



Regulatory and General Purposes Committee

Date: Thursday, 8 October 2026

Time: 6.00 p.m.

Venue: Wallasey Town Hall - Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Anne Beauchamp

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PLEASE NOTE: Public seating is limited therefore members of the public wishing to attend are asked to register their attendance in advance by emailing committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk. Wirral Council is fully committed to equalities and our obligations under The Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty. If you have any adjustments that would help you attend or participate at this meeting, please let us know as soon as possible and we would be happy to facilitate where possible. Please contact committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk

This meeting will be [webcast](#)

AGENDA

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**
2. **APOLOGIES**
3. **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, in connection with any item on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

4. **MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)**

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2026.

5. MINUTES OF THE LICENSING PANEL (Pages 5 - 16)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Panel held on 11 June, 10 July, 27 August and 18 September 2026.

6. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS

6.1 Public Questions

Notice of question to be given in writing or by email by 12 noon, Monday 5th October 2026 to the Council's Monitoring Officer via this link: [Public Question Form](#) and to be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 10. The question to be put at the meeting shall not exceed 100 words in length.

For more information on how your personal information will be used, please see this link: [Document Data Protection Protocol for Public Speakers at Committees | Wirral Council](#)

Please telephone the Committee Services Officer if you have not received an acknowledgement of your question by the deadline for submission.

6.2 Statements and Petitions

Notice of representations (statements) and petitions are to be given in writing by 12 noon, Monday 5th October 2026 to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

To register your intention to give a statement please do so via this link: [Public Statement Notification](#), and this will be dealt with in accordance with Standing Order 11.1.

Petitions may be presented to the Committee. The person presenting the petition will be allowed to address the meeting briefly (not exceeding one minute) to outline the aims of the petition. The Chair will refer the matter to another appropriate body of the Council within whose terms of reference it falls without discussion, unless a relevant item appears elsewhere on the Agenda. Please give notice of petitions to committeeservices@wirral.gov.uk in advance of the meeting.

6.3 Questions by Members

Questions by Members to dealt with in accordance with Standing Orders 12.3 to 12.8.

- 7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND
WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW 2025 (Pages 17 - 28)**
- 8. CONCLUSION OF STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS
AND PLACES 2026 (Pages 29 - 38)**

The appendix to this report may not be suitable to view for people with disabilities, users of assistive technology or mobile phone devices. Please contact electoral@wirral.gov.uk if you would like these documents in an accessible format.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this committee can be found at the end of this agenda.

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 3 June 2026

Present:

Councillor C Povall (Chair)

Councillors L Luxon-Kewley
J Stewart Laing
S Bennett
G Bennett
E Lamb
K Murphy

C Cooke
G Davies
R Pitt
J Robinson
R Molyneux (In
place of C Walsh-
McDonald)
G Cooper (In place
of K Stuart)

Apologies:

Councillor M Booth

1 **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and those watching the webcast.

2 **APOLOGIES**

The Chair confirmed that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor C Walsh-McDonald with Councillor R Molyneux deputising and Councillor K Stuart with Councillor G Cooper deputising. Apologies had also been received from Councillor M Booth.

3 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

4 **MINUTES**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2026 be approved.

5 **MINUTES OF THE LICENSING PANEL**

Resolved – That the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Licensing Panel held on 13 March, 20 March, 1 April, 10 April and 8 May 2026 be approved.

6 PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS

No questions had been received from any members of the public or Members.

No statements or petitions had been received.

7 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE CHARITABLE TRUSTS SUB-COMMITTEE AND THE LICENSING PANEL

The Director of Law and Corporate Services submitted a report in respect of the appointment of Members to the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and the Licensing Panel.

It was reported that the Terms of Reference of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee as contained in the Council's Constitution (approved by Council on 16 March 2026), required this Committee to appoint five of its members, politically balanced, to the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee which has responsibility for the discharge of the Council's functions where it acts as corporate trustee, such as the Wirral Borough Council Mayor's Charity.

The allocation of five seats on the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee would be 2 Labour, 1 Conservative, 1 Green and 1 Reform UK and it would be for the political groups to decide who they wished to nominate to the places on the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee allocated to their group.

It was further reported that the Terms of Reference as amended at Council on 16 March 2026 also allowed for the convening of Licensing Panels of between three and five Members of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee, which shall consist of members of more than one political group but shall otherwise not be subject to political balance, with the responsibility for the Council's functions to deal with applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations and any related matter, in respect of any licensed activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005). Up to two further members of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee may attend a Licensing Panel as observers.

Resolved –

- (1) That the Terms of Reference of the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and the Licensing Panel as referred to in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 of the report be noted.**

- (2) That the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) be authorised to carry out the wishes of the Group Leaders in allocating Members to membership of the Charitable Trusts Sub-Committee and to appoint those Members with effect from the date at which the proper officer is advised of the names of such Members.**
- (3) That the Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons, to convene Licensing Panels as and when required for the purposes of carrying out the Council's functions to deal with applications, determinations and reviews of licences or registrations, and any related matter, in respect of any licensed activity that is the responsibility of the Authority (other than under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005) and that it be agreed that the term of membership be continued until such time as a new Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is appointed.**

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LICENSING PANEL

Thursday, 11 June 2026

Present: Councillors C Povall
G Bennett
G Davies

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Resolved – That Councillor C Povall be appointed Chair for this meeting.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

3 AMENDMENT TO MARKET RIGHTS LICENCE

The Director of Corporate Services reported that a request had been received from Games Master Leisure Limited, the holder of a Market Rights Licence, to amend the definition of 'Stallholders' and 'Traders' contained within their Market Rights Licence for the Licensing Panel to consider. The licence holder operated The BIG Wirral Car Boot Sale at Tranmere Rovers Football Club Car Park, Prenton Road West, Prenton, CH42 9PY.

It was reported that on 28 November 2025, following an application received, the Licensing Panel had granted a Market Rights Licence to Game Master Leisure Limited which permitted them to operate a weekly car boot sale at Tranmere Rovers Car Park. A copy of the licence, together with conditions, was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

It was stated that Wirral Council had the sole right to operate a market in Birkenhead and had the right to prevent other markets taking place within the common law distance of 6 2/3 miles of Birkenhead Market. In accordance with the Market Rights Policy, a Market Rights Licence which would operate indefinitely or for more than 28 days per calendar year (permanent market) or where an objection had been raised to the proposal must be referred to the Licensing Panel for consideration.

The Market Rights Licence issued to Games Master Leisure Limited contained several definitions and also had conditions attached to it, which

determined how the licence holder must operate the market. Contained within these are the definitions of a 'Stallholder' and a 'Trader'.

It was further reported that the licence currently defined Stallholders as 'members of the public who are not trading in a commercial capacity.' Condition 10 stated: "Stallholders must only sell surplus household items. Stallholders cannot sell items acquired for the purpose of resale." The Licence Holder had requested that stallholders be permitted to sell handmade craft items.

The licence currently defined Traders as 'commercial businesses and in this particular case traders must be limited to providing catering services (e.g. hot food and drinks)'. Condition 3 stated: 'There must be a maximum of 4 catering units present at the market.' The licence holder had requested that the number of permitted traders (including catering units) be increased from 4 to 5 to allow a commercial fruit and vegetable trader to operate at the car boot sale.

The applicant addressed the Panel and advised that the car boot sale had been operating well and that the request had been made to accommodate a fruit and vegetable stall and that 5 units would be the maximum number of units they wished to operate at the car boot sale.

The applicant responded to questions from the Members of the Panel and the Licensing Manager.

Resolved – That the definition of 'Stallholders' and 'Traders' referred to within the Market Rights Licence held by Games Master Leisure Limited be agreed be amended.

4 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

5 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (GJ)

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether GJ should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

GJ attended the meeting with their legal representative and made representations. All parties viewed CCTV footage that had been provided.

GJ and their legal representative responded to questions from Members of the Panel, the legal advisor to the Panel and the Licensing Manager.

Members considered carefully the responses made by GJ.

In determining the matter Members gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public.

Resolved – That GJ be allowed to continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

6 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (NRP)

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether NRP should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

NRP attended the meeting with their legal representative and made representations. NRP and their legal representative responded to questions from Members of the Panel, the legal advisor to the Panel and the Licensing Manager.

Members considered carefully the responses made by NRP.

In determining the matter Members gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public.

Resolved – That NRP be allowed to continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

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LICENSING PANEL

Friday, 10 July 2026

Present: Councillors G Bennett
S Bennett
C Walsh-McDonald

7 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Resolved – That Councillor S Bennett be appointed Chair for this meeting.

8 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

9 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

10 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (RN)

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether RN should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

RN attended the meeting and made representations. RN responded to questions from Members of the Panel, the legal advisor to the Panel and the Licensing Manager.

Members considered carefully the responses made by RN.

In determining the matter Members gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public.

Resolved – That, in the interests of public safety, RN's Private Hire Driver Licence be revoked with immediate effect.

11 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (BL)**

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether BL should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

BL did not attend the meeting.

Resolved – That BL attend a future meeting of the Licensing Panel should they wish to pursue their application.

LICENSING PANEL

Thursday, 27 August 2026

Present: Councillors C Povall
S Bennett
G Bennett

12 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Resolved – That Councillor C Povall be appointed Chair for this meeting.

13 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

No such declarations were made.

14 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

15 PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (JG)

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether JG should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

JG did not attend the meeting.

Resolved – That JG be instructed to attend a future meeting of the Licensing Panel.

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LICENSING PANEL

Friday, 18 September 2026

Present: Councillors G Bennett
S Bennett
J Robinson

16 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Resolved –

- (1) That Councillor G Bennett be appointed Chair in respect of Item 4 (minute 19).
- (2) That Councillor S Bennett be appointed Chair in respect of Items 5 and 6 (minutes 20 and 21).

17 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the Panel were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in connection with any application on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

Councillor G Bennett declared an interest in Item 5 on the agenda (minute 20 refers) by virtue of previously having worked as a Hackney Carriage Driver.

18 **EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The Public Interest test had been applied and favoured exclusion.

19 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (JG)**

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether JG should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence.

JG attended the meeting and made representations. JG responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members considered carefully the responses made by JG.

In determining the matter Members gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public.

Resolved –

(1) That JG be allowed to continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence subject to the completion of the next available independent Driver Assessment course. Failure to do so will result in JG's Private Hire Driver Licence being suspended until the course has been completed.

(2) That JG be issued with a written warning from the Licensing Panel.

20 **PRIVATE HIRE AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVER LICENCE REVIEW (SC)**

Councillor G Bennett declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of previously having worked as a Hackney Carriage Driver (minute 17 refers).

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether SC should continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence and Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

SC attended the meeting and made representations. SC responded to questions from Members and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members considered carefully the responses made by SC.

In determining the matter Members gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public.

Resolved –

(1) That SC be allowed to continue to hold a Private Hire Driver Licence and Hackney Carriage Driver Licence.

(2) That SC be issued with a written warning from the Licensing Panel.

21 **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER LICENCE APPLICATION (RC)**

The Director of Corporate Services submitted a report for Members to consider whether RC should be granted a Private Hire Driver Licence.

RC attended the meeting and made representations in respect of the application. RC responded to questions from Members of the Panel and the legal advisor to the Panel.

Members gave due consideration to the representations made and exercised their rights to consider each case on its individual merits in light of the representations made.

In determining the matter Members also gave serious consideration to their overriding responsibility in respect of the protection and safety of the public.

Resolved - That RC's application for a Private Hire Driver Licence be refused.

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Thursday 8th October 2026

REPORT TITLE:	LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW 2025
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

This report details the final recommendations published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on 30th September 2025 following its electoral boundary review of the Wirral. This report details the recommended changes to ward boundaries, councillor numbers, and the rationale behind these recommendations.

The draft Order to implement the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) final recommendations for Wirral was laid before Parliament on 11th June 2026. Once laid, the draft Order will be subject to the draft negative procedure, which means that unless rejected by Parliament within 40 sitting days it will automatically become law.

The draft Order, if confirmed, will set out the new electoral arrangements for Wirral which are scheduled to come into effect in time for the local elections in May 2027.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is requested to note the content of this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

To ensure that Members are aware of the outcome of the review, the legislative changes arising from the Order, and the implications for future electoral administration and Local Government elections within the Borough.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 As the implementation of an electoral review is prescribed through legislation, the Council is required to give effect to the provisions contained within the Order and does not have discretion to adopt alternative arrangements. Accordingly, there are no alternative options available to the Council other than to prepare for and implement the revised electoral arrangements once the Order comes into force.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The previous electoral review of the Wirral was completed in 2003. The review recommendations were subsequently implemented through The Borough of Wirral (Electoral Changes) Order 2003, which was made on 31 July 2003. The revised electoral arrangements came into force at the local elections held in May 2004.
- 3.2 The current review commenced in 2024, which meant that Wirral's ward boundaries had remained substantially unchanged for over 20 years. The reason for The Local Government Boundary Commission for England undertaking an electoral review of the ward boundaries was to ensure that electoral arrangements continued to provide fair and effective representation across the Borough.
- 3.3 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England's final recommendations resulted in several changes to Wirral's present electoral arrangements including that the overall number of councillors should be reduced from 66 to 65 members.
- 3.4 The Council will continue to comprise 22 wards, with each ward represented by three councillors, except for the Hoylake & Meols Ward, which will be represented by two councillors. The reduction in representation for the Hoylake & Meols Ward reflects the revised ward boundaries recommended by the Commission. The changes to the ward boundary have resulted in a significant reduction in the size of the electorate within the ward and the allocation of two councillors is intended to ensure electoral equality across the Borough.
- 3.5 Of the Council's 22 wards, 13 wards will be subject to boundary changes. Details of the ward boundary amendments are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

3.6 The following wards will be renamed as part of the new electoral arrangements.

Existing Ward Name	New Ward Name
Bromborough	Bromborough & Port Sunlight
Claughton	Claughton & Noctorum
Liscard	Liscard & Egremont
Rock Ferry	Rock Ferry & New Ferry
Upton	Upton & Woodchurch

These changes which are detailed in Appendix 2 attached to this report are intended to ensure that ward names better reflect the communities and geographical areas they represent following the electoral review.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Any additional costs will be met from existing budgets.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Once the Order is made, the Council will be under a legal obligation to implement the revised electoral arrangements contained within it. The Council does not have discretion to alter, amend or disregard the ward boundaries, ward names, councillor allocations or electoral arrangements prescribed by the Order.

5.2 The new arrangements will require the Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer to undertake the necessary administrative and electoral preparations to ensure that electoral registers, polling districts, polling places, election management systems, mapping data, electoral publications and election processes are updated and administered in accordance with the new legislative requirements.

5.3 The Council will be required to update its constitutional and governance documentation where necessary to reflect the revised ward names and councillor representation arrangements.

5.4 Changes will be required to ensure that electoral administration and future elections are conducted in accordance with the new ward structures established by the Order.

5.5 Failure to implement the electoral arrangements prescribed by the Order could result in the Council acting unlawfully and could compromise the lawful conduct of elections within the Borough. Accordingly, the Council must ensure that all necessary actions are taken to give full effect to the new arrangements once the Order comes into force.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Undertaking this review has had a significant impact on resources in respect of officer time. Implementing the new electoral arrangements will continue to impact on officer time. This review traverses the annual canvass of the Electoral Register. The requirements of administering this review will be met from within existing resources.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The implementation of the new electoral arrangements gives rise to several operational, legal and reputational risks which will need to be managed by the Council.
- 7.2 There is a risk that electoral records, polling district arrangements, polling places, election management systems and mapping data are not updated accurately or within the required timescales. This could impact the administration of future elections and electoral registration processes which will necessitate detailed project planning, system testing and regular monitoring of implementation activities.
- 7.3 Once the Electoral Changes Order is made, the Council must administer elections in accordance with the new ward boundaries, ward names and councillor allocations. Failure to implement the changes correctly could result in legal challenge and the unlawful administration of elections.
- 7.4 Changes to ward boundaries and ward names may cause confusion amongst electors, elected members, candidates and other stakeholders. There is a risk that electors may be unaware of changes to their ward or polling arrangements. Appropriate communication and public engagement activity has been undertaken to minimise confusion and maintain confidence in the electoral process. Electors who are affected by these changes will also be contacted by letter to inform them of the new arrangements.
- 7.5 The Council will need to review and update relevant constitutional, governance and administrative documentation to reflect the new electoral arrangements. Failure to do so could create inconsistencies within Council procedures and decision-making processes.
- 7.6 Implementing the new arrangements will require officer time and resources across several Council services, including Electoral Services, Democratic Services, ICT, Legal Services, Communications and GIS Mapping. There is a risk that competing service priorities may affect implementation timescales. This will be managed through effective project planning and cross-service coordination.
- 7.7 Any errors in the implementation of the new electoral arrangements could negatively impact public confidence in the Council's democratic processes. The Electoral

Services team however will maintain accurate electoral records and ensure that electors are appropriately informed of the changes to mitigate any such risk.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Electoral Review was undertaken by the LGBCE, an independent body established by Parliament. Throughout the review, Wirral Council have supported the Commission's consultation programme by publicising consultation opportunities, providing information requested by the Commission and encouraging participation by residents, elected members, community organisations and other stakeholders. The Commission undertook several stages of public consultation and received 93 submissions from individuals and organisations. The final recommendations took account of representations received during the consultation process and resulted in several amendments to the Commission's draft proposals.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The LGBCE is required to have regard to equality considerations when undertaking electoral reviews. As part of its review process, the Commission considered the likely impact of the proposed electoral arrangements on local communities and sought to ensure that its recommendations reflected community identities and interests whilst achieving electoral equality.
- 9.2 The Council will ensure that all communications relating to the implementation of the new electoral arrangements are accessible and available in appropriate formats, in line with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and its commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and access to democratic participation.
- 9.3 No specific equality impacts have been identified arising from the implementation of the new electoral arrangements, beyond the intended benefit of improving electoral equality and ensuring fair representation across the Borough.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no known environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no known community wealth implications arising from this report.

12.0 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no known crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Kris Cureton
Civic & Electoral Services Manager
email: kriscureton@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Summary table of the final Ward boundary changes

Appendix 2 Final Ward Names for Wirral Council (Effective May 2027)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Borough of Wirral (Electoral Changes) Order 2003

Local Government Boundary Commission for England, Electoral Review of Wirral Council - Draft Recommendations.

Local Government Boundary Commission for England consultation documents and associated mapping.

Local Government Boundary Commission for England, New Electoral Arrangements for Wirral Council - Final Recommendations, September 2025

Draft Statutory Instrument - Wirral (Electoral Changes) Order 2026

The Representation of the People Act 1983

The Local Government Act 1992

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (Part 3)

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee in accordance with Section 8.2(i) of its Terms of Reference, (i) functions relating to elections and electoral registration not otherwise reserved to Full Council, including the making of recommendations to the Council as to recommendations to the Secretary of State on ward boundaries.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Regulatory & General Purposes Committee	Wednesday 16th Nov 2022
Regulatory & General Purposes Committee	Wednesday 01st Feb 2023
Regulatory & General Purposes Committee	Thursday 7th September 2023

Appendix 1

Summary table of the final ward boundary changes for Wirral Council, based on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's September 2025 report.

Electoral variance 2030 refers to the difference between the number of electors represented by each councillor in a ward compared with the Wirral average, using the projected electorate for 2030. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) uses these forecasts to assess whether each ward will provide fair and equal representation in the future.

Pensby & Thingwall is the only proposed ward forecast to exceed the Commission's preferred $\pm 10\%$ electoral equality threshold by 2030. The LGBCE considered whether boundary changes should be made to Pensby & Thingwall to improve the electoral equality but concluded "...making changes to the ward boundary to reduce the electoral variance would not reflect established and ongoing community ties."

Final Ward Structure for Wirral Council (Effective May 2027)

Ward Name	No. of Councillors	Electoral Variance (2030)	Notes / Changes
Birkenhead & Tranmere	3	+3%	Ward boundary adjusted to include area south of Mersey Park
Bromborough & Port Sunlight	3	-3%	Northern Ward boundary adjusted to follow Boundary Road, New Ferry Bypass, and New Ferry Road, separating it from the newly defined Rock Ferry & New Ferry ward. Renamed to reflect inclusion of Port Sunlight
Claughton & Noctorum	3	-4%	Minor ward boundary adjustment to reflect shared community identity. Renamed to reflect inclusion of Noctorum
Clatterbridge	3	+1%	Ward boundary extended to Dibbinsdale Brook

Heswall	3	+1%	Minor ward boundary adjustment to take in some properties on Mere Lane and Irby Road. Properties were previously in the Pensby Thingwall Ward.
Hoylake & Meols	2	+9%	Reduced from 3 to 2 councillors; West Kirby area moved out. Ward boundary adjusted.
Liscard & Egremont	3	+3%	Minor ward boundary adjustments based on community feedback. The boundary change is minor, primarily involving the inclusion of Egremont within the ward boundary.
Oxton	3	+4%	Ward boundary to take in the area bounded by Balls Rd East, Borough Rd, Kirkland Rd, Woodchurch Rd
Pensby Thingwall	3	+11%	Minor ward boundary adjustment. Pensby & Thingwall ward will lose some properties on Mere Lane and Irby Road. These properties will move to the Heswall ward.

Prenton	3	-3%	Ward boundary change results in the loss of the area south of Mersey Park
Rock Ferry & New Ferry	3	+10%	Renamed and the ward boundary revised to unify New Ferry community
Upton & Woodchurch	3	+5%	Ward boundary expanded to include Woodchurch. Renamed to reflect inclusion of Woodchurch.
West Kirby	3	+7%	Ward boundary adjusted to unify West Kirby into one ward. The new ward boundary follows the existing ward boundary until the Hoylake to West Kirby railway line where it runs north before following the rear of properties on Airlie Road, The King's Gap and Stanley Road.

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Appendix 2

Final Ward Names for Wirral Council (Effective May 2027)

Existing ward name	Change / no change	New ward name
Bebington	No change	
Bidston & St James	No change	
Birkenhead & Tranmere	No change	
Bromborough	Change	Bromborough & Port Sunlight
Claughton	Change	Claughton & Noctorum
Clatterbridge	No change	
Eastham	No change	
Greasby Frankby Irby	No change	
Heswall	No change	
Hoylake & Meols	No change	
Leasowe & Moreton East	No change	
Liscard	Change	Liscard & Egremont
Moreton West & Saughall Massie	No change	
New Brighton	No change	
Oxton	No change	
Pensby & Thingwall	No change	
Prenton	No change	
Rock Ferry	Change	Rock Ferry & New Ferry
Seacombe	No change	
Upton	Change	Upton & Woodchurch
West Kirby & Thurstaston	No change	
Wallasey	No change	

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REGULATORY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**Thursday 8TH October 2026**

REPORT TITLE	CONCLUSION OF STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES 2026
REPORT OF	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the consultation outcome following the polling place and polling district statutory review which was undertaken following the Local Ward Boundary Review.

This review is being undertaken following changes to local electoral arrangements arising from a review of local Ward boundaries conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). The LGBCE published its final recommendations and completed their review in September 2025. A draft Order, the legal document which brings into force the LGBCE recommendations has been laid before Parliament and is currently subject to parliamentary scrutiny. If approved, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections on 6th May 2027.

The boundary review resulted in changes to Ward boundaries across the Borough and it is therefore necessary to review polling district arrangements and polling places to ensure they continue to support the effective administration of elections and provide convenient voting facilities for electors.

This statutory review considers whether existing polling districts and polling places remain appropriate considering the revised Ward boundaries and seeks to ensure that the electoral geography of the Borough reflects the new electoral arrangements established through the LGBCE review.

The recommendations contained within this report meet the objectives in the Wirral Plan 2023 – 27 relating to safe, resilient and engaged communities.

The recommendations in this report do not constitute a key decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is recommended to consider and note the outcome of the consultation and agree to relocate the polling places identified with the alternative suitable venues as detailed in this report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The local authority has a statutory duty to undertake a full review of their polling districts and polling places within the Borough and make such changes as are considered necessary to ensure they remain accessible to all electors. Furthermore, this review is being undertaken following changes to local electoral arrangements arising from a review of local Ward boundaries conducted by the LGBCE.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options were considered as it is necessary to undertake the review.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Local Authority has a duty under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to divide Wirral Borough into Polling Districts and to designate Polling Places for each Polling District.
- 3.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 placed a duty on all local authorities to undertake a full review of their polling districts and polling places every four years.
- 3.3 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of the reviews to five-yearly and, in line with this legislation, a full review was last undertaken by the local authority in 2023.
- 3.4 In addition to the five-yearly statutory reviews, local authorities may conduct reviews at any time where changes in local circumstances make it necessary to do so, including alterations to electoral arrangements or administrative boundaries.
- 3.5 The purpose of the review is to principally ensure that:
- all electors in the Borough have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and,
 - so far as reasonable and practicable, the polling districts, places and stations are accessible to all electors including those who are disabled and when considering the designation of a polling place to have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons; and,
 - where there is no fully accessible building conveniently located for the electors in an area, where it is necessary to use a place where the access is not ideal then every reasonable adjustment must be undertaken to provide access for all Electors.
- 3.6 The specific areas of focus for the review are polling districts and the location of polling places and polling stations within the Borough: -

Polling District is a geographical area created by the sub-division of an electoral area, for example a Parliamentary constituency, or a ward.

Polling Place is a building (for example, a school or community centre) or area in which a polling station is located.

Polling Station is the physical location (for example, the room) in which polling takes place and is designated by the Returning Officer.

3.7 Roles and Responsibilities

The local authority has a statutory responsibility for reviewing polling districts and places within its area.

The Electoral Registration Officer must, where there are any alterations to the polling districts within its area, amend the register of electors accordingly. This is done either on a notice of alteration or by publishing a revised register. Any changes to the register take effect on the date the Electoral Registration Officer publishes a separate notice stating that the alterations have been made, which should be done to coincide with the publication of a notice of alteration/publication of a revised register.

The (Acting) Returning Officer must comment during any review of polling districts and polling places on both existing polling stations and the polling stations that would probably be used if any new proposal for polling places were accepted.

- 3.8 The length of the review process is not prescribed, provided all the steps required by the legislation can be undertaken within the time limit. The time allowed for consultation should be sufficient to enable interested persons and groups to read and understand the proposals, gather comments, and respond with any alternative arrangements that they may wish to submit.

- 3.9 The statutory review commenced on 10th of August 2026 and concluded on the 20th of September 2026. Any proposed changes to the Electoral Register will be made and effective upon the re-publication of the Register on 1st February 2027 subject to this Committee's decision. Following the conclusion of the review, individuals will have a right to make representations to the Electoral Commission, although the Commission will only consider representations in respect of the review process not being conducted correctly.

3.10 Notification of the Review

- 3.11 The review, as indicated above, commenced on 10th August 2026 with the publication of a formal notice at Wallasey Town Hall and on the Council's website. Notices were also published on the Council's social media and online channels.
- 3.12 Notification of the review and how to participate was sent to elected representatives, local political party offices and local disability and community groups. A press release was also issued to provide general notification of the review.
- 3.13 Representations and comments were also sought from electors, Councillors, MPs, the (Acting) Returning Officer and those with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people with regards to existing Polling Districts and Places.

3.14 Outcome of Consultation

- 3.15 Electoral Services received representations from electors and Ward Councillors. Representations were received in the form of thirty-five 'Have your say' responses, and email submissions from Ward Councillors for Oxton ward, Bidston and St James ward, and Wallasey ward.
- Twenty-eight respondents commented that overall, they were satisfied with the current location of their polling station arrangements.
 - Seven respondents did not think the location of their polling place was suitable.
 - Two respondents commented on the general dissatisfaction with using schools as polling places.
 - One respondent commented that they found it difficult to park at their polling station.
 - **Polling District RC in Heswall** - four respondents asked for an alternative venue. One respondent has commented that the current venue is too far for elderly residents to walk to, while a different respondent has stated that they walk to this polling station because it is quite near. The venues suggested as an alternative to The Royal British Legion were, the Lighthouse Church on Telegraph Road or the Quaker House on Telegraph Road. The suggested alternative locations are however sited out of the polling district boundary of RC, and located in polling district RD. A further respondent suggested that Barnston Primary School should be used as an alternative to The Royal British Legion. Barnston Primary School however is already used as a polling station for polling district RA and is therefore not within the polling district boundary for district RC. A further respondent suggested Heswall Hall as an alternative, but this venue is also situated outside of the polling district boundary and located in polling district RB. No suitable alternative venue to the Royal British Legion has therefore been found for a polling place in polling district RC.
 - **Polling District DD in Oxton Ward** - an email received from a Ward Councillor in Oxton requested a change to the current polling place for polling district DD. The current polling place at Christchurch Oxton is closed for refurbishment with no expected end date given. The alternative location suggested is the Williamson Art Gallery which has been assessed as being suitable for a polling place.
 - **Polling District AF in Bidston and St James Ward** - An email received from a Ward Councillor in Bidston and St James has suggested that the AF polling station, Christ the King Church, is not ideal as it is too close to the AE polling place and too far from most of the residents in polling district AF, many of whom do not have a car. The alternative location suggested is the Equilibrium Northwest Family Hub on Livingstone Street which has been assessed as being suitable for a polling place.
 - **Polling District WD in Liscard Ward** - An email has been received from the owner of the Grosvenor Ballroom in polling district WD in the Liscard Ward indicating that they do not wish for the venue to be used as a polling place in the future. The

alternative location suggested is the Hebron Evangelical Church, Egerton Grove, Wallasey which has been assessed as being suitable for a polling place.

- As part of this review the Ward boundary between Bromborough & Port Sunlight Ward and the Rock Ferry & New Ferry Wards will move. The current polling place for polling district HA is the New Ferry Village Hall. Following the new Ward boundary arrangements as from the 6th May 2027, New Ferry Village Hall will be located within the Rock Ferry & New Ferry Ward. As such a new polling place venue has been assessed and deemed as a suitable replacement for district HA, namely, the Sea Cadet Bebington Corps on Cronwell Close. New Ferry Village Hall will now act as the polling place for polling district EE.
- **Polling Districts YC and YD in Moreton West & Saughall Massie Ward** - An email received from a Ward Councillor for Moreton West & Saughall Massie has suggested that the current arrangement for a combined polling station for districts YC and YD at Moreton Baptist Church is not suitable as it is not large enough to accommodate the two districts. The suggested alternative for district YD is the Grange Public House function room which has been assessed and is suitable as a polling place.
- **Polling District VF in Wallasey Ward** - An email from a Ward Councillor for the Wallasey Ward had asked for a review of the polling place for district VF, St Hilary's Church. It was noted that several residents had commented on the distance from the road to the polling place, and the uneven path that led to the church. The suggested alternative polling place is Wallasey Village Library which has been assessed and is suitable as a polling place.
- **Polling District DA in Oxtan Ward** - An email from the venue owner of The McAllester Pavilion in polling district DA advised that they do not wish the venue to be used as a polling place for future elections. No alternative venue has been identified at the date of this report. Once an alternative venue has been established and assessed, Ward Councillors will be advised.
- The Council's (Acting) Returning Officer submitted comments on 24 August 2026 as required which are published on Wirral Council's website. The comments state which polling places offer the most reasonable facilities for voting.

3.16 Conclusion and recommendations

- 3.17 The review and consultation have been useful in that; it has demonstrated the public and elected representatives are largely satisfied with the current arrangements. Where listed above, alternative polling places have been assessed. The polling places not mentioned above will remain unchanged. The (Acting) Returning Officer's final recommendations will be published on Wirral Council's website.
- 3.18 In relation to using schools as polling places, this is continually reviewed by the Electoral Services team. Wirral has one hundred and three polling places of which

in 2019 forty-five schools were used as polling places. This number has been reduced to thirty-four at the May 2023 election which equates to less than one third of the total number.

- 3.19 The rules that govern the conduct of elections give the (Acting) Returning Officer a statutory right to use, free of charge, schools maintained or assisted by a local authority as well as those schools that receive grants made from moneys provided by Parliament. This includes academies and free schools.
- 3.20 The decision to close the school falls on the Headteacher and will usually depend upon whether arrangements can be made for voting to take place separately from the rest of the school premises. Where possible, the (Acting) Returning Officer and the school will make such arrangements for the school to remain open. However, pupil safety must always be considered as paramount and if the school decides to close on the day of the poll and it is not reasonably practicable to arrange an alternative day to make up the lost education, the school will be treated as if it had met the requisite 190 days for the purposes of the school year regulations.
- 3.21 Clear guidance is provided to schools on this matter so there should be no misunderstanding about the legal position and the need for schools to co-operate in making rooms available for polling station use. Any reluctance to use schools as polling places despite the statutory position would lead to an increase in the use of private buildings or mobile units which would incur additional costs even where the most reasonable facilities could be provided within a school.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. If alternative polling places are identified as part of this review, and incur any additional charge, the cost can be met from within the existing budget.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Authority has a duty under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to divide Wirral Borough into Polling Districts and to designate Polling Places for each Polling District.
- 5.2 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 places a duty on all local authorities to undertake a full review of their Parliamentary polling districts and polling places every five years.
- 5.3 There is a legal duty on the local authority to provide accommodation for polling stations - Chapter 2, Schedule 1, Part III, paragraph 22. the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- 5.4 Polling stations must be accessible to all - Section 20, 29 and 31, Equality Act 2010.
- 5.5 Provision of polling stations - the (Acting) Returning Officer must provide enough polling stations and subject to the following provisions of this rule, must allot the electors to the polling stations in such manner as they think most convenient - Rule 23(1-4), The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 Undertaking this review will impact on resources in respect of officer time, particularly as the period of this review traverses the annual canvass of the Electoral Register. However, it is anticipated that these requirements can be met from within the existing budget.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 7.1 The Council has a statutory duty to complete a Polling Districts and Places Review every five years. The Review provides an opportunity for the Council to ensure accessibility to all Electors, mitigate any potential hazards and health and safety risks; and ensure that the Council addresses any identified risks affecting any potential Electors, particularly if they suffer from a disability.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Acting Returning Officer (ARO) published notice of this review and consulted with interested groups, including those with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people, or bodies including electors, political parties, MPs and members of the council.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Wirral Council has an ongoing responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (S149) to take equality implications into consideration in policy decision, implementation, and day to day activities. The impact on those with protected characteristics under the Act will be taken into consideration during this exercise when assessing the overall suitability of a venue. Any changes to venues and or arrangements will be assessed with equality impacts in mind and other voting practices such as proxy and postal voting will remain in place for those who wish to use it.
- 9.2 The appendix to this report may not be suitable to view for people with disabilities, users of assistive technology or mobile phone devices. Please contact electoral@wirral.gov.uk if you would like these documents in an accessible format.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no known environmental or climate implications arising from this report.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no known community wealth implications arising from this report.

12.0 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no known crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1 Survey responses by Ward area

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Representation of the People Act 1983

The Local Elections (Principal Areas) (England and Wales) Rules 2006.

Electoral Administration Act 2006

Equality Act 2010

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

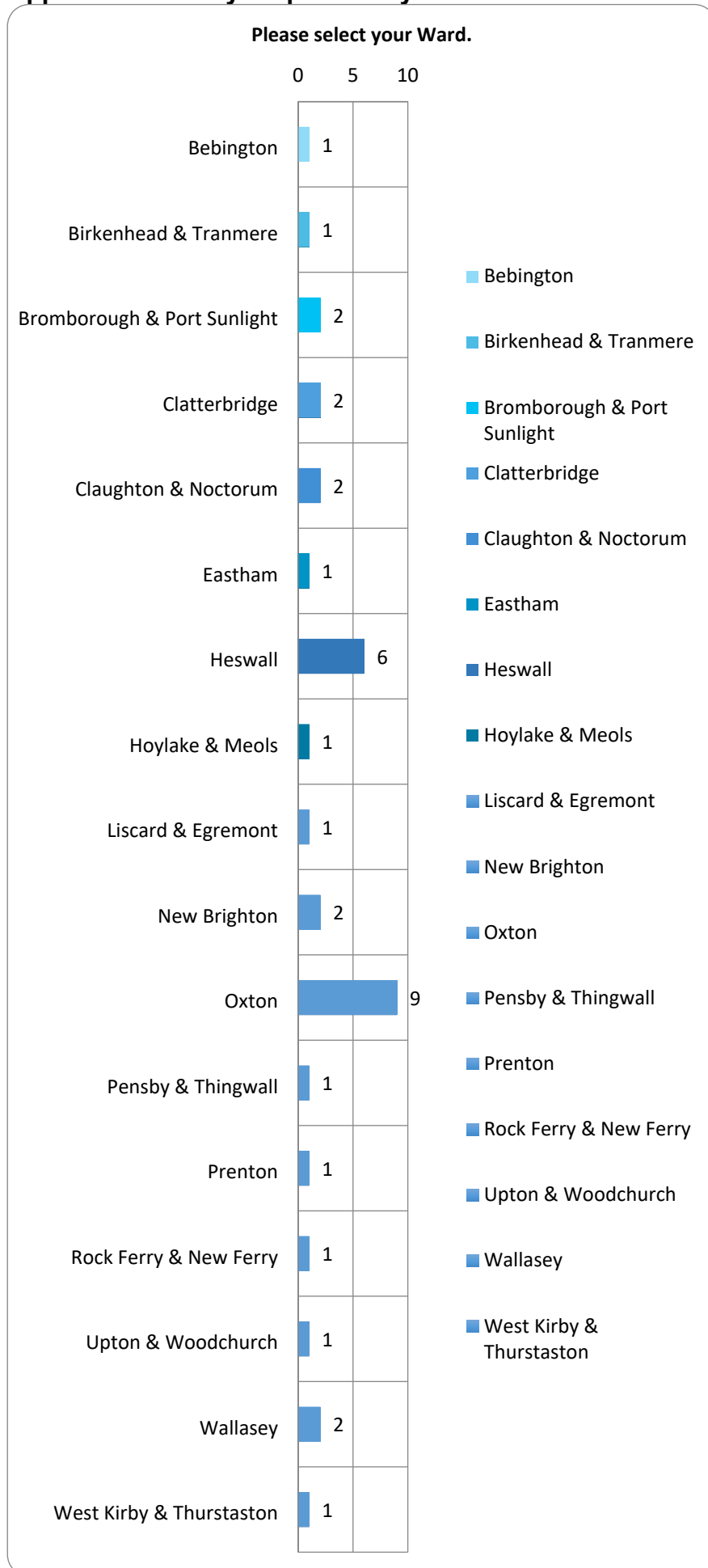
TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is presented to Committee in accordance with section 8.2(i) of the Committees terms of reference.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Regulatory & General Purposes Committee	Wednesday 16th Nov 2022
Regulatory & General Purposes Committee	Wednesday 01st Feb 2023
Regulatory & General Purposes Committee	Thursday 7th September 2023

Appendix 1 Survey responses by Ward area



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Regulatory and General Purposes Committee – Terms of Reference

The principal role of the Regulatory and General Purposes Committee is as the administrative committee, established as an ordinary committee and acting under delegation pursuant to sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, and responsible for making decisions as licensing and registration authority on all regulatory matters not otherwise delegated to the Planning Committee or reserved to the Licensing Act Committee.

The Committee is charged by full Council to fulfil all of those functions, more particularly described as set out at Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), and associated matters, including but not limited to:

- (a) functions relating to licensing, registration and ancillary matters other than those falling within the remit of the Licensing Act Committee, including but not limited to:
 - acupuncture, tattooing, ear-piercing and electrolysis;
 - caravan sites;
 - charity collections and street collections;
 - hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences, drivers and operators;
 - entertainments;
 - market and street trading,
 - pleasure boats and pleasure vessels;
 - scrap yards;
 - sex shops and sex establishments;
 - solemnisation of marriages;
 - theatres and cinemas;
 - zoos, animal trainers and exhibitors and dangerous wild animals;
- (b) functions relating to health and safety at work, to the extent that those functions are discharged otherwise than in the authority's capacity as an employer;
- (c) functions relating to sea fisheries;
- (d) functions relating to statutory nuisance and contaminated land;
- (e) the passing of a resolution that schedule 2 to The Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the authority's area;
- (f) commons regulation and town and village greens, the power to apply for an enforcement order against unlawful works on registered common land, the power to protect unclaimed registered common land and unclaimed town or village greens against unlawful interference and the power to institute proceedings for offences in respect of unclaimed land;
- (g) the power to make a closing order on a takeaway food shop;
- (h) the obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976;

- (f) functions relating to elections and electoral registration not otherwise reserved to Full Council, including the making of recommendations to the Council as to recommendations to the Secretary of State on ward boundaries;
- (g) Power to consider and make recommendations to the Council on matters relating to the name and status of the Borough and individuals; and
- (h) making recommendations to Council on the promotion or approval of local bill.