
Urgent Decisions Committee

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT on Wednesday, 20 March 2024 from 6.15 pm - 6.19 pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Bowen, Tim Gibson (Chair), Angela Harrison, James Hunt, Richard Palmer and Hannah Perkin.

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Councillor Elliott Jayes.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Lisa Fillery, Robin Harris and Jo Millard.

OFFICERS PRESENT (VIRTUALLY): Larissa Reed.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Dolley Wooster.

773 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

The Chairman outlined the emergency evacuation procedure.

774 **Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

775 **Review of Polling Place**

The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager introduced the report and explained that the Coniston Hotel, Sittingbourne had been used in the most recent elections as the Chalkwell ward polling place, but the venue was unavailable for the Police and Crime Commissioners election in May 2024. She said that during consultation with the Ward Member for Chalkwell, the hall to the rear of the Methodist Church in the High Street, Sittingbourne was put forward as a potential venue, and after a site visit, it was considered to be a suitable alternative, with the necessary facilities. The Democratic and Electoral Services Manager advised that the Coniston Hotel could remain as a potential venue in the future and the proposal to use the hall to the rear of the Methodist Church gave more options.

In response to a Member's question, the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager confirmed that it was permissible to use a religious venue as a polling station. The same Member commented that whilst the proposed venue was at the opposite end of the ward boundary, there were limited venue options and wherever the venue was located, some of the electorate would need to travel.

Resolved:

(1) That the proposed change to the polling place to the hall at the rear of the Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Sittingbourne be approved whilst retaining the use of the Coniston Hotel, Sittingbourne.

Chair

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All minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel