



Report of: (Acting) Returning Officer

Meeting of:	Date	Agenda item	Ward(s)
Audit Committee	2 September 2019		All

Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report sets out proposed changes to polling districts and polling places following a consultation process carried out in accordance with the Electoral Administration Act 2006.
- 1.2 This change will take effect with the publication of the revised Register of Electors on 1 December 2019 and for all elections for four years thereafter.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree to the changes set out in this report in relation to Holloway ward.
- 2.2 To note that all other polling districts and places remain unchanged.

3. Background

Introduction

- 3.1 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK parliamentary polling districts and polling places. The compulsory review must be started and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020 inclusive.
- 3.2 The steps required for the review have been undertaken, including the publication of proposals and consultation of them. The Returning Officer will seek approval from the Audit Committee of the Council, which has delegated powers to designate polling places, at a meeting of the committee on 2 September 2019. The new scheme shall have effect upon publication of the revised Register of Electors on 1 December 2019.
- 3.3 Electorate and property figures are as at 1 July 2019.

PROPOSED CHANGES

3.4 Holloway Ward

Existing Polling Place

Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Properties	Polling Stations
SHYB	Drovers Day Centre North Road	3,884	2,618	2

Proposed Polling Place

Polling District	Current Polling Place	Electorate	Properties	Polling Stations
SHYB	Goodinge Community Centre North Road	3,884	2,618	2

The proposed venue was the designated polling place in 2014 but was demolished and rebuilt. It was always the intention to return to this venue once the building works were completed. The venue is on the same road and just a few yards from the existing venue so will make no difference in terms of distance travelled and will not cause any issues regarding awareness of location. The new venue was visited and assessed in June 2019 and is entirely suitable for polling, has level access throughout and all the necessary facilities.

Comments received to initial proposal

Comments were received by Islington Labour Party supporting the recommendation. The response is included as Appendix 1.

4. Implications

4.1 **Financial implications:**

The costs of the polling districts and polling places review will be met from within existing budgets.

4.2 **Legal Implications:**

4.2.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 section 18D requires that local authorities designate the polling places within their Parliamentary constituencies. Under Representation of the People Act 1983, Returning Officers have the right to use certain public buildings (including schools that receive public funds) for use as polling stations at elections.

4.2.2 Section 18B (4) of the RPA 1983 states that in conducting a review of polling places the authority must:

- a) seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances

- b) seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

4.2.3 In addition, the polling place for a polling district must be within the area of the district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area either wholly or partly outside of the polling district.

4.3 **Environmental implications**

None specific applicable to this report, though the Council aims to ensure that polling stations are in locations which are safe and easily accessible to all members of the community.

4.4 **Resident Impact Assessment:**

4.4.1 The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

4.4.2 Electoral Services considered a review of all possible polling places and used a suitability and access checklist. This was drawn largely from the recommendations in Scope's Poll Report 4 published following the 2005 General Election. One checklist has been completed for each existing polling place and all proposed new polling places.

4.4.3 All polling staff receives equalities training as part of the induction for working on the election.

5. **Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

5.1 The Electoral Registration & Administration Act 2013 requires all authorities to keep polling districts and polling places in its area under review.

5.2 Representations have been sought from political groups and the report takes into account informal conversations held with members and party agents.

Appendices: Appendix 1

Background papers: None.

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Fehler', written in a cursive style.

Peter Fehler
Director of Law and Governance

Date 14/8/2019

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Response to Islington Council's Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

This submission sets out our position in response to the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places and the draft recommendations published by Islington Council.

SHYB Polling Place

We welcome and support the council's recommendation to re-instate Gooding Community Centre as the polling place for SHYB.

All other Polling Places

We support the council's recommendation that all other polling places remain unchanged.

SBUB Polling Place

We understand that Tompion Community Centre will remain the designated polling place for polling district SBUB, but if an election is called during the period of refurbishment, the Returning Officer will find a suitable alternative Polling Place. We support this approach.

All Polling Districts

We support the council's recommendation that all Polling Districts remained unchanged.

Islington Labour Group 07.08.19