



Directorate of Corporate Governance
Director and Monitoring Officer **Davina Fiore**

Community Governance and Polling Places & Districts Review

Summary of Responses & Recommendations

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Community Governance Review – Summary of Responses.

Listed by Geographic Area:

WEST WIGHT

Brighstone

Brighstone PC requested that the Hulverstone area should be included in the Mottistone Ward, rather than the Brook Ward as is currently the case. A map was supplied showing the proposed boundary.

Recommendation: This area is not protected – proceed to amend Warding as requested.

Calbourne

The Calbourne Parish Council area generated the longest list of suggestions, mainly aimed at tacking the perceived lack of cohesion between the two wards (namely Calbourne and Porchfield) and a couple of areas of the boundary that split small rural hamlets between adjacent parishes.

Calbourne PC suggested that the Calbourne ward should be merged with Shalfleet PC, whilst the Porchfield ward (which includes Newtown) be merged with Gurnard PC. An option for the Newtown area to join Shalfleet was also raised, and the common issues of the Creek and flooding were mentioned. These suggestions were also echoed by two electors for the area.

It was further suggested that all of the properties in Shalcombe be included in Calbourne ward (regardless of whether Calbourne ward merged with Shalfleet or not) or with Shalfleet PC, as some properties are in Calbourne, some are in Shalfleet, and the Tapnell area is in Yarmouth TC. It was further suggested that Marks Corner be included in either Newport or Northwood PC areas.

One resident also suggested that various boundaries be amended to extend the Calbourne ward (and therefore the parish boundary) to include Rowridge and Park Place to the west, and all of the properties in Elm Lane to the east, and again the boundary in the Shalcombe area was raised.

Recommendation: Explore with electors and adjacent parish councils (Shalfleet, Gurnard and Yarmouth) the options for dissolving Calbourne Parish Council and merging areas with either Shalfleet or Gurnard, and possibly including Tapnell in one of the resulting areas.

Newport and Northwood PC's are both protected, and any subsequent amendments would also require IOWC electoral divisions to be moved in order to avoid very small and fragmented polling districts. It is recommended that these boundaries are looked at once protection for Newport and Northwood has ceased.

Freshwater

Freshwater PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: No Action

Shorwell

Shorwell PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: No Action

CENTRAL WIGHT – Newport & Surrounding

Gatcombe

*Gatcombe PC wish to change the name of the Civil Parish area and therefore the Parish Council to “**Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council**”.*

Recommendation: Proceed to amend the name of the area as requested.

Newport

One elector commented that the Parish and IOWC electoral division boundaries should be amended so that part of Shide was not in the same division or parish ward as the Pan area. The degree of representation they received was commented on, as was the location of the polling station. Further comments were received which related solely to the location of the polling station for Shide residents.

Recommendation: No Action – Newport is protected, and consequent amendments would also be needed to IOWC Electoral Divisions to avoid small and fragmented polling districts. The issue of both parish and IOWC boundaries could be looked at again once Pan Meadows is complete and fully occupied, which could result in boundaries having to be redrawn.

EAST WIGHT – Wootton / Ryde & Surrounding

Fishbourne

Fishbourne PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Fishbourne (& Wootton Bridge)

A local elector of the Fishbourne Parish Council area suggested that Fishbourne Parish Council should be divided into two, with the boundary at the top of the Kite Hill area, with the area to the west being added to Wootton Bridge Parish Council area, and the area to the east being added to the Binstead ward of Ryde Town Council.

A further suggestion from the same local elector was to merge the two Parish Councils together to form a single Parish Council.

However, Fishbourne PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: Ryde TC is protected until 2015, and Fishbourne until May 2011. As Fishbourne have expressed the desire to remain unchanged, there seems to be little merit in pursuing any changes. If the Isle of Wight Council were to consider merging Fishbourne with Wootton, then a new Community Governance review would need to be commenced after May 2011, when the protection has expired.

Havenstreet & Ashe

Havenstreet & Ashe PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

A local elector suggested that the Ashe area be merged with Brading TC, and the Havenstreet area with either Fishbourne PC or the Binstead Ward of Ryde TC.

Recommendation: Ryde TC is protected until 2015, and Havenstreet & Ashe until May 2011. As Havenstreet & Ashe have expressed the desire to remain unchanged, there seems to be little merit in pursuing any changes. If we were to consider merging Havenstreet & Ashe with an adjacent area, then a new Community Governance review would need to be commenced after May 2011, when the protection has expired (May 2015 in the case of Ryde TC).

Ryde

Ryde TC suggested that the south-eastern boundary of the Town Council be extended to include the Bullen Village development.

Andrew Turner MP expressed an opposing view, and generally wished to see the boundaries around Ryde pulled in towards the town and away from the rural open country, with the adjoining parishes of Fishbourne, Havenstreet & Ashe and Brading expanding to fill the areas vacated by Ryde TC.

Recommendation: See Comments for Fishbourne and Havenstreet & Ashe. No action given that Ryde is protected until May 2015.

SANDOWN – SHANKLIN BAY AREA

Lake (including Sandown & Shanklin)

A local elector of one of these three town or parish councils suggested that all three councils should be combined to form a single “Sandown and Shanklin Bay Council” and that there should be six wards with the same boundaries as the current Isle of Wight Council electoral divisions covering the three councils’ area. Each ward should return two councillors. This suggestion was followed up with well argued reasoning on the basis of financial savings, greater influence over the Isle of Wight Council on various matters, a stronger community identity for the area, more electoral competition for seats and greater viability for taking on devolved services from the Isle of Wight Council.

However, Sandown Town Council were actively opposed to the suggestion, and Shanklin Town Council had no comment to make on the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: No Action – given that two out of the three councils involved have already either indicated active opposition or contentment with the current arrangements. Lake and Shanklin area also protected until May 2014.

Sandown

Sandown TC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area, and actively opposed the proposal for a merged council covering Sandown, Lake and Shanklin.

Recommendation: No Action – given that two out of the three councils involved have already either indicated active opposition or contentment with the current arrangements. Lake and Shanklin area also protected until May 2014.

Shanklin

Shanklin TC indicated that they had no comment to make on the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: No Action – given that two out of the three councils involved have already either indicated active opposition or contentment with the current arrangements. Lake and Shanklin area also protected until May 2014.

SOUTH WIGHT

Niton & Whitwell

Niton & Whitwell PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: No Action

Wroxall

Wroxall PC requested that the western boundary of the parish be amended to include Appuldurcombe House, Farm and Park. This may be achieved by running the boundary north along the top of Stenbury Down and Appuldurcombe Down, then east along the Worsley Trail. A short but well argued paragraph provided a number of reasons to support the change.

Recommendation: Pursue the possibility of such an amendment with Godshill PC, and implement if favour is found.

OTHERS

St. Helens

St. Helens PC indicated that they are content with the current boundaries and electoral arrangements for their parish council area.

Recommendation: No Action

General:

General comment received from a member of the Isle of Wight Council: On a general point, may I propose any Parish or Town Council which fails to secure at least half of it's membership by election two terms running is automatically wound up.

Comment: This is not an option the Isle of Wight Council could pursue, as this course of action would require a change to primary legislation.

Polling Place Review: By area:

Cowes

The poll clerk at the Community Hall at Northwood House was concerned about the generally low level of lighting and the angle of the ramped access.

A suggestion was made that the polling station for Cowes Medina be moved from The Scout Hall to St. Faiths church hall, and a comment was received via Andrew Turner MP from an elector who did not wish to climb the hill to Northwood House to vote.

Recommendation: Subject to relevant Health & Safety checks, consider moving back into the main rooms at Northwood House, and check the suitability of the hall at St. Faiths Church.

East Cowes

Some general concerns were raised about the location of polling stations in East Cowes in relation to parish ward boundaries and the locations of the majority of electors.

Recommendation: Review the polling district boundaries allocated to East Cowes (parish ward and Electoral Division), along with the choice of building used in the Osborne polling district – which could also be divided into two if required.

Gurnard

A suggestion was made that All Saints Church Hall could be used as a polling station rather than the WI Hall.

Recommendation: No Action, as the WI Hall is fully satisfactory.

Havenstreet & Ashe

Havenstreet & Ashe Parish Council were content with the existing polling station arrangements, and no other comments were received.

Recommendation: No Action

Newport

Newport Parish Council raised some concerns over the location of polling stations in Newport West, Newport South and Parkhurst.

Three electors commented that the Parish and IOWC electoral division boundaries should be amended so that Shide was not in the same division as the Pan area. The location of the polling station was commented on by two of these respondents.

Recommendation: Review of buildings used as polling stations within the current electoral boundaries.

Northwood

Northwood Parish Council were content with the existing polling station arrangements, and no other comments were received.

Recommendation: No Action

Ryde

Five electors in the Ryde West electoral area raised concerns about the location of the polling station (The Sherbourne Centre), in particular that it was difficult to access on foot from the eastern side of the district, and that the road in which the polling station was located was a cul-de-sac where vehicles could not always turn easily.

The nature of the fixed ramped access at Dover Park school was raised by one elector, and a further elector queried the need to close Oakfield School, particularly following the Easter holiday and the January snow.

In previous years the access to the polling station in Haylands had been an issue, but clearer signposting and directions printed on the poll card seem to have resolved this.

Recommendation: Divide the Ryde West polling district into two halves, roughly along Pellhurst Road, and source an additional polling station for the western half. This will reduce by approximately 50% the number of electors allocated to the Sherbourne Centre, and the remaining electorate will be geographically much closer to the polling station, so reducing the need to travel by car to the venue.

Review access at Dover Park, and see if any other venues can be used to replace the schools.

Totland

One elector raised concerns about the suitability of the disabled access at Christ Church Hall, Totland, and made a number of alternative suggestions.

Recommendation: Review other available buildings in the area, although it is recognised that choice is limited.