

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE ELECTORAL MATTERS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER 2007, AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. H. J. Jones, Dr. G. H. Lord,
Mrs. C. M. McDonald, D. McGrath, W. R. Newnes, S. P. Shannon,
R. D. Smith, C. J. Tidmarsh and L. J. Turner

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mrs. C. Cockell and Mr. A. C. Stephens

1/07 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Dr. G. H. Lord be elected Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

2/07 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor R. J. Deeming be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

3/07 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R. J. Deeming.

4/07 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor R. D. Smith declared a personal interest in respect of the item relating to the Polling District Review (Minute No. 6/07) stating that, as Catshill Village Hall was used as a polling station, he was a Trustee of the Catshill Village Hall Management Committee.

5/07 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16th March 2006 were submitted.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendment of the date of the meeting from "16th March 2005" to "16th March 2006", the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

6/07 **POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW**

Mrs. C. Cockell, Acting Electoral Services Manager, presented the report which outlined a review of Polling Districts and Polling Places within the District, in accordance with the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.

Consideration was then given to the report and the following matters were raised by Members:-

- Councillor C. J. Tidmarsh asked whether the review was limited to the Bromsgrove District area, or whether it included the polling arrangements between neighbouring districts. In reply, Mrs. Cockell stated that the review related solely to the Bromsgrove District, and stated that boundaries between authority areas were a matter for the Boundary Commission for England.
- Councillor D. McGrath suggested that the Hawthorns Social Club, 59 Rednal Hill Lane, Rubery, be considered as a possible additional polling station. Mrs. Cockell agreed to investigate this issue.
- Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths referred to the polling station at the Brooklyn Citroën Garage, Birmingham Road, Bordesley, and stated that she would not wish for the polling station to move to the Travel Lodge, as stated in the report. Mr. Dicks and Mrs. Cockell stated that future polling arrangements at Brooklyn Citroën Garage would be investigated.
- Councillor W. R. Newnes raised a question over the future use of the Meadows First School Hall which was currently being reconstructed, in conjunction with Parkside Middle School. Mrs. Cockell stated that this would be reviewed when the new school had fully replaced the previous building.
- Councillor Newnes also referred to the use of school premises in general and the general (unwritten) policy of minimising disruption to school premises. The Chairman stated that, in some situations, this was unavoidable, especially in terms of the costs of hiring rooms for polling station purposes.
- Councillor L. J. Turner commented on the findings in the report in respect of Wake Green AFC Pavilion, stating that an alternative location may be difficult to locate. Mrs. Cockell stated that no, or few, complaints had been received in respect of the use of the pavilion as a polling station and added that further discussions with Wake Green AFC would be undertaken.
- The Chairman referred to the Rowney Green Peace Memorial Hall, Rowney Green Lane, Alvechurch, where a lottery funding application for improved disabled persons access had been submitted. As a result, any concerns over access to the polling station would be overcome in due course.
- In addition, the Chairman raised a question relating to the use of the Cricket Pavilion at Romsley and Hunnington Cricket Club, Bromsgrove Road, Romsley, but Mrs. Cockell stated that there were no suitable alternative locations.
- The Chairman also suggested that an additional polling station in Catshill would be of benefit in respect of access for voters on the Stourbridge Road side of Catshill. Mrs. Cockell assured Members that this issue would be looked into.
- Councillor S. P. Shannon referred to the SCOPE report over the use of Aston Fields Social Club, Stoke Road, and agreed with its findings in respect of the possible use of the Salvation Army Hall in Carlyle Road.

He also suggested the Finstall Centre, Stoke Road, as a further possible alternative. Mrs. Cockell stated that these would be investigated.

RESOLVED that (i) with the exception of the recommendations relating to the Brooklyn Citroën Garage, Birmingham Road, Bordesley; and (ii) subject to the comments and suggestions raised by Members outlined above, the report be accepted.

7/07 **ABOLITION OF LICKEY END PARISH COUNCIL**

Members considered a report relating to a request from Lickey End Parish Council to return the area to its previously unparished state.

RESOLVED

- (i) that, under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, the Council seek to abolish Lickey End Parish Council without reference to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government;
- (ii) that, in the event of the Council being unable to abolish Lickey End Parish Council without reference to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as referred to in (i) above, the Chief Executive write to the Department for Communities and Local Government seeking the abolition of Lickey End Parish Council; or
- (iii) that, should the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government consider that a review is required, the Chief Executive be authorised to undertake a consultation exercise within the Lickey End Parish Council area as to the proposed abolition of Lickey End Parish Council, and to report the findings of the review to a future meeting of the Committee.

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm

Chairman