

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 2 November 2017	Decision maker: Strategic Director, Finance and Governance
Report title:		Polling district, polling place and polling station review	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All Electoral wards	
From:		Head of Electoral Services	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the recommendations contained in paragraph 21 with regard to the polling districts mentioned therein be adopted
2. That the recommendations on the polling stations contained in paragraph 21 be identified as the likely polling stations to be used for elections in these polling districts
3. That the remaining scheme for polling districts, polling places and polling stations as drafted be adopted.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. This report sets out the final proposed changes to Southwark's polling districts, polling places and polling stations as part of a review carried out as required under section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
5. In Southwark the last compulsory review was carried out in 2014.
6. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) carried out an electoral review of Southwark between September 2015 and November 2016. The boundaries of all wards have changed. The aim of their review was to deliver electoral equality for voters in local elections and recommend ward boundaries that means each councillor represented approximately the same number of electors
7. The London Borough of Southwark (Electoral Changes) Order 2016, to implement recommendations made by the LGBCE for new boundaries in Southwark, was made on 23 November 2016. As these new ward arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2018, Southwark was required to undertake a polling district, polling place and polling station review as its existing polling districts no longer fall within the lines of the new wards:
8. The proposals seek to update the current scheme to fit within the new wards. In particular the proposals seek to meet the recommended number of electors allocated to polling stations across the borough. The Electoral Commission

has recommended that there should be no more than 2,500 electors (excluding absent voters) allocated to a polling station.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

9. All proposals are made to ensure that there is a balance of the electorate within each polling district, that polling stations are convenient and easily accessible for voters and that future demand arising from new building and development has been taken into account.
10. These changes will take effect with the publication of the register on 1 March 2018. If an election were to be called prior to publication the existing polling districts and polling stations would be used.

Policy implications

11. Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 requires a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations to be started and completed within the period 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020.
12. This requirement does not prevent a local authority from conducting a review at any time. It is sometimes necessary that interim reviews may need to be conducted outside the compulsory review period.
13. The Local council elections scheduled to be held on 3 May 2018 will be based on the newly proposed wards, as set out in The London Borough of Southwark (Electoral Changes) Order 2016, to implement recommendations made by the LGBCE for new boundaries in Southwark made on 23 November 2016.

Community impact statement

14. The considerations used in developing the review, taken from the Electoral Commission's guidance, fully comply with the council's equality commitments. No formal community impact statement is therefore needed for this report to be adopted.

Consultation

15. The initial proposals on the draft scheme were published and circulated to interested parties on 1 August 2017 and can be found at the following webpage: <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/voting-and-elections/polling-places-and-polling-districts-review>
16. The consultation started on 1 August 2017 and the deadline for submissions of representations to the review was 22 September 2017.
17. Following consideration of all representations the proposed scheme has been updated to accommodate these where possible and a decision made on the final scheme

Representations Received

18. A total of eight representations were received concerning 47 polling districts (PDs) in 20 wards.
19. Two responses requested for previous nomenclature such as ROT for Rotherhithe (RTH) to be retained, however nomenclature is for administrative purposes only and is not up for consultation as it has no public purpose.
20. Representations were received from:
 - Helen Hayes MP
 - Southwark Labour Group
 - Liberal Democrats
 - Redriff Primary School
 - Sean Harriss ARO for Lambeth
 - Shad Thames Area Management
 - Shad Thames Resident's Association
 - Tower Bridge Piazza Residents' and Long Leaseholders' Association
21. Appendix 1 and 2 is a summary of the representations received, together with the the final decision from the Strategic Director, Finance and Governance.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS


Director of Law and Democracy

22. Section 18C Representation of the People Act 1983 ("the Act") requires the council to carry out a review of the polling districts and places in its area within the period of 16 months of 1 October 2013, and then within the period of 16 months from 1 October of every fifth year after that. The next period is from 1 October 2018 to be completed by 31 January 2020. The last compulsory review was carried out in 2014. The review must be carried out in accordance with Schedule A1 of the Act which requires the council to publish its proposals and consult and seek representations from certain prescribed people. Electors may also make representations.
23. Once the review is completed the council must publish its decision, together with correspondence and representations made in relation to the review and other prescribed information.

24. In carrying out its functions, the council must have regard to the public sector equality duty contained in section 149 Equality Act 2010. This requires the council to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The decision maker will need to pay due regard to these matters, and will note the steps taken to consult and seek views, in particular from disability groups, and the matters considered by the Acting Returning Officer when considering the accessibility of polling places.
25. The council's functions relating to a review of polling districts and places are designated by law as non-executive functions, so they cannot be discharged by the Leader or Cabinet. Under Part 3P of the council's constitution, any function that is not reserved to the council assembly or a committee is deemed to be delegated to the appropriate chief officer. There is no provision in the Constitution reserving the council's functions in relation to polling districts and places to council assembly or any committee, so the recommendations in this report can therefore be agreed by the Strategic Director, Finance and Governance.

FOR DELEGATED APPROVAL

Under the powers delegated to me in accordance with the council's constitution, I authorise action in accordance with the recommendation(s) contained in the above report (and as otherwise recorded in Part B below).

Signature  Date..... 15/11/17

Designation Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

PART B – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE DECISION TAKER FOR:

- 1) All key decisions taken by officers (including contract reports)
- 2) Any non-key decisions which are sufficiently important and/or sensitive that a reasonable member of the public would reasonably expect it to be publicly available.

1. DECISION(S)
As per the recommendations.

2. REASONS FOR DECISION
For the reasons set out in the report and appendices

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED BY THE OFFICER WHEN MAKING THE DECISION

None

4. ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY ANY CABINET MEMBER WHO IS CONSULTED BY THE OFFICER WHICH RELATES TO THIS DECISION (IF APPLICABLE)*

None

*Contract standing order 4.5.1 states that for contracts with an Estimated Contract Value of over £100,000, the lead contract officer (LCO) must consult with the relevant cabinet member before a procurement strategy is implemented.

5. NOTE OF ANY DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE MONITORING OFFICER, IN RESPECT OF ANY DECLARED CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If a decision taker or cabinet member is unsure as to whether there is a conflict of interest they should contact the legal governance team for advice.

None

6. DECLARATION ON CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

I declare that I was informed of no conflicts of interests.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
The consultation on the polling district review includes the initial proposals and interactive map published on the council's website as well as the representations received from the consultation. These documents can be found on the website: https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/voting-and-elections/polling-places-and-polling-districts-review	Electoral Services Southwark Council 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Frances Biggs 0207 525 7694
	Finance & Governance Southwark Council 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Duncan Whitfield 0207 525 1780

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Maps of all wards with scheme for polling districts and polling stations
Appendix 2	Summary of representations made and final decision by RO
Appendix 3	Correspondence to respondents with list

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Frances Biggs, Head of Electoral Services	
Report Author	Peter Taylor, Senior Electoral Services Officer	
Version	1.0	
Dated	2 November 2017	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Community Council / Scrutiny Team	2 November 2017	