

**REPORT FOR: LICENSING AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

---

<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	6 February 2019
<b>Subject:</b>	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Hugh Peart Director of Legal and Governance Services
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All wards
<b>Enclosures:</b>	Appendix 1 – Proposed Terms of Reference

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

This report sets out the proposal for review of Harrow's polling districts and polling places in accordance with legislation.

**Recommendations:**

The Committee is requested to agree:

1. To establish a Review Working Group to undertake the review of the polling districts and polling places in Harrow;
2. The appointment of 5 Members (3 Labour, 2 Conservative) to the Review Working Group the Members being nominated by the Group Leaders;

3. That if the nominated member is unable to attend any meeting, a substitute can attend in place of that member;
4. The additional appointment of one non-voting co-opted representative from Harrow East or Harrow West Labour Party and one Harrow East or Harrow West Conservatives to the Review Working Group; and
5. Agree the terms of reference of the Review Working Group set out at Appendix 1.

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **2.1 Background**

Section 18C of The Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) and the Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires the London Borough of Harrow to review its polling district and polling places. It also provides that as Harrow undertook its last review in 2014, it must commence and complete a polling district and polling places review by 31 January 2020.

The Committee will be aware that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) are currently undertaking an electoral review of the borough of Harrow. The proposals from the LGBCE will come into effect for the Local Elections in May 2022 and once approved a further polling district review will be required. In the meantime and in accordance with the legislation, a polling district review is required to be held for the current arrangements.

### **2.2 The Review**

The purpose of the review is to ensure that:

- (1) All electors have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- (2) So far as is reasonable and practicable that the polling places are accessible to all electors (including disabled persons) having regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

In undertaking the review:

- (1) A notice of the holding of the review must be published;
- (2) The authority must consult the Returning Officer for every parliamentary election held in a constituency that is wholly or partly within its area;
- (3) The Returning Officer must make representations to the authority as to the location of existing and proposed polling stations within existing and proposed polling places;
- (4) The Returning Officer's representations must be published 30 days after receipt;
- (5) The authority must seek representations and comments on the Returning Officer's representations from:
  - (a) Persons with expertise in relation to access to premises and facilities for persons with different forms of disability; and
  - (b) Any elector;
- (6) On completion of the review the authority must:
  - (a) Give reasons for its decisions in the review; and
  - (b) Publish such information.

## **2.3 Proposal**

This Committee has the following responsibilities:

“To keep under review and to determine the arrangement for the holding of elections and any referendums within the Borough and to initiate or respond to any proposal to the change of ward, constituency or Borough boundaries”

Based on previous reviews it is proposed that this should be undertaken by a cross-party Working Group with a membership of 5 (3 Labour, 2 Conservative). The members to be nominated by the Group Leaders.

The proposed terms of reference for the Review Working Group is set out in Appendix 1. The conclusions of the Review Working Group would be reported back to the Committee for approval.

## 2.4 Timetable

The draft timetable relating to the review is as follows:

February/March 2019	Notice of Review
April-May 2019	End of Consultation
May-June 2019	Meeting(s) of Working Group to consider representations
July 2019	Report from Working Group to Licensing & General Purposes Committee

In line with the above timetable all current arrangements, including maps of the existing polling district boundaries and locations of polling stations, will be available on the Council's website.

### Financial Implications

All costs associated with the review will be met from within the current resources.

### Risk Management Implications

See separate guidance notes

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? No

### Equalities implications

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No

If no, state why an EqIA was not carried out below:

An EqIA will be conducted to inform the Review process.

## Council Priorities

The proposed review will support all of the Council's Corporate Priorities by seeking to ensure that all of its polling districts, places and stations are appropriate for elections held within the borough. Elections provide residents with the opportunity to vote for democratically elected representatives who provide the political leadership for the Corporate Priorities and Harrow's Ambition Plan.

## Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Dawn Calvert	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Chief Financial Officer
Date: 28 January 2019		
Name: Hugh Peart	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Monitoring Officer
Date: 25 January 2019		

<b>Ward Councillors notified:</b>	<b>NO</b>
-----------------------------------	-----------

## Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Elaine McEachron, Democratic, Electoral and Registration Services Manager, elaine.mceachron@harrow.gov.uk , 020 8424 1097

**Background Papers:** None

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Priorities	N/A

# **APPENDIX 1**

## **Proposed Terms of Reference**

### **Review of Polling Districts and Places Working Group**

- (1) To consult the Returning Officer for every parliamentary election held in the borough or constituency, which is wholly, or partly in its area on the facilities for voting and the accessibility of polling places to all electors (including disabled persons);
- (2) To consider representations made by the Returning Officer as to the location of existing and proposed polling stations, within the existing and proposed polling places;
- (3) To consider all representations made on the review and any comments received on the Returning Officer's representations;
- (4) To make recommendations on the proposed review to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee.