



## **Polling Places Review 2019**

### **Acting Returning Officer and Returning Officer Comments**

#### **ARO Comments for Mid Sussex Constituency**

The Returning Officer for the District of Mid Sussex is also the Acting Returning Officer for the Parliamentary Constituency of Mid Sussex at UK General Elections. This constituency does not cover the entire area of Mid Sussex District though. The wards of Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint & Downs fall within the Arundel & South Downs Constituency, while Ardingly & Balcombe, Copthorne & Worth and Crawley Down & Turners Hill are within the Horsham Constituency.

The ARO for these Constituencies is the Returning Officer for Horsham District, and they will also make comments on the polling places used in their area. The comments made by the RO for Mid Sussex District also apply to the polling places used in Mid Sussex Constituency for all wards other than the ones mentioned above.

#### **RO Comments for Mid Sussex District**

The Returning Officer for the District is responsible for the siting of polling stations within the polling places designated by Council.

Mid Sussex is a district of varied characteristics. There are three urban centres: Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath, and a number of villages that vary greatly in size and property density. As a result the polling district scheme for the district also varies greatly in size, from as few as 100 registered electors to in excess of 4,000.

It is neither practical nor desirable to designate all of the District's polling places within their allocated polling district, as there are not always suitable venues in which to site a polling station. It would be desirable for Council to formally endorse this principal and designate that the polling place for any particular polling district be the entirety of the District Council ward that the polling district sits in. This would allow maximum flexibility in the siting of polling stations by the Returning Officer, affording full legal contingency in the event of an established polling station becoming unavailable on or shortly before polling day.

The District contains a number of rural polling stations with low electorates allocated to them, a situation that has become more pronounced since the opening of the postal voting process to all electors on application.

Conversely owing to rising electorates, additional polling stations are being sourced for Haywards Heath Bentswood, Burgess Hill St. Andrews, BH Victoria and Hassocks.

Tom Clark, Acting Returning Officer at Parliamentary elections & Returning Officer at Local elections