

# POLLING DISTRICT AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2011

*Reporting Officers: Head of Democratic Services and Electoral Services Manager*

## SUMMARY

1. Under the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006, the Council has a statutory duty to conduct a review of its polling districts and polling places, which must be completed by 31 December 2011. The first such review was completed in 2007.
2. The aim of the review is to seek to ensure that:
  - (a) all the electors in the borough have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
  - (b) so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places are accessible to all electors, including those with disabilities.

**RECOMMENDATION: That the proposed changes for the polling arrangements within the Borough be approved.**

## INFORMATION

3. The aim of the exercise was to make voting more convenient to electors, providing places that are well located within communities, avoiding road safety hazards and using any existing boundaries (i.e. open space land, railway lines etc) but with an eye to economising where possible – particularly in view of the number of electors who now choose to vote by post.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

4. To ensure clarity in discussing issues arising from the review the following definitions are used:
  - **polling district;** a geographical sub-division of an electoral area i.e. a UK parliamentary constituency, a European parliamentary electoral region, a ward or an electoral division.
  - **polling place;** a geographical area in which a polling station is located. However, as there is no legal definition of what a polling place is, the geographical area could be defined as tightly as a particular building or as widely as the entire polling district.
  - **polling station;** the actual area where the process of voting takes place, and must be located within the polling place designated for the particular polling district.

## REVIEW PROCESS

5. The preliminary stage of the review involved giving notice that the Council was conducting a review. A public notice of the review was published on 4 July 2011. Notices were published at the Council Offices, in Hillingdon People, on the council website, and were sent to all Councillors, the three local MP's, various

residents associations, community groups and libraries. Views were invited from residents, local political parties and councillors as well as such persons as the Council thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability, as well as local community groups. Documentation provided included ward maps showing polling station locations as well as polling boundaries and also the electorate served by each polling area. The notice indicated that the consultation would conclude on 30 September 2011.

6. There is no requirement to change existing arrangements if it is felt that these are suitable, but consultation must take place so that the process is seen to be open and fair and any decision to make no change must be clearly supported.
7. The Returning Officer must comment on all existing polling stations and any proposed or possible new ones. His comments were included in the consultation documents issued.
8. The final stage of the review is for Council to consider all the proposals and comments received, approve and then publish the results of the review.
9. Existing polling districts and polling stations have been reviewed and proposals for changes prepared where appropriate. There is no requirement to change any existing arrangements. However any change or decision to make no change must be supported by a reason, such as that the current arrangements are considered satisfactory.
10. The final proposals must be approved by the Council in November 2011, so that changes to existing arrangements can be made to the new Register of Electors to be published on 1 December 2011. However, the completion of this review does not preclude reviewing polling places further should circumstances change e.g. a better venue becomes available or an existing polling place is no longer available.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. Public consultation was an essential part of the review, the costs being met from existing budgets. The net effect of the proposals would produce a cost reduction on polling location costs of approx' £2000. For all but local elections this cost does not fall to be met by the authority.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

12. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 and the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places [Parliamentary Elections] Regulations 2006 together place a duty on all local authorities to review all polling districts and polling places every four years. This report seeks to give effect to this duty'.

## EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

13. The aim of the exercise is to make voting more convenient to electors, providing places that are well located within communities, avoiding road safety hazards and using any existing boundaries.
14. The review is based on the number of electors on the current register of electors. The borough currently has 82 polling districts. Each polling district should serve approximately equal numbers of electors and Polling locations should be 'logical' i.e. electors should not have to travel past another polling place to get to their own and none should be shared by different wards.
15. This exercise does not allow the movement of ward boundaries. Any issues relating to this would be dealt with as a different exercise. This is merely to determine whether the electors in each ward are best served by the current polling arrangements.
16. The Wards where the consultation has produced proposals for change are summarised below. The detail of all wards are attached as an appendix. Maps showing all the proposed polling stations are available as a background document, in the Group offices and on the website.

Ward	Recommendation
<b>Botwell</b>	HB6 – Rosedale College, Wood End Green Road and HB3 – 9 <sup>th</sup> Hayes Scout Hut, Chestnut Close – combine at Rosedale College as the Scout Hut is a difficult location to access, producing on polling area of 3124 electors.
<b>Heathrow Villages</b>	HD6 – Mobile unit, Oxford Avenue – relocate to HD5 by amalgamating polling areas HD5 and HD6 to produce one polling area of 3895 electors.
<b>Hillingdon East</b>	UC2 - Oak Farm Library Sutton Court Road - remove polling district and relocate electors to following polling districts:  UC1 - Royal British Legion, Uxbridge Road (778 electors) (roads affected - Baxter Road, Brampton Road, Charville Lane West, Long Lane (part), Redwood Close, The Dingle, The Larches)  and UC3 - Oak Farm School Nursery Unit, Windsor Avenue (764 electors) (roads affected - Clifton Gardens, Long Lane (part), Oakdene Road, Silver Way, Snowden Avenue, Sutton Court Road)
<b>Northwood Hills</b>	RE4 - Northwood School, Potter Street - relocate to Northwood Hills Library, Potter Street due to unsuitability of Northwood School for use as a Polling Station.

Ward	Recommendation
<b>Pinkwell</b>	<p>HE1 – Thomas Henry Public House – delete polling district &amp; station &amp; relocate the electors from HE1 into HE2 (Harlington Community School, Pinkwell Lane) and HE3 (Cranford Park School, Phelps Way) as follows:</p> <p>i) move the streets to the left of Station Road currently in HE2 (Redmead Road, Bushey Road, Station Road, Clement Gardens Carlton Avenue and Bedwell Gardens) to the HE3, Cranford Park School Polling Place and</p> <p>ii) relocate the HE1 electors to the HE2 Harlington Community School Polling Place.</p> <p>The net effect will be to increase the electorate for HE2 from 2969 to 4296 and HE3 from 4212 to 4759.</p>
<b>South Ruislip</b>	<p>UE1 – Bourne Primary School, Cedar Avenue - relocate to South Ruislip Christian Fellowship Church, Deane Avenue.</p> <p>UE2 - Deansfield Primary School, Queens Walk – relocate to South Ruislip Youth Centre.</p> <p>UE4 - Deane Park Hall, Long Drive - relocate electors in Rabournead Drive and Wheatsheaf Close (385 electors) from Deane Park Hall to South Ruislip Youth Centre as it is more readily accessible by foot and a better route to drive to.</p>
<b>Townfield</b>	<p>HF4 – Salvation Army Hall, Coldharbour Lane - remove polling district and relocate electors to following polling districts:</p> <p>HF2 - Minet School, Avondale Drive (1172 electors) (roads affected - Coldharbour Lane, Copperfield Road, Crossway, East Walk, Fairdale Gardens, Hunters Grove, Minet Drive, Mount Road, Silverdale Gardens, West Walk )</p> <p>and HF3 - Townfield Community Centre, Townfield Square (525 electors) (roads affected - Townfield Community Centre: Austin Road, Botwell Lane, Bullsbridge Road, Chalfont Road, Crown Close, Little Road, Silverdale Road)</p>
<b>Uxbridge North</b>	<p>UF3 - All Saints Church, Long Lane – relocate to Guide Hall, Sweetcroft Lane as a better station inside the district, subject to the agreement of the leaseholder.</p>
<b>Uxbridge South</b>	<p>UG4 – St Laurence School, Worcester Road – return to the Cowley Meeting Hall, subject to the completion of the refurbishment.</p>

Ward	Recommendation
<b>West Drayton</b>	<p>HG2 – St Catherine’s Primary School, Money Lane - relocate to St Catherine’s Church Hall as a viable alternative location less disruptive to the community.</p> <p>HG3 - West Drayton Primary School Kingston Lane &amp; HG4 Bell Farm Christian Centre – implement boundary line changes so that the new development of Drayton Gardens (old RAF site in Porters Way) falls into the HG3 polling area to vote at West Drayton Primary School which would be better able to cope than the Bell Farm Centre which is already a large polling area (please refer to map in appendix)</p> <p>Roads that would move would be Brickfields Way, Hanson Close, Park Lodge Avenue, Percy Bush Road, Pocock Avenue, Porters Way and Starveall Close – total of 644 electors</p>
<b>Yiewsley</b>	UH1 - St Matthews Parish Centre High Street – relocate to UH2, Yiewsley Baptist Church Hall, Colham Avenue

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** Electoral Administration Act 2006; Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006; Electoral Commission circular EC19/2010; Various written responses to public notice; maps of all polling locations