

Board/Committee:	POLICY & ORGANISATION BOARD
Date of Meeting:	WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2018
Title:	PROPOSALS FOR THE REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES
Author:	HEAD OF ELECTORAL SERVICES
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To advise the Board of the Council's statutory responsibilities for reviewing UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places and to agree the recommendations as set out in this report.

Recommendation

1. To approve the creation of an Electoral Task and Finish Group to carry out the formal review of Gosport's UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places.
2. To agree to the terms of reference for the Electoral Task and Finish Group as outlined within this report
3. To agree to the timetable of the review as outline within this report.
4. To approve the nominations received by the Borough Solicitor from each Political Group Leaders for members on the Electoral Task and Finish Group

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council is required by Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, and also under Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 to carry out reviews of Polling Districts and Polling Places for the Parliamentary Constituency.
- 1.2 This compulsory review must be started and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020.
- 1.3 The review will not consider the boundary of the Parliamentary Constituency, and the arrangements put in place following the review will be used for all Local Government elections.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 A 'review' is all the steps set out in Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983), and information on what these steps are included in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The length of the review process is not prescribed by law, however, the time allowed for consultation should be sufficient to enable interested persons and groups to read and understand the proposals, gather comments and responses with any alternative arrangements that they may wish to submit.
- 2.3 A '**Polling District**' is the area created by the division of a constituency into smaller parts within which a 'Polling Place' can be determined which is convenient to electors.
- 2.4 A '**Polling Place**' is the building or area in which 'Polling Stations' will be selected by the Returning Officer
- 2.5 A '**Polling Station**' is the room or building where the poll takes place. It is chosen by the relevant Returning Officer for the election and publicised on the Notice of Poll and communicated to electors on the Poll Card.
- 2.6 The current list of Polling Districts and Polling Places (along with the current electorate count and access arrangements) is included in this report at Appendix 2.

Notice of Review

- 2.7 The Council has to give notice that it is conducting a review in accordance with the relevant regulations including seeking responses from the electorate, bodies or persons with expertise in access for persons with disabilities on their proposals.
- 2.8 The council must have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place or the designation of which as a polling place it is reviewing. Guidance on accessibility issues provided by the Electoral Commission will inform the review process.
- 2.9 It is proposed that the 'Notice of Review' will be published on Monday, 4 February 2019 on both the Council website and also in the Hampshire Independent publication.
- 2.10 Representations will be sent to the Head of Electoral Services for collation, before circulation to members of the Electoral Task and Finish Group for discussion and consideration. The closing date for these initial representation and comments is proposed to be Friday, 29 March 2019.

2.11 A copy of the Notice of Review is included in this report at Appendix 3.

Timetable for the Review

2.12 As stated in paragraph 1.2, the review must be started and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020.

- 2.13 The review is to be broken down into five stages:
- Stage 1 – Notification of the review;
 - Stage 2 – Consultation;
 - Stage 3 – Concluding the review (consideration of the all representations received etc.) by the Electoral Task and Finish Group, and the proposed changes to P&O Board;
 - Stage 4 – Report and debate at P&O Board of the proposals by the Electoral Task and Finish group and the recommendation of proposals to Full Council for decision;
 - Stage 5 – Publishing the conclusions of the review to the public, (including the reasons for choosing each particular Polling District and Polling Place must be given).

Stage	Dates	Notes
1 – notification	Monday, 4 February 2019	Publication of the Notice of Review
2 - consultation	Monday, 4 February to Friday, 29 March 2019	
3 – Electoral Task and Finish Group	Meetings start on Wednesday, 10 April through to Friday, 21 June 2019	Meetings to be held as frequently as necessary, and scheduled with site visits etc.
3 – consultation on draft proposals	Monday, 1 July through to Friday, 30 August 2019	
4 – P&O Board meeting	Held in November 2019	
4 – Full Council meeting	Held in December 2019	
5 – published conclusions	December 2019	Day after Full Council meeting
Implementation of the changes in the Electoral Register for the Borough of Gosport	By Wednesday, 1 January 2020	

Electoral Task and Finish Group

- 2.15 The appointment of the Electoral Task and Finish Group lies with the Policy and Organisation Board, and is contained within the Council Constitution (Part 3 Schedule 18A – pages 233-234).
- 2.16 The Electoral Task and Finish Group is to be comprised of five Elected Members, assisted and advised by the Head of Electoral Services, with the Senior Democratic Services Officer providing the Secretariat for the group.
- 2.17 The Electoral Task and Finish Group does not have to follow the political balance rules of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and it is there proposed to contain the following:
- Conservative Party – 2 seats;
 - Liberal Democrat Party – 2 seats;
 - Labour Party – 1 seats.
- 2.18 As per the rules regarding Task and Finish Group as contained in the Constitution, nominations from Political Group Leaders must be submitted to the Borough Solicitor before this P&O Board, for ratification by the Board.
- 2.19 The terms of reference for the Electoral Task and Finish Group must be agreed by the Policy and Organisation Board, and these are included in this report at Appendix 4.
- 2.20 As well as covering the standard processes during the review (as outlined in Appendix 1), the Returning Officer would like the Task and Finish Group to also consider the following and make recommendations:
1. The abnormalities that have arisen since the County Boundary Review in 2016 for Brockhust and Leesland Electoral Wards;
 2. Look at the boundaries for Grange and Rowner & Holbrook Wards, as Grange Ward is nearing capacity with the Alver Village re-development all now coming on stream;
 3. Visit and assess any new buildings within the Borough for possible use as Polling Stations, as the use of schools is becoming more difficult with regards to safeguarding issues if the schools remain open to pupils.
- 2.21 The Task and Finish Group will also need to consider any future residential developments that will come 'on-stream' during the five years from when these changes take effect, until the next statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places.

3.0 Risk Assessment

3.1 The Council has to comply with its statutory obligation and conduct the review before the end of January 2020.

4 Conclusion

4.1 P&O Board could decide not to review polling places; however this could result in electors being severely inconvenienced as well as not conforming to best practice or statutory legislation.

Financial Implications:	None
Legal Implications:	Contained in the report
Crime and Disorder:	N/A
Equality and Diversity:	Task and Finish Group to be fully briefed on “Considering Accessibility Issues” per Electoral Commission Polling District Review Guidance.
Equality Impact Assessment:	Recommend EIA screening form be completed by returning officer by Stage 3 and submitted for review. EIA and review findings to be appended to Board report at Stage 4 for Full Council decision
Service Improvement Plan:	N/A
Corporate Plan:	This process aligns with the Strategic Priority to ‘Deliver effective services’
Risk Assessment:	Risks will be considered when looking at the possibility of moving to any alternative Polling Place or Polling Station. It is believed there will be no unmitigated risks. For example new Polling Places will be visited and assessed regarding their suitability for use as a Polling Station by the Electoral Task and Finish Group.
Background papers:	None
Appendices:	
Appendix 1	Schedule A1 – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places from the Representation of the People Act 1983
Appendix 2	Current list of Polling Districts and Polling Places (along with the current electorate count and access arrangements)
Appendix 3	Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
Appendix 4	Terms of Reference for the Electoral Task and Finish Group
Report author/Lead Officer:	Graeme Jesty

Appendix 1: Schedule A1 – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places from the Representation of the People Act 1983

“SCHEDULE A1

Section 18C

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

- 1 The relevant authority must publish notice of the holding of a review.
- 2 The authority must consult the returning officer for every parliamentary election held in a constituency which is wholly or partly in its area.
- 3 (1) Every such returning officer must make representations to the authority.
(2) The representations must include information as to the location of polling stations (existing or proposed) within polling places (existing or proposed).
(3) The representations must be published in such manner as is prescribed.
- 4 (1) The authority must seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.
(2) Such persons must have an opportunity—
(a) to make representations;
(b) to comment on the returning officer’s representations.
- 5 Any elector in a constituency situated in whole or in part in the authority’s area may make representations.
- 6 Representations made by any person in connection with a review of polling places may include proposals for specified alternative polling places.
- 7 On completion of a review the authority must—
(a) give reasons for its decisions in the review;
(b) publish such other information as is prescribed.”

Appendix 2: Current list of Polling Districts and Polling Places (along with the current electorate count and access arrangements)

Polling District & Ward	Polling Place	Current Electorate¹	Access Arrangements
Alverstoke - GA1	Gomer Infant School, Pyrford Close, St Helen's Road	1,200	Permanent Access Ramp
Alverstoke- GA2	Alverstoke CE (Aided) Junior School, The Avenue	1,225	Permanent Access Ramp
Alverstoke - GA3	Alverstoke Infants School, Ashburton Road	1,136	Permanent Access Ramp
Anglesey - GB1	Alverstoke Infants School, Ashburton Road	917	Permanent Access Ramp
Anglesey - GB2	Gosport District Scout Activity Centre, Clayhall Road	1,013	Permanent Access Ramp
Anglesey - GB2	St Francis Church Hall, Clayhall Road	1,045	Permanent Access Ramp
Bridgemy North - GC1	Bridgemy Methodist Church, Prideaux Brune Avenue	1,013	Permanent Access Ramp
Bridgemy North - GC2	Woodcot County Primary School, Tukes Avenue	1,270	Permanent Access Ramp
Bridgemy North - GC3	Woodcot County Primary School, Tukes Avenue	1,203	Permanent Access Ramp
Bridgemy South - GD1	St Matthew's Church, Wych Lane, Bridgemy	1,003	Permanent Access Ramp
Bridgemy South - GD2	Bedenham County Primary School, Bridgemy Avenue	1,286	Temporary Access Ramp
Bridgemy South - GD3	Rowner County Junior School, Tichborne Way	1,304	Permanent Access Ramp
Brockhurst - GE1 & GE1-B	Solent Evangelical Church, 365 Forton Road, Gosport	1,081	Permanent Access Ramp
Brockhurst - GE2	Solent Evangelical Church, 365 Forton Road, Gosport	1,113	Permanent Access Ramp
Brockhurst - GE3	St Mary's RC School, Norman Road	1,513	Permanent Access Ramp
Christchurch - GF1	Newtown CE (Controlled) Primary School, Queens Road	1,520	Permanent Access Ramp
Christchurch - GF2	Gosport Methodist Church, Stoke Road	970	Permanent Access Ramp
Christchurch - GF3	The Queen Social Club	1,362	Temporary Access Ramp
Elson - GG1	Elson County Junior School, Exmouth Road	1,758	Permanent Access Ramp
Elson - GG2	Elson County Junior School, Exmouth Road	1,725	Permanent Access Ramp
Forton - GH1	Brockhurst County Junior School, Avery Lane	935	Permanent Access Ramp
Forton - GH2	Brockhurst County Junior School, Avery Lane	1,487	Permanent Access Ramp
Forton - GH3	St John's C of E Primary School, Grove Road	931	Permanent Access Ramp
Grange - GI1	Youth, Arts and Media Centre, 17 Falcon Meadows Way	2,160	Permanent Access Ramp
Grange - GI2	Youth, Arts and Media Centre, 17 Falcon Meadows Way	1,867	Permanent Access Ramp
Hardway - GJ1	St John's C of E Primary School, Grove Road	1,647	Permanent Access Ramp
Hardway - GJ2	St John's C of E Primary School, Grove Road	1,179	Permanent Access Ramp
Hardway - GJ3	Explosion! Museum of Naval Firepower, Priddy's Hard	1,403	Permanent Access Ramp
Lee East - GK1	Lee Community Centre, 51 Twyford Drive, Lee-on-the-Solent	1,573	Permanent Access Ramp
Lee East - GK2	Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School (Youth Centre), Salisbury Terrace, Lee-on-the-Solent	1,344	Permanent Access Ramp
Lee East - GK3	Lee Community Centre, 51 Twyford Drive, Lee-on-the-Solent	1,644	Permanent Access Ramp
Lee West - GL1	St Faith's Church, Victoria Square, Lee-on-the-Solent	1,533	Permanent Access Ramp
Lee West - GL2	Lee Methodist Church, Studland Road, Lee-on-the-Solent	1,192	Permanent Access Ramp
Lee West -GL3	Lee-on-the-Solent Junior School (Youth Centre), Salisbury Terrace, Lee-on-the-Solent	1,376	Permanent Access Ramp

¹ Electorate as of Thursday, 25 October 2018

Polling District & Ward	Polling Place	Current Electorate	Access Arrangements
Leesland - GM1 & GM1-B	Salvation Army Hall, The Crossways, Gosport	1,081	Permanent Access Ramp
Leesland - GM2	Leesland C of E Infant School, Whitworth Road	1,547	Permanent Access Ramp
Leesland - GM3	Leesland C of E Infant School, Whitworth Road	890	Permanent Access Ramp
Peel Common - GN1	Peel Common Infant School, The Drive	1,148	Temporary Access Ramp
Peel Common - GN2	St Matthew`s Church, Wych Lane, Bridgemary	1,175	Permanent Access Ramp
Peel Common -GN3	Peel Common Infant School, The Drive	991	Temporary Access Ramp
Privett - GO1	Thorngate Hall, Bury Road	1,475	Permanent Access Ramp
Privett - GO2	Gomer Infant School, Pyrford Close, St Helen's Road	1,804	Permanent Access Ramp
Rowner & Holbrook - GP1	Rowner County Junior School, Tichborne Way	1,832	Permanent Access Ramp
Rowner & Holbrook - GP2	Grange County Junior School, Franklin Road	1,414	Permanent Access Ramp
Town - GQ1	St Mary`s R.C Church Hall, Mumby Road	1,742	Permanent Access Ramp
Town - GQ2	Club Hampshire Centre, (Former Red Cross Centre), The Anchorage	1,184	Permanent Access Ramp
Town - GQ3	Haselworth County Primary School, Stone Lane	952	Permanent Access Ramp
TOTAL		62,199	

Appendix 3: Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places



GOSPORT
Borough Council

NOTICE OF REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT 1983

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES (PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS) REGULATIONS 2006

Gosport Borough Council is commencing a review of polling districts and polling places in its area.

A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of an electoral area. A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations are located.

We are looking for feedback on any aspect of polling districts and/or polling places currently used and invite representation and comments from any resident and particularly disabled residents within the Gosport Constituency; interested persons; and from such persons as may have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.

Although the review is of polling districts and polling places it is accepted that polling stations are inexorably linked to the review and representations and comments are invited regarding those polling stations currently used.

If your representations and comments include suggestions as to alternative arrangements please identify premises suitable for use as polling places, wherever possible.

Information regarding the current polling districts and polling places may be found on the Council's website: <https://www.gosport.gov.uk/sections/pollingreview2019>

Representations and comments should be sent in writing by **Friday, 29 March 2019** to:

Head of Electoral Services
Town Hall
High Street
Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 1EB
E-mail: electoral.registration@gosport.gov.uk

Representations and comments received by **Friday, 29 March 2019** will be taken into account by the Electoral Task and Finish Group meetings starting on **Wednesday, 10 April 2019** in determining draft proposals. Draft proposals will then be published and further comments invited between **Monday, 1 July and Friday, 30 August 2019**. Final proposals will be considered first by the Policy and Organisation Board on **XXXXXXXX, xx November 2019**, and then by Full Council on **Xxxxxxx, xx December 2019** and implemented by **1 January 2020**.

Details of any representation received including the (Acting) Returning Officer's will be made available for inspection at the Town Hall and on the Council's website.

Michael Lawther
Deputy Chief Executive and Borough Solicitor
Monday, 4 February 2019

Appendix 4: Terms of Reference for the Electoral Task and Finish Group

Statutory requirements

Under Schedule 1A of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended), there is a requirement for a full review of polling districts and places to be undertaken for all parliamentary constituencies within 16 months of every fifth year, commencing with 1 October 2013.

Polling districts

The review will consider and propose polling districts with the aim of ensuring that:

- the borough is divided into polling districts;
- each polling district offers reasonable facilities for voting for all its electors, as far as is practicable in the circumstances;
- each Electoral Ward is contained within one Electoral Division.

Polling places

The review will consider and propose polling places with the aim of ensuring that:

- all electors in a constituency within the Borough have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
- polling places can provide polling stations which are suitable for use by all sections of the community, with appropriate access for disabled voters;
- polling places are located in an area of the polling district unless special
- circumstances make it necessary to designate an area that is wholly or partly outside the polling district;
- polling places are not so large that it is not clear to electors how they will be able to gain access to the polling station.

Key Processes in the Review of polling districts and polling places:

1. Report to P&O Board with recommendation to set up Task and Finish Group, along with background information on district/polling places and electorate information;
2. Publish notice of the review;
3. Invite consultation with local groups and interested parties;
4. Report to P&O Board with recommendations following the consultation;
5. Report to Full Council with recommendations for approval;
6. Final proposals published, together with all representations received;*
7. Restructured register of electors published.

* On completion of the review, the Council is required to give reasons for its decisions in respect of the designation of both polling districts and polling places, and must publish:

- all correspondence sent to the Acting Returning Officer in connection with the review;

- all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability;
- all representations made by any person in connection with the review;
- the minutes of any meetings held;
- details of the agreed designation of polling places and polling districts;
- details of where the results of the review have been published.

Action/Stage	Date(s)
Report to P&O Board with recommendations to set up the Electoral Task and Finish Group, along with background information on current Polling Districts, Polling Places, electorate and access arrangements	Wednesday, 21 November 2018
Approval of P&O Board minutes by Full Council	Wednesday, 12 December 2018
Stage 1 – Notification (publication of notice of review	Friday, 1 March 2019
2 - Consultation	Friday, 1 March to Friday, 12 April 2019
3 – Electoral Task and Finish Group	Meetings start on Wednesday, 24 April through to Wednesday, 29 May 2019
3 – Consultation on draft proposals	Monday, 1 July through to Friday, 30 August 2019
4 – P&O Board meeting to review the proposals and recommendations from the Electoral Task and Finish Group	November 2019
4 – Full Council meeting to approve the recommendations from P&O Board	December 2019
5 – Publish conclusions	December 2019
Implementation of the changes in the Electoral Register for the Borough of Gosport	By Wednesday, 1 January 2020