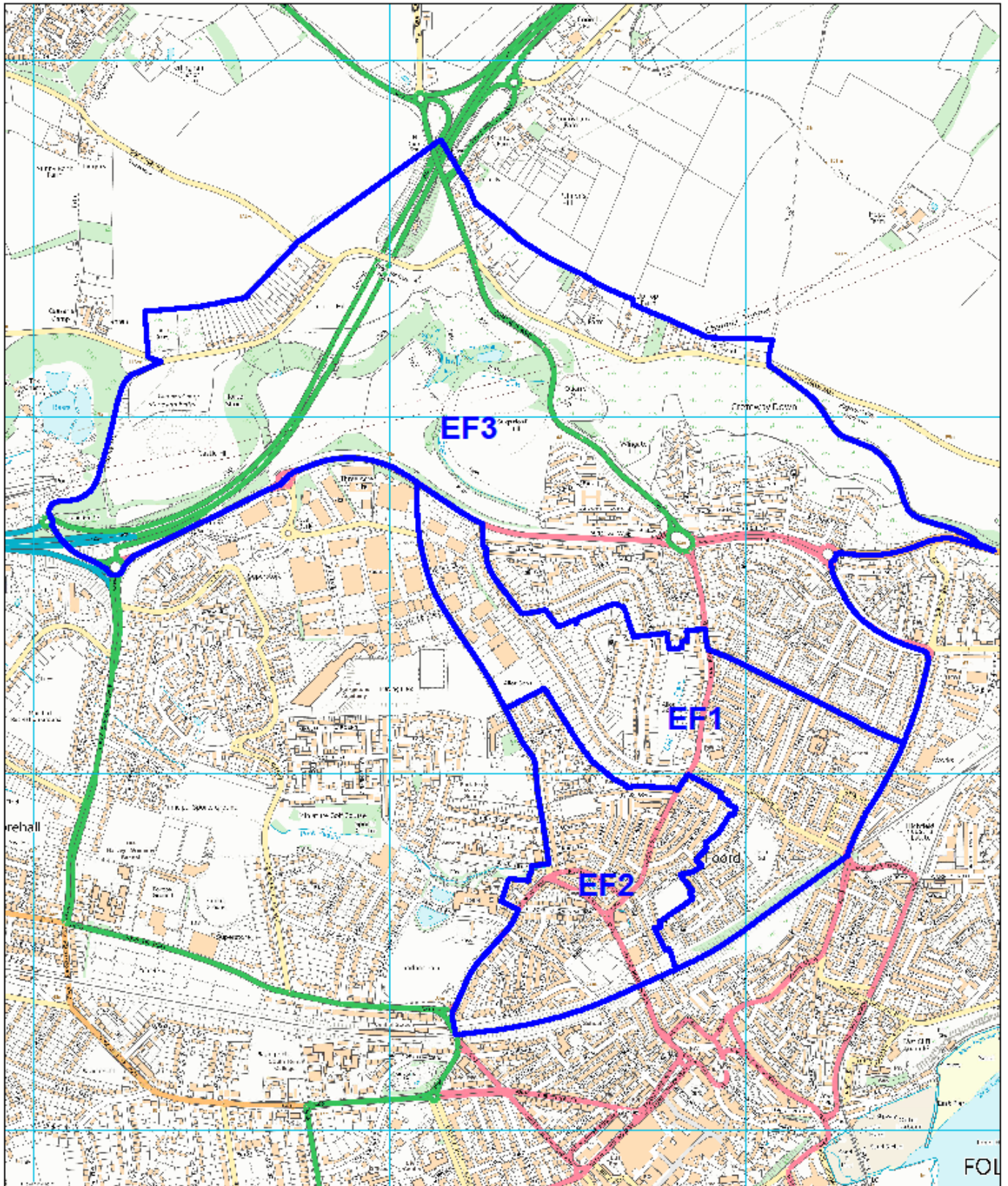
Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
CH3	2616	2738	All Souls Church Hall Somerset Road Cheriton, CT19 4NW	To introduce two polling stations at this polling place (double polling station).
Comments:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This long standing venue choice has adequate space to accommodate a double station for the large electorate of this area. Large housing developments in this area will have an implication on the electorate size over the next 4 years. 				

Ward: East Folkestone ward of Folkestone Town Council, East Folkestone District ward

Polling districts: EF1, EF2, EF3

Polling districts	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling places	Proposal
EF1 EF2 EF3	2158 1802 2878	2251 1880 3003	Salvation Army, 75-79 Canterbury Rd St Johns Church Hall, St Johns Church Rd Wood Avenue Library, Wood Avenue	To keep the current polling places, however balance the electorate against Electoral Commission guidance to avoid oversaturation at Wood Avenue Library
Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move the administrative boundary lines that make up this ward. By moving the lines slightly the approximate electorate figures allow for any natural increase in electorate over the next 4 years:<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ EF1 2275 (with potential growth to 2373 over the next 4 years)▪ EF2 2215 (with potential growth to 2311 over the next 4 years)▪ EF3 2346 (with potential growth to 2448 over the next 4 years)• A map on the following page shows the new boundary lines for each of the polling districts EF1, EF2 and EF3.				

Proposed Boundary Changes - EF1, EF2 & EF3

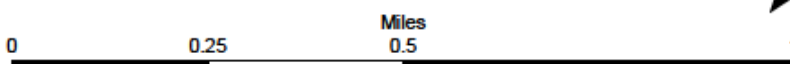


Drawn date:
17 Jul 2019

Drawn by:
Brian Harper

Drawing ref:
2237/DSMPB

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Folkestone & Hythe Council 100019677 - 2019



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Ward: Folkestone Central ward of Folkestone Town Council, Folkestone Central District ward

Polling districts: FC1, FC2, FC3, FC4

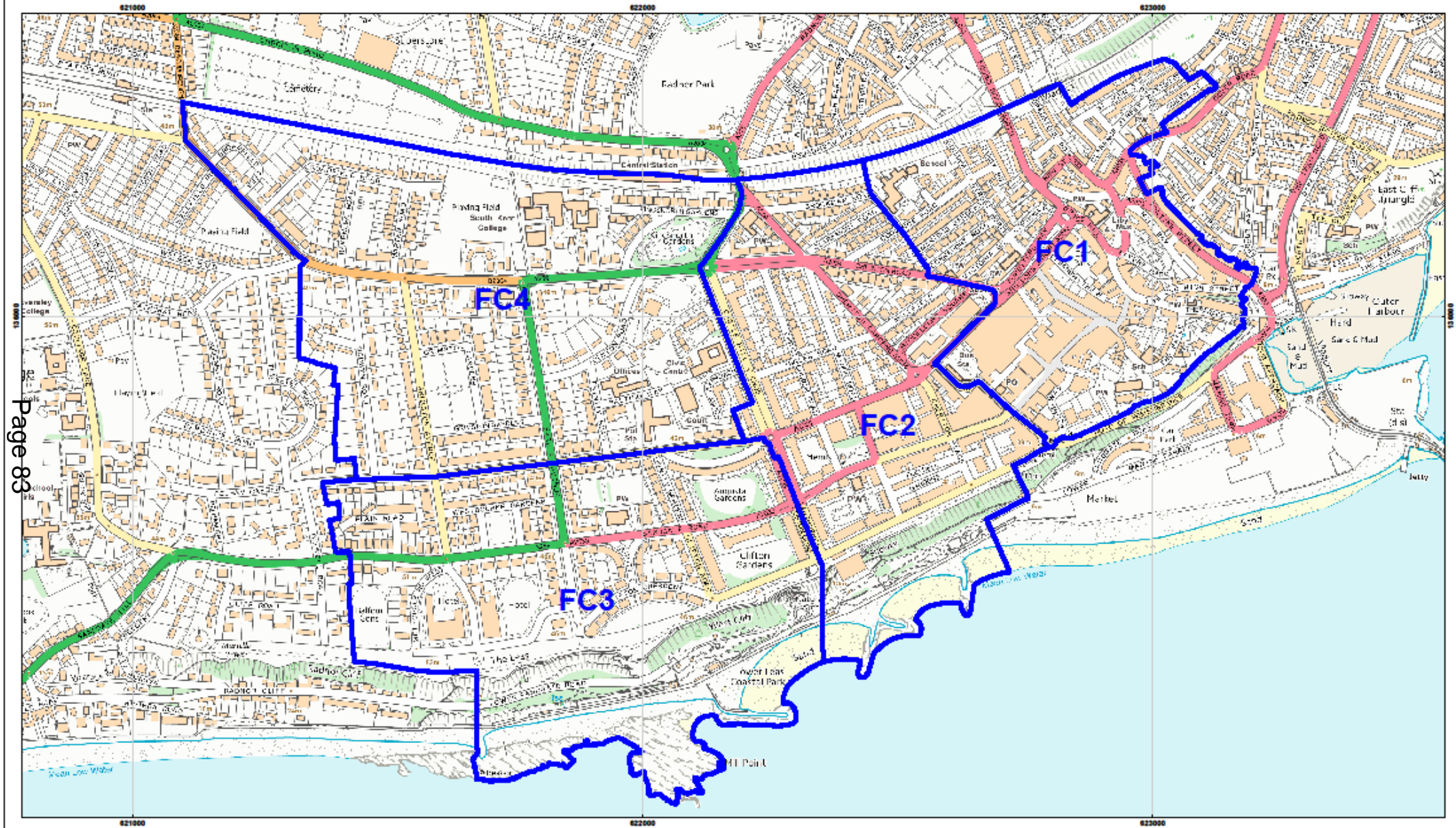
Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
FC1	2604	2717	Folkestone Town Hall, Guildhall St.	In order to balance the electorate against Electoral Commission guidance, the administrative boundary lines of this ward should be moved. The current polling places remain.
FC2	1502	1567	South Kent Community Church	
FC3	1453	1516	Holy Trinity Church Hall	
FC4	983	1025	Wards Hotel, 39 Earls Avenue	

Comments:

- Move the administrative boundary lines that make up this ward. By moving the lines slightly the approximate electorate figures allow for any natural increase in electorate over the next 4 years:
 - FC1 1931 (with potential growth to 2014 over the next 4 years)
 - FC2 1655 (with potential growth to 1726 over the next 4 years)
 - FC3 1552 (with potential growth to 1619 over the next 4 years)
 - FC4 1403 (with potential growth to 1464 over the next 4 years)

- A map on the following page shows the new boundary lines for each of the polling districts FC1, FC2, FC3 and FC4.

Proposed Boundary Changes - FC1, FC2, FC3 & FC4.



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Drawn date:
18 Jul 2019

Drawn by:
Brian Harper

Drawing ref:
2135/DSM/PB

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Ward: Hythe East ward of Hythe Town Council, Hythe District ward

Polling districts: HY1

Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
HY1	1523	1589	Seabrook Church Hall 141 Seabrook Road Hythe, CT21 5RB	Change the polling place permanently to: New Fountain Pub 171 Seabrook Road Hythe, CT21 5RT
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have been informed that Seabrook Church Hall is permanently closed and now up for auction. Successful elector and polling station staff feedback coupled with the proximity of this location to the old venue is a suitable replacement. 				

Ward: New Romney Town ward of New Romney Town Council, New Romney District ward

Polling district: NR2

Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
NR2	2433	2530	New Romney Bowls Club Sussex Road New Romney, TN28 8HL	Change the polling place permanently to: South Kent Methodist Church Hall High Street New Romney, TN28 8AH
<p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportionate elector and polling station staff feedback has led to a change of polling station in the New Romney Town area. Alternative venues were suggested, one being the proposed venue noted above. The venue is on the high street, has an entry ramp and a path leading to it, answering the requests of the local electorate. 				

Wards: Swingfield Parish Council and Acrise parish meeting, North Downs East District ward

Polling districts: NDE6, NDE10

Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
NDE6 NDE10	89 655	92 683	Black Horse Inn, Densole	Change the polling place permanently to: The Scout Hut, Reindene Woods CT18 7BB
Comments:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The location of both these premises is on a busy road, however the Black Horse Inn is on a blind bend where electors have to contend with two other roads opposite when entering/leaving the location by car. The additional signage that was placed on the road ahead of the Scout Hut made drivers aware of the venue entrance. The Scout Hut provides value for money for the electorate. 				

Wards: Lyminge ward of Lyminge Parish Council, North Downs West District ward

Polling districts: NDW9

Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
NDW9	1410	1501	Lyminge Village Hall	Change the polling place permanently to: 1 st Lyminge Scout Hut, Woodland Road, Lyminge CT18 8EW
Comments:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving to this location avoids the requirement of shutting down a busy pre-school at the Village Hall. 				

- The venue is wheelchair accessible, has a kitchen facility for staff as well as toilets and ample space for the polling station.

Wards: Lydd Town Council and Walland & Denge Marsh District ward

Polling districts: WDM2

Polling district	Current electorate	Potential electorate (over next 4 years)	Current polling place	Proposal
WDM2	918	982	Dungeness Lifeboat Station	Change the polling place permanently to: Heysham Hall Taylor Road Romney Marsh TN29 9PA
Comments:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following elector feedback we have procured this change of venue for Lydd electors. • The location has disabled access, parking, is close to the main road and is also on a bus route. 				

Polling Districts, Polling Places and Stations Review 2019

Representations received up until Wednesday 14 August 2019

Polling District	Polling Station	Representation
All	All	We wish to make no comments regarding the review
CH4	St Andrews Methodist Church Hall, Cheriton	My polling station has always been in this hall. It is just up the road from me - there's no bus service, but it is within walking distance or there's a car park and it wasn't full. I walked in, was immediately given a card, voted and was out within two minutes.
FC1	n/a	If you are considering different venues, please consider the use of the Parish Church Hall (41 Guildhall Street North) a Our Lady Help of Christians, as a future Polling Station. It is central to the town and could easily provide a service to 2500+ voters
HY1/2	New Fountation Pub, Seabrook (in place of Seabrook Church Hall for 02/05/19 and 23/05/19)	I appreciate that you had to find an alternative polling station in a hurry and that The Fountain was probably the only option but I don't think a pub is really an appropriate polling station as some people might feel uncomfortable entering a pub eg some muslims
NDE1	Cricket Club, Hawkinge	The use of this site for the polling station is fine. There is parking for those that cannot walk there. There are no steps to negotiate so safe for less mobile residents too.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	Observations This is a difficult polling station to get to if you don't have your own or access to transport ie car. It is not on a bus route It is some distance from the Town centre The gravel from the entrance to the door makes it very difficult for those with mobility aids to cross. Mobility scooters struggled as well as those with walking frames and sticks. The access to the Club does not allow for wheelchairs. The doors are not wide enough If my memory serves me correctly there is still a step at the door for those with walking aids to conquer.
WDM8	Brenzett Village Hall	The members of Brenzett Parish Council feel that Brenzett Village Hall is the most suitable place for the Polling Station in Brenzett as it is central, well known, fully accessible for everyone and has plenty of parking.
HR1/2	Hythe Football Club, Hythe	Our local polling station used to be at the Light Railway Station and is now at the Football Ground. The football ground is much more difficult to get to for many people. Could it come back to a more central position?
FC1	Town Hall, Folkestone	Very convenient
RM1	Burmarsh Church Hall	Burmarsh Parish Council noted this review by F&HDC at its meeting on 9 th July and agreed to express satisfaction with current arrangements.
NDE9/10	Scout Hut / Black Horse Inn	The scout hut on the A260 was not suitable on grounds of health and safety as it was access from the busy A260. Suggest that the proprietors of the Black Horse Public House be contacted.
HY1/3 & HR1	Age UK, Hythe / Hythe Town Football Club / New Fountain Pub	Age UK Hythe & Lyminge be relocated to either Burton Hall of the Library Foyer.Museum because of the logistics of using an elderly working/eating environment. Hythe Town Football Club be relocated to the Light Railway Hall due to the distance that voters need to travel. The Fountain PH be relocated to the new Indian Restaurant next to the Seapoint garage as a more appropriate venue.
WDM2	Dungeness Lifeboat Station, Dungeness	Dungeness and Lydd on Sea The current Polling Station at Dungeness Lifeboat Station is not easily accessible, and we propose that Heysham Hall, Taylor Road, Lydd-on-Sea is used as a Polling Station. The Polling Station at Dungeness is not on a bus route, is hard for disabled people to access especially in adverse weather conditions. It is too far away for voters to meaningfully take part in elections because of its location. It also lacks street lighting and is dark. Voters particularly those who are vulnerable do not feel safe going to and from. Voters are also deterred from participating on account of feeling they would hinder the launch of the lifeboat or any similar emergency. Voters feel disenfranchised at the location of the polling station and feel that it is not in a suitable location and do not bother. Moving the polling station to Heysham Hall would encourage voters to participate in elections, feel they were part of the democratic process and the council would have representatives who truly reflected the views and wishes of the electorate. Heysham Hall is close to a bus route and has plenty of safe on street parking.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	This location has many negatives for many voters. The road to the club is not the safest with no pavement and a difficult road junction to cross. When you get to the bowling club the entrance is across a gravel parking lot which is not very easy for the less sure footed or those in wheelchairs or using walkers. Finally it is not a very central location within the ward so some voters have a much longer journey than others and therefore require the use of cars

Polling Districts, Polling Places and Stations Review 2019

Representations received up until Wednesday 14 August 2019

NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	The Bowls Club does have very good parking arrangements but there should be better defined arrangements for disabled parking. The road outside the Bowls Club does not have a defined footpath or streetlighting.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	<p>New Romney Town Council Response to F.H.D.C. Polling Station Review This response is on behalf of New Romney Town council, it was produced by a working party of four members, representing both Town and Coastal wards, delegated by New Romney Town Council to submit a joint response to the F.H.D.C. Review on polling stations. One of the councillors is disabled and experienced firsthand the problems associated with using The Bowls Club as a voting station. We believe that there are no problems with the Varne Boat Club, the Coastal Ward voting station. So the following observations are purely in respect to the use of the Bowls Club as a voting station in the Town Ward. We believe the following are negatives with respect to the use of the Bowls Club as a polling station.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electors could not get to the polling station due to its location, away from the town centre and the most densely populated areas. • There is no pavement in the road leading to the station and the condition of the road is not safe for those walking. • The road is unlit and there is therefore a greater risk as it gets dark. • On arrival voters are meet by a large gravelled car park which has to be crossed to get to the entrance and it is therefore a problem for the less able. • The entrance door was narrow leading to access issues for those in wheelchairs and those needing walking aides. Although there was a ramp there was still a door step to be negotiated. We believe location is key to the democratic process of encouraging a higher voter engagement and turn out, and would therefore suggest there are several better locations for a polling station: 1. The Scout Hut 2. The Methodist Church room 3. The Old School House 4. The March Academy/Leisure centre. These meet the 4 key needs required for a polling station. • Central location • Safe accessibility • Transport access public/private/foot
FC1 - 4	<p>Town Hall, Folkestone</p> <p>South Kent Community Church, Castle Hill Avenue</p> <p>Holy Trinity Church Hall, Sandgate Road</p> <p>Wards Hotel, Earls Avenue/Grimston Gardens</p>	<p>Here is our submission to the polling stations review. We have concentrated on Folkestone Central ward as councillors representing it. The current arrangement of polling stations is failing voters. For example people living in FC1 in the Brockman road area have to walk all the way to the town hall to vote when they live right by or much closer to the FC2 polling station. And people living in FC1 in the Phoenix Court (Clarence road) area have a longish walk over a difficult terrain, uphill, for those with mobility issues but who still want to exercise their right to vote in person at the town hall. The proposals from the Returning Officer to move people at the Brockman road end of FC1 into FC2 are sensible in this regard. However they cause their own issues which will be addressed shortly. By contrast currently in FC3 and FC4 you have two polling stations very close together meaning only a short, flat walk for people living in this part of the ward to either Wards hotel or Holy Trinity church.</p> <p>Our proposal is to create a 5th polling district for Central ward to cater better for people living in the Phoenix court (Clarence road) area. This will increase voter participation and demonstrate that the council cares about residents in this area who have been neglected for far too long. The area would fit this model neatly as a self contained part of the ward off Dover road - spanning Clarence road to Queens street.</p> <p>Our proposal is to create the 5th polling district (FC5) polling station at St Augustines church on Dover road which has an accessible downstairs room or at Sunflower house on Foord road. Both are closer and more accessible for these residents than the town hall.</p> <p>Coming back to the issue of the boundary change proposed by the Returning Officer between FC1 and FC2; this is sensible as far as FC1 goes. However it creates a problem for FC2. If you live in Kingsnorth Gardens for example you will no longer be able to vote at the church at the end of your road but have to go all the way to Wards hotel which is practically on the edge of the polling district. This will mean a loss of participation. Our proposal to address this is to close Wards hotel as a polling station and move it to Folkestone College which is more central. As Wards currently doubles as the polling station for Sandgate this would need to be addressed also and could be moved to the Holy Trinity polling station (FC3).</p>

Polling Districts, Polling Places and Stations Review 2019

Representations received up until Wednesday 14 August 2019

BR1	Grace Taylor Hall, Lucy Avenue	Broadmead ward continues to expand, with new developments such as Scholar's Village having recently been built off Park Farm Road. The existing Polling Station of Grace Taylor Hall is far too small to cope with major elections or referenda where turnout can be considerably higher than 60% and often struggles for space or is forced to have large queues due to lack of space of additional polling booths. The simple alternative would be to use the Folkestone Academy secondary school located immediately opposite which has ample space for a larger polling station and better parking facilities for those that require it or who have mobility issues.
FC1/2	Town Hall, Guilhall Street South Kent Community Church, Castle Hill Avenue	Folkestone Central ward Polling District FC1 requires voters to have to navigate busy roads including Forester's Way, if they live in the area immediately to the east of Foresters Way or south of Grace Hill. It is proposed that the FC1 polling district be split so that all electors living north of Cheriton Road, Foresters Way, Grace Hill (one side) and Dover Road vote at the Catholic Hall at Our Lady Help of Christians on Guildhall Street which also has access from Cheriton Road and was used for many years previously, whilst the remainder continue to vote at Folkestone Town Hall along with the addition of those electors in FC2 south of Bouverie Road West.
NDE3	Hawkinge Community Centre, Heron Forstal Avenue	North Downs East ward currently forces electors in NDE3 to cross Spitfire Way to vote at Hawkinge Community Centre, outside of the Polling District, which is used for other Polling Districts in North Downs East. It would be much more convenient, safer and more accessible for voters in NDE3 to vote at nearby Churchill School in the Polling District.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, Sussex Road	In New Romney ward, the recent change to the Bowls Club for electors in NR2 means that the location is considerably less accessible than the previous location of the Scout Hut which is the preferred option for the majority of local people that we have spoken with regarding the change. It is therefore requested that the change is made to revert back to the Scout Hut.
NDW9	Lyminge Village Hall, Woodland Road	Lyminge Village Hall is currently used as the area's polling station but this does cause an issue for many residents as the Pre-School has to close for the day and residents have to find alternative childcare arrangements or take annual leave. Whilst the Pre-School have expressed a view that they do not want to upset long-standing residents who are used to this venue, the Lyminge Village Hall Management Committee feel that it is unfortunate for the residents left with childcare issues as a result, and would like to take this opportunity, along with the council, to see if an alternative option can be explored. As such, we would like to invite the review panel to consider whether Lyminge Scout Hut, of which the parish council are the landlords, could be used as an alternative. The Scout Hut is on the same ground as the Village Hall so the accessibility and car parking is the same. There are toilets but no kitchen in the building. It is fully accessible for disabled users or users with additional needs.
EF1-3	Wood Avenue Library, Folkestone Salvation Army, Folkestone St John's Church Hall, Folkestone	I wish to place on record my objections to the Acting Returning Officer's proposals for East Folkestone ward. The proposals are merely for numbers purposes and do not take into account the ease of voting for electors in the ward that currently exist. I would propose that the polling stations remain as they were and that EF3 is split into two new Polling Districts and that Wood Avenue Polling Station in made into a double polling station as there is more than enough room at the venue.
NR2	New Romney Bowls Club, New Romney	The current arrangements for voting at the Bowls Club in Sussex Road New Romney is not easily accessible and we support the alternative location at the Methodist Church High Street New Romney. The Bowls Club is located down a lane with no public footpath and inadequate lighting. The location is not widely known to many of the electorate and it is too far away for voters to meaningfully take part in elections. The Methodist Church is well known locally and is near a bus route on the High Street. There is plenty of parking nearby in a public car park and some on road parking nearby.

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