

# FAREHAM

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Report to the Executive for Decision 04 September 2017

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Old Portchester Parish Addresses</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Strategy/Policy:</b>	Community Engagement Strategy
<b>Corporate Objective:</b>	Strong and Inclusive Communities

**Purpose:**

To consider requesting that Royal Mail consult on adding Portchester as a new locality to the addresses in the old Portchester Parish, following receipt of a petition.

**Executive summary:**

On 15 December 2016, a petition was presented to a meeting of the Council, titled "Preserve the unique identity of Portchester," stating that *"We the undersigned petition the Council to preserve the unique identity of Portchester as a village and not simply a part of Fareham by lobbying Royal Mail to maintain the name of Portchester in postal addresses"*.

The petition comprised over 1,500 signatures. The Council agreed that it would write to Royal Mail to affirm the unique identity of Portchester and request that the name Portchester continues to be used in postal addresses.

In Spring 2017, Royal Mail changed the postal town address line in Portchester addresses to Fareham.

In response to the change by Royal Mail and the petition received in 2016, it is proposed that Portchester would be added as an additional line to all properties within the area defined as the old Parish of Portchester. The change is proposed as part of the Corporate Objective for strong and inclusive communities, which recognises the distinct communities within the Borough.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Executive approves the proposal to request that Royal Mail consult on adding Portchester as a new locality to the addresses within the old Portchester Parish, subject to support being obtained from the MP for Fareham and Hampshire Chamber of Commerce by the Council.

**Reason:**

Portchester is a distinct community within the Borough of Fareham. There was strong opposition to Royal Mail's proposal to change Portchester postal addresses, as evidenced by a petition with over 1,500 signatures. The recommendation represents the Council's support for distinct communities and its efforts to help preserve them.

**Cost of proposals:**

There are no costs associated with the proposals, due to the required consultation being the responsibility of Royal Mail.

**Appendices:**

**A:** Map of Old Portchester Parish

**B:** Properties without Portchester locality

**Background papers:** None

**Reference papers:** Portchester parish map

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## BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Executive Briefing Paper

<b>Date:</b>	04 September
<b>Subject:</b>	Old Portchester Parish Addresses
<b>Briefing by:</b>	Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Portfolio:</b>	Policy and Resources

#### INTRODUCTION

1. Every house and business in the UK is given a postal address by Royal Mail. The postal address is a sorting and routing instruction to Royal Mail employees, and not always a geographically accurate description of where a property is actually located. Table 1 outlines the address format used by Royal Mail

Royal Mail Address Format		
Address Data	Postal Requirement	Example
Name of addressee (title, initials, surname)	Not if building name or number present	Mr A Smith
Company/Organisation	Not if building name or number present	Acme Plc
Building name	Not if building number present	Acme House
Number of building & name of street or road	Yes	3 High Street
Additional Locality	Where similar road names exist within a Post Town area or there is another operational requirement	Hedle End
Post Town (capital letters)	Yes	SOUTHAMPTON
County	No	Hampshire
Postcode (capital letters)	Yes	SO31 4NG

2. In August 2016, Royal Mail announced that it was considering changing the post town in Portchester addresses from Portchester to Fareham. Operational reasons were given by Royal Mail at the time of the proposal:
  - The local sorting office covering Portchester properties is in Fareham
  - Portchester is not needed in the address to ensure mail is delivered correctly

3. Following Royal Mail's announcement, the Council received a petition in December 2016 asking the Council to lobby Royal Mail to "preserve the unique identity of Portchester as a village..." and to "Save Portchester from being taken off postal addresses and being unrecognised by the Post Office." The petition was initiated by Councillor Fazackarley and received over 1,500 signatures.
4. The petition was presented at a meeting of the Council on 15 December 2016 and it was agreed that the Council would write to Royal Mail to request that the name Portchester continued to be used in postal addresses. A letter was then sent by the Executive Leader to Royal Mail on 20 December 2016.
5. In early 2017, Royal Mail replaced the postal town of Portchester with Fareham in the addresses of Portchester properties.

## PORTCHESTER AS A LOCALITY

6. Helping to maintain strong and inclusive communities is a priority within the Council's Corporate Strategy. As part of this priority, consideration has been given to identifying methods of helping to preserve the identity of Portchester, following the changes made by Royal Mail.
7. Royal Mail only makes changes to the post town for operational and efficiency reasons. There is no route for requesting that the Portchester addresses be returned to how they were before, displaying Portchester in the post town line.
8. A potential solution could be to add Portchester as a locality line to addresses where there is sufficient support from residents and businesses to do so. The address below provides an example of what the addition of a locality line would do to such addresses.

1 Winnham Drive	would become...	1 Winnham Drive
Fareham		Portchester
PO16 8QE		Fareham
		PO16 8QE

9. Royal Mail will consider adding locality information in the following circumstances:
  - (a) There is no impact on the quality of service or efficiency of deliveries.
  - (b) The change is supported by customer representatives. The scale of the changes in Portchester means that support will be required from the Local Chamber of Commerce, Member of Parliament as well as Fareham Borough Council.
  - (c) There is a clearly defined geographical boundary with details of the properties affected.
  - (d) There is a response from at least 50% of the people polled by Royal Mail and a majority favour the change.

10. The points below provide a response to each of the requirements outlined by Royal Mail:
- (a) There is not perceived to be any impact on Royal Mail services, in adding Portchester as a locality. There are no similarly named areas within the Borough, so there should not be any confusion with the information being added to addresses.
  - (b) It is proposed that the Council would contact Suella Fernandes, MP for Fareham, and Hampshire Chamber of Commerce to confirm their support, before contacting Royal Mail again.
  - (c) It is proposed that the old Portchester parish be used as the area where the locality information will be applied. This is a clearly defined geographical area, which has a historic basis. Appendix A to this report includes a map outlining the area covered by the old Portchester parish according to Church of England records. The Parish originally covered areas of Portsmouth but these will not be included in the request to Royal Mail.
  - (d) The response to the petition would indicate that there is a significant amount of support for this change to take place, but a 50% response rate is a much higher than usual anticipated response to a survey.
11. Of the nearly 8,200 addresses within the current Portchester Wards, approximately 6,800 fall within the old Portchester Parish. Furthermore, approximately 6,400 of the properties already have Portchester as a locality line in their postal addresses. It is proposed that the remaining, approximately 400, properties have Portchester added as a locality line to their postal addresses. Appendix B to this report outlines the roads, and number of properties in them, which do not have Portchester as a locality line in their addresses.

## **CONCLUSION**

12. Earlier in 2017, Royal Mail changed the postal town details for Portchester following a public consultation in late 2016. Addresses were changed to have a postal town of Fareham instead of Portchester.
13. In response to the change, and a petition submitted to the Council during Royal Mail's consultation period, it is proposed that a request be submitted to Royal Mail to add the locality of Portchester to addresses in the old Portchester Parish. This would affect approximately 400 properties and would be subject to support being obtained from the local MP and Chamber of Commerce.
14. It is a Council priority to promote strong and inclusive communities, part of which is recognising the distinct communities that make-up the Borough. The inclusion of Portchester in addresses helps to support the community and maintain its distinct character.

## **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact Roy Brown, Customer Engagement Manager (ext. 4409).