

Crawley Borough Council

	Report No: DS/67	D
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Report to General Purposes Committee

27 November 2006

Polling Arrangements 2007

1. Key Points

- 1.1 This report proposes some changes to polling arrangements for voters in Bewbush for elections in 2007 and informs members about a more far reaching review of polling arrangements throughout the borough that will be required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council be recommended to approve designation of Bewbush Ward as a single polling district.

PAT TINSLEY
Head of Democratic Services

3. Background

- 3.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 places a duty on the Council to divide the Borough into polling districts and provide reasonable facilities for voting. Following the Borough elections in May 2007 a review of facilities was conducted and it is proposed that arrangements in Bewbush ward be simplified.
- 3.2 New provisions in the Electoral Administration Act 2006 will place a duty on the Council to carry out a review of polling arrangements across the Borough. This part of the Act comes into force on 1st January 2007 and requires the review to take place within 12 months and thereafter at four yearly intervals. A report will therefore be submitted to the Committee next year.

4. Content

- 4.1.1 Bewbush ward is currently divided in three polling districts with polling taking place at Bewbush Community Centre, Barn Church and Waterfield First School as set out on the map at Appendix A.
- 4.1.2 The location of the Barn Church and Waterfield First School at the edge of their polling districts have caused inconvenience and confusion for voters and has not help to increase turnout. At the elections on 4th May this year 206 voters used Waterfield first School and 262 used the Barn Church.
- 4.1.3 For many electors within these two polling districts the central location of the Bewbush Community Centre would be more convenient and would avoid disruption to Waterfield School.
- 4.1.4 It is proposed that the polling districts be combined and that voting for the whole ward take place at the Community Centre for 2007 and that the success of this arrangement be reviewed after the election in May.

5. Ward Members' Views

- 5.1. Following the May 2006 elections Members were invited to comment on voting arrangements within their ward. Councillors Murdoch and Cheshire responded by and expressed the view that there should be a single polling place for Bewbush Ward.

6 Staffing, Financial and Legal Implications/Powers

- 6.1 There will be small savings in the cost of hiring premises and delivering polling equipment.

7 Links to the Community Strategy and Corporate Plan

7.1 The proposals contained in this report relate to the following key areas of the Community Strategy

Local Economy	N	Health and Social Care	N
Affordable Housing	N	Community Safety	N
Lifelong Learning	N	Local Environment	N

The following key principles are applicable:-

(i) Working together	y
(ii) Dignity, respect and opportunities for all	y
(iii) Leaving no-one behind	y
(iv) Making it last	y

This report achieves the following aims as set out in the Corporate Plan

Providing high quality services	y	Giving exemplary customer service and satisfaction	y
Being financially efficient and well managed	y	Developing motivated, positive and empowered staff	y

8 Background Papers

None

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