

Part A

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: 15 October 2019

Report author: Electoral Services Manager

Title: Polling District, places and stations review

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the results of a review of the Polling Districts and Polling Places within the borough. A public notice of the review was posted which invited comments. Direct consultation was carried out with the elected members for the various tiers of government covering the borough, political parties and voluntary sector organisations, including disabled and ethnic minorities.

1.2 Proposals for changes to polling place/stations, including alternative premises, have been received and are set out in Appendix 1.

1.3 Responses have been received in respect of two wards of which only one of the wards has had alternative suggestions put forward, which are detailed in Appendices 1 and 2. Also included as appendices are location maps where submission have been made.

2.0 Risks

2.1

| Nature of risk | Consequence | Suggested Control Measures | Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer) | Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood) |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Change of polling locations re. Polling Districts DA and DC – within Leggatts Ward | i. Increase in distance for larger number of electorate to attend their designated polling station i.e. unreasonable walking distance; ii. Possible decline in voter turnout; | i-iii. Maintain current designated polling locations without change for polling districts DA and DC | Treat | Unlikely (2) x High (3) = rating of 6 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| | <p>iii. Potential increase in ongoing election costs for Leggatts ward</p> <p>iv. Initial confusion for electors due to change of venue i.e. attending former polling station locations.</p> | <p>iv. Extensive public awareness action to forewarn electorate prior to the initial change of venue and at first of each type of election in addition to usual poll cards clearly highlighting change of venue with location map.</p> | | |
| <p>Sighting an additional temporary polling station within the Holywell ward area</p> | <p>Inability to locate a suitable area of land to locate a Portakabin inclusive of the required disability access ramp; staff toilet facilities and possibly power generator without issue or obstruction.</p> | <p>Maintain current 2 x designated polling places with multiple polling stations within the Holywell electoral area.</p> | | <p>Unlikely (2) x High (3) = Rating of 6</p> |

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 that the current arrangements for Callowland, Central, Meriden, Nascot , Park, Stanborough, Vicarage and Woodside wards, as set out in Appendix 1, continue without change.
- 3.2 that the existing 2 x polling places/5 x polling stations within Holywell Ward be retained without addition for the reasons set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 that the current arrangements including the use of Orchard Primary School and Cherry Tree Primary School within Leggatts Ward be retained for the reasons set out in Appendix 2 .
- 3.4 that the current arrangements for Oxhey Ward will continue unchanged following advise that the existing polling arrangements for polling district LB is acceptable to the Bushey and Oxhey Infants School for the foreseeable future, as set out in Appendix 1.

- 3.5 that the current arrangements for Tudor Ward will be retained and to note that upon completion of the rebuild of Centrepoint Community Centre these facilities will be checked and consideration will be given for the return from the current arrangement with Glen Rovers Hurling and Football Club.

Further information:

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Report approved by: Group Head of Democracy and Governance

4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 Following conduct of the 2019 Polling District/polling places review the full details of the various submissions made to the review are contained in Appendix 1 and officer comments on them is contained in Appendix 2.

- 4.2 Only 3 submissions were received relating to 2 Wards. No changes were proposed for the other 10 Wards.

4.3 Leggatts Ward

- 4.3.1 Cherry Tree Primary School has requested that the council considers alternative accommodation and suggested the use of Everett Rovers Football Club, located in Dodd Road. A response was also received from Everett Rovers Football Club. Full details are set out in Appendices 1 and 2. This is not recommended by officers for the reasons set out in Appendix 2.

- 4.3.2 Orchard Primary School has requested that the council considers alternative accommodation and suggested the use of St Mark's Church located in Leggatts Way. Full details are set out in Appendices 1 and 2. This is not recommended by Officers for the reasons set out in Appendix 2.

4.4 Holywell Ward

- 4.4.1 Councillor Bell made a request for an additional polling place within the Holywell Ward. Full details are set out in Appendices 1 and 2. This is not recommended by Officers for the reasons set out in Appendix 2.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that in the event that Council decides to create an additional polling place in Holywell this will have budget implications

because of the need to hire and locate a Portacabin for which there is currently no budget and we would need to recruit additional polling station staff.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that it is a legal requirement to conduct a 5 yearly review of polling districts and polling places. The Council is required to publish its polling districts and polling places in December 2020

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 All polling stations are checked to ensure that they are accessible by electorate with disabilities.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 If the suggested changes to the polling stations for Holywell were agreed extra polling station staff would need to be employed.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 Should Council decide to agree to having an additional polling place in Holywell a suitable location for the additional polling station in Holywell will need to be identified. Officers will have to ensure that all new venues are accessible for the electorate. If a Portakabin is to be used members need to be aware that the space required would not be limited to the width or length of the size of the structure. Additional toilet facilities for polling staff, possible need for a generator in order to have power within the units, plus the need to provide disability access would require a suitable disability access ramp which would considerably increase the size of the polling station footprint, i.e. it would be wider than an on-street parking space. Provision of a Portakabin would incur considerable additional costs going forward including delivery, set up and subsequent removal costs in addition to the actual rental at all future elections. Plus potential costs for a traffic regulation order or hire of a suitable off-street location, which to date has not been identified.

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 At every election the council has a single point of contact with the police in case of any crime and disorder issues and the police are entitled to enter any polling station during an election.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Submissions received

Appendix 2 – Officers comments on the Submissions

Appendix 2a – map of Holywell ward

Appendix 2b – current and proposed polling places for polling district DA

Appendix 2c – current and proposed polling places for polling district DC

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.