



SIGNED OFF BY	Electoral Registration Officer
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TO	Council
DATE	Thursday, 16 January 2020

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	Yes
WARDS AFFECTED	(All Wards);

SUBJECT	Review of Polling Districts and Places
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RECOMMENDATIONS
(i) The premises and recommendations set out in Appendix 1 be designated the polling places for the polling districts stated with effect from 31st January 2020.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This report sets out the proposals for polling districts and polling places in the Borough following the statutory review undertaken under the Electoral Administration Act 2006.
Full Council has authority to approve the above recommendations.

STATUTORY POWERS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Electoral Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places. 2. Reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 2013. The last statutory review of polling districts and polling places was carried out in 2014. 3. The current review must therefore be completed by 31 January 2020. 4. Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 sets out all the steps that must be undertaken to complete a review. Officers have also had regard to guidance published by the Electoral Commission.

BACKGROUND

5. In February 2019 the Council concluded a Local Government Boundary Review, which included a review of polling places and districts. It is therefore not expected that this review will result in significant changes to the current designated polling places or polling districts.
6. Due to the timing of the recent Boundary Review and the need to conduct a statutory review by 31 January 2020, this report will consider:
 - representations received during the consultation period for this review; and
 - any comments from the Acting Returning Officer with regards to the suitability of polling places and districts arising from the UK Parliamentary elections in December 2019.
7. In conducting a statutory review Local Authorities are required to demonstrate they have met the criteria set out in the legislation as follows:
 - Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
 - Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.
8. Notice of the review, including details of a consultation period, was published on the Council's website and at the Town Hall on 5 June 2019.
9. A consultation period from 5 July to 16 September 2019 invited comments and representations from electors, elected Members, local political parties as well as any persons or organisations with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability.

KEY INFORMATION

Size of the electorate

10. The Electoral Commission's guidance recommends that:
 - Any polling station over 2,000 electors will create challenges in ensuring voters can vote without delay, considering the hours of poll and the fact that voters will not typically vote in an even spread across the day.
 - A polling station should not have more than 2,500 electors allocated to it.

Projected population growth

11. Polling stations located at the Pathfinder Scout Hall (Horley West and Sidlow), the Merstham Community Hub (Hooley, Merstham and Netherne), St Joseph's Church (Redhill East) and St Mark's Church Hall (Reigate) are close to the 2500 elector guideline and are likely to exceed 2500 electors before the next review within 5 years. This projection is informed by:
 - The Council's [Development Management Plan](#), which sets out a housing requirement over the next 10 years and indicates that the electorate in these areas will grow significantly; and

- The population growth projections data for the Boundary Review in 2018/19 was re-applied to the new polling districts to give an indication of projected population in these areas.
12. With this in mind, the council can carry out an interim review and change some of their polling districts and polling places before the end of the next 5-year cycle.
 13. In particular, development of the Westvale Park area has led to a growth in the electorate in the HRW2 polling district (Horley West and Sidlow) and is expected to continue expanding.

Representations

14. Appendix 2 lists each of the representations received during the consultation period.
15. A total of 11 responses were received during the consultation period. 6 responses stated that no changes were required. The remaining 5 responses which sought changes related to the use of:
 - Tanyard Barn Community Centre in Brookfield Drive (HRE3 and HRE4 - Horley East and Salfords);
 - St Wilfrid's Church in Horley Row (HRW2 - Horley West and Sidlow); and
 - Edmonds Hall in Albert Road (HRC2 - Horley Central and South).
16. During the UK Parliamentary elections in December 2019 the Acting Returning Officer received several complaints regarding the suitability of the Redhill Football Social Club (EWB4 – Earlswood and Whitebushes) as a polling place, specifically in relation to parking and access for electors. The potholed car park was a trip hazard for some voters, particularly after sunset.

Assessment criteria

17. As part of the review process officers considered existing arrangements against a range of criteria including:
 - Convenience for electors
 - Accessibility
 - Car parking
 - Facilities for staff
 - Health & Safety
18. Each of the above criteria were assessed as part of a comprehensive evaluation based on Electoral Commission guidance when Polling Station Inspectors visited each polling place during the UK Parliamentary elections in December 2019. Presiding Officers also complete a health and safety risk assessment at each election.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. The Electoral Administration Act 2013 requires that reviews be carried out within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 2013. The last

statutory review of polling districts and polling places was carried out in 2014. The current review must therefore be completed by 31 January 2020.

20. Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 sets out all the steps that must be undertaken to complete a review.
21. In conducting a statutory review, the legislation requires that Local Authorities ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

23. In conducting a statutory review, the legislation requires that Local Authorities ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.
24. An accessibility assessment was included within the evaluation form completed by Polling Station Inspectors when assessing polling stations during the UK Parliamentary elections in December 2019.

COMMUNICATION IMPLICATIONS

25. Electors will be notified of any changes to polling places for their respective electoral areas / wards on their poll cards.

CONSULTATION

26. In accordance with statutory requirements the Council gave notice of the review on Wednesday 5 June 2019 and sought comments from a wide range of stakeholders including:
 - The Acting Returning Officers for Parliamentary Constituencies within the Borough;
 - All Borough Councillors;
 - County Council Divisional Councillors for Reigate and Banstead;
 - Surrey County Council;
 - Horley Town Council;
 - Salfords and Sidlow Parish Council;
 - MPs for the borough;
 - Political Parties;
 - Residents Associations; and
 - Access Groups

The Review information was also available via the Council's web site for public consultation.

APPENDICES

1. Appendix 1 – Designated Polling Districts and Places
2. Appendix 2 – Representations

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. [Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983](#)
2. [Electoral Commission guidance](#)