

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Council **DATE:** 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013

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Community Governance Review Group

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

#### **POLLING DISTRICT REVIEW – PROPOSALS FOR POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES**

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise the Council of the responses received to the consultation on the proposed revised polling district and polling places and seek agreement to the revised polling districts and places as recommended by the Review Group.

2. **Recommendations**

The Council is requested to resolve that the revised polling district boundaries be approved and that polling places be designated for each of the Borough Wards as set out at Appendix A and B respectively for implementation with effect from the May 2014 Borough Elections.

3. **Community Strategy Priorities**

Effective, transparent and equitable democratic and decision making processes are an essential pre-requisite to the delivery of all the Council's priorities.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial or risk management implications. The costs associated with the Review have been accommodated within existing resources.

(b) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no Human Rights Act Implications associated with this report. The Review has been carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation and the recommendations within this report meet legal requirements. The proposals have no workforce implications.

## 5 **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 At its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2013 the Council was advised that it was a statutory requirement for a local authority to keep all polling arrangements under review and to establish a polling place within each polling district wherever possible. Arrangements must seek to ensure that all electors have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and that they are accessible to all electors, including any with disabilities. Given the Borough has revised ward boundaries with effect from 2014 a review of polling districts and places was required.
- 5.2 The Council agreed the terms of reference and timetable for a Review of Polling Districts and established a Member Working Group to carry out the Review.
- 5.3 The Working Group agreed the following principles to underpin the Review:
- An aim of 3 polling districts per ward unless exceptional reasons dictate departure [with a maximum of four]
  - An aim for approximately 2,000/2,200 voters per polling district wherever possible.
- 5.4 The Working Group also agreed to seek to minimise use of school buildings for polling places wherever possible.

### **Initial Proposals**

- 5.5 The Working Group's initial proposals were submitted to the Council at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2013 and agreed for consultation. The consultation ran from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and was extended to 31<sup>st</sup> October to take account of the Council's duty under the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 to review polling districts.

### **Response to Consultation and Final Recommendations**

- 5.6 The working Group met on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013 to consider the responses to the consultation on the initial proposals. The schedule attached at Appendix B sets out, by Ward, the comments received on the proposals and the final recommendations of the Review Group. Maps at Appendix A detail the proposed polling district boundaries.
- 5.7 The proposed polling district boundaries and places in Haymill & Lynch Hill and Britwell & Northborough are dependent on the recommendations of the Community Review Group with regard to the boundary of Britwell Parish Council being approved by the Council and receiving the consent of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (see previous item). If necessary the Council will receive a further report at its January meeting.

- 5.8 The final recommendations, if agreed, will result in the use of 5 school premises and 6 portacabins as polling places (currently 15 and 7 respectively).
- 5.9 Once agreed the Council's decision will be published for implementation in May 2014. The Electoral Register will also re-structured to take account of the new polling districts.

## 6 **Appendices**

Appendix A Maps detailing proposed polling district boundaries

Appendix B Schedule setting out the comments received on the initial proposals and the final recommendations of the Review Group for revised polling district boundaries and polling places.

## 7. **Background Papers**

None