

DECISION-MAKER:	COUNCIL		
SUBJECT:	REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES		
DATE OF DECISION:	20 NOVEMBER 2019		
REPORT OF:	RETURNING OFFICER		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Mike Hickman	Tel: 023 8083 3954
	E-mail:	mike.hickman@southampton.gov.uk	
Director	Name:	Mike Harris	Tel: 023 8082 2882
	E-mail:	mike.harris@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
Not Applicable	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
<p>The purpose of this report is to place before Council the results of the 2019 review of polling districts and polling places carried out in accordance with the obligations under the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.</p> <p>The recommendations have been compiled by the Returning Officer with input from nominated members of both the Labour and Conservative political groups.</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) That the recommendations in respect of the polling districts and polling places as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	There is a statutory duty to complete this review by the 31 January 2020.
2.	The proposed recommendations are made as a result of the statutory consultation process, taking into account all representations made.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
3.	The council has a legal obligation to undertake this review.
4.	With regard to individual polling districts and/or polling places, there are a range of options – where appropriate, the recommendations set out in Appendix 1 attempt to strike a balance between the requirement to provide voting facilities and any concerns raised by way of consultation.
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
5.	<u>General Background</u> In accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, a review of polling districts and polling places must be completed 31 January 2020.
6.	<u>Consultation</u> The Council is required to consult the (Acting) Returning Officer for every parliamentary constituency that is wholly or partly within its area, and to seek

	<p>submissions from electors and other interested persons and bodies, including elected representatives and such persons/organisations with expertise in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to premises; or • facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. <p>In addition, all existing polling places were notified of the review to enable them to make submissions regarding continuing use of the premises.</p>
7.	<p><u>Polling districts, polling places and polling stations</u></p> <p>A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, such as a parliamentary constituency or a ward. As the 'relevant authority', Southampton City Council is responsible for dividing the local authority area into polling districts.</p> <p>A polling place is generally defined as the building or location in which a polling station is located. The council is also responsible for designating a polling place for each polling district.</p> <p>A polling station is the actual room or area where the process of voting takes place, and must be located within the polling place designated for the particular polling district. It is the Returning Officer for the particular election that is responsible for allocating polling stations.</p>
8.	<p><u>Requirements for designating polling places</u></p> <p>Relevant authorities must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to ensure that all the 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, the polling places are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled. <p>In addition, the designated polling place must be within the area of the polling district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate a location wholly or partly outside of the district.</p>
9.	<p><u>Review Timetable</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of the start of the review: 26 July 2019 • Start of consultation period: 29 July 2019 • End of consultation period: 20 September 2019 • Report to Council meeting: 19 November 2019 • Arrangements come into force from when the next revised register is published: 1 December 2019
10.	<p><u>Comments on the Review by the Returning Officer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Returning Officer is mindful of the fact that changing polling stations can cause confusion for electors and wishes to make it as simple as possible for every eligible elector to use their vote. • Polling stations are assessed prior to each major poll and steps are taken to improve accessibility for all members of the community. Where problems or concerns are drawn to the Returning Officer's attention, every effort is made to resolve them. At each election, polling staff are asked to report back on any difficulties encountered. • The Council should note that before the next compulsory polling district and polling place review in 2023, the Local Government

	<p>Boundary Commission for England will be undertaking a review of the electoral arrangements for Southampton. This will have a future impact on ward and polling district boundaries, and consequently the allocated polling places and polling stations.</p> <p>The Returning Officer considers that the recommendations set out at Appendix 1 offer the most reasonable and practicable voting facilities. He is also satisfied that, where there are identified issues or concerns, and despite efforts to identify better alternatives, these locations remain the best available options in their vicinities. However, these (and indeed all) locations will be kept under review outside this statutory process and should other options be identified, these will be brought forward as and when they become available.</p>
--	---

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

11.	<p>Capital – none</p> <p>Revenue – based on the recommendations set out in Appendix 1, there are minimal implications (potential annual hire charge increases). However, a decision to peruse other options, such as increasing the number of temporary polling stations, could have significant cost implications</p>
-----	--

Property/Other

12.	None
-----	------

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

13.	Section 17 Electoral Administration and Registrations Act 2013 (as amended)
-----	---

Other Legal Implications:

14.	Representation of the People Act 1983, Chapter 2, Schedule 1, Part III
-----	--

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15.	None
-----	------

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

16.	None
-----	------

KEY DECISION?	No
----------------------	-----------

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
------------------------------------	-----

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Schedule of polling districts and polling places + recommendations
2.	Summary or representations received and considerations made

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	
----	--

Equality Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.		No
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.		No
Other Background Documents		
Other Background documents available for inspection at:		
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	
1.		