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|-------------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| <b>Subject:</b>         | <b>Protocol for statistical analysis during future Ward name change Consultation exercises</b> |                     |  |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b> | <b>9 March 2010</b>  |                     |  |
| <b>Report of:</b>       | <b>Chief Executive</b>   |                     |  |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b> | <b>Name: Paul Holloway</b>   | <b>Tel: 29-2005</b> |  |
|                         | <b>E-mail: paul.holloway@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b>  |                     |  |
| <b>Wards Affected:</b>  | <b>All</b>   |                     |  |

### FOR GENERAL RELEASE

#### 1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 Following the recent consultation exercises and decisions of the Council regarding ward name changes, concern was raised about the low number of responses to the consultation exercises in both wards. There was a request that we develop criteria to guide the Council's decision on whether to initiate consultation in accordance with the requirements of section 59 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, including the possibility of adopting thresholds.
- 1.2 This report puts forward proposals for Members' approval to have a clear and transparent process for agreeing consultation exercises on ward name changes. It is also felt that there should be a known "trigger", which must be met, before undertaking any exercise.
- 1.3 Where a trigger is met, the methodology of the consultation process will be agreed. Specific advice will then be taken on the statistical practices that are relevant to apply, based on the number of responses. Consideration will be given to budgetary issues around how extensive the methods of consultation are going to be.
- 1.4 Whilst there is no absolute formula, the more households to receive information about the consultation, the more the exercise is going to cost. The Research and Consultation Team can provide advice specifically about the significance of the methods used to consult, and representativeness of the responses.
- 1.5 Any recommendations on the outcome of a consultation exercise will not be made in the future without going through this process, assuring that appropriate research and analysis, and statistical relevance has been carried out before a recommendation is made.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That consideration of a proposal to change a ward name be triggered by submission to the Council of a petition signed by 5% of residents, or 500 people, whichever is greater, who are on the Electoral Register, and who provide a permanent address that can be verified as being within the ward in question.
- 2.2 That, further to recommendation 2.1, the relevant ward councillors be consulted and their views taken into account before a report is put to the Governance Committee to consider authorising a formal consultation on the proposal.

## **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION / CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:**

- 3.1 The Governance Committee meeting of 22 September 2009 approved a consultation exercise to explore changing the name of two council wards:
  - (i) the current Patcham Ward to become Patcham and Hollingbury Ward.
  - (ii) the current Stanford Ward to become Hove Park Ward.
- 3.2 The consultation exercise took place between 28 September 2009 and 26 October 2009. The four week consultation process gave residents living in the 2 wards, the opportunity to register their support, or otherwise to the proposals.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The Council is required to consult with such persons that it considers reasonably appropriate who may be affected by a proposed ward name change
- 4.2 The methods of consultation for the 2 proposed ward name changes, were agreed by affected ward councillors. The low response rates have indicated that it would be sensible to introduce a transparent known “trigger”, which should be met, before a consultation on ward name changes is approved in the future.
- 4.3 By introducing a known “trigger” of 5% or 500 signatures on a petition, whichever is greater, a standard is being set, in line with existing practices for a mayoral referendum. It may therefore be thought to be a significant enough number to warrant arranging a consultation process.
- 4.4 Ward Councillors will be consulted throughout the process.
- 4.5 The criteria is by way of guidance only.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs for any future consultation will be identified in the report to members when approval is sought.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Alasdair Ridley*

*Date: 16/02/10*

### Legal Implications

- 5.2 If members accept the proposal that consideration be given to change a ward name based on a petition signed by the requisite number of people, this would form the basis of a new protocol or guidance. Members would then be expected to have regard to the protocol but would not be bound by it.
- 5.3 The duty to consult under section 59(3) of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act (see 1.1 above) arises **only** where the council has formulated a proposal to change the name of an electoral area, whether in response to a petition to that effect or of its own volition.
- 5.4 The suggested trigger point of 5% referred to in 2.1 above is broadly in line with the threshold for accepting other forms of petition, such as those requesting a mayoral referendum a community governance review, or other matters to be permitted by the Local Democracy etc Act.

*Lawyer Consulted:*

*Oliver Dixon*

*Date: 22/02/10*

### Equalities Implications

- 5.5 An Equalities Impact Assessment on any consultation will be considered.

### Sustainability Implications

- 5.6 There are no implications

### Crime & Disorder Implications

- 5.7 There are no implications.

### Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

- 5.8 There are no implications.

### Corporate / Citywide Implications

- 5.9 The recommendations are in line with council priorities, specifically for open and effective city leadership.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

None

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

### **Background Documents**

None