

STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 7.30 pm

Council Chamber - Epsom Town Hall

The members listed below are summoned to attend the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting, on the day and at the time and place stated, to consider the business set out in this agenda.

Councillor Eber Kington (Chairman)
Councillor Clive Smitheram (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Arthur Abdulin
Councillor Steve Bridger
Councillor Kate Chinn

Councillor Nigel Collin
Councillor Hannah Dalton
Councillor David Gulland
Councillor Colin Keane
Councillor Barry Nash

Yours sincerely



Chief Executive

For further information, please contact Democratic Services, 01372 732122 or democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

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- Do not stop to collect personal belongings;
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- Do not re-enter the building until told that it is safe to do so.

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Agendas, reports and minutes for the Committee are also available on the free Modern.Gov app for iPad, Android and Windows devices. For further information on how to access information regarding this Committee, please email us at Democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk.

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Questions from the Public

Members of the public who live, work, attend an educational establishment or own or lease land in the Borough may submit a written question to, or ask a question verbally at meetings of the Committee on matters within the Committee's Terms of Reference. Please note questions relating to matters listed on a Committee Agenda cannot be asked.

Written questions must be submitted to the Council's Chief Legal Officer, who can be contacted via the following email address: Democraticservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk. The written question must arrive by noon on the tenth working day before the day of the meeting. For example, for a meeting on a Tuesday, the request must therefore arrive by noon on the Tuesday two weeks before the meeting.

AGENDA

1. QUESTION TIME

To take any questions from members of the Public

Please Note: Members of the Public are requested to inform the Democratic Services Officer before the meeting begins if they wish to ask a verbal question at the meeting

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in respect of any item of business to be considered at the meeting.

3. EXTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER (Pages 5 - 36)

This report presents the external auditor's Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31 March 2019 and the latest Progress Report. In accordance with Audit Regulations, both items must be received by this Committee.

4. EMPLOYEE PAY & REWARD - COST OF LIVING AWARD 2020-2024 (Pages 37 - 62)

This report seeks approval of the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure, and also for the Council's proposed pay award for 2020-2024.

5. EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL PENSION DISCRETIONS POLICY (Pages 63 - 80)

This report provides background information on the proposed draft Pension Discretions Policy.

6. APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMAN (Pages 81 - 84)

The report invites the Committee to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Jean Steer in recognition of her eminent services to the Borough.

7. POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2019 (Pages 85 - 162)

Sets out the outcome of the consultation process on Polling Places and Districts and recommendations for proposed changes.

8. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 163 - 168)

The Committee is asked to confirm as a true record the Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 24 September 2019 and to authorise the Chairman to sign them.

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EXTERNAL AUDIT - ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER

Head of Service/Contact:	Lee Duffy, Chief Finance Officer
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Annexes/Appendices (attached):	Annex 1: Annual Audit Letter Annex 2: External Audit Progress Report
Other available papers (not attached):	None

Report summary

This report presents the external auditor's Annual Audit Letter for the year ended 31 March 2019 and the latest Progress Report. In accordance with Audit Regulations, both items must be received by this Committee.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) receives the Annual Audit Letter for the year 2018/19 (Annex 1)**
- (2) receives the External Audit Progress Report for the year 2019/20 (Annex 2)**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The annual audit is an integral part of the controls in place for ensuring that the Council achieves its key priority Managing our Resources.

2 Background

- 2.1 Grant Thornton provides the Council's external audit work. The 2018/19 external audit provided the Council with an unqualified opinion on the accounts. Strategy and Resources Committee received Grant Thornton's Audit Findings Report for 2018/19 at its meeting on 30 July 2019.

- 2.2 The Annual Audit Letter (**Annex 1**) summarises the 2018/19 Audit Findings Report.
- 2.3 The External Audit Progress Report (**Annex 2**) provides an update on the external auditor's progress in the current financial year.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 An officer from Grant Thornton will attend the committee meeting to introduce this item and answer any questions from Members.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 For 2018/19, Grant Thornton's audit fees were planned at £34,425 (excluding VAT) for the main audit, as set by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), plus £2,250 for auditing the group accounts.
- 4.2 These audit fees have been factored into the Council's budget setting process.
- 4.3 In addition to the planned fees and as set out in the Annual Audit Letter, Grant Thornton have requested additional fees totalling £4,000 for work undertaken in 2018/19 on the Council's pension liability following the McCloud ruling, and for additional work on the Council's non-current assets portfolio, owing to increased audit requirements of the Financial Reporting Council.
- 4.4 These proposed fee variations have been referred to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) for a decision as to whether they are payable by the Council. If PSAA approve the additional fees, funding will be identified within the existing Financial Services budget.
- 4.5 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** *The annual audit letter is part of the overall external audit process for the Council. The Council received an unqualified opinion from the external auditor for 2018/19.*

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 sets out the framework for audit of local authorities. Grant Thornton's work is undertaken in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audit Bodies issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- 5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** The work of external audit is a key part of the controls in place to ensure that the Council is doing the right thing in the right way at the right time.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The audit of the Council's financial statements comprise a key element of the Council's governance arrangements.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 That Committee receives the Annual Audit Letter for the year 2018/19 (**Annex 1**)
- 9.2 That Committee receives the External Audit Progress Report for the year 2019/20 (**Annex 2**)

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

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The Annual Audit Letter for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

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Year ended 31 March 2019
30 August 2019



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Your key Grant Thornton team members are:

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A Reports issued and fees

Executive Summary

Purpose

Our Annual Audit Letter (Letter) summarises the key findings arising from the work that we have carried out at Epsom & Ewell Borough Council (the Council) and its subsidiary (the group) for the year ended 31 March 2019.

This Letter is intended to provide a commentary on the results of our work to the group and external stakeholders, and to highlight issues that we wish to draw to the attention of the public. In preparing this Letter, we have followed the National Audit Office (NAO)'s Code of Audit Practice and Auditor Guidance Note (AGN) 07 – 'Auditor Reporting'. We reported the detailed findings from our audit work to the Council's Strategy & Resources Committee as those charged with governance in our Audit Findings Report on 30 July 2019.

Our work

Materiality	We determined materiality for the audit of group's financial statements to be £1,081,000, which is 2% of the group's gross revenue expenditure.
Financial Statements opinion	We gave an unqualified opinion on the group's financial statements on 31 July 2019.
Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)	We completed work on the Council's consolidation return following guidance issued by the NAO.
Use of statutory powers	We did not identify any matters which required us to exercise our additional statutory powers.

Respective responsibilities

We have carried out our audit in accordance with the NAO's Code of Audit Practice, which reflects the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (the Act). Our key responsibilities are to:

- give an opinion on the Council and group's financial statements (section two)
- assess the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (the value for money conclusion) (section three).

In our audit of the Council and group's financial statements, we comply with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs) and other guidance issued by the NAO.

Executive Summary

Value for Money arrangements	We were satisfied that the Council put in place proper arrangements to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We reflected this in our audit report to the Council on 30 July 2019.
Certification of Grants	We also carry out work to certify the Council's Housing Benefit subsidy claim on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions. Our work on this claim is not yet complete and will be finalised by 30 November 2019. We will report the results of this work to the Strategy & Resources Committee separately.
Certificate	We certified that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice on 31 July 2019.

Working with the Council

During the year we have delivered a number of successful outcomes with you:

- An efficient audit – we delivered an efficient audit with you in July, delivering the financial statements by the agreed deadline.
- Understanding your operational health – through the value for money conclusion we provided you with assurance on your operational effectiveness.
- Sharing our insight – we provided regular audit committee updates covering best practice.
- Supporting development – we provided training for the finance via our chief accountants' workshops.

We would like to record our appreciation for the assistance and co-operation provided to us during our audit by the Council's staff.

Audit of the Financial Statements

Our audit approach

Materiality

In our audit of the group's financial statements, we use the concept of materiality to determine the nature, timing and extent of our work, and in evaluating the results of our work. We define materiality as the size of the misstatement in the financial statements that would lead a reasonably knowledgeable person to change or influence their economic decisions.

We determined materiality for the audit of the group financial statements to be £1,081,000 which is 2% of the group's gross revenue expenditure. We determined materiality for the audit of the Council's financial statements to be £1,027,000, which is 95% of the group's materiality. We used this benchmark as in our view, users of the group and Council's financial statements are most interested in where the group and Council has spent its revenue in the year.

We set a lower threshold of £54,000, above which we reported errors to the Strategy & Resources Committee in our Audit Findings Report.

The scope of our audit

Our audit involves obtaining sufficient evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements to give reasonable assurance that they are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes assessing whether:

- the accounting policies are appropriate, have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed;
- the significant accounting estimates made by management are reasonable; and
- the overall presentation of the financial statements gives a true and fair view.

We also read the remainder of the financial statements, the narrative report and annual governance statement published alongside the financial statements to check it is consistent with our understanding of the Council and with the financial statements included in the Annual Report on which we gave our opinion.

We carry out our audit in accordance with ISAs (UK) and the NAO Code of Audit Practice. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the group's business and is risk based.

We identified key risks and set out overleaf the work we performed in response to these risks and the results of this work.

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks

These are the significant risks which had the greatest impact on our overall strategy and where we focused more of our work.

Risks identified in our audit plan	How we responded to the risk	Findings and conclusions
<p>Valuation of land and buildings You revalue your land and buildings on a rolling five-yearly basis.</p> <p>This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved (£75 million of PPE in 2017-18) and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>Additionally, management need to ensure the carrying value in your financial statements is not materially different from the current value or the fair value (for surplus assets) at the financial statements date, where a rolling programme is used</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of land and buildings, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>As part of our audit work we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work• evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert• wrote to the valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out• challenged the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding• tested revaluations made during the year to ensure that they have been input correctly into your asset register• evaluated the assumptions made by management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different to current value at year end.	<p>No issues were identified from the work performed in this area, thus we identified nothing to report.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	How we responded to the risk	Findings and conclusions
<p>Valuation of net pension liability Your pension fund net liability, as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved (£34 million in your balance sheet in 2017-18) and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>We therefore identified valuation of your pension fund net liability as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>As part of our audit work we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gained an understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and evaluate the design of the associated controls; evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work; assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the pension fund valuation; assessed the accuracy and completeness of the information provided to the actuary to estimate the liability; tested the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary; undertook procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report; and obtained assurances from auditors of Surrey County Council Pension Fund as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data; contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements. 	<p>You sought an additional actuarial assessment of the impact on your pension liability of the McCloud judgement and the potential effect of GMP, the updated assessment also provided updated figures for the return on the assets of the pension scheme.</p> <p>The total effect on the net pension liability of this is a material increase of £1.192 million.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Significant Audit Risks (continued)

Risks identified in our audit plan	How we responded to the risk	Findings and conclusions
<p>Management override of internal controls</p> <p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities. You face external scrutiny of your spending and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance.</p> <p>We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>As part of our audit work we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• documented the design effectiveness of management controls over journals• analysed the journals listing and determine the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals• tested unusual journals recorded during the year and after the draft accounts stage for appropriateness and corroboration• gained an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and consider their reasonableness with regard to corroborative evidence• evaluated the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.	<p>No issues were identified from the work performed in this area, thus we identified nothing to report.</p>

Audit of the Financial Statements

Audit opinion

We gave an unqualified opinion on the group's financial statements on 31 July 2019.

Preparation of the financial statements

The group presented us with draft financial statements in accordance with the national deadline, and provided a good set of working papers to support them. The finance team responded promptly and efficiently to our queries during the course of the audit.

Issues arising from the audit of the financial statements

We reported the key issues from our audit to the group's Strategy & Resources Committee on 30 July 2019.

Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report

We are required to review the Council's Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report. It published them on its website in the Statement of Accounts in line with the national deadlines.

Both documents were prepared in line with the CIPFA Code and relevant supporting guidance. We confirmed that both documents were consistent with the financial statements prepared by the Council and with our knowledge of the Council following a minor disclosure amendment.

Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

We carried out work on the Council's Data Collection Tool in line with instructions provided by the NAO . We issued an assurance statement which confirmed the Council was below the audit threshold.

Certificate of closure of the audit

We certified that we have completed the audit of the financial statements of Epsom & Ewell Borough Council in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice on 31 July 2019.

Value for Money conclusion

Background

We carried out our review in accordance with the NAO Code of Audit Practice, following the guidance issued by the NAO in November 2017 which specified the criterion for auditors to evaluate:

In all significant respects, the audited body takes properly informed decisions and deploys resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people.

Key findings

Our first step in carrying out our work was to perform a risk assessment and identify the risks where we concentrated our work.

The risks we identified and the work we performed are set out overleaf.

Overall Value for Money conclusion

We are satisfied that in all significant respects the Council put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ending 31 March 2019.

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Value for Money conclusion

Value for Money Risks

Risks identified in our audit plan	How we responded to the risk	Findings and conclusions
<p>Sustainable Resource Deployment – Financial Sustainability in the Medium Term</p> <p>The overall Local Government sector has been facing a challenging financial outlook in recent years, which is to continue for 18/19 and for the medium term. Further pressure is expected across the sector as a result of continued increasing demand for services and falling central government funding, factors which are also affecting Epsom & Ewell Borough Council</p> <p>We will update our understanding the Authority's financial arrangements. Evaluating the robustness of their medium term financial plan and budgeting to ensure that resources are deployed to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for local tax payers</p>	<p>In arriving at our conclusion, our main considerations were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating your Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and its assumptions for reasonableness and relevance; Evaluating your 2019/20 budget setting process and determining the reasonableness of your plans to resolve budget gaps; Assessing the 2018/19 outturn position against the 2018/19 budget to determine the potential effect on medium term financial sustainability; Understanding your reserves policy and evaluating the actual use of reserves against planned usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have demonstrated that you have a robust budget setting process which incorporates an appropriate level of challenge and scrutiny from member committees and good level of support from finance You undertake ongoing budget monitoring throughout the year to ensure budgets remain relevant and any risks identified quickly. You are able to successfully plan for the medium and long term by producing an Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) incorporating a 10 year forecast based on realistic assumptions and allows you to identify and plan for savings. You have produced a balanced budget for 2019/20 which is realistic in its assumptions and includes appropriate risks and opportunities You have been able to fully identify and plan for savings required in 2019/20 leaving no budget gaps to identify moving into next year. In terms of outturn position you have demonstrated control over spending in 2018/19 and recorded an underspend of £68k on your revenue account for 2018/19. You have maintained a strong reserves increasing the level of usable reserves by £2.8m in the year to £28.9m overall. You have set yourself a minimum general fund balance of £2.5m which you wish to hold to ensure a minimum level of funds is available for non-specific expenditure should it be required. You have demonstrated that you have exceeded this minimum threshold for 2018/19 by holding a general fund reserve of £3.4m and have plans to maintain the minimum level in the medium term <p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accordingly, in our view, appropriate arrangements are in place to support your medium term financial position.

A. Reports issued and fees

We confirm below our final reports issued and fees charged for the audit and provision of non-audit services.

Reports issued

Report	Date issued
Audit Plan	31 January 2019
Audit Findings Report	30 July 2019
Annual Audit Letter	20 August 2019

Fees

	Planned £	Actual fees 2017/18 £	2018/19 fees £
Statutory audit	34,425	TBC	44,708
Housing Benefit Grant Certification	16,000	TBC	16,000
Total fees	50,425	TBC	60,708

Audit fee variation

As outlined in our audit plan, the 2018-19 scale fee published by PSAA of £34,425 assumes that the scope of the audit does not significantly change. There are a number of areas where the scope of the audit has changed, which has led to additional work. These are set out in the following table.

Area	Reason	Fee proposed
Assessing the impact of the McCloud ruling	The Government’s transitional arrangements for pensions were ruled discriminatory by the Court of Appeal last December. The Supreme Court refused the Government’s application for permission to appeal this ruling. As part of our audit we have reviewed the revised actuarial assessment of the impact on the financial statements along with any audit reporting requirements.	1,600
Pensions – IAS 19	The Financial Reporting Council has highlighted that the quality of work by audit firms in respect of IAS 19 needs to improve across local government audits. Accordingly, we have increased the level of scope and coverage in respect of IAS 19 this year to reflect this.	1,200
PPE Valuation – work of experts	As above, the Financial Reporting Council has highlighted that auditors need to improve the quality of work on PPE valuations across the sector. We have increased the volume and scope of our audit work to reflect this.	1,200
Total		4,000

Fee variations are subject to PSAA approval.

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Audit Progress Report and Sector Update

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
Year ending 31 March 2020

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26th November 2019



Agenda Item 3
Annex 2

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Introduction



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This paper provides the Strategy & Resources Committee with a report on progress in delivering our responsibilities as your external auditors.

The paper also includes a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to you as a local authority.

Members of the Strategy & Resources Committee can find further useful material on our website, where we have a section dedicated to our work in the public sector. Here you can download copies of our publications www.granthornton.co.uk ..

If you would like further information on any items in this briefing, or would like to register with Grant Thornton to receive regular email updates on issues that are of interest to you, please contact either your Engagement Lead or Engagement Manager.

PSAA Contract Monitoring

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council opted into the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) Appointing Person scheme which started with the 2018/19 audit. PSAA appointed Grant Thornton as auditors. PSAA is responsible under the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015 for monitoring compliance with the contract and is committed to ensuring good quality audit services are provided by its suppliers. Details of PSAA's audit quality monitoring arrangements are available from its website, www.psaa.co.uk.

Our contract with PSAA contains a method statement which sets out the firm's commitment to deliver quality audit services, our audit approach and what clients can expect from us. We have set out commitment to deliver a high quality audit service in the document at Appendix A. We hope this is helpful. It will also be a benchmark for you to provide feedback on our performance to PSAA via its survey in Autumn 2019.

Progress at November 2019

Financial Statements Audit

We issued our opinion on your 2018/19 Statement of Accounts on 31 July 2019.

We will begin our planning for the 2019/20 audit in December and will issue a detailed audit plan, setting out our proposed approach to the audit of the Council's 2019/20 financial statements.

We will begin our interim audit in February/March 2020. Our interim fieldwork includes:

- Updated review of the Council's control environment
- Updated understanding of financial systems
- Review of Internal Audit reports on core financial systems
- Early work on emerging accounting issues
- Early substantive testing

We will report our work in the Audit Findings Report and aim to give our opinion on the Statement of Accounts by the statutory accounts publication date of 31 July 2020.

Value for Money

The scope of our work is set out in the guidance issued by the National Audit Office. The Code requires auditors to satisfy themselves that; "the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources".

The guidance confirmed the overall criterion as: "in all significant respects, the audited body had proper arrangements to ensure it took properly informed decisions and deployed resources to achieve planned and sustainable outcomes for taxpayers and local people".

The three sub criteria for assessment to be able to give a conclusion overall are:

- Informed decision making
- Sustainable resource deployment
- Working with partners and other third parties

Details of our initial risk assessment to determine our approach will be included in our Audit Plan.

We will report our work in the Audit Findings Report and aim to give our Value For Money Conclusion by the statutory accounts publication date of 31 July 2020.

Other areas

Certification of claims and returns

We certify the Council's annual Housing Benefit Subsidy claim in accordance with procedures agreed with the Department for Work and Pensions. The certification work for the 2018/19 is in progress and will be completed by the 30 November deadline. We will report our findings to the Strategy & Resources Committee following the deadline via our Certification Letter in March 2020.

Meetings

We met with Finance Officers in October as part of our quarterly liaison meetings and continue to be in discussions with finance staff regarding emerging developments and to ensure the audit process is smooth and effective.

Events

We provide a range of workshops, along with network events for members and publications to support the Council. Your officers will receive an invitation to our Financial Reporting Workshop in the New Year, which will help to ensure that members of your Finance Team are up to date with the latest financial reporting requirements for local authority accounts.

Further details of the publications that may be of interest to the Council are set out in our Sector Update section of this report.

Audit Deliverables

2018/19 Deliverables

Audit Findings Report

The Audit Findings Report was reported to the 30th July Strategy & Resources Committee.

Planned Date

July 2019

Status

Complete

Auditors Report

This is the opinion on your financial statement, annual governance statement and value for money conclusion.

July 2019

Complete

Annual Audit Letter

This letter communicates the key issues arising from our work.

August 2019

Complete

2019/20 Deliverables

Fee Letter

Confirming audit fee for 2019/20

Planned Date

April 2019

Status

Complete

Accounts Audit Plan

We are required to issue a detailed accounts audit plan to the Strategy & Resources Committee setting out our proposed approach in order to give an opinion on the Council's 2019-20 financial statements. We plan to issue this to officers in the new year, the proceeding Strategy & Resources Committee date is scheduled for 31st March 2020

March 2020

Not yet due

Interim Audit Findings

We will report to you the findings from our interim audit and our initial value for money risk assessment within our Progress Report.

March 2020

Not yet due

Audit Findings Report

The Audit Findings Report will be reported to the July Strategy & Resources Committee.

July 2020

Not yet due

Auditors Report

This is the opinion on your financial statement, annual governance statement and value for money conclusion.

July 2020

Not yet due

Annual Audit Letter

This letter communicates the key issues arising from our work.

August 2020

Not yet due

Sector Update

Councils are tackling a continuing drive to achieve greater efficiency in the delivery of public services, whilst facing the challenges to address rising demand, ongoing budget pressures and social inequality.

Page 2 of 3
Our sector update provides you with an up to date summary of emerging national issues and developments to support you. We cover areas which may have an impact on your organisation, the wider NHS and the public sector as a whole. Links are provided to the detailed report/briefing to allow you to delve further and find out more.

Our public sector team at Grant Thornton also undertake research on service and technical issues. We will bring you the latest research publications in this update. We also include areas of potential interest to start conversations within the organisation and with Strategy & Resources committee members, as well as any accounting and regulatory updates.

- **Grant Thornton Publications**
- **Insights from local government sector specialists**
- **Reports of interest**
- **Accounting and regulatory updates**

More information can be found on our dedicated public sector and local government sections on the Grant Thornton website by clicking on the logos below:

Public Sector

Local
government

CIPFA – CFO confidence survey

In July, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) reported the results of their annual confidence survey.

The survey found that the majority of local government finance officers have lost confidence in their future financial positions over the last year.

Seventy per cent of respondents said they were either slightly less or much less confident in their financial position this year compared to 2018-19.

The survey also found that 68% said they were either slightly less or much less confident in their ability to deliver services in 2020-21. Sixty-two per cent expressed equal confidence in their financial position for 2019-20 as they had last year.

CIPFA found that the area of greatest pressure for top tier authorities was children's social care, with the number of authorities rating it as the biggest pressure rising by six percentage points.

For districts the greatest pressures were housing, cultural services and environmental services.

Rob Whiteman, CIPFA chief executive, said: "Local government is facing greater demand pressures than ever before, with particularly pressures in adults' and children's social care and housing. Local authorities also lack certainty about their future financial positions, so it's unsurprising to see confidence on the decline.

"We have repeatedly pointed out that local government is in need of a sustainable funding solution, but meeting this demand requires more than pennies and pounds. The sector as a whole must come together to address the challenges of effective service delivery."

CIPFA's survey received a total of 119 responses from authorities in the UK - 56 top tier authorities, 47 English districts, 12 Scottish authorities, and 4 Welsh authorities.

On the same theme, a Local Government Association (LGA) survey, also reported in July, found that almost two-thirds of councils believe cash for services like adult social care, child protection and preventing homelessness will dry up by 2024-25.

The survey got responses from 141 of the 339 LGA member councils in England and Wales.

It also found that 17% of councils were not confident of realising all of the savings they had identified this year (2019-20).

The LGA said that councils needed a guarantee they will have enough money to meet growing demand pressures in particular in adult social care, children's services, special educational needs, homelessness support and public health.



MHCLG – Independent probe into local government audit

In July, the then Communities secretary, James Brokenshire, announced the government is to examine local authority financial reporting and auditing.

At the CIPFA conference he told delegates the independent review will be headed up by Sir Tony Redmond, a former CIPFA president.

The government was “working towards improving its approach to local government oversight and support”, Brokenshire promised.

“A robust local audit system is absolutely pivotal to work on oversight, not just because it reinforces confidence in financial reporting but because it reinforces service delivery and, ultimately, our faith in local democracy,” he said.

“There are potentially far-reaching consequences when audits aren’t carried out properly and fail to detect significant problems.”

The review will look at the quality of local authority audits and whether they are highlighting when an organisation is in financial trouble early enough.

It will also look at whether the public has lost faith in auditors and whether the current audit arrangements for councils are still “fit for purpose”.

On the appointment of Redmond, CIPFA chief executive Rob Whiteman said: “Tony Redmond is uniquely placed to lead this vital review, which will be critical for determining future regulatory requirements.

“Local audit is crucial in providing assurance and accountability to the public, while helping to prevent financial and governance failure.”

He added: “This work will allow us to identify what is needed to make local audit as robust as possible, and how the audit function can meet the assurance needs, both now and in the future, of the sector as a whole.”

In the question and answer session following his speech, Brokenshire said he was not looking to bring back the Audit Commission, which appointed auditors to local bodies and was abolished in 2015. MHCLG note that auditing of local authorities was then taken over by the private, voluntary and not-for-profit sectors.

He explained he was “open minded”, but believed the Audit Commission was “of its time”.

Local authorities in England are responsible for 22% of total UK public sector expenditure so their accounts “must be of the highest level of transparency and quality”, the Ministry of Housing, Local Government and Communities said. The review will also look at how local authorities publish their annual accounts and if the financial reporting system is robust enough.

Redmond, who has also been a local authority treasurer and chief executive, is expected to report to the communities secretary with his initial recommendations in December 2019, with a final report published in March 2020. Redmond has also worked as a local government boundary commissioner and held the post of local government ombudsman.



National Audit Office – Code of Audit Practice

The Code of Audit Practice sets out what local auditors of relevant local public bodies are required to do to fulfil their statutory responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. 'Relevant authorities' are set out in Schedule 2 of the Act and include local councils, fire authorities, police and NHS bodies.

Local auditors must comply with the Code of Audit Practice.

Consultation – New Code of Audit Practice from 2020

Schedule 6 of the Act requires that the Code be reviewed, and revisions considered at least every five years. The current Code came into force on 1 April 2015, and the maximum five-year lifespan of the Code means it now needs to be reviewed and a new Code laid in Parliament in time for it to come in to force no later than 1 April 2020.

In order to determine what changes might be appropriate, the NAO is consulting on potential changes to the Code in two stages:

Stage 1 involves engagement with key stakeholders and public consultation on the issues that are considered to be relevant to the development of the Code.

This stage of the consultation is now closed. The NAO received a total of 41 responses to the consultation which included positive feedback on the two-stage approach to developing the Code that has been adopted. The NAO state that they have considered carefully the views of respondents in respect of the points drawn out from the [Issues paper](#) and this will inform the development of the draft Code. A summary of the responses received to the questions set out in the [Issues paper](#) can be found below.

[Local audit in England Code of Audit Practice – Consultation Response \(pdf – 256KB\)](#)


Stage 2 of the consultation involves consulting on the draft text of the new Code. To support stage 2, the NAO has published a consultation document, which highlights the key changes to each chapter of the draft Code. The most significant changes are in relation to the Value for Money arrangements. Rather than require auditors to focus on delivering an overall, binary, conclusion about whether or not proper arrangements were in place during the previous financial year, the draft Code requires auditors to issue a commentary on each of the criteria. This will allow auditors to tailor their commentaries to local circumstances. The Code proposes three specific criteria:

- a) Financial sustainability: how the body plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services;
- b) Governance: how the body ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks; and
- c) Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness: how the body uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

The consultation document and a copy of the draft Code can be found on the NAO website. The consultation is open until 22 November 2019. The new Code will apply from audits of local bodies' 2020-21 financial statements onwards.

Link to NAO webpage for the Code consultation:

<https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/code-of-audit-practice-consultation/>


Consultation response by the National Audit Office
Local audit in England Code of Audit Practice
Issues paper: Consultation response

Local Government Association – Profit with a purpose – delivering social value through commercial activity

The Local Government Association (LGA) report 'Profit with a purpose' focuses on some of the practicalities of how councils can deliver social value through their commercial activity.

Through 'key questions' to ask, the guidance supports councils to face the challenge of how to undertake commercial activity and achieve greater value for the public purse in ways that better meet society's needs and outcomes for people and communities.

In addition, the publication features a number of short case studies highlighting some of the innovative commercial practice already achieving results for communities.

The LGA comments that the best approaches ensure the generation of social value is the primary factor driving commercial activity; from the initial decision to develop a commercial vision to how the approach is developed, and implemented, councils which are pulling ahead ensure social value is placed centre stage.

The guidance starts with an overview of what the LGA understands by 'profit with a purpose', the guidance explores different types of social value and the role of councils in driving social value alongside their commercial ambition.

The guidance then looks at how consideration and delivery of social value should be practically considered when deciding on whether to embark on commercial activity, the need for social value to be prioritised alongside financial return and the key questions councils should consider when embarking on a commercial initiative.

Following on from this, there are specific chapters on; embedding social value in governance of alternative service delivery vehicles, the role of procurement in contracting services that deliver social value and finally how to contract and performance manage social value through your service providers.

Each chapter outlines the factors that need to be considered and the 'key questions' councils should be asking themselves.

In addition, a number of short case studies are provided to highlight some of the innovative commercial practice already achieving results for communities.

The report can be downloaded from the LGA website:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/profit-purpose-delivering-social-value-through-commercial-activity>



MHCLG – Brexit preparations

Councils should be fully prepared to leave the European Union by the end of October, the Communities and Local Government Secretary announced on 3 August as he ramped up preparations.

Mr Jenrick thanked councils for all the work they have already done, but said they must step up vital preparations and committed £20 million for councils across England to prepare for delivering Brexit on 31 October, whatever the circumstances.

He has asked each council to designate a Brexit lead to work with central government and oversee teams in every community who will work with stakeholders in their area to plan intensively for Brexit.

The new funding comes in recognition of the central role councils will play to make sure their residents are ready for Brexit, and is expected to support a range of activity including communications, training and the recruitment of staff.

The Secretary of State said:

“From Whitehall to town halls – everyone needs to be ready to fulfil our democratic mandate to leave the European Union by the end of October.

Local government has a vital role in helping to make Brexit a success and it is absolutely right that together we intensify preparations in every community.

And to do this successfully I have asked every council to appoint a Brexit lead to work with government. We’ll be providing £20 million for councils to support the major step up in preparations.

I want all of us – central and local government – to be fully prepared for leaving the EU on 31 October whatever the circumstances. I know that we can achieve this, by continuing to work side by side with renewed national focus and intensity.”



Public Accounts Committee – Local Government Governance and Accountability

The Public Accounts Committee has found that the Government has not done enough to ensure that, at a time when local authority budgets are under extreme pressure, governance systems are improved.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (the Department) is responsible for: ensuring that this framework contains the right checks and balances, and changing the system if necessary. The Secretary of State also has powers to intervene in cases of perceived governance failure. The framework includes: officers with statutory powers and responsibilities; internal checks and balances such as audit committees and internal audit; and external checks and balances such as external audit and sector-led improvement overseen by the Local Government Association. These arrangements represent a significant reduction in the level of central oversight in recent years following the government's decision to abolish the Audit Commission and the Standards Board for England as part of a broader reform of local audit, inspection and reporting.

The Public Accounts Committee report summary notes "Local authorities have a good overall track record with governance arrangements generally robust across the sector, and there is evidence that local authority governance compares favourably to that of the health sector. However, this is not universal and in some authorities governance is under strain, as funding reduces and responsibilities and exposure to commercial pressures change. We are worried to hear about audit committees that do not provide sufficient assurance, ineffective internal audit, weak arrangements for the management of risk in local authorities' commercial investments, and inadequate oversight and scrutiny. This is not acceptable in the more risky, complex and fast-moving environment in which local authorities now operate.

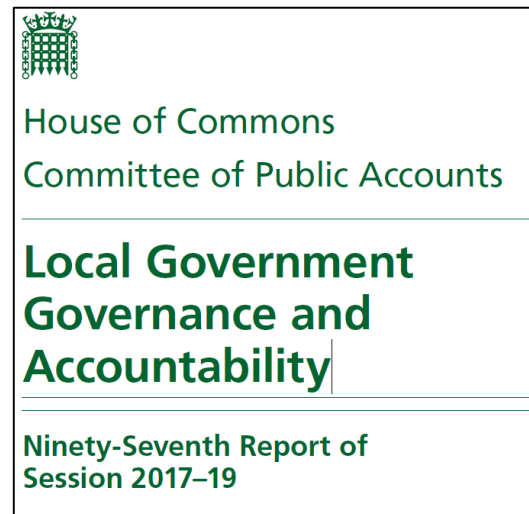
The Department has been reactive and ill-informed in its approach to oversight of the local governance system. However, the Department has now recognised that the network of bodies with responsibility for the local governance framework is fragmented and lacking the leadership needed to drive change. Encouragingly, the Department has now committed to enhancing its oversight role and producing a proactive work programme to deliver this change. We urge the Department to ensure that this activity leads to concrete actions and outcomes on a timely basis. When a local authority fails this has a significant impact on local people and the Department has a responsibility to work with local government to ensure that problems are caught early and that it can pinpoint at-risk councils. Since the abolition of the Audit Commission and other changes culminating in the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 there is no central assessment of value for the money, which means the Department's work is fundamental."

The report makes five conclusions, with associated recommendations:

- 1) The Department is not yet providing effective leadership of the local governance system.
- 2) The Department does not know why some local authorities are raising concerns that external audit is not meeting their needs.
- 3) The Department lacks reliable information on key governance risks, or relies on weak sources of information, meaning it has no way of pinpointing the at-risk councils.
- 4) The Department's monitoring is not focused on long-term risks to council finances and therefore to services.
- 5) There is a complete lack of transparency over both the Department's informal interventions in local authorities with financial or governance problems and the results of its formal interventions.

The Government response is available on the website below:

<https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/public-accounts/Gov-response-to-Public-Accounts-on-the-93-98-reports.pdf>



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EMPLOYEE PAY & REWARD PROCEDURE - COST OF LIVING AWARD 2020-2024

Head of Service/Contact:	Shona Mason, Head of HR & Organisational Development
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Annexes/Appendices (attached):	Annex 1 - Draft Employee Pay & Reward Procedure 2020 -2024 Annex 2 - Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy 2016/20
Other available papers (not attached):	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pay Policy Statement

Report summary

This report seeks approval of the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure, and also for the Council's proposed pay award for 2020-2024.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) approves the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure for 2020 – 2024, attached at Annex 1;**
- (2) agrees an annual pay award based on CPI as outlined in the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure for 2020 - 2024 and the costs required to fund the pay award;**
- (3) notes the associated budget implication.**

- 1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy**

- 1.1 The Council's employees are a key part of its efforts to meet the Council's ambition to make Epsom & Ewell an excellent place to live and work, and its policies on the pay of staff will be important in ensuring that the Council meets its key priorities. In particular, any policy about pay is relevant to the Council's key priority of "Managing Resources" – the Council aims to utilise its limited resources in the most efficient and effective way.
- 1.2 As outlined in the HR & Communications Service Delivery Plan a review of all core HR policies is being undertaken during 2019/20 to develop a new People Framework. The Employee Pay & Reward procedure is a key part of the new People Framework. The Council is currently consulting on phase two of the People Framework with a view to finalising in the coming months.
- 1.3 There are no implications arising from this report for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council's Pay Policy 2016 - 2020 sets out the Council's intention in relation to pay for this period and is due to expire in March 2020. Under this Policy the across the board pay awards are set out in the table below:

Year	Pay Award
2019/20	1%
2018/19	0% (Restructured Grades)
2017/18	1.5%
2016/17	1.5%

- 2.2 Currently pay awards have been determined annually and budgeted for in the medium term financial plan. As part of the process, proposed pay awards were submitted to the Staff Consultative Group to formally consult on the level of the pay award and were then invited to make any representations relating to the level of the pay award.
- 2.3 Following receipt of comments, a report with the proposed pay award and response of the Staff Consultative Group went to the HR Panel for consideration. Following this, a report was then prepared for Strategy & Resources, for consideration and approval of the pay award.
- 2.4 The process for agreeing annual pay awards was protracted and failed to align, in terms decision making responsibility.

- 2.5 As a result, following a review, the processes were amended and the Constitution updated, so as to realign the award of annual pay awards to Strategy & Resources and not HR Panel.
- 2.6 During the current Pay Policy period of 2016 to 2020 the Council has undertaken significant work on the pay structure which is outlined in the table below:

Year	Implementation of Pay Review
2019/20	<p>1% pay award</p> <p>Removal of G12</p> <p>Removal of SCP 1</p> <p>Implement SCP 10</p> <p>Review of all role profiles to generic templates</p> <p>Complete job evaluation for all roles by South East Employers</p>
2018/19	<p>0% pay award</p> <p>Reduction of 20 Market Anchors to 12 Grades</p> <p>Implement annual pay progression</p> <p>Implement new performance scheme (My Performance Conversation)</p>
2017/18	<p>1.5% pay award</p> <p>Development and costing of revised pay and performance scheme</p> <p>Consultation with staff</p> <p>Stop annual appraisals</p>
2016/17	1.5% pay award

	LGA review of pay and performance
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- 2.7 The Council is currently in the final stages of reviewing its Pay and Performance scheme in conjunction with the Local Government Association (LGA). South East Employers are currently undertaking a job evaluation exercise to ensure that all roles are graded correctly as a result of the changes made to the pay structure in 2018/19 when 20 Market Anchors were reduced to 12 Grades.
- 2.8 During 2019/20 the HR team have been undertaking a full review of all core HR policies and developing a new People Framework. The new draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure is one of the key policies and will replace the Council's existing Pay Policy 2016/20.

Draft Employee Pay & Reward Procedure

- 2.9 On 6 March 2019 the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure was issued to Staff Consultative Group for consultation specifically focusing on the next four years with annual pay awards linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- 2.10 In the draft Employee Pay Reward procedure, the annual pay award for staff will be based on CPI rate taken in the month of September, prior to the April when any pay award is implemented.
- 2.11 The CPI for September has just been published at 1.7% and therefore will inform the April 2020 pay award for all staff at 1.7% if the procedure is agreed by Committee.
- 2.12 The consultation period with staff on the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure ran for 5 weeks until 10 April 2019. In their responses the Staff Consultative Group were supportive of the four year program and proposed pay awards based on CPI. They also confirmed that the new Employee Pay & Reward procedure provided greater clarity and were pleased that the Council is seeking to improve on previous years pay awards, which had been viewed as modest.
- 2.13 Now that the consultation process has been completed and all comments and feedback has been received, the new draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure needs to be approved for the period 2020 – 2024.

Economic Context

- 2.14 To give economic context to the Council's draft Employee Pay & Reward Policy and proposed annual pay awards based on CPI the following information is provided: Consumer Prices Index for August 2019 was 1.7%. Over the previous 12 months the rate of annual change has varied between 2.4% and 1.7%.
- 2.15 Retail Prices Index for August 2019 was 2.6%. Over the previous 12 months the rate of annual change has varied between 3.5% and 2.4%.
- 2.16 The latest UK average weekly earnings growth rate for the whole economy for 2018 was 3.5% and 2.3% for the public sector.
- 2.17 Information on pay awards within our benchmark group and in the South East, National Pay settlement and the IRS Pay and Benefits pay levels indicate that awards being considered range from 1 – 2.5% for the period 2018/19.
- 2.18 Central Government in its 2015 statement recommended a 1% pay award cap for public sector workers for a 4 year period. The cap was removed during 2018 in recognition that dedicated public sector workers deserved a pay rise.
- 2.19 Central Government, National Living Wage for employees over the age of 25 of increased on 1 April 2019 from £7.83 to £8.21. The Council must ensure that all employees over the age of 25 are paid the National Living Wage as a minimum. Over the past four years the Council has taken action to address the increasing national living wage ensuring that the bottom grade of the pay structure is above the national living wage.
- 2.20 The staff turnover for 2018/19 was 20.7% (14.1% resignations only). This is a rise from the previous year (16% - 13.7% resignations only) which indicates that as the labour market becomes more buoyant, there is a likelihood that the Council would lose skilled staff to other organisations offering competitive salaries. As such it is important to ensure our offer remains competitive in terms of salaries.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The draft budget includes a provision for a pay award of 2% for staff in 2020/21.
- 3.2 On the basis of the above it is recommended that the Committee consider the draft Employee Pay & Reward procedure for 2020 -2024 and specifically the annual pay award linked to CPI for the next four years.

- 3.3 The approved budget available would allow the Committee to consider the recommended pay award linked to CPI for the next four years. This proposal will need to be considered in the light of the external and internal market data, turnover figures and the comparative information that is available. Any award below the current rate of inflation is likely to make us less competitive in relation to our neighbours. An award above 2% will require the identification of additional savings from elsewhere to fund an increase over 2%.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 The total pay bill inclusive of agency staff and employer salary on-costs is £11.5 million.
- 4.2 It is estimated that the cost of this proposal will be approximately £1million over four years based on an average CPI of 2% and includes on-costs which has been included in the draft Medium Term financial Strategy for 2020/24.
- 4.3 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** Linking annual pay increases to CPI harmonises the inflationary uplift with what is currently in place for member allowances and local government pensions.
- 4.4 Although CPI for September 2019 is below the 2% included within the draft MTFs, it is anticipated that over the remaining years of this Pay Policy the CPI rate will average out at 2% .
- 4.5 The draft budget for 2020/21 includes a provision for pay awards of £400,000, with £230,000 to fund the cost of living increase and the balance to fund progression through the pay scales. Any unallocated provision will be set aside to fund any potential increases in CPI above 2% in future years

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The Council's pay structure and policy/procedure needs to be fair and transparent. The proposed Employee Pay & Reward Procedure will provide this transparency along with the Council's Pay Policy Statement.
- 5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications for this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 There are no implications for this report.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 Failure to agree a pay award for staff is likely to lead to increased turnover and difficulties in recruitment and retention of staff, as well as contribute to low staff morale.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is requested to approve the draft Employee Pay & Reward Procedure which will be form part of the HR Framework, agree to the recommendation of the pay award to be linked to CPI for the period 2020 - 2024 and agree to the funds pay for the award.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

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People Framework

Employee Pay & Reward Procedure 2020-2024



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Tracking

Policy Title	Employee Pay & Reward Procedure		
LT sign off	26 February 2019		
Committee	Strategy & Resources	Date approved	(TBC)26 November 2019
Review due date	October 2023	Review completed	
Service	HR & OD		

Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision

Document Approvals

Each revision requires the following approvals:

Sponsor Approval		Name	Date
Head of HR & OD			

1. Equalities

It is unlawful for the Council to discriminate against employees because of any of the following protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex (Gender), Sexual Orientation.

All employees, irrespective of their employment status, are protected by law against discrimination in the course of their employment with the Council. It is unlawful for Managers to discriminate against an individual on the grounds that he or she is “associated with” someone with a particular protected characteristic. The Council will not victimise an employee because he or she has raised a genuine complaint of discrimination, or assisted another employee with a complaint. Please refer to the Whistle Blowing Policy and Grievance Procedure.

Employees are protected against all unlawful forms of discrimination in every aspect of their employment. This will include the terms and conditions of their contract, including information that is contained in the Employee Handbook and HR Policies.

The Council will comply with all relevant employment legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, Part Time Employment (Prevention of Less favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000 and others. With regard to the Equal Pay requirements contained within the Equality Act, the Council makes every effort to ensure there is no pay discrimination within its pay structures and that pay differentials can be objectively justified through the use of equality proofed job evaluation mechanisms, which directly relate to the requirements, demands and responsibilities of the role.

The Council will undertake to meet its obligations to comply with equal pay regulations and to comply with its own equality schemes and policies ensuring that decisions regarding pay are consistently applied and that, where any discretion is allowed within this Policy, it is properly evidenced and monitored to ensure that it is being applied in a gender neutral manner.

2. Pay & Reward Strategy

Organisational structures and role profiles will be developed to enable the Council to achieve the outcomes outlined in the Corporate Plan and in accordance with its Behaviour Framework. Grading structures will continue to be developed to ensure its employees are paid fairly for undertaking their duties in accordance with their role profiles. Pay progression will be awarded for fully meeting the expectations of the role to the required standards. There will be careful and sustained equality monitoring of the grading structure and performance process by Heads of Service and Officers in order to maintain the integrity of the Pay Structure.

The Council will ensure that fair and non-discriminatory grading structures are developed locally. The Council's pay structure seeks to pay evaluated rates to attract and retain employees with the skills and experience essential to deliver a diverse and complex range of services. What is reasonable will be defined by the economic circumstances of the Council at the time of the pay review and the requirements of equal pay law in order that the pay structure is equitable.

3. Pay Policy Statement

The Local Government Act 1972 (Section 112) sets out the Council's "power to appoint officers on such reasonable terms and conditions as the Council thinks fit". The Council's Pay Policy Statement (the 'Statement') sets out the Council's approach to pay policy in accordance with the requirements of Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. Nothing within the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 detracts from the Council's autonomy in making decisions on pay that are appropriate to local circumstances and which deliver value for local tax payers.

The purpose of the Pay Policy Statement is to provide transparency with regard to the Council's approach to setting the pay of its employees. Annually, the Council will renew and publish a Pay Policy Statement in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act.

The Pay Policy Statement will be approved by Council and be published on the Councils' internet site by 1st April each year. The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 will be adhered to with regard to the remuneration of Chief Officer Posts (as defined by these Regulations). Please refer to the Pay Policy Statement.

4. Cost of Living Award

This Pay Policy is for a period of four years from 2020 – 2024 in line with the Council's Corporate Plan.

The cost of living pay award in any given year will be in line with CPI and will not normally be expected to exceed the rate of CPI. For the purposes of this policy the CPI rate will be taken in the month of September prior to the April when any pay award is implemented.

The table below summarises the review timetable:

Year	Pay Policy
2020 - 2021	Across the board pay award based on CPI taken in Sept 2019
2021 - 2022	Across the board pay award based on CPI taken in Sept 2020
2022 - 2023	Across the board pay award based on CPI taken in Sept 2021
2023 - 2024	Across the board pay award based on CPI taken in Sept 2022

Where CPI is negative there will be no pay award.

Where CPI exceeds 3% there will be a cap on the pay award of 3%.

All CPI based awards will be implemented with effect from 1 April each year.

When appropriate and affordable the results of any pay benchmarking surveys and/or reviews will be implemented with effect from 1 April each year.

5. Pay Structure

The pay structure will consist of a series of incremental levels known as spinal column points within each pay grade. The basic pay of each employee will consist of a spinal column point on the grading structure.

6. Job Evaluation

As an employer, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council has a responsibility to ensure compliance with obligations placed upon us by equal pay legislation.

Job Evaluation is the mechanism which allows the Council to objectively establish the relative value of each role in the organisation compared to others across the organisation. This determines the grade of each role within the Council's pay structure to support equality in pay across the organisation.

All roles in the Council will be evaluated in line with the National Joint Council (NJC) scheme which is based on 13 factors.

Further details are provided in the Council's Job Evaluation Procedure.

7. Pay on Appointment

Employees who apply and are appointed, whether through internal or external recruitment, will normally be placed on the minimum of the grade that was allocated to the job through Job Evaluation.

Under exceptional circumstances, and where there are compelling and evidenced reasons to support the decision, a new employee may be appointed to a higher increment, subject to the maximum of the grade.

In order to maintain fairness and consistency, this must be agreed by the Head of Department who is making the appointment and in consultation with the Head of HR and Organisational Development. A documented audit trail must be produced by the Manager detailing the reasons behind any decisions to offer a higher starting salary. The approval and the reason for it will be recorded on the employee's personal file, and provided to Human Resources with the request to appoint on a higher point.

If an internal employee is appointed to a higher graded post or a post that has been re-graded through job evaluation, and where the new grade overlaps with the old, their pay will be mapped to the nearest spinal column point within the new grade and they will receive two incremental increases.

Under exceptional circumstances and where there are compelling and evidenced reasons to support the decision, they may be appointed to a higher increment, subject to the maximum of the grade.

8. Annual Pay Progression

Annual pay progression will apply to all employees who have not reached the maximum spinal column point of their grade.

Annual pay progression will be awarded to employees who are in post at the end of the financial year, i.e. 31 March and on or before 1st October of the previous year, based on a recommendation by their manager in line with the Council's Performance Management procedure.

If an employee has not already reached the maximum spinal column point of the grade they will be moved up to the next available point. The same process will apply each year until the employee reaches the final spinal column point within their grade.

Annual progression for the Chief Executive will be determined by the Appraisal Panel which will consist of elected Members. This panel will comprise of three members: the Chairman and Vice Chair-man of Strategy and Resources Committee and a member nominated by the largest opposition group on the Council.

An ongoing programme of training will be provided to Managers to ensure that they are following the agreed procedures for managing annual progression fairly. The Appraisal Panel for the Chief Executive will also receive training.

Monitoring of annual progression will be carried out by Human Resources to ensure protection of the robustness of the Council's objectives on equal pay.

9. Honoraria Payments

The Council uses the word 'honoraria' to define a payment attributed to a temporary change in duties (full or part/shared) at a higher level. Honoraria is sometimes referred to as 'acting up' but, for pay purposes, is always referred to as honoraria.

Honoraria arrangements will only be agreed in exceptional circumstances and will be subject to service needs. Duties will be of a short-term temporary nature and be required at a higher level. Honoraria are not to be used to cover short-term absence such as annual leave or short-term sickness.

A payment will be made to an employee where it is formally agreed that they undertake a job (or part of) of a higher grade on a temporary basis. The payment will be commensurate with the level of work being undertaken and for the duration of those duties or job. In addition to regular local monthly management review, Senior Managers will review annually all payments in place at the 31st March.

A Head of Service may award honoraria payments to those employees:

- Who have agreed to a formal request to temporarily undertake full duties and responsibilities of a higher graded post for more than 4 weeks. Once the period of 4 weeks has been satisfied and suitability confirmed the pay at a higher grade will be backdated
- Who have agreed to a formal request to perform duties outside the scope of their substantive post over an extended period or where the additional duties and responsibilities are exceptionally onerous. This could be interpreted as an officer undertaking part or shared responsibility for a higher graded post. It may also apply to when an employee is assigned to a one-off and specific project which is additional to the scope of his/her normal post.

An honoraria payment will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- An increase in workload rather than higher level responsibility;
- An employee awaiting the outcome of Job Evaluation;
- An employee is undertaking different tasks associated with development/PRCD or a qualification;
- An employee asks for a development opportunity to benefit future career progression;
- An employee is undertaking additional duties and responsibilities voluntarily without prior management agreement that he/she qualifies to receive a payment under this Policy;
- To provide cover for annual leave or short-term sickness absence.

An 'Honoraria Payment Authorisation Form' (Appendix X) must be fully completed, signed by the Head of Service and submitted to the Human Resources/Finance.

The employee must have been undertaking the duties of the higher graded post for 4 weeks before the payment will be processed. Payment will be backdated to the first date of the arrangement. Before submitting an Honoraria Form to the Human Resources, the Manager should review the suitability and effectiveness of the arrangement before the end of the initial 4 week period. The Honoraria Request Form should then include the start date and the end date which may be 4 weeks or up to a maximum of 6 months.

10. Withdrawal of Honoria Payments

As an honoraria is for specific duties undertaken, when an employee is not able to undertake these duties, the payment will be withdrawn.

When in receipt of honoraria, if an employee takes sickness absence leave or annual leave, the honoraria will be suspended or be apportioned/reduced to reflect the number of day's absence/leave. The arrangement will expire if the employee is absent/on leave for a period of more than one month.

The Head of Service should notify HR immediately should an employee in receipt of an honoraria payment take sickness absence/annual leave.

If during the agreed period, service needs/departmental structures result in the higher graded role or the activities of the employee receiving the honoraria no longer being needed, the arrangement may be terminated early.

11. Honoraria - Monitor and Review

Honoraria payments should only be used for temporary arrangements. If the end date of an event which is resulting in the honoraria is known, the detail of this and the end date should be provided on the form (Appendix X).

If the end date is unknown, then the initial honoraria should be granted for no longer than 6 months. The payment will be reviewed monthly by the Manager in consultation with the employee to determine the progress of the additional responsibilities being undertaken to merit the payment. The Head of Service has a responsibility to review the honoraria 1 month prior to the expiry of the date indicated on the form and to discuss the situation with the employee.

12. Honoraria - Extension

An extension to the honoraria payment should only be agreed in exceptional circumstances. If an extension is to be granted the appropriate section of the form should be completed and approval gained from the Chief Executive or Chief Operating Officer.

13. Pay Protection

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council recognises that from time to time, where situations arise due to circumstances relating to restructures, an employee may be redeployed to a lower graded post as a suitable alternative to redundancy or their grade is reduced following a job evaluation result or their work location changes due to the relocation of a service.

In all cases, the Council will seek to reduce the financial effect by applying pay protection as stated in these policies.– Please refer to the Workforce Change Policy and Job Evaluation Policy.

14. Payment of Salaries to all Employees

Employees will be paid an annual salary with any related allowances in 12 equal instalments. A monthly salary will be paid on the 20th day of each month or the previous Friday if the 20th falls at a weekend.

The amount that an employee is paid per month includes payment for the whole month up to and including the last day of the calendar month. The payment will be made by automatic bank transfer directly into a bank or building society account.

When an employee's salary starts or ends part way through a month, the first or last proportionate payment due is calculated by dividing the monthly rate of pay by the number of days in the month and then multiplying by the number of days' service in the month (which includes weekends, bank and public holidays).

Please note that casual workers with no mutual obligation of work are paid retrospectively on receipt of a time sheet.

Payment is subject in all cases to pension (if applicable), statutory deductions of income tax and employee national insurance contributions and any other deductions which the Council may be obliged to make. Employees will have access to a monthly pay slip detailing gross pay and deductions via an online payslip or through self-service.

15. Commencement of employment prior to the 7th day of the month

If an employee commences their employment and is due to start part way through a month, the day of start will normally be a Monday. If the start date is prior to the 7th day of the month, the pay due to them will be calculated as follows:-

- Normal annual salary divided into 12 equal instalments to give monthly salary.
- Monthly salary divided by the number of days in the current month divided by the number of days due.

Example: Start date 6th July. Number of days due = 26/31sts.

NB. The 7th day can fall on a weekend and the cut-off date may be earlier or later depending on when the weekend falls.

16. Commencement of employment after the 7th day of the

month

If employment commences after the 7th working day of the month, a full month's salary will be paid the following month plus the pay due in respect of the previous month.

- Normal annual salary divided into 12 equal instalments to give monthly salary.
- Monthly salary plus the number of days in the previous month divided by the number of days due.

Example: Start date 18th July. Number of days due = 13/31sts.

- NB. The 7th day can fall on a weekend and the cut-off date may be earlier or later depending on when the weekend falls.

17. Termination of Employment

If an employee terminates their employment and is due to leave on a Friday part way through a month, unless by reason of redundancy where there is a specified end date, the leaving date for pay purposes will be the Sunday after their leaving date.

The pay due to them will be calculated as follows:

- Normal annual salary divided into 12 equal instalments to give monthly salary.
- Monthly salary divided by the number of days in the current month divided by the number of days due.

Example: Leaving date 6th July. Number of days due = 6/31sts

18. Statutory Deductions

At the start of each financial year and by no later than 31st May in that year, the Council will issue each employee with a P60 Certificate, which confirms their total earnings and statutory deductions in the previous financial year.

If an employee has any queries on statutory deductions they should contact the HMRC. The contact details for HMRC are:-

- HM Revenue and Customs, Bradford & Becks, Centenary Court, 1 St Blaise Way, Bradford, BD1 4YL
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council's Tax Reference: 073/E1312

Before telephoning HMRC, an employee should have their National Insurance number to hand and quote their individual tax reference code. This should also be included on any correspondence sent to them.

19. Underpayments to Employees

There may be an occasion, whether through error or omission, when an employee receives less than their contractual pay and/or allowances. Should such an unfortunate circumstance arise, the Council will rectify the situation and any contractual pay and/or allowances due, will be paid on the first opportune pay-day following notification or identification of the omission or error. In exceptional circumstances, an advance of pay may be agreed by the Head of HR & Organisational Development.

20. Overpayments to Employees

If any error or omission results in any overpayment of pay and/or allowances being made, the Council reserves the right to deduct any such overpayment(s) from the employee's salary on the first opportune pay-day following identification or notification. The Council has the right to seek repayment over the same period that the overpayment was made. The Council will take into account individual circumstances and try to achieve a jointly agreed repayment schedule. It is in the interest of every employee to check their payslips regularly to identify issues at the earliest opportunity. If an employee suspects that they have been overpaid then they must contact Payroll at the earliest opportunity to discuss the matter.

In the event that the overpayment is made in respect of an employee's final salary payment (or other payment due on termination of employment), or if the employee is under a repayment schedule and employment terminates, the monies will be deducted from the employee's final salary and if this is not sufficient, the balance must be repaid by personal means. HR will raise a sundry debtor account with Finance for the monies to be repaid.

21. Consultation Process

The Council will endeavour to maintain the partnership approach that it has demonstrated throughout the development and subsequent implementation of its People Framework and work closely with the Staff Consultative Group to actively consult on matters of pay. There has been consultation with representatives of the Staff Consultative Group during the development of this procedure.

22. Reviewing Effectiveness of the Pay Structure

A full review of the procedure will take place every 4 years.

The Head of HR & Organisational Development will have the authority to review the procedure within the 4 year period, to make any amendment(s) necessary to reflect any changing legal requirements or make minor alteration(s).

There will be a regular review of the grading structures and allowances. The regularity of review will be decided by the Council. The review will take account of benchmark data, legislation, best practice and any national guidance provided by the Government/Local Government Association.

23. Standard Working Week and Pay Definitions

The arrangement of the working week shall be determined by the service and by the terms and conditions on which the employee is contracted. The period for averaging working hours, according to the Working Time Regulations, will be a 17 week reference period. The working week of the individual employees may vary over the standard of 36 hours provided that the individuals' average over the same period does not exceed the standard working week.

Employees' basic pay is the spinal column point reached on the grade and is the basis of any pay calculations.

The annual pay is the basic pay plus any other contractual payments. For the purposes of calculation this is also known as 'normal pay'. A full year's salary calculation is based on 52.14 weeks.

Term time only employees will be paid a proportion of the appropriate full-time rate based on actual days worked. The salary will be paid in 12 equal instalments over the agreed year, at 1/12th of the proportional annual salary.

Part time employees will be paid on the basis of the annual salary divided by the standard full time hours and multiplied by the contracted number of hours per week.

Hourly pay is calculated on the basis of:

- Full time equivalent annual salary divided by 52.14 weeks, divided by 36 hours = hourly rate

Normal pay is paid for periods of sickness, holiday and all forms of approved paid leave of absence, maternity leave and redundancy payments (subject to the appropriate Council Policy). Excluded from the calculation for normal pay are irregular non-standard payments such as overtime.

24. Associated Policies and Documents

The following policies and documents are related to this Employee Pay and Reward Policy and will be reviewed and updated as required.

- Relocation Allowance Procedure
- Recruitment & Retention Incentives Procedure
- Job Evaluation Procedure
- Workforce Change Procedure
- Pay Policy Statement
- Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Constitution

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL

PAY POLICY 2016 -2020

1. OBJECTIVES OF EEBC'S NEW PAY STRATEGY/POLICY

This policy sets out the Council's aspirations in relation to Pay within the context of affordability and financial conditions.

All new appointments to the Council's service are made on the basis of locally devised and negotiated conditions of service. The Council is not party to the National Joint Council (NJC) pay scales or conditions of service, which do not apply to EEBC employees.

Contracts of employment are entirely local and do not incorporate the provisions of the NJC Conditions.

The aims of local conditions of service are:-

- a) To offer a competitive salary and benefits package to attract and retain competent and experienced staff;
- b) Payment levels to be nearer the mid-point or median of our benchmark group
- c) To link progression to individual performance;
- d) To take account of skills shortages by the use of market supplements where appropriate;
- e) That all salary and conditions of service matters are consulted on internally.

All existing members of staff and all new appointments to the Council's service from 1 April 2016 will be in accordance with the provisions of this Policy and Conditions of Service and subsequent revisions relating thereto.

2. SALARY ON APPOINTMENT AND PROGRESSION

Each post within the officer establishment is subject to job evaluation using Role Profiles and a salary scale determined by the relative pay rate of its Market Anchor post. The starting salary on appointment to any post will normally be to the lowest point of the salary scale (SCP 1) for that particular post. However, in exceptional circumstances it is possible to negotiate a higher starting salary subject to the appointee's level of relevant experience and attained qualifications, as appropriate to the post. To appoint at a higher level, the appointing manager would be required to provide justification which should then be referred to the Head of HR and Organisational Development.

Progression beyond the starting salary will be dependent upon positive performance recommendations, in accordance with the criteria detailed in the Council's performance management appraisal processes, and will take effect from 1 April each year. There will be no further progression payment once an employee reaches the maximum spinal column point of their Market Anchor; however, they could be entitled to bonus payments in accordance with the appraisal scheme.

3. PERFORMANCE RELATED PAYMENTS

Following the recommendations of the relevant manager and within the terms of the performance management process, a small unconsolidated bonus payment may be made in exceptional circumstances in order to recognise a high level of performance over and above what is required during the appraisal year. Any such payments will be at the discretion of the Chief Executive and Director of Finance & Resources and will normally be paid in May each year.

4. PAY BENCHMARKING

Epaycheck is the national online pay benchmarking service developed for the public sector by the public sector. Councils who have joined the Epaycheck community securely share and compare their pay data with that of other councils, across hundreds of common roles within the sector.

Epaycheck is delivered in partnership with the Local Government Association and it provides access to current information to support pay negotiations and a means of tracking the effects of pay changes on key job groups. EEBC has signed up to this facility and will use the database as the main source for pay data.

If for any reason the pay data available on Epaycheck is insufficient then additional data will be collected directly from the comparator group.

For pay benchmarking purposes the local authority comparator group will comprise of District & Borough Councils in the South East Region

Private sector pay data will be collated from local businesses and recruitment agencies.

The Head of HR & Organisational Development will assess the available information and propose pay settlements to the relevant Committee for implementation on 01 April each year.

5. ANNUAL PAY AWARDS AND REVIEW TIMETABLE

This Pay Policy is for a period of four years from 2016 – 2020 in line with the Council's Corporate Plan.

Agreement has already been reached in terms of the pay settlement and arrangements for the coming year 2016/17. This will be 1.5%.

In the following year 2017/18, the proposal would be to explore the possibility of reverting to having six spinal column points per Market Anchor instead of the present nine and the possibility of awarding an across the board pay award if appropriate and affordable.

Thereafter, the Council will carry out annual benchmarking via Epaycheck of the Market Anchor posts to determine if the salary scales continue to be fit for purpose and salaries continue to be competitive.

In addition when appropriate and affordable consideration will be given to an across the board pay award which will be informed by pay settlements reached by the local authorities within the benchmarking comparator group.

The pay award in any given year will not normally be expected to exceed the rate of CPI. This does not mean that the pay award will always equate to CPI. For the purposes of this policy the CPI rate will be taken in the month when any pay offer is made to staff.

The table below summarises the review timetable:

Year	Pay Policy
2016 – 17	Across the board pay award
2017 – 18	Review of the salary scales & performance appraisal scheme (Implementation dependent upon appropriateness and affordability at the time)
2018 - 19	Across the board pay award and benchmarking
2019 - 20	Across the board pay award and benchmarking

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS

When appropriate and affordable the results of any pay benchmarking surveys and/or reviews will be implemented with effect from 1 April each year.

7. MARKET POSITION

In terms of the pay rates for the Market Anchor posts, the Council will generally seek to position itself at the mid-point or median of the benchmarking comparator group. This does not imply a guarantee that the Council will pay at the mid-point for all posts. Market conditions and other factors may cause the Council to consider positioning itself higher or lower with the comparator group while taking into consideration affordability.

8. STAFF TURNOVER

It is expected that normal annual staff turnover be contained within the range 12% - 18% of the officer establishment. A quarterly review of staff turnover rates will be undertaken; should trends indicate that it will fall outside of this range the Council will consider appropriate remedial such as applying market supplements.

9. MARKET SUPPLEMENTS / APPOINTMENT ALLOWANCES

The Council will consider the provisions of market supplements, partnership supplements and/or appointment allowances to be applied to specific posts in the event of recruitment difficulties. Where such supplements and/or allowances are introduced they will be applied, reviewed and withdrawn in accordance with the Council's scheme.

10. FLEXIBLE BENEFITS

A menu of flexible benefits may be offered to all employees. The degree to which staff may chose the benefits offered within the overall scheme may be expanded over time. Benefits may be in kind or cash and are non-contractual, subject to periodic review. The purpose of such benefits is to enhance the attractiveness of the Council's pay and remuneration package and to take account of work/life balance while at the same time assisting staff to fulfil their duties to the maximum effectiveness for the benefit of the Council, its residents and clients.

11. IMPLEMENTATION / REVIEW OF PAY POLICY

This Pay Policy will be effective from 1 April 2016, for an initial period of four years, but will be subject to regular review by the Head of HR & Organisational Development as deemed appropriate.

Consultations on any amendments to this Pay Policy will take place through the SCG and relevant Committee.

Head of HR & Organisational Development
Jan 2016

EPSOM & EWELL BOROUGH COUNCIL PENSION DISCRETIONS POLICY

Head of Service/Contact:	Shona Mason, Head of HR & Organisational Development
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Annexes/Appendices (attached):	Annex 1 - Draft Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Pension Discretions Policy
Other available papers (not attached):	Pay Policy Statement 2019/20

Report summary

This report provides background information on the proposed draft Pension Discretions Policy.

Recommendation (s)

That the Committee:

- (1) agrees the draft Pension Discretions Policy at Annex 1; and**
- (2) refers the draft Pension Discretions Policy to Council for approval.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 The Council's employees are a key part of its efforts to meet the Council's ambition to make Epsom & Ewell an excellent place to live and work, and its policies on the pay of staff will be important in ensuring that the Council meets its key priorities. In particular, any policy about pension is relevant to the Council's key priority of "Managing Resources" – the Council aims to utilise its limited resources in the most efficient and effective way.
- 1.2 There are no implications arising from this report for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

2 Background

- 2.1 Under the Local Government Pension Regulations, the Council is required to publish a written statement of its policy relating to certain discretionary powers relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- 2.2 The information set out in the draft policy, at **Annex 1**, meets the requirements of the legislation and details the Council's intentions on how it will apply the discretions.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The draft Policy is based on a document prepared by Surrey Pension Fund which outlines mandatory and optional discretions.
- 3.2 This covers matters relating to:
 - Whether to vary an employee's contribution band
 - Whether to increase assumed pensionable pay in certain specific circumstances
 - Funding of Additional Pension Contributions
 - Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVCs)
 - Whether to grant early payment of pension on compassionate grounds (pre-1st April 1998 leavers)
 - Flexible Retirement
 - Switching-on the 85-year rule
 - Waiving of Actuarial Reduction to Pensions
 - Award of Additional Pension
 - Aggregation of Benefits: Concurrent Employments
 - Aggregation of Benefits: Deferred Member becoming Active Member
 - Aggregation of Benefits: Deferred Member becoming Active Member (pre-2014 membership)
 - Inward Transfer of Pension Rights
 - Redundancy Payments
 - Compensation for loss of Employment
 - Injury Allowances
- 3.3 Surrey Pension Fund have provided advice to all the Surrey authorities on how to consider pension discretions. They have suggested the following statements to be included in the in any policy document:
 - If the Council would like to do something it may say; the Council may award (discretion) but each case will be considered on its merits.
 - If the Council do not want to something it may say; the Council will only award (discretion) in exceptional circumstances.

- If the Council is not sure about whether it will or will not do something it can say; the Council will not generally award (discretion) but each case will be considered on its merits.

- 3.4 The proposed Pension Discretions Policy has been drafted based on the advice from Surrey Pensions Fund with input from the Leadership Team and consideration of our context.
- 3.5 The Council may adopt some of these discretions but it should be noted that some involve a cost, such as flexible retirement, share cost AVC's or discretionary compensation.
- 3.6 It should be noted that the Policy states that the power to exercise and to take any decision in relation to the each of the discretions is delegated to the Chief Executive and in their absence the Chief Operating Officer.
- 3.7 The policy also includes that in the circumstances where the decision relates to the Chief Executive, the power to exercise and take any decision in relation to each of the discretions will be made by full Council.
- 3.8 This list of discretions is up to date, including the 2018 amendment regulations.
- 3.9 Once approved the policy will be published on the Council's website.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 There may be financial implications relating to individual cases where discretions are considered however these decisions will be delegated to the Chief Executive.
- 4.2 There are no other financial implications for this report.
- 4.3 Chief Finance Officer's comments: Any financial implication arising from an individual case would be assessed on its merits, with consideration given to funding, cost to the organisation and service efficiency.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 All qualifying local government employees are entitled to be members of the statutory Local Government Pension Scheme. Although a local authority is not able to opt out of the Scheme and or alter the main Scheme provisions, they do have some areas of discretion.
- 5.2 The Council is required under both Local Government legislation and Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, to have written policies on a number of pension related matters.

- 5.3 Although a comparison with other local authorities may assist with policy decisions, the nature of discretionary aspects of LGPS are designed to allow each employer the flexibility to assist with people management within their own context and circumstances.
- 5.4 Every employer is required to:
 - 5.4.1 keep their discretionary decisions policy under review
 - 5.4.2 make sure revisions are appropriate
 - 5.4.3 ensure all the discretionary decisions made are in accordance with the LGPS regulations
 - 5.4.4 in preparing, reviewing and making revisions to its Policy, employers must be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable, having regard to foreseeable costs.
- 5.5 An implications of the Equality Act legislation and Pension Scheme Orders, is that all staff should be treated equally regardless of their age, unless different treatment can be objectively justified. The Policy provides a framework for a consistent approach that can help avoid claims of discrimination.
- 5.6 ***Monitoring Officer's comments:*** none arising from the contents of the report.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications for this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 There are no implications for this report.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 A discretionary policy statement is a legal requirement for scheme employers, therefore by having one in place, the Council will be fulfilling its legal obligation, and negating financial and legal risks.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is requested to approve the draft Pension Discretion Policy and refers it on for Council approval.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);



DRAFT

Local Government
Pension
Discretion Policy

Version number: 1
Date: August 2019

Tracking

Policy Title	LGPS Discretion Policy		
LT sign off	27 August 2019		
Committee	Strategy & Resources	Date approved	26 November 2019 (TBC)
Review due date	August 2021	Review completed	
Service	HR & OD		

Revision History

Revision Date	Revisor	Previous Version	Description of Revision

Document Approvals

Each revision requires the following approvals:

Sponsor Approval		Name	Date

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** as an employer is under a legal duty to prepare and publish a written statement of its policy relating to certain discretionary powers under the Regulations which apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme (“the LGPS”).
- 1.2 **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** is also under a duty to formulate, publish and keep under review the policy that **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council** applies in exercising discretionary powers under Regulations relating to the payment of compensation to employees whose employment is terminated as a result of redundancy or certain other reasons.
- 1.3 This document is intended to comply with these duties and, in the table in Section 3, sets out the discretionary powers the discretion and describes how the discretion will be exercised.
- 1.4 The policy will not be departed from except as provided by the policy or following any variation to the policy approved by Full Council.
- 1.5 This statement is not a definitive statement of the law and is subject to the provisions of the relevant regulations.

2. Legislative Background

- 1.6 The Regulations that apply to the LGPS are:
 - The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (these are referred to as the “Pensions Regulations”);
 - The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (referred to as the “Transitional Regulations”);
 - The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applied to the LGPS before 1 April 2014, are preserved in part on a transitional basis by the Transitional Regulations and are referred to as the “Benefits Regulations”
- 1.7 The Regulations which apply to the payment of compensation to employees whose employment is terminated as a result of redundancy, other specified reasons or injury are:
 - The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (referred to as the “Compensation Regulations”).

- The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 (referred to as the “Injury Regulations”).

1.8 In the table in Section 3:

- 1.8.1 “The Scheme” or “the Pension Scheme” means the LGPS and “the Fund” or “the Pension Fund” means the fund maintained under the LGPS;
 - 1.8.2 “Member” means a member of the LGPS;
 - 1.8.3 “Active member” means a member in employment and paying, or treated as paying, contributions to the LGPS, or absent from employment for a reason mentioned in Regulation 11 of the Pensions Regulations.
 - 1.8.4 References to a member with transitional protection are those who can count membership accrued before 1 October 2006 and who have statutory transitional protection under the Transitional Regulations, wholly or partly, from changes that would otherwise be made to their pension entitlements and/or from actuarial reductions that would otherwise be applied to their pension benefits as a result of the coming into force of the Pensions Regulations on 1 April 2014.
 - 1.8.5 References to a member meeting “the 85 year rule” are those a members whose age in whole years when added to the member’s total membership in whole years is 85 years or more.
- 1.9 The power to exercise and to take any decision in relation to the each of the discretions is delegated to the Chief Executive and in their absence the Chief Operating Officer.
- 1.10 In the circumstances where the decision relates to the Chief Executive, the power to exercise and take any decision in relation to each of the discretions will be made by full Council.
- 1.11 This statement was approved by Leadership Team and Full Council and is intended to comply with **Epsom & Ewell Borough Council’s** duties under Regulation 60 of the Pensions Regulations, Regulation 7 of the Compensation Regulations and Regulation 14 of the Injury Regulations.
- 1.12 Further explanation of the terms referred to within this policy can be found on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) website
<https://lgpsmember.org/index.php>

3. Policy Statement

No.	Area	Regulation	Discretion	Explanation	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council Position
1	Whether to vary an employee's contribution band	Regulations 9 and 10 Pensions Regulations	Members must pay pension contributions at the appropriate rate set on 1st April or the first day of active membership, if later. The employer may vary the contribution rate if there is a change in employment or a material change that affects the member's pensionable pay.	Contribution bands are set on 1st April but the employer may change them if a member changes jobs or has a material pay increase / decrease.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council may vary the employee's contribution rate if there is a material change and each case will be considered on its merits.
2	Whether to increase assumed pensionable pay in certain specific circumstances	Regulation 21(5), 21(5A) and 21(5B) Pension Regulations	If a member is absent as a result of illness, child related leave or reserve forces leave their pension benefits may be based on assumed pensionable pay (APP). If, in the employer's opinion, the member's APP is materially lower than their pay in the twelve months preceding the absence they can either include (1) a "regular" lump sum received during that period or (2) substitute a higher pensionable pay having regard for their earnings in that period.	If a member's APP is lower than their regular pensionable pay the employer can either substitute a higher rate of pay, based on the pay they received in the year before the absence began, or, include regular lump sums received during that period.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council may increase assumed pensionable pay and each case will be considered on its merits.

3	Funding of Additional Pension Contributions	Regulations 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d)	Whether to fund, in whole or in part, a shared cost additional pension contributions (SCAPC) on behalf of an active member by	The employing authority can choose to pay additional pension	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will only contribute towards APCs in exceptional circumstances but each case will be considered on its merits.
4	Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVCs)	Regulation 17(1) and Schedule 1 (definition of SCAVC) Pension Regulations.	Whether to contribute towards a Shared Cost Additional Contribution arrangement. Pre-2014 SCAVCs also fall under Regulation 17 by virtue of Regulation 15(2A) Transitional Regulations.	An employer can choose to contribute towards a SCAVC.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will only contribute to SCAVCs in exceptional circumstances.
5	Whether to grant early payment of pension on compassionate grounds (pre-1st April 1998 leavers)	Regulation D11(2)(c) of 1995 Regulations	Whether to agree to early payment of pension benefits from age 50 on compassionate grounds. The employer should note that pension benefits paid before age 55 may attract an unauthorised payments surcharge and they may have to pay a strain cost because the pension benefits cannot be reduced.	The employer may agree to payment from age 50, but they may incur an unauthorised payments surcharge and/or a capital cost.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will only agree to early payment of pension in exceptional circumstances.
6	Flexible Retirement	Regulation 30(6),	Whether to agree to an employee aged 55 or over reducing their hours of work or their grade so that they may receive	The employing authority can agree to an employee	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will consider

		Pensions Regulations Regulations 11(2) and (3) of Transitional Regulations	all or some of their retirement pension while still employed. Whether, in addition to any pre-1st April 2008 pension benefits which the member must draw, to permit the member to draw; (a) all, part or none of benefits accrued between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014 and (b) all, part or none of the pension benefits built up after 31st March 2014	aged 55 or over drawing all or some of their pension and continuing to work in the same employment on reduced hours, pay or grade. The employer should note that granting consent would trigger the 85-year rule and may require a capital payment.	requests for flexible retirement based on cost to the organisation and service efficiency.
7	Switching-on the 85-year rule	Schedule 2 of Transitional Regulations	Whether to switch on the 85-year rule under Regulation 1(2) and 1(3) of Schedule 2 of the Transitional Regulations.	The employer can agree to switch on the 85-year rule, which may mitigate reductions that would, otherwise, apply but the employer may have to make a capital payment if they do so.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not switch-on the 85-year rule.
8	Waiving of Actuarial Reduction to Pensions	Regulation 30(8),	(Post 2014) Whether to agree to waive, in whole or in part, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise apply to	The employing authority can agree to waive reductions	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not generally

		Pensions Regulations Schedule 2 of Transitional Regulations	the pension paid o a former employee aged 55 or over under 30(5) or 30(6) [flexible retirement] using regulation 30(8) of the Pension Regulations. (Pre-2014) Whether to waive actuarial reductions entirely under 30(5) or 30A(5) [deferred pensioner members] of the Benefits Regulations and Regulation 2(1), of Schedule 2 of the Transitional Regulations.	to the pension of a member aged 55 or over who has left employment or been granted flexible retirement. The employer may be required to make a capital payment if they do so.	waive actuarial reductions but each case will be considered on its merits.
9	Award of Additional Pension	Regulation 31, Pensions Regulations	To award additional pension at full cost to the employer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an active member; or • a former active member who was dismissed by reason of redundancy, business efficiency or mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency. <p>Note: Any additional pension awarded (including any additional pension purchased by the employer or the member under Regulation 16 of the Pensions Regulations) may not exceed the overall additional pension limit of £6,822 (April 2018 and uplifted annually).</p> <p>Additionally, in the case of a member falling within (2) above, the resolution to award additional pension must be</p>	This means the employing authority has the power to award additional pension to an active member. The employer can also award additional pension to members who leave on the grounds of redundancy, business efficiency or mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency – up to six months after termination.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will only award additional pension in exceptional circumstances.

			made within 6 months from the date on which the employment ended.	The employer would be required to make a capital payment (in addition to the cost of purchase) if the member retired early on any grounds apart from permanent ill-health.	
10	Aggregation of Benefits: Concurrent Employments	Regulation 22 (7)(b), Pensions Regulations	Whether to allow an active member with concurrent employments, who ceases an employment with an entitlement to a deferred pension, more than 12 months to elect not to have their deferred pension aggregated with their active member's pension account.	The employing authority can allow a member who leaves one of two (or more) employments - held at the same time - longer than 12 months to elect not to combine the deferred pension with the ongoing active pension.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not extend the deadline.
11	Aggregation of Benefits: Deferred Member becoming Active Member	Regulation 22 (8)(b), Pensions Regulations	Whether to allow a deferred member who becomes an active member longer than 12 months in which to elect not to have their deferred benefits	The benefits are usually aggregated (joined-up), unless the member elects	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not extend the deadline.

			aggregated with the benefits in their active member's pension account.	to keep them separate. The employing authority can agree to a former member having longer than 12 months to choose not to combine their pensions.	
12	Aggregation of Benefits: Deferred Member becoming Active Member (pre-2014 membership)	Regulation 10(6)(b) Transitional Regulations	Whether to allow a deferred member who becomes an active member longer than 12 months in which to elect for their pre-2014 deferred benefits to be aggregated with their active member's pension account (but, technically, they would lose the final salary link if they have not made an election under 5(5) Transitional Regulations within twelve months of becoming an active member of 2013 scheme).	The pre-2014 preserved benefits will be kept separate unless the member makes a positive election to aggregate them. The employing authority can agree to a former member having longer than 12 months to choose to combine their pensions.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not extend the deadline.
13	Inward Transfer of Pension Rights	Regulation 100, Pensions Regulations	Whether to allow an employee who has been an active member in their current employment for more than 12 months to ask for the transfer of	Members who have been in the pension scheme for more than twelve months can ask for a	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not extend the deadline.

			<p>certain accrued pension rights to be considered.</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>Regulation 100(6) of the Pensions Regulations requires that a request must be made within 12 months beginning with the date on which the member first became an active member in an employment or such longer period as the employer and the Administering Authority may allow. The discretion is, therefore, only exercisable if both the Employing Authority and the Administering Authority agree.</p>	<p>transfer-in to be considered - but it will only be investigated if both the employing authority and the administering authority agreed.</p>	
14	Redundancy Payments	Regulation 5, Compensation Regulations 2006	Whether to base redundancy pay on actual pay where actual pay exceeds the statutory maximum under the Employment Rights Act 1996	The employer can base the calculation of a week's pay for redundancy on actual pay if it is higher than the statutory limit	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will pay redundancy payments based on actual weeks' pay as outlined in the Council's Managing Workforce Change policy.
15	Compensation for loss of Employment	Regulation 6, Compensation	Whether to pay compensation to a person whose employment ceases	The employing authority can make an award of up to	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will not award

		<p>Regulations 2006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by reason of redundancy; • in the interests of the efficient exercise of the employing authority's functions; or • in the case of a joint appointment, because the other holder of the appointment leaves <p>Note:</p> <p>Compensation may not be paid under this Regulation if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person's period of membership of the Pension Scheme has been increased under Regulation 12 of the Benefits Regulations 2007 (see above); or • a person has been awarded an additional pension under Regulation 13 of the Benefits Regulations 2007 (see above). <p>In all cases the amount of compensation paid under this Regulation may not exceed 104 weeks' pay less any redundancy payment payable.</p> <p>In all cases the decision to pay compensation under this Regulation must be made no later than 6 months</p>	<p>104 week's pay (less any redundancy payment payable).</p>	<p>compensation for loss of employment.</p>
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			after the date of termination of the person's employment.		
16	Injury Allowances	14(1) of the Compensation Regulations 2011	<p>Scheme employers (LGPS employers), apart from admission bodies, must formulate, publish and keep under review a policy on:</p> <p>3. whether to make an injury award to those who sustain an injury or contract a disease as a result of anything they were required to do in performing the duties of their job and in consequence of which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suffer a reduction in remuneration, or • cease to be employed as a result 	An employing authority may award an injury allowance to employees who contract an injury or illness related to their employment.	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council will only pay injury allowances in exceptional circumstances.

APPOINTMENT OF HONORARY ALDERMAN

Head of Service/Contact: Amardip Healy, Chief Legal Officer
Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Annexes/Appendices (attached): None
Other available papers (not attached): None

Report summary

The report invites the Committee to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Jean Steer in recognition of her eminent services to the Borough.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked:

- (1) that the Council places on record its deep appreciation of the eminent services to the Council rendered by former Councillor Jean Steer, and**
- (2) that a Special Meeting of the Council be convened immediately following Full Council on the 10 December 2019, at which members will be recommended to confer the title of Honorary Alderman**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

1.1 Not applicable.

2 Background

- 2.1 Section 249 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows Local Authorities to appoint both Honorary Freeman and Honorary Aldermen. The criterion for appointment as Freeman is that an individual should be a "person of distinction" and have "rendered eminent service to the place or area". The criterion for appointment as an Alderman is that an individual "should have rendered eminent service to the Council as [a] past Member of that

Council". There is no bar on an individual being both an Honorary Freeman and an Honorary Alderman.

- 2.2 The Local Government Act specifies that both Honorary Freemen and Honorary Aldermen must be appointed at a Special Meeting of Council, with the appointment being endorsed by a two thirds majority of those Members in attendance at the meeting.
- 2.3 Honorary Aldermen have no 'legal or social precedence' but it is custom and practice that they are invited to all Civic ceremonial events. The Aldermen have no right to attend meetings of the Council or its committees beyond those of the public, but the Council has recognised their attendance and allowing them to sit within the Chamber. The Aldermen status does not carry with it any allowances or payments to which serving councillors are entitled.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 It is customary for the Council in the first year of a new municipal term to consider the possibility of the award of honours to Councillors who have given long and distinguished service and who have usually held the office of Mayor of the Borough.
- 3.2 A nomination for former Councillor Jean Steer has been received by the Council's Chief Executive.
- 3.3 Former Councillor Jean Steer served as an Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillor for 24 years, from May 1995 to May 2019 and was Mayor of the Borough 2007-2008, and Deputy Mayor 2008-2009.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 There are costs of preparing the traditional scrolls and a photographer for the ceremony. It is also customary for the Council to cover the cost of any hospitality provided for the newly elected Alderman and a select number of guests.
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** The £4,000 of additional costs associated with the election of a new Alderman can be funded from within the 2019/20 civic expenses budget.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The formal decision to confer the status of Honorary Alderman must be ratified by a Special Meeting of the Council.
- 5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

7 Partnerships

7.1 Not applicable.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 There are no risks associated with this report.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 The Committee to consider conferring the title of Honorary Alderman on former Councillor Jean Steer in recognition of her eminent services to the Borough, and agrees to a Special Meeting to be requested.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

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POLLING PLACES REVIEW 2019

Head of Service/Contact:	Amardip Healy, Chief Legal Officer
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	no
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	no
Annexes/Appendices (attached):	Annex 1: Review Of Polling Districts, Polling Places & Polling Stations: Consultation – September 2019 Annex 2: Review Of Polling Districts, Polling Places & Polling Stations: Consultation Responses - October 2019
Other available papers (not attached):	Report to Council 23 July 2019, Notices of Motions; Report to S&R Committee, 24 September 2019 Electoral Commission: Reviews Of Polling Districts, Polling Places And Polling Stations https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-ama/electoral-administrator/polling-place-reviews

Report summary

Sets out the outcome of the consultation process on Polling Places and Districts and recommendations for proposed changes.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee recommends to Council:

- (1) the location of the polling places and districts as set out in Annex 2 for a five year period from 1st January 2020, or until it is superseded by any subsequent review of any polling place or district; and
- (2) delegates to the Chief Executive any ongoing review or change of polling places during this period, to ensure that polling arrangements in the Borough remain fit for purpose for each election called.

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 This report does not contribute directly to the above strategies specifically, but is being presented as part of the Chief Executive's statutory duty to comply with this review process as part of her role as Returning Officer.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Electoral and Registration Act 2013 requires that a review be completed between 1st October 2013 and 31st January 2015 inclusive, and also mandates for a further review to be carried out in every five year period subsequent to this.
- 2.2 The Council's Chief Executive, as Returning Officer for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council, is required to undertake regular reviews of polling districts and places in the Borough, and the polling stations within them.
- 2.3 Returning Officers are also responsible for providing a sufficient number of polling districts and polling places for elections, and for allocating electors to those districts and stations as they consider appropriate.
- 2.4 At least one polling place must be identified for each polling district. Polling places have polling stations located within them; so, for example, a primary school may be a polling place, with the classroom or hall where voting takes place comprising the actual polling station.
- 2.5 There are a number of factors that need to be considered when reviewing existing polling places or when assessing new polling places. In practice, the designation of polling places is very much dependent on the availability of suitable premises that can be used as polling places.
- 2.6 The current review cannot propose changes to Ward (or Borough or Constituency) boundaries, which is the responsibility of the Boundary Commission.
- 2.7 The Council has carried out the required review, and it is required to agree the outcome of the review by 31st January 2020. If agreed, the polling places proposed will be confirmed with effect from 1st January 2020, and will be those used for the Police & Crime Commissioner's Elections on 7th May 2020, or for any election called subsequent to 1st January 2020.
- 2.8 It is important to note the review has been carried out within a background that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is due to review the governance arrangements in the Borough. A further, more in-depth review of polling places will be carried out following the completion of that process, in line with its findings.

Council Motion on use of Schools as Polling Places

- 2.9 At its meeting on the 23rd July 2019, Council passed a Motion, where
“This Council agrees that it will no longer use any schools that, in order to act as a polling station, would have to close for the day. It will provide polling districts which have been accustomed to using such schools with alternative polling stations as near as possible to that polling stations”.
- 2.10 It is important to note that the legislation (Representation of the People Act 1983, Schedule A1) sets out the requirements for polling place reviews. This requires Local Authorities to comply with the access requirements. As part of the review they must:
- Seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
 - Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practical every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.
- 2.11 In the event these tests are not met, an elector has a right of representation (ie appeal). The two appeal grounds are:
- The local authority has failed to meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency
 - The local authority has failed to take sufficient account of accessibility to disabled persons of the polling station/ polling stations within a polling place.

It is therefore clear, that a polling place is determined with the elector as the primary interest, no other considerations form part of the legislative requirements.

Set up of Member Working Group to consider representations on Review

- 2.12 The public consultation on the review of polling district and places processes started on the 11th September and ended on the 16th October 2019. In light of Members' wish to avoid the use of schools following the Council meeting in July, a report was taken to Strategy & Resources Committee on the 24th September 2019 to establish a Working Group of Members to consider representations received and for their proposals to be brought back before Strategy & Resources Committee on 26 November 2019.

- 2.13 The Working Group consisted of cross party members and met on 17th October 2019 to review and consider the responses received. At the meeting they asked Officers to carry out further enquires and met again on 29th October 2019 to review and finalise their discussions.

3 Proposals

Current Arrangements

- 3.1 The Borough is divided into 13 electoral wards. Of these Wards:
- 3.1.1 Two are made of 1 polling district and has one polling place (Auriol, Ruxley);
 - 3.1.2 Seven are made of 2 polling districts with 2 polling places in each Ward (Cuddington, Ewell Court, West Ewell, Court, Stoneleigh, Nonsuch, College);
 - 3.1.3 Four are made up of 3 polling districts with 3 polling places in each Ward (Stamford, Ewell, Town, Woodcote)

Consultation Exercise

- 3.2 Consultation in relation to the Polling Districts and Places review was carried out for five weeks between September and October 2019, a copy of the consultation document is attached at **Annex 1**. The review was conducted in accordance with the Electoral Commission's guidance on conducting such reviews.
- 3.3 So as to ensure as wide a circulation of the Consultation exercise, all the affected Schools (ie those allocated as Polling Places) were contacted directly to advise of the review and were asked to disseminate the details of the review to the school community.
- 3.4 Following close of the Consultation exercise, a number of representations were received, and the breakdown for all the representations is contained at **Annex 2**. In essence, the representations were made up as follows:

Ward	Total Number Received
GENERAL	2
RUXLEY	2
COURT	22
EWELL	1
NONSUCH	14
TOWN/COLLEGE	1
WOODCOTE	1

- 3.5 All the representations for Court and Nonsuch and one from Ruxley related directly to the use of three schools as polling places.

Working Group considerations

- 3.6 The Working Group considered all the representations at their meeting on 17th October. There were a number of alternative venues suggested both by those making representations, but also by the Working Group members and Officers.
- 3.7 Following an assessment of the options, the Working Group met again on 29th October 2019 and number of recommendations were agreed to be put forward for consideration by Strategy & Resources Committee.
- 3.8 The recommendations are as follows:

3.8.1 Ruxley Ward

- a. Of the two representations received, one was from Epsom & Ewell High School requesting the School not be used. The School is currently a double polling place.
- b. Although the School does not need to close, it chooses to limit access to certain School years. The School also complained that over the years a number of incidents arising out of those voting at the School.
- c. In response to the School's concerns, the Council did instigate a number of steps to manage the concerns raised by the School. These steps worked well for both the Local Elections and the European Elections in 2019 this year, with no incidents being reported.
- d. Officers were asked to look at the local Scout Hut to see if was suitable to replace the polling place at the school. The Scout Hut is in a poor state of repair and has a number of accessibility issues and therefore is not suitable as a polling place.
- e. It is therefore recommended that Epsom & Ewell High School remains as a polling place.

3.8.2 West Ewell Ward:

- a. The recommendation of the Acting Returning Officer in the Consultation document was for the Polling Place for Polling District EA of Harrier Centre, King George V Recreation Ground, Poole Road, West Ewell to be changed. The suggestion is to use West Ewell Evangelical Church, Lansdowne Road, West Ewell. The Church was used previously but has been unavailable until now.

- b. **Recommendation:** to change EA to West Ewell Evangelical Church, Lansdowne Road, West Ewell

3.8.3 Court Ward:

- a. In principle, the representations related to the use of Southfields School and the impact of the School having to close on the school community. The School confirmed it tries to use inset days for pre-planned elections, but those elections which were not anticipated required the School to close. The School is currently used as a double Polling Station.
- b. An option was considered and accepted which allowed the School to be used as a single polling station, which would then allow it to remain open. The School have confirmed such an arrangement would allow them to remain open.
- c. This arrangement would require the creation of a further polling district within the Ward ie from two to three with the use of Bowling Pavilion at the Court Recreation Ground as the polling place for the third polling district. The Pavilion is not large enough to be set up as a double station, but is sufficient for one. This allows Southfields School to alter their arrangements in a way which then allows it to remain open.
- d. The longer term solution to the use of Southfields School will be the use of the refurbished Horton Chapel. It is hoped all works will be completed in time for the next Borough Elections. Once completed Horton Chapel will be assessed as to its suitability as a Polling Place to replace Southfields School.
- e. It is therefore recommended that the Ward is split into three Polling Districts, that Southfields School changes to a single polling place and that a new District of FC be created and that the Bowling Pavilion at the Court Recreation Ground be allocated as a single polling place for the new district. The breakdown of FA and FC to be as follows:

Table 1: New FA: Southfields School

Road	No of Properties	No of electors
Brettgrave	24	46
Briane Grove	4	8
Burnhams Grove	35	55
Buxton Close	12	23
Calvert Close	6	14
Cavendish Walk	68	128
Chantilly Way	2	3
Davison Close	5	13
Eastman Way	85	114
Haven Drive	60	18

Hine Close	5	11
Hook Road 291-337b inc Horton Farm & 260-330 evens	67	130
Horton Crescent	111	182
Long Grove Road	28	65
Marston	13	22
Norris Close	7	16
Parkhurst	24	42
Pelman Way	70	106
Riley Close	6	17
Saville Close	12	25
Tichmarsh	24	36
Tobin Close	7	14
Westcote Road	34	55
	709	1143

Table 2: New FC: Court Recreation Ground

Road	No of Properties	No of electors
Almond Road	28	67
Andover Close	48	85
Blakeney Close	14	34
Eastway	45	71
Holland Close	7	12
Hook Road 181-289 odds & 178 – 232 evens including Tomlin Court	129	206
Horton Hill	166	310
Hurst Road	16	28
Lower Court Road	128	251
Manor Green Road	49	71
Pound Close	6	11
Pound Lane	46	57
Relko Court	14	27
Temple Road	3	0
Tomlin Close	6	11
Tonstall Road	96	172
Trigo Court	5	6
Upper Court Road	73	135
Vancouver Close	3	5
	882	1559

3.8.4 Nonsuch Ward:

- a. All the representations for Nonsuch Ward relate to the use of Wallace Fields Junior School. The make-up of the representations was as follows:
Members: 2: Cllr C Frost and Cllr N Collin
Public representations: 12
- b. The objections relate to the impact on the school community from closure, since the School closes on a Polling Day.
- c. A number of alternative sites were considered: NESLOT, Alexander Recreation Ground Football Pavilion, Wallace Fields Infant School, Alexander Recreation Ground Martial Arts Centre and Glyn School Pavilion, Reigate Road, although a response is still awaited from one of the listed options. Prior to the start of the review, Officers have been working to identify suitable alternative sites, as yet without success. The nature of Polling District IB has made finding a new location very difficult and this is why the current Polling Place, even though it sits just outside the Ward, has previously been selected.
- d. The Working Group has asked for work to continue in finding an alternative and this has included consideration of the use of temporary buildings such as a portacabin. Therefore, although with great reluctance it was agreed there is no recommendation for a change to IB, Officers have been asked to continue to urgently find an alternative solution in time for the Police & Crime Commissioners Elections in May 2020.
- e. It was agreed that if a recommendation for a change could be brought to the Working Group a request would be made to allow such a change to be brought to Council in February 2020.

- 3.9 To enable changes to be made quickly, in the event they can be, not just in relation to those matters identified as a part of this review, a delegation is being sought for the Chief Executive to agree both a review and a change more generally without the need to go back to both Strategy & Resources and Council to instigate a new polling place. This delegation would enable any necessary change which to be made in time for the Police and Crime Commissioner's election in May 2020.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 The cost of venue hire for national elections and referenda is met by central Government. Costs for local elections are covered by allocated budgets

- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** In the event the use of temporary structures is accepted as a solution, then this will have a cost implication and these additional costs will need to be funded from within existing resources.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 This review has been undertaken in accordance with Section 18 of Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006), which requires such a review to be undertaken every five years. A review requires all of the steps set out in Schedule A1 of Representation of the People Act 1983 to be met, as demonstrated by this report and its appendices.
- 5.2 In addition, due consideration has been given to the requirements of the Electoral and Registration Act 2013 in relation to the timing of this review.
- 5.3 The Council has due regard to its equality duties under Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010. In addition, it is a legal requirement of the Returning Officer that, in so far as is reasonable and practical, every polling place is accessible to electors with disabilities. This has been taken fully into account during this review process.
- 5.4 Appropriate equipment (such as ramps, visual enhancement aids and braille information) will continue to be provided at all polling stations, and all polling staff will continue to be fully trained to provide support and facilities for voters with disabilities.
- 5.5 The regulations that govern the use of schools falls under rule 22, Schedule 1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. There is a duty imposed on schools who are either maintained or assisted in any way by money provided by Parliament, to be used free of charge (with the exception of certain expenses) as polling places.
- 5.6 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** none arising from the contents of this report.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 None

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 None

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 None

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to note the outcome of the public consultation exercise and approve the proposed changes and recommendations to Council.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);



Public Consultation

Polling District and Polling Places Review

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

September 2019

**Kathryn Beldon Acting Returning Officer
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council
The Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey KT15 8BY**

www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk

Background

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (Section 16) introduced a number of changes to the Representation of the People Act 1983 in respect of the way in which reviews of polling districts and polling places must be undertaken.

First Review

The Act specified how frequently reviews should be undertaken and made it a requirement that relevant authorities (i.e. this Council) carry out a review every four years. The Council was required to conclude the first review by 31 December 2007. The review was duly undertaken in September 2007 and the outcome of the review reported to Council in December of that year.

Subsequent Reviews

Notwithstanding the legislation, the Council regularly reviews its polling places but duly completed a second statutory review in December 2011.

The Electoral Registration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews and the next compulsory review that had to be held between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015 was completed in December 2014. The next review has a requirement to be held and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020

Definition of a Parliamentary Constituency, a Ward, Polling District, Polling Place and Polling Station

To assist any interested party who may wish to make representations, the following definitions may be helpful:

a) Parliamentary Constituency

This is an area designated by the Boundary Commission which is represented by a Member of Parliament (MP) in the House of Commons. This cannot be changed by the review – it is the division of the constituency into polling districts and places that is under review.

b) Wards

The Borough is divided into areas known as “Wards” which are represented by Borough Councillors.

c) Polling Districts

A polling district is the area created by the division of a Ward into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is most suitable for the electors.

d) Polling Places

A polling place is the building or area in which the number of polling stations will be selected by the Acting Returning Officer.

e) Polling Station

A polling station is the room or area in which voting takes place. This must be located within the polling place that has been designated for the particular polling district. The number of polling stations to be accommodated within a polling place is the decision of the Acting Returning Officer.

Timetable for the Review

The Council is required to publish notice of the holding of a review. This has been carried out by way of notices posted outside the Town Hall, Epsom and on the Council's website. The timetable for the review is set out below:

Publication of notice	11 September 2019
Publication of consultation document	11 September 2019
Closing date for representations	5pm, 16 October 2019
Consideration of all representations	16 – 18 October 2019
Report to Strategy and Resources Committee	26 November 2019
New Register 2020 published	2 December 2019
Report to Full Council	10 December 2019
Publication of notice of amendments to electoral register and intention to publish revised version of register (If necessary)	19 December 2019
Publication of revised version of register (if necessary)	2 January 2020

Criteria for Polling Places and Polling Districts

The Electoral Commission has set out guidance to assist in assessing the current arrangements and any proposals for change.

As part of the assessment of the suitability of polling district boundaries, the following should be considered:

- Are the boundaries well defined? For example. Do they follow the natural boundaries of the areas? If not, is it clear which properties belong in the polling district?
- Are there suitable transport links within the polling district, and how do they relate to the areas of the district that are most highly populated? Are there any obstacles to voters crossing the current polling district and reaching the polling place e.g. steep hills, impassable major roads, railway lines, rivers?

There are also a number of factors that must be considered when reviewing existing polling places or assessing new polling places, including:

- The location: is it reasonably accessible within the polling district? Does it avoid barriers for the voter such as steep hills, major roads, rivers, etc.? Are there any convenient transport links?
- Size: can the polling place accommodate more than one polling station if required? If multiple polling stations are required, is the polling place ample enough to accommodate all voters going into and out of the polling stations, even where there is a high turnout?
- Suitability: is the building readily available in the event of any unscheduled elections? Is there any possibility that the building may be demolished as part of a new development? Is the building accessible to all those entitled to attend the polling place?

The Electoral Commission recognises that the choice of polling place will often be a balance between the quality of the building in terms of access and facilities and the proximity of the building to the electors it is intended to serve and that there may be circumstances, as in the case of College Ward, where the polling place might fall wholly or partly outside the polling district because suitable alternatives are not available in the relevant Ward.

Although it is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible, there may be locations where there are no other suitable premises in the area. If a school is used, the polling station(s) should be located within the school grounds to enable the school to remain open with suitable separation of pupils from voters to cause minimal disruption to the school day. Any decision to close any school ultimately remains with the school itself.

There are occasions where a school may be the only option available, and it may need to close.

For the purposes of elections, the Acting Returning Officer is entitled to use free of charge, subject to covering the cost of heating, lighting and caretaking charges, schools maintained or assisted by a local authority as well as those schools that receive grants made up of monies provided by Parliament.

In conducting this review, it is proposed that, in order to minimize the risk of queues at a polling place, as far as possible, around 1500 and no more than 2000 voters should be assigned to each polling station as recommended by the Electoral Commission (find doc ref). It should be noted that the number of postal voters in each polling district is a relevant consideration in this regard. In the event of a combined and/or Parliamentary Election, given more complex arrangements and higher voter turnout, it may be necessary to review these numbers. In all circumstances, consideration is given to whether a polling place is capable of accommodating more than one polling station, if necessary.

Current practice, to avoid confusion and delays at polling stations and the Count, is not to locate polling stations from more than one Ward in the same building and this will be taken into consideration when considering any proposals.

Polling station staff are encouraged to make comments and observations regarding the suitability of polling places to which they are allocated and Polling Station Inspectors visited all polling stations during the recent elections in May 2019. Comments have been taken into account when conducting this review.

The Role of the Acting Returning Officer

Whilst it is for the Council to decide on the creation of polling districts and location of polling places, it is for the Acting Returning Officer to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling station and must allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as he or she thinks most conducive to the smooth running of polling day.

The Council is required to consult the Returning Officer for every Parliamentary Constituency that is wholly or partly within its area. The whole of the Borough falls within the Parliamentary Constituency of Epsom and Ewell there are no other Constituencies wholly or partly within its area.

Therefore the Council needs only to consult the Acting Returning Officer for Epsom and Ewell as part of the review and the Acting Returning Officer must comment during any review on both the existing polling districts and the polling stations and any proposed changes.

Other representations

Any elector in the Constituency may make representations on the designation of polling districts or places.

The Council is also required to seek representations from those with an expertise in relation to access to premises and facilities for disabled people. Such persons must also be given the opportunity to comment on the representations made by the Acting Returning Officer (which are contained in this consultation document).

Summary of Consultees

Set out below is a list of persons specifically notified about the review:

- The Member of Parliament for Epsom and Ewell, Chris Grayling
- Surrey Coalition of Disabled People (www.surreycoalition.org.uk)
- All Epsom and Ewell Borough Councillors
- All Surrey County Councillors representing divisions within the Epsom area
- Election agents who acted at the 2019 Borough elections
- Candidates who stood in the 2019 Borough elections
- Registered political parties who regularly field candidates in local and parliamentary elections in the Borough

Completion of the review

After considering all of the representations, a report will be presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee. It is anticipated that this will be at its meeting on 26 November 2019. The Strategy and Resources Committee will consider the report and make recommendations as it thinks appropriate to Full Council on 10 December 2019 at which the final decisions will be made.

The Council is required to give reasons for its decisions in respect of the designation of both polling districts and polling places and these will be published, together with the following information, on the Council's website and made available, on request, at the Town Hall, Epsom:

- all correspondence sent to the Acting Returning Officer in connection with the review
- all correspondence sent to any person who the Council 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 by the Council where details of the review have been considered;
- details of the actual designations of polling districts and polling places agreed as a result of the review; and

Challenging the Review

Although the Electoral Commission has no initial role in the review process itself, it does have an important role in respect of considering representations and observations made that a Council has failed to conduct a proper review on one of two grounds:

- that the Council has failed to meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency, or a body of them (i.e. the reasonable requirements of a particular area of the authority have not been satisfactorily met);

or

- that the Council has failed to take sufficient account of the accessibility to disabled persons of polling stations within a designated polling place.

Representations based on any other grounds will not be considered by the Commission.

All representations made to the Commission must be in writing either by post, or email and should include the location and any other relevant information, stating specifically why it is inaccessible or does not meet the reasonable requirements of the electors.

Who may make a representation to the Electoral Commission?

Section 18D (1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, sets out who may make representations to the Electoral Commission namely;

- not less than thirty registered electors in the constituency (although electors registered anonymously cannot make a representation)
- a person (except the Acting Returning Officer) who made representations to the council when the review was being undertaken
- any person who is not an elector within the constituency but who the Electoral Commission feels has sufficient interest in the accessibility of disabled persons in the areas or has particular expertise in relation to the access to premises or facilities of disabled persons

The Acting Returning Officer is entitled to make observations on any representations made to the Commission.

What will the Electoral Commission do?

The Electoral Commission is required to consider any representations and observations and may direct the relevant council to make any alterations it sees necessary to the polling places designated by the review. Should a Council fail to make the alterations within two months of the direction being given, the Commission may make the alterations itself.

Proposals

Set out in Appendix A are details of current polling districts and polling places for each of the 13 Wards within the Borough of Epsom and Ewell.

Appendix B contains a map and a breakdown for each polling place with the details of any proposed changes and the comments of the Acting Returning Officer. Included in Appendix B are details of known proposed housing developments. The potential increase in the electorate in any affected polling districts is an estimate based on two eligible electors per property and full occupancy of the approximate number of proposed dwellings.

The electorate, broken down into polling districts, is based on the electorate as at 1 September 2019.

Any significant comments from polling station staff or polling station inspectors regarding the condition or accessibility of currently used polling places are included where appropriate.

A full review of polling places was last conducted in 2014 and this review is available on the Council's website.

There are no known plans which would affect the availability of those Council-owned premises currently used as polling places, with the exception of The Wells Social Centre, in polling district G(C). The Council has had no indication that private venues currently used, will not be available in future, apart from as indicated in Appendix B.

Representations

Any persons wishing to make comments or representations regarding the proposals may do so. Any representations you wish to make should be **received by close of business 5pm on 16 October 2019**

All representations must be made in writing either by post or email.

Representations by post should be sent to:

Electoral Services (Polling Station Review)
Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
The Town Hall
The Parade
Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5BY

Representations by email should be sent to:

electoralservices@epsom-ewell.gov.uk

For any queries, please telephone 01372 732000 and ask to speak to Electoral Services.

All representations will be published on the Council's website after the closing date for representations.

The final decision will be taken by Full Council at its meeting on 10 December 2019 and, if necessary, a notice of any alterations to the register will be published on the Council's website no later than 19 December 2019. Any new polling districts and polling places will become effective at all elections held after 2 January 2020.

Appendix A

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

Schedule of Current Polling Districts and Polling Stations

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE
CUDDINGTON	AA	Rowe Hall, 2 nd Cuddington Scout HQ, Salisbury Road, Worcester Park KT4 7LP
	AB	St Mary's Church Hall, The Avenue, Worcester Park KT4 7HL
AURIOL	B	Stoneleigh Methodist Church Centre, Stoneleigh Crescent, Ewell KT19 0RT
EWELL COURT	CA	Ruxley Church, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell KT19 0JG
	CB	Ewell Court House, Ewell Court Avenue, Ewell KT19 0EB
RUXLEY	D	Epsom & Ewell High School, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell KT19 9JW
WEST EWELL	EA	Harrier Centre, King George V Rec Ground, Poole Road, West Ewell KT19 9RY
	EB	All Saints Church & Community Centre, Fulford Road, West Ewell KT19 9QY
COURT	FA	Southfield Park Primary School, Long Grove Road, Epsom KT19 8TF
	FB	Community & Wellbeing Centre (Main Hall) (Former Longmead Centre), Sefton Road, Epsom KT19 9HG
STAMFORD	GA	The Fellowship Hall, West Hill, Epsom KT19 8JD
	GB	The Church Hall, Christ Church, Christ Church Road, Epsom KT19 8NE
	GC	The Wells Social Centre, Spa Drive, Epsom KT18 7LR
STONELEIGH	HA	Stoneleigh Baptist Church Hall, The Glade, Stoneleigh KT17 2HL
	HB	Stoneleigh Baptist Church Hall, The Glade, Stoneleigh KT17 2HL

WARD	POLLING DISTRICT	POLLING PLACE
NONSUCH	IA	St Paul's Church Centre, Northey Avenue, Cheam SM2 7HS
	IB	Wallace Fields Junior School, Dorling Drive, Ewell KT17 3BH
EWELL	JA	Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell KT17 1UF
	JB	Glyn School, The Kingsway, Ewell KT17 1NB
	JC	Defoe Court, 87 East Street, Epsom KT17 1AQ
TOWN	KA	Defoe Court, 87 East Street, Epsom KT17 1AQ
	KB	Epsom Playhouse, Ashley Avenue, Epsom KT18 5AL
	KC	St. Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom KT19 8TU
COLLEGE	LA	The Pavilion, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Alexandra Road, Epsom KT17 4BU
	LB	The Church House, Church Street, Epsom KT17 4PX
WOODCOTE	MA	Grace Baptist Church, 32 Dorking Road, Epsom KT18 7NH
	MB	St Martin's C of E Junior School, Ashley Road, Epsom KT18 7AD
	MC	Langley Vale Village Hall, Rosebery Road, Epsom KT18 6AF

Appendix B

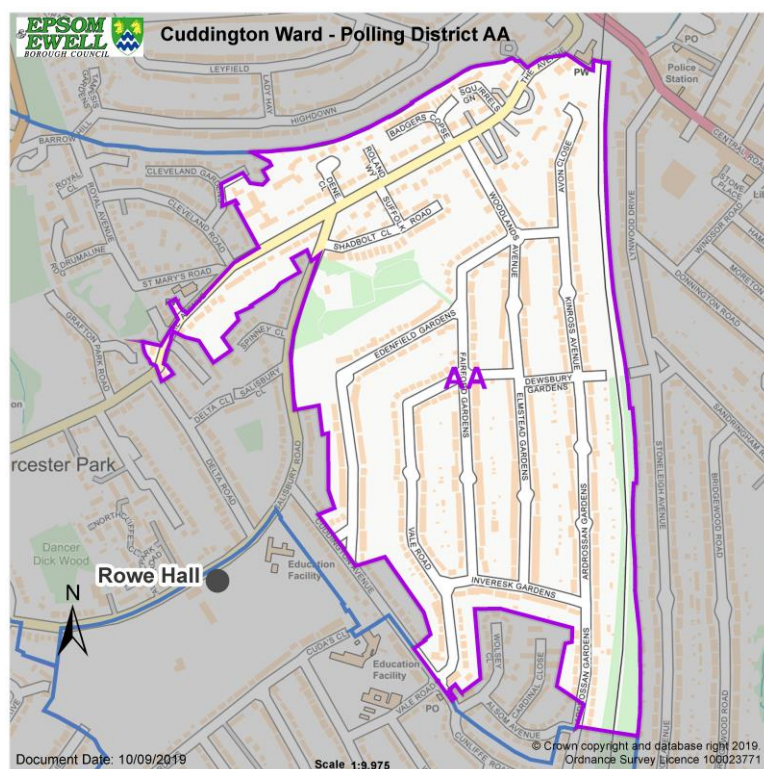
Epsom & Ewell Borough Council

**Existing Polling Districts and Places & Acting Returning Officers'
representations**

Cuddington Ward

Number of Polling Districts:	Two
Number of Polling Places:	Two
Electorate in Ward:	4522
Postal Voters in Ward:	641
Notes	There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	A(A)
Electorate in District:	2475
Postal Voters:	331
Polling Place	Scout Hut (Rowe Hall), Salisbury Road, Worcester Park
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	1
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – limited off-street parking available on site. On-street parking available around venue.



Cuddington Ward A(A) cont

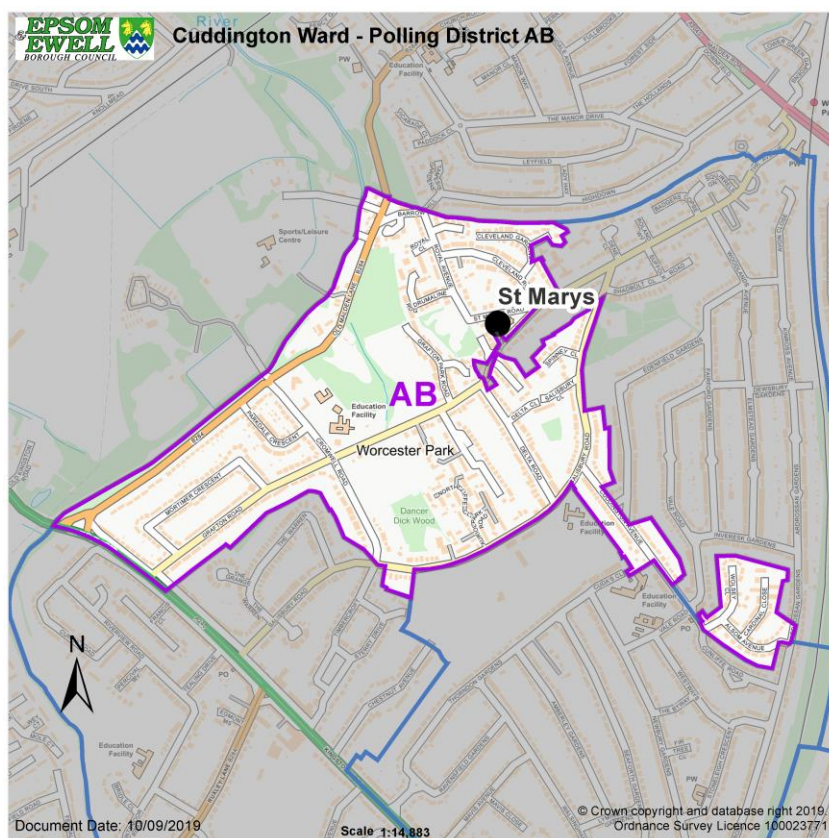
Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Cuddington Ward (cont)

Polling District	A(B)
Electorate in District	2047
Postal Voters	310
Polling Place	St Mary's Church Hall, The Avenue, Worcester Park
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	2
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking - off-street parking available on site. On-street parking also available around venue.

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

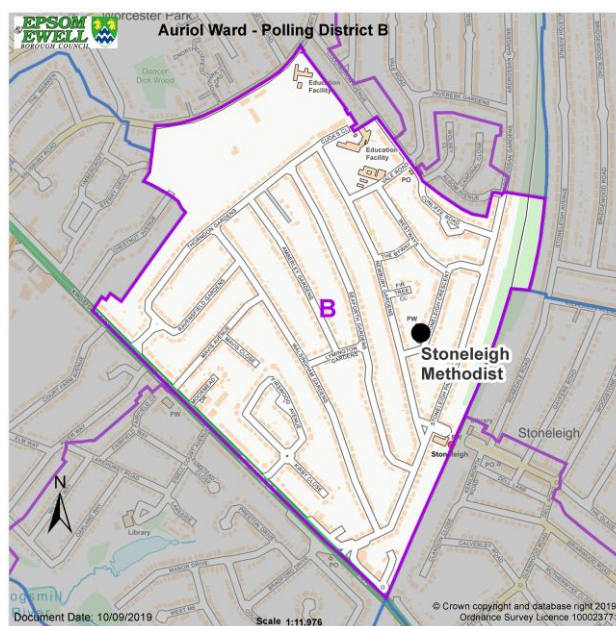
No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Auriol Ward

Number of Polling Districts: One
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **3096**
 Postal Voters in Ward: **390**
 Notes: There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	B
Electorate in District	3096
Postal Voters	390
Polling Place	Stoneleigh Methodist Church Centre, Stoneleigh Crescent, Stoneleigh, Ewell
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	3
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site. On-street parking available around venue.

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

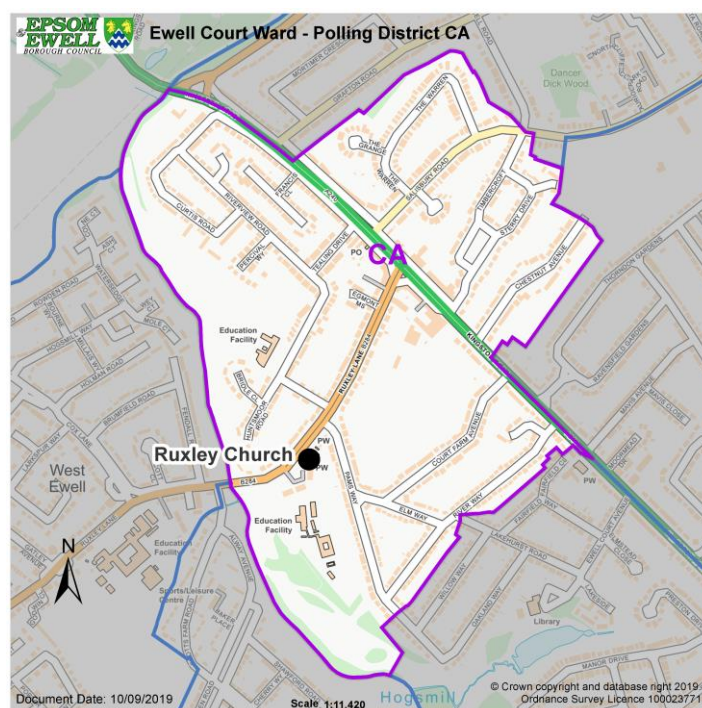
No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Ewell Court Ward

Number of Polling Districts: Two
 Number of Polling Places: Two
 Electorate in Ward: **4330**
 Postal Voters in Ward: **666**
 Notes: There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	C(A)
Electorate in District	2626
Postal Voters	418
Polling Place	Ruxley Church, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	4
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location - Good Disabled access - Good Parking – off-street parking available on site.

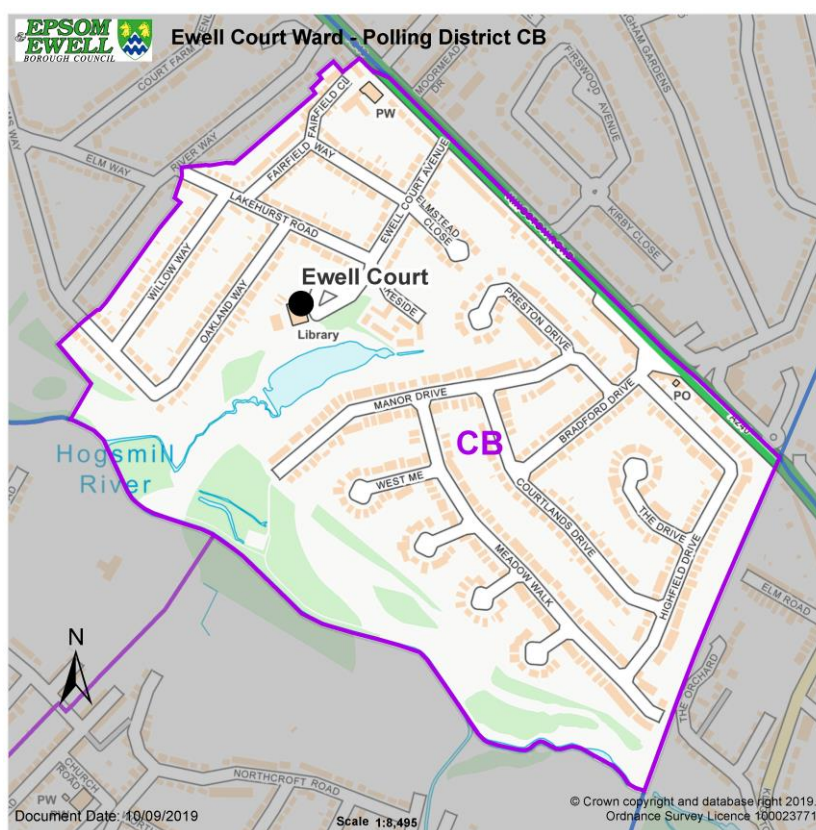
**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

The church has been designated as the polling place for C(A) since 2013. No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Ewell Court Ward (cont)

Polling District	C(B)
Electorate in District	1704
Postal Voters	248
Polling Place	Ewell Court House, Lakehurst Road, Ewell
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	5
Proposal	No change
Comments	Council owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good via separate side door Parking - off-street parking available

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

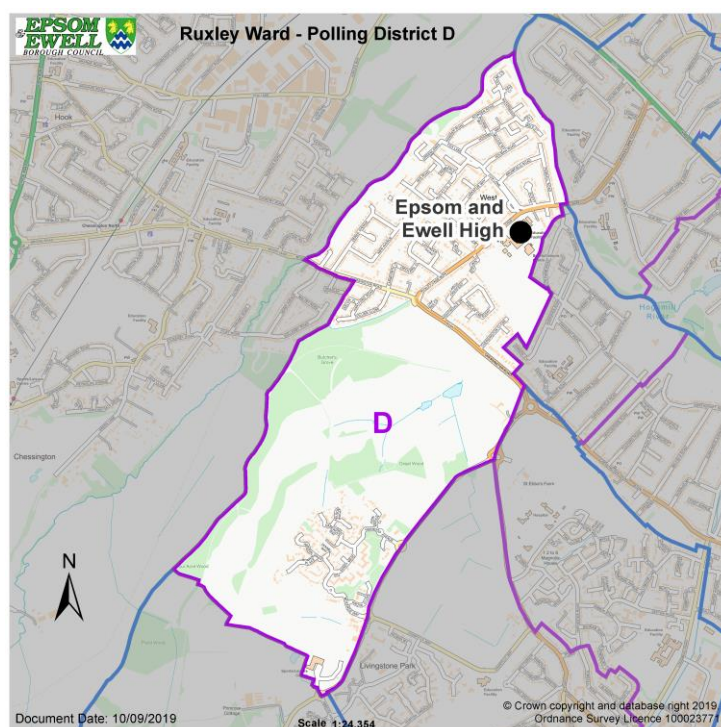
No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Ruxley Ward

Number of Polling Districts: One
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **4608**
 Postal Voters in Ward: **699**
 Notes: There has recently been approved a housing development which could increase the electorate

Polling District	D
Electorate in District	4608
Postal Voters	699
Polling Place	Epsom & Ewell High School, Ruxley Lane, West Ewell
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	6
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on-site for disabled only during school hours</p> <p>Polling station is located in the North Annexe which is separate from main school building and the School remains open on polling day.</p>



Ruxley Ward (cont)**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

In 2014 a representation was received from a resident of the Clarendon Park area stating that they believed the distance of the polling station from Clarendon Park was potentially a deterrent to voters.

It is recognised that the location of the current polling place in Ruxley Ward is not entirely satisfactory but enquiries have failed to identify any premises suitable for designation as a polling place in the southern half of the Ward and there would be a significant cost implication in providing temporary accommodation even if a suitable location could be found.

The number of voters potentially voting at each station is just over the recommended tolerance set by the Electoral Commission and there is possible scope for increasing the number of polling stations at the premises.

There are proposals to develop the school playing fields which could increase the electorate by 300-400 voters. In the event of this happens, then an alternative location within the school may need to be identified. The development site could be included into West Ewell ward subject to the necessary permissions from the Boundary Commission.

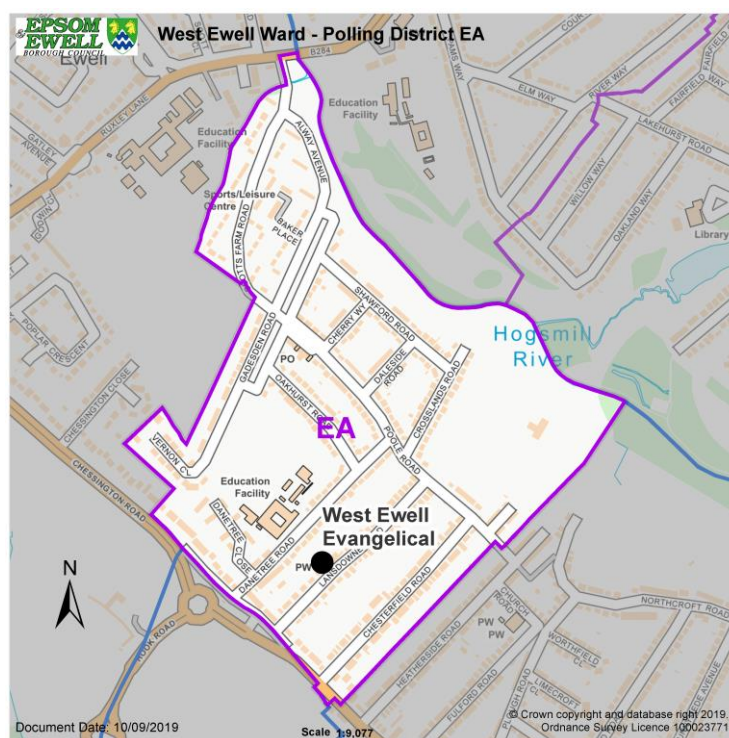
There have been issues with parking for voters during the school hours, however a compromise has been reached with the School to enable on site parking for disabled voters. There is on street parking available in roads close to the School. To advise voters regarding the limited vehicle access a warning is now printed on poll cards.

In the absence of any alternatives, I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

West Ewell Ward

Number of Polling Districts	Two
Number of Polling Places	Two
Electorate in Ward	4711
Postal Voters in Ward	489
Notes	There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	E(A)
Electorate in District	1492
Postal Voters	144
Polling Place	West Ewell Evangelical Church, Lansdowne Road, West Ewell
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	7
Proposal	Change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - satisfactory Parking – Limited off-street parking on site; on-street parking on residential road.</p> <p>First used as a polling place in 2013. These premises are used as an alternative to Danetree School until 2016. Unfortunately it became unavailable and the Harrier Centre, Poole Road has been used since 2017. The Church has now indicated it is now available again and the intention is to revert back.</p>

West Ewell Ward EA (cont)**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

First used as a polling place in 2013 the church was used as an alternative to Danetree School until 2016. Unfortunately the church became unavailable and the Harrier Centre, Poole Road has been used since 2017. Although the facilities within the Harrier centre are good comments have been made by voters regarding parking. The main car park is quite a distance from the actual building and the access road to the disabled parking is narrow, with limited disabled parking adjacent to the building. The Harriers Athletic Club meet on a Thursday evening so the main car park does become full causing voters to have to park on adjacent roads.

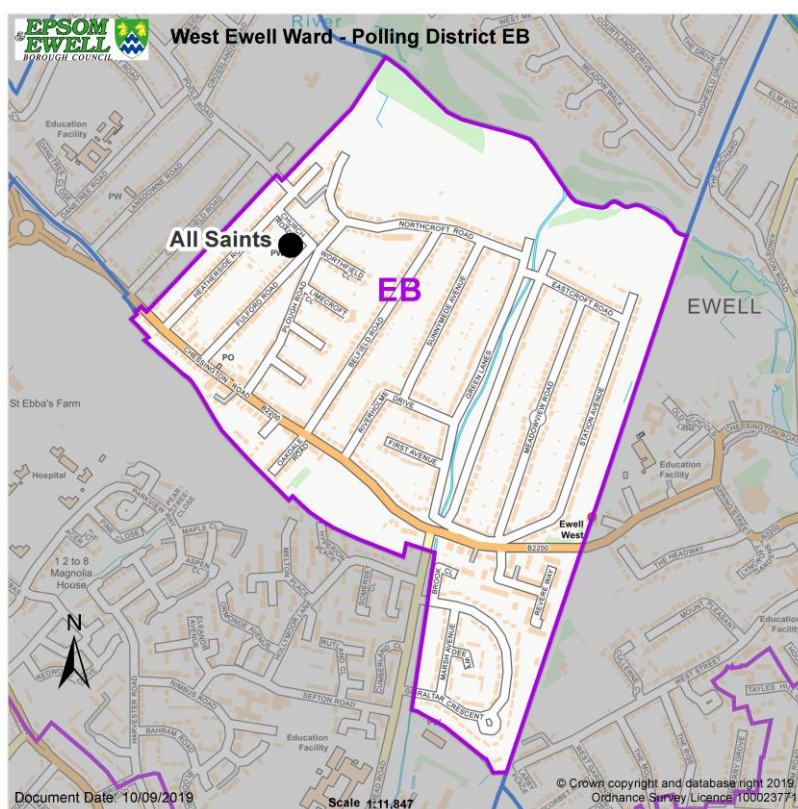
The Church has indicated that it would be available again and the recommended change is for the Church to be designated

I am not aware of any adverse feedback regarding the use of the Church.

Subject to the above comments being accepted, I consider the changes to the polling place to be appropriate. I consider the current polling district appropriate.

West Ewell Ward (cont)

Polling District	E(B)
Electorate in District:	3219
Postal Voters	345
Polling Place	All Saints Church Community Centre Fulford Road, West Ewell
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	8
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – limited off-street parking available on site otherwise on-street parking in residential road.

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Court Ward

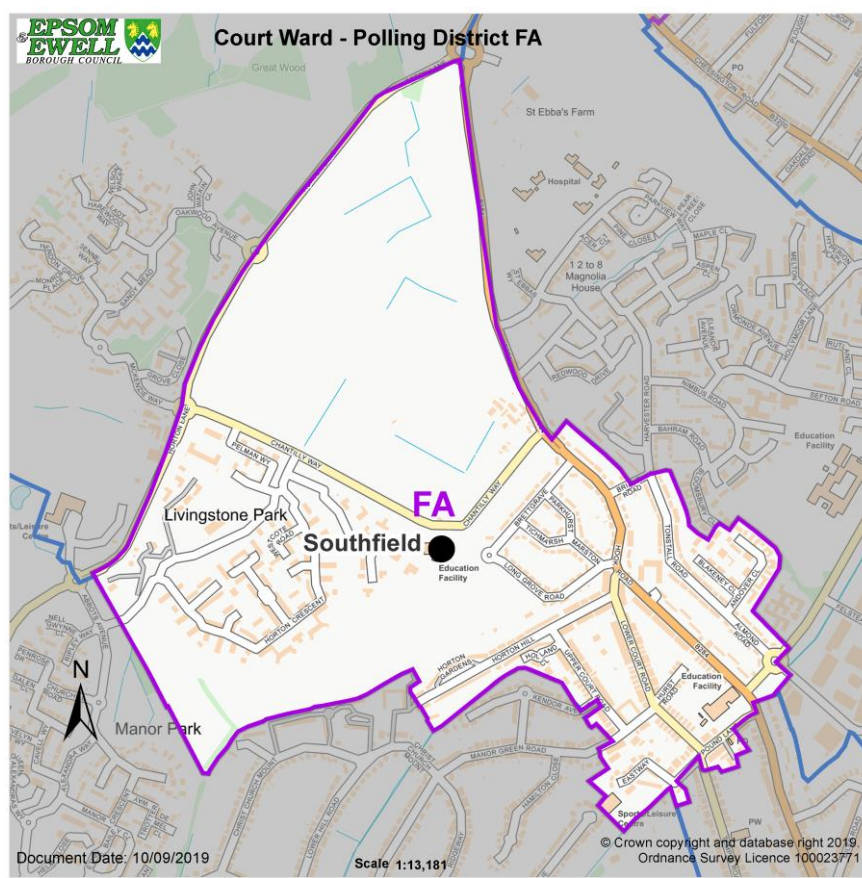
Number of Polling Districts: Two

Number of Polling Places: Two

Electorate in Ward: **5026**Postal Voters in Ward **561**

Notes: There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	F(A)
Electorate in District	2714
Postal Voters	332
Polling Place	Southfields Park Primary School, Long Grove Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	9
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on school premises.</p> <p>This school closes on election day.</p> <p>Although it is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible, it is considered that there are currently no other suitable premises in the area. Schools are notified of scheduled elections as early as possible to allow schools the option of setting an INSET day on polling day.</p> <p>There is a possibility of considering Horton Chapel once refurbished. However the Chapel is not as central within the polling district as the school and some voters will have to travel further.</p>

Court Ward FA (cont)**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

Whilst it is recognised that it is not ideal to use the school, there is currently no other venue.

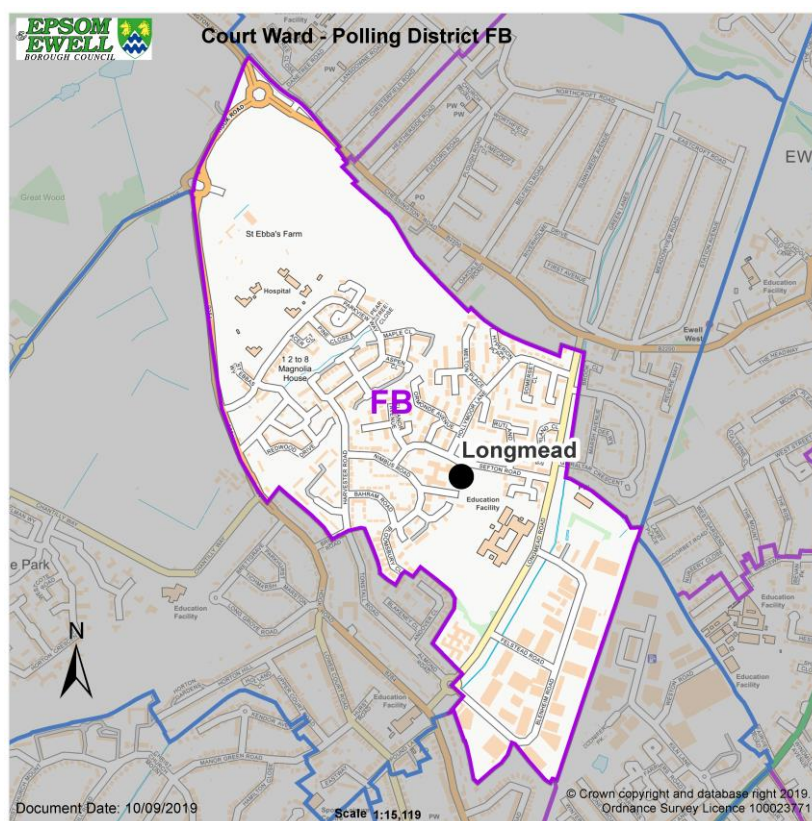
For the County by-election in November 2015, the School's staff room was trialled for polling, to enable the School to remain open. However the room is very compact for 2 polling stations and therefore it is unsuitable as a polling place. To operate as a polling place the School's Hall is needed, however, the hall is used to provide school lunches, which results in the need for the School to close on polling day.

There is a possibility of the availability of Horton Chapel following refurbishment. However it is not as centrally located within the polling district as the School and this in itself is likely to lead to increased travelling for some voters.

Subject to the above comments, I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Court Ward (cont)

Polling District	F(B)
Electorate in District	2312
Postal Voters	229
Polling Place	Health and Wellbeing Centre (Former Longmead Centre), Sefton Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	10
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Council-owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site.</p> <p>The polling station is located in the main hall.</p>

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

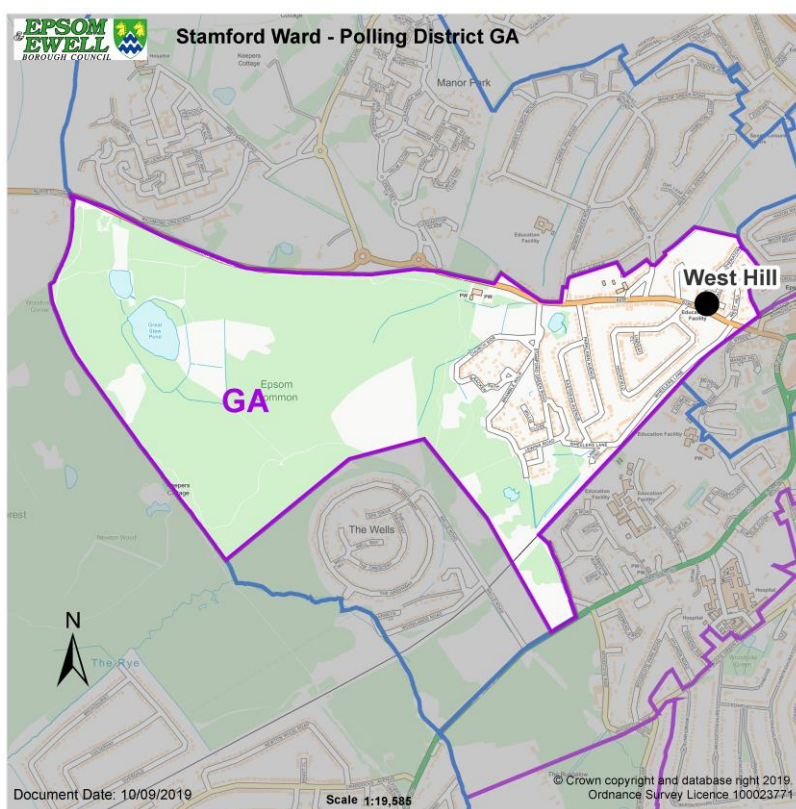
Taking into account postal voting trends, I consider that the size of this Polling District is still within acceptable tolerances and there is scope to create another polling station at the polling place, if necessary. No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stamford Ward

Number of Polling Districts	Three
Number of Polling Places	Three
Electorate in Ward	5414
Postal Voters in Ward	799
Notes	There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	G(A)
Electorate in District	1510
Postal Voters	215
Polling Place	The Fellowship Hall, West Hill, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	11
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - adequate Parking – small public car park opposite, no on-street parking available close to venue.



Stamford Ward G(A) cont

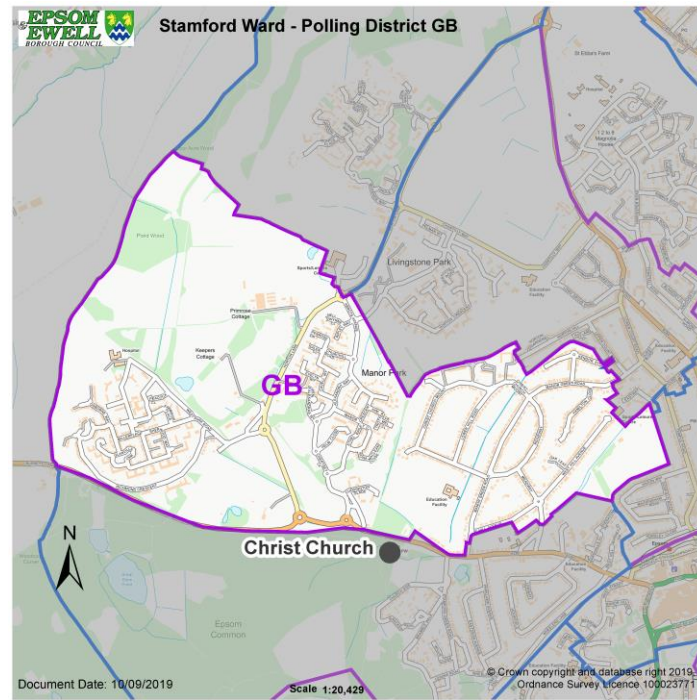
Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stamford Ward (cont)

Polling District	G(B)
Electorate in District	2891
Postal Voters	483
Polling Place	Church Hall, Christ Church, Christ Church Road Epsom
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	12
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises satisfactory. Location – adequate Disabled access - adequate Parking – car park available on site but not immediately adjacent to building.</p> <p>Although the building is on the edge of the Polling District boundary, it is considered overall to be a more central location for voters than the previous polling station which was Stamford Green School. There are two pedestrian crossings on the main road either side of Christ Church Hall.</p>



Stamford Ward GB (cont)

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

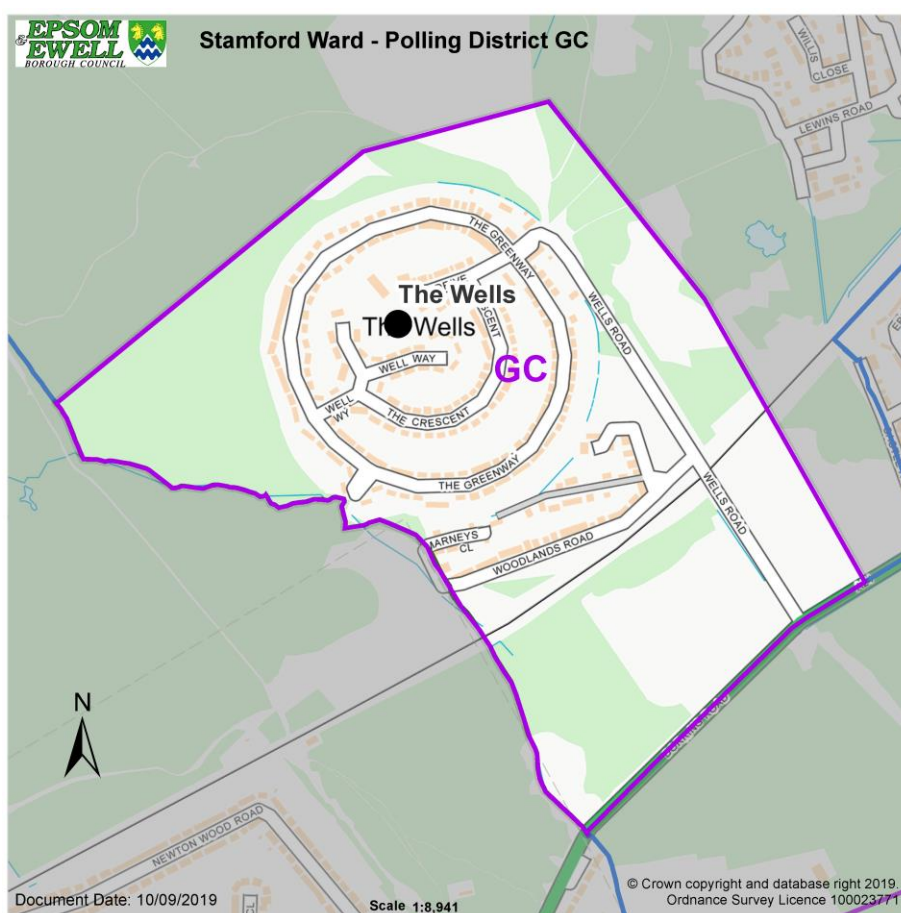
I consider that the size of this polling district is still within acceptable tolerances and an additional polling station was created and been in place at this polling place since the 2015 elections.

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stamford Ward (cont)

Polling District	G(C)
Electorate in District	1013
Postal Voters	101
Polling Place	The Wells Social Centre, Spa Drive, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	13
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Council-owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – Good Parking – good – car park on site.</p> <p>The polling station was located in the Main Hall in the 2019 elections.</p> <p>This building is currently subject to a planning application for redevelopment and alternative arrangements will need to be made for voters whilst building work is underway until the new community hall is available.</p>



Stamford Ward G(C) cont

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

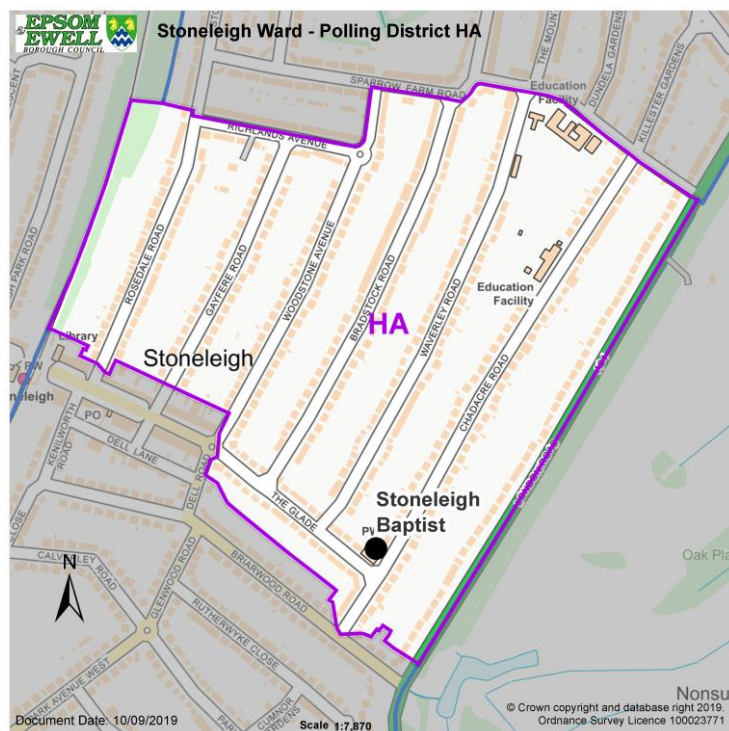
This building is currently subject to a planning application for redevelopment and alternative arrangements will need to be made for voters whilst building work is underway and until the new community hall is available. The date of these works is not currently known but it is expected that a temp building will located somewhere on the current centre site.

Subject to the above comments, I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Stoneleigh Ward

Number of Polling Districts: Two
 Number of Polling Places: One
 Electorate in Ward: **3676**
 Postal Voters: **433**
 Notes: There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

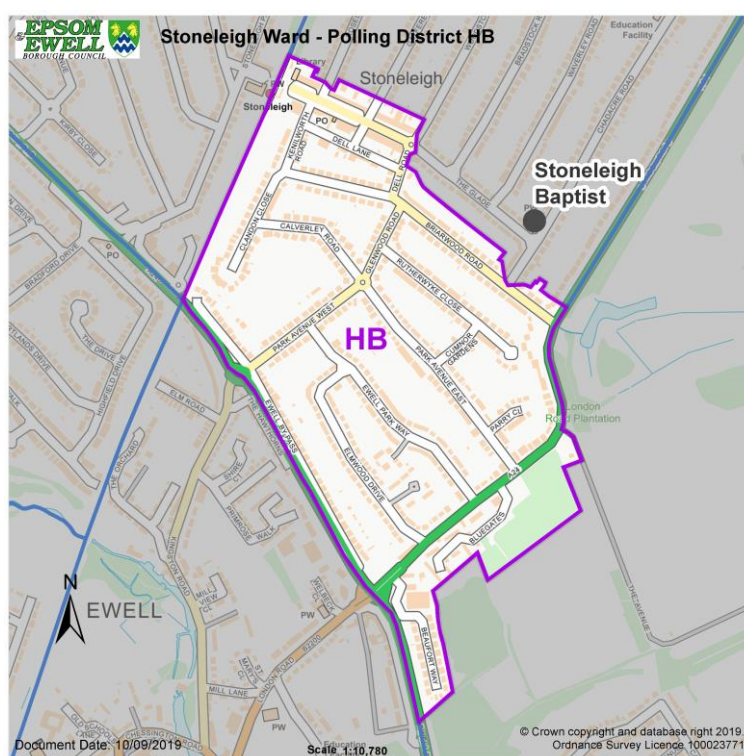
Polling District	H(A)
Electorate in District	1898
Postal Voters	226
Polling Place	Stoneleigh Baptist Church Hall, The Glade, Stoneleigh
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	14
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – limited off street parking available. On-street parking available around venue

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

See H(B), next page.

Stoneleigh Ward (cont)

Polling District	H(B)
Electorate in District	1778
Postal Voters	207
Polling Place	Stoneleigh Baptist Church Hall, The Glade, Stoneleigh
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	14
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking - limited off street parking available. On-street parking available around venue.

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

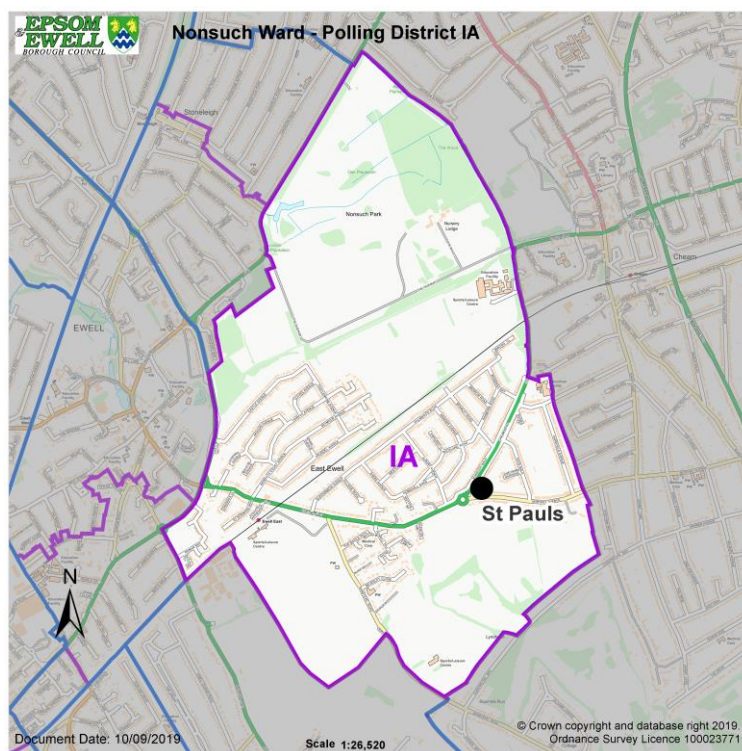
No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling districts and polling place to be appropriate.

Nonsuch Ward

Number of Polling Districts:	Two
Number of Polling Places:	Two
Electorate in Ward:	4586
Postal Voters	704
Notes:	The redevelopment of land at NESCOT on the Reigate Road is still underway and the current electorate is likely to increase further

Polling District	I(A)
Electorate in District	3700
Postal Voters	565
Polling Place	St Paul's Church Centre, 15 Northey Ave, Cheam
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	15
Proposal	Change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site. On-street parking available around venue Move polling district boundary so properties within the NESCOT development become part of Nonsuch I(B)



Nonsuch Ward I(A) cont

Acting Returning Officer's Representations

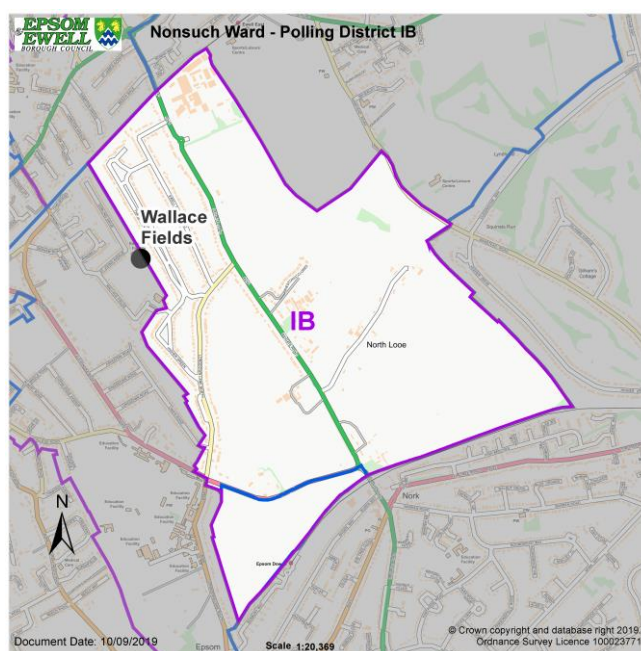
Since the NESCOT development, the electorate for this polling place has increased by approx. 200 voters. This is expected to rise as further properties are completed and occupied. The location of the site means that voters currently have to travel quite a distance to this polling place.

The proposal is to move part of the current polling district boundary to run along the back of the properties in Chatsfield, Conaways Close and St Normans Way. Such a change would move this area into Nonsuch I(B) polling district and these voters will then vote at a different polling place.

Subject to the above changes to the polling district, I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Nonsuch Ward (cont)

Polling District	I(B)
Electorate in District	886
Postal Voters	139
Polling Place	Wallace Fields Junior School, Dorling Drive, Ewell
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	16
Proposal	Partial Change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – good Parking – off street parking available on school premises and on-street parking available close to venue.</p> <p>Although the Polling Place is not actually located within the Nonsuch Ward boundaries, it is immediately adjacent to the Ward and it has worked very well for many years.</p> <p>This school closes on election day.</p> <p>Although it is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible, no other suitable premises have been identified in the area. Schools are notified of scheduled elections as early as possible, to allow schools the option of setting an INSET day on polling day.</p> <p>Change to polling district boundary, so properties within the NESCOL development become part of Nonsuch I(B).</p>



Nonsuch Ward IB (cont)**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

At the time of the previous review, it was noted that, although the Council has a policy to avoid the use of schools, and the School does close on election days, there was no alternative to Wallace Fields Junior School. NESCOT had been approached in the past but responded at the time, that, because of the intensity of use of the site, they could not make any accommodation available unless an election falls in a half term or vacation period (which is unlikely).

Further site visits undertaken to NESCOT in 2011 and 2018 established that there was in fact no suitable accommodation available for the purposes of polling on this site at the time.

We have had a small number of complaints from some parents regarding the closing of the school mainly down to child care cost issues. The School does not stay open during polling day due to its layout.

There is also the possibility of using the pavilion at the playing fields owned by Glyn School adjacent to NESCOT but this will need to be investigated to see if the site and building is suitable.

Now that the NESCOT housing development is almost finished there is a proposal to move the polling district boundary and include the new properties within I(B) instead of I(A).

Subject to the above comments being accepted I consider the proposals for the changes to the polling district to be appropriate.

The polling place is considered to be appropriate in light of the current constraints.

Ewell Ward

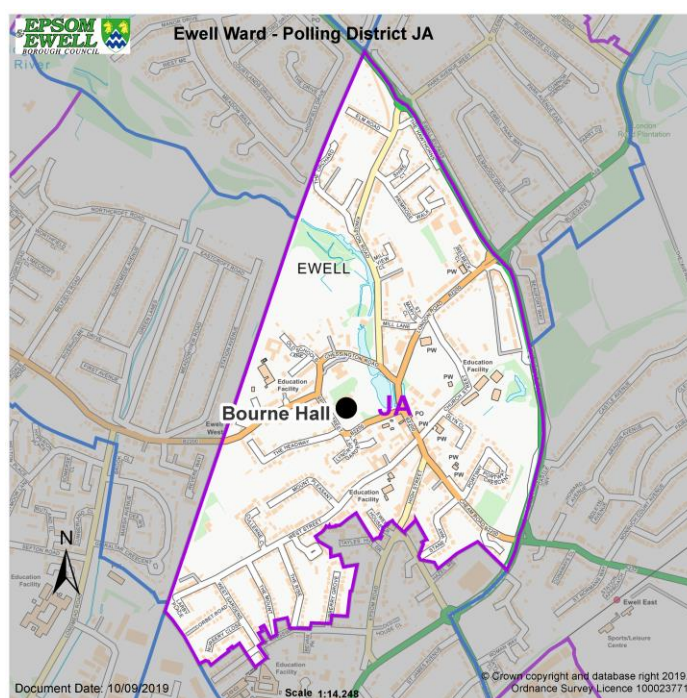
Number of Polling Districts: Three

Number of Polling Places: Three

Electorate in Ward: **4340**Postal Voters **644**

Notes: There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	J(A)
Electorate in District	2637
Postal Voters	376
Polling Place	Bourne Hall, Spring Street, Ewell
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	17
Proposal	No change
Comments	Council-owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available (public car park). The polling station is located in the Rose Room.



Ewell Ward J(A) cont

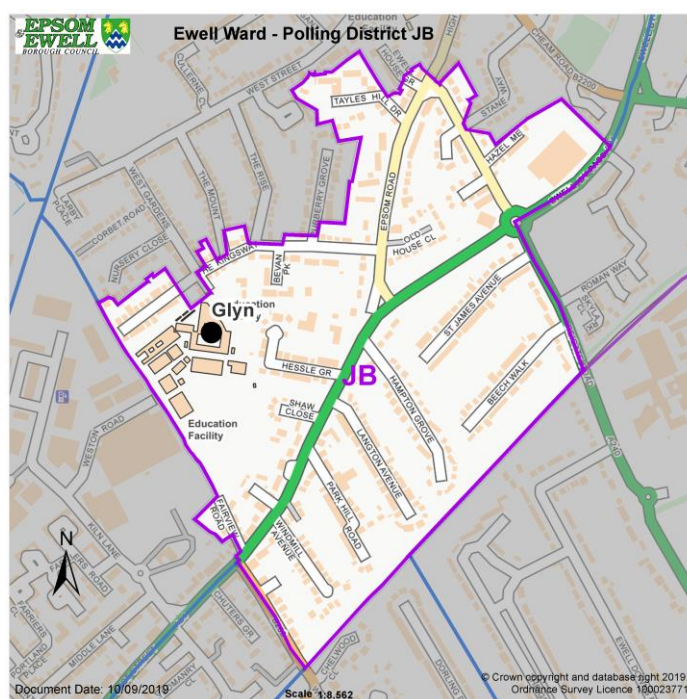
Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Ewell Ward (cont)

Polling District	J(B)
Electorate in District	1174
Postal Voters	199
Polling Place	Glyn School, The Kingsway, Ewell
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	18
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - adequate Parking – limited off-street parking available on school premises. On-street parking available close to venue.</p> <p>The polling station is currently located in the staff room so that the School can remain open on polling day. Disabled access is via a lift as the staff room is accessed via stairs. There is a bell on the ground floor for those requiring disabled access to obtain assistance.</p>

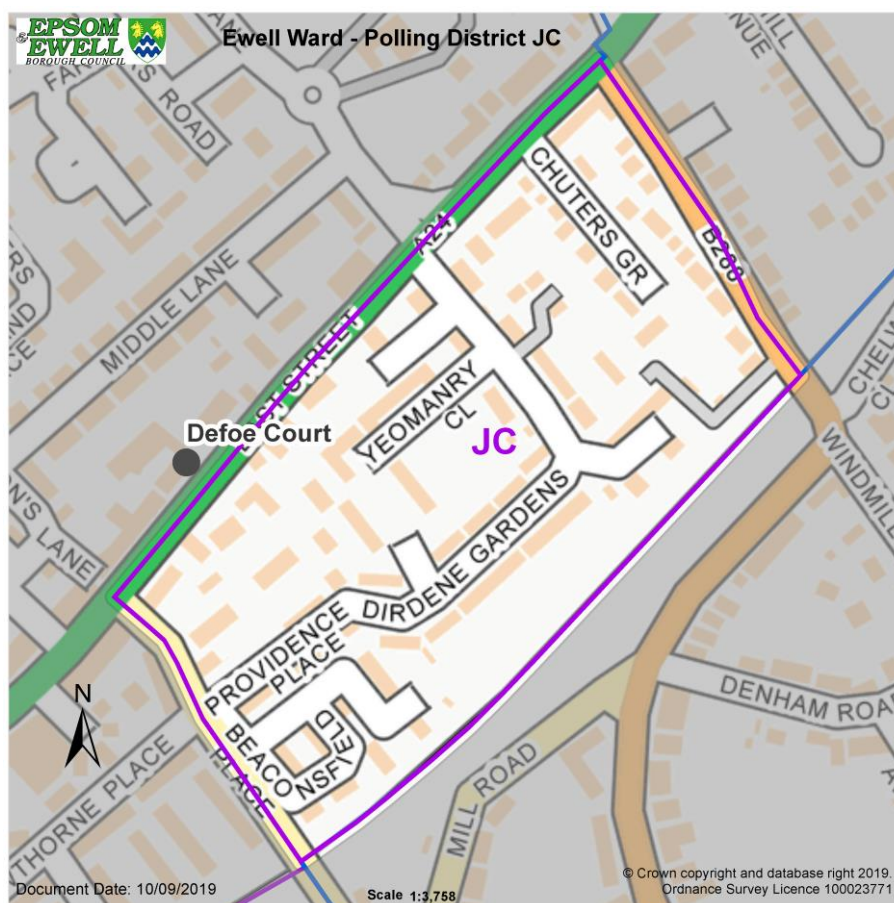
**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Ewell Ward (cont)

Polling District	J(C)
Electorate in District	529
Postal Voters	69
Polling Place	Defoe Court, 87 East Street, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	19
Proposal	No Change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory</p> <p>Disabled access – good</p> <p>Parking – no parking on site</p> <p>The polling station is located in the conference room.</p>



Ewell Ward J(C) cont**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

After the demolition of the Lintons Centre, various premises were investigated but the only premises that was available was "The Forge", a building located behind the Scout Hall, and owned by the Scouts. This building located at the rear of the site was found to be large enough to accommodate the small number of electors eligible to vote in polling district J(C) however its location on the site was not ideal – extra lighting was required due to issues with the state of the access drive after dark for voters on foot and the vehicle access (the drive is very narrow and gated) and the limited parking. As the options for polling station accommodation in this area were very limited, its use was trialled as a polling place during the European Elections in May 2014 and for elections in 2015.

Due to the access problems at the Forge, Defoe Court in East Street was identified as a good central location and was large enough for 2 polling stations. The decision was made to move from the Forge to Defoe Court for elections in 2016 onwards along with voters in Town Ward (KA).

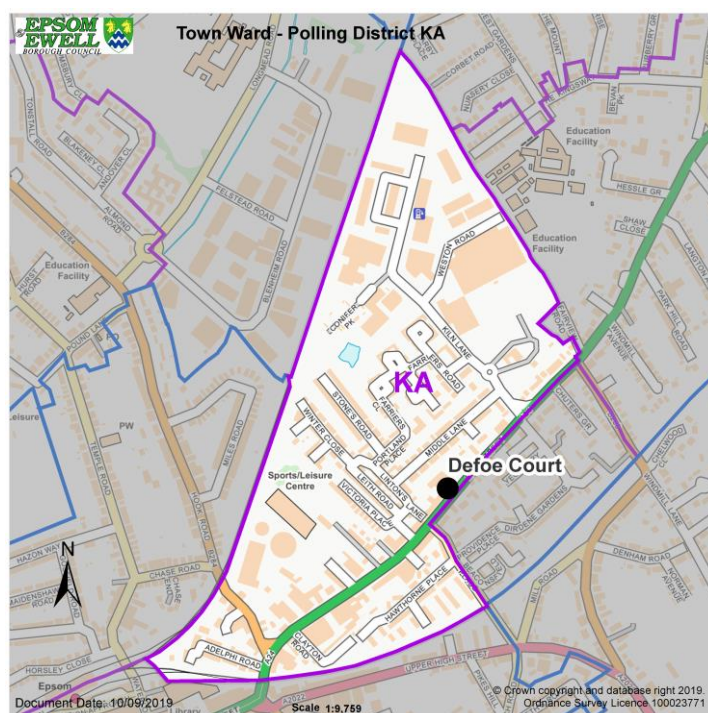
Even though there is no parking for voters on site the premises is otherwise deemed suitable as it a new building with good disabled access and 24 hour staff on duty for any assistance needs.

I consider the polling district and polling place adequate.

Town Ward

Number of Polling Districts Three
 Number of Polling Places Three
 Electorate in Ward **5282**
 Postal Voters **777**
 Notes

Polling District	K(A)
Electorate	1365
Postal Voters	192
Polling Place	Defoe Court, 87 East Street, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	19
Proposal	No Change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – no parking available</p> <p>The polling station is located in the conference room.</p>



Town Ward KA (cont)**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

When trialled back in 2001, The Ebbisham Centre was not a popular choice with the electorate owing largely to the issue of parking (there is no free or convenient on-street parking in the vicinity of the building). However, this would apply to the majority of locations in the Town centre. The options for polling station accommodation in this area were very limited and no other suitable premises had been located.

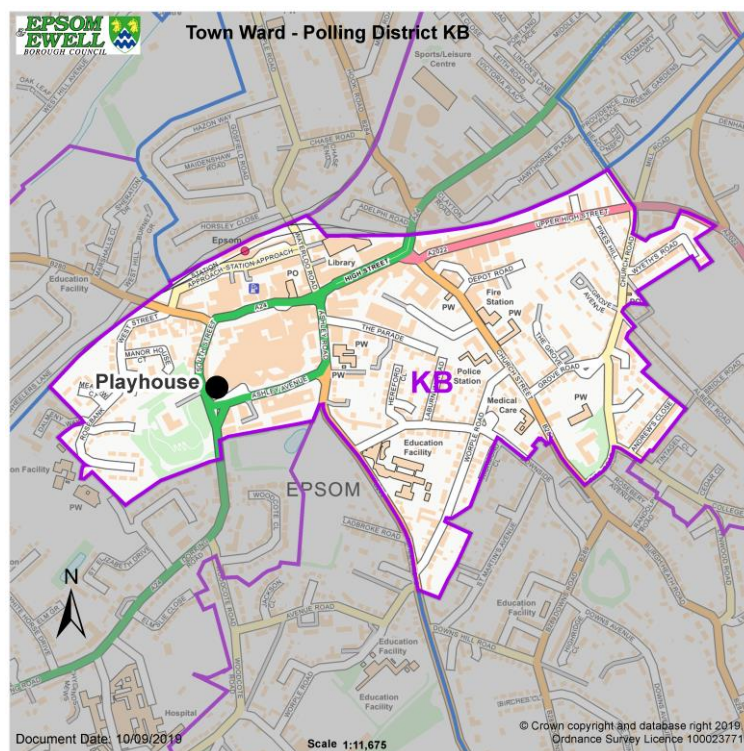
Since Defoe Court has been available, this has been a much better located polling station and being a new building it has good disabled access and 24 hour staff on duty for any assistance needs. Although there is no parking, the station is much more centrally placed in the polling district.

This same building is also used for voters who vote in polling district J(C) and although we try to keep voters from different wards in separate locations the room is large enough and the room division made by staff and signage for voters has not caused any problems.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Town Ward (cont)

Polling District	K(B)
Electorate in District	2691
Postal Voters	431
Polling Place	Epsom Playhouse, Ashley Avenue, Epsom
No. of Stations	2
Map Ref.	20
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Council owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking - Multi storey public car park adjacent to Playhouse. No on-street parking close to venue.</p> <p>The Polling Station is located in the Myers Hall.</p>

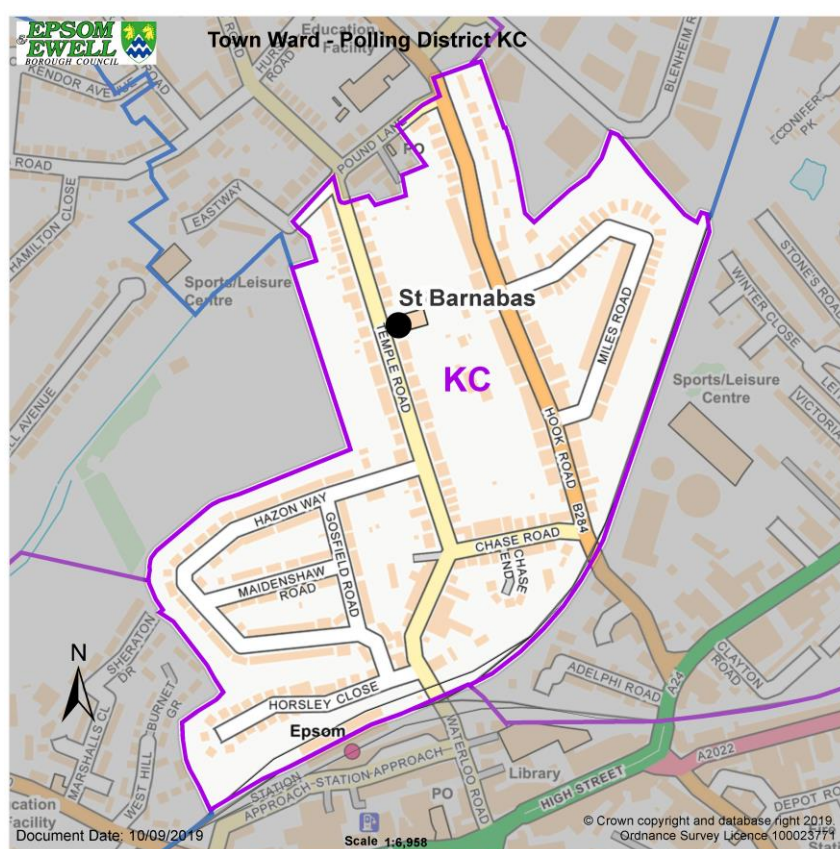
**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I therefore consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Town Ward (cont)

Polling District	K(C)
Electorate in District	1226
Postal Voters	154
Polling Place	St Barnabas Church, Temple Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	21
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location good Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site.

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

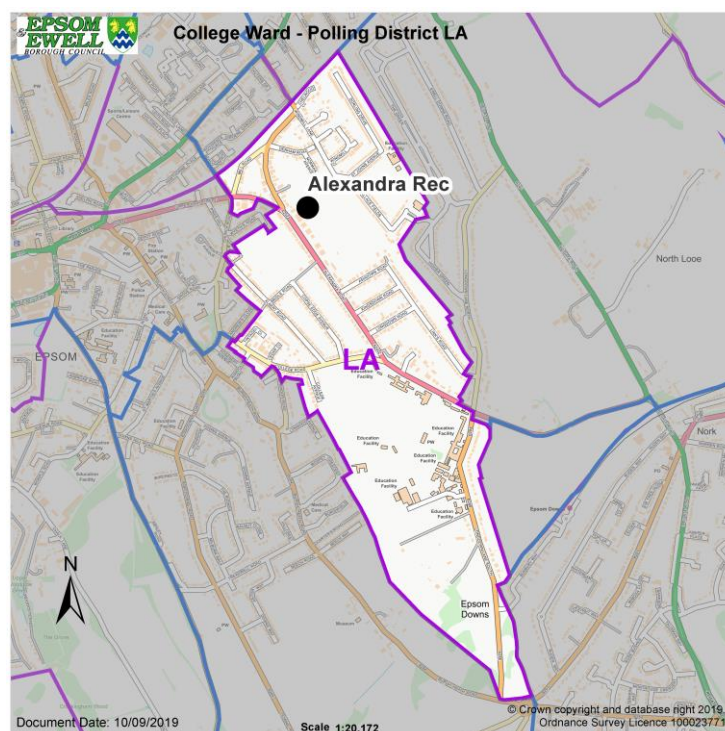
No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

College Ward

Number of Polling Districts	Two
Number of Polling Places	Two
Electorate in Ward	4293
Postal Voters	754
Notes	There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward.

Polling District	L(A)
Electorate in District	2147
Postal Voters	347
Polling Place	The Pavilion, Alexandra Recreation Ground, Alexandra Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	22
Proposal	No change
Comments	Council owned premises Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - Adequate Parking – close to pavilion for staff & disabled. In main car park for other voters.



College Ward L(A) cont

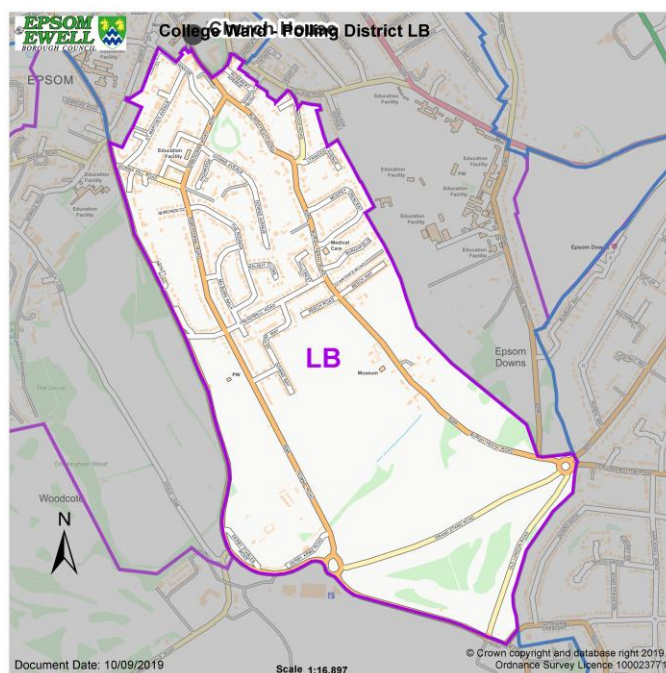
Acting Returning Officer's Representations

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

College Ward (cont)

Polling District	L(B)
Electorate in District	2146
Postal Voters	407
Polling Place	The Church House, Church Street, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	23
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – off-street parking available on site. No on-street parking close to venue.</p> <p>Although the Polling Place is not actually located within the College Ward boundaries, it is immediately adjacent to the Ward and it has worked very well for many years. As far as the Council is aware, there are no other suitable premises (halls etc) within the College Ward/Polling District boundaries.</p> <p>The polling station is located in The Wisley Room.</p>

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

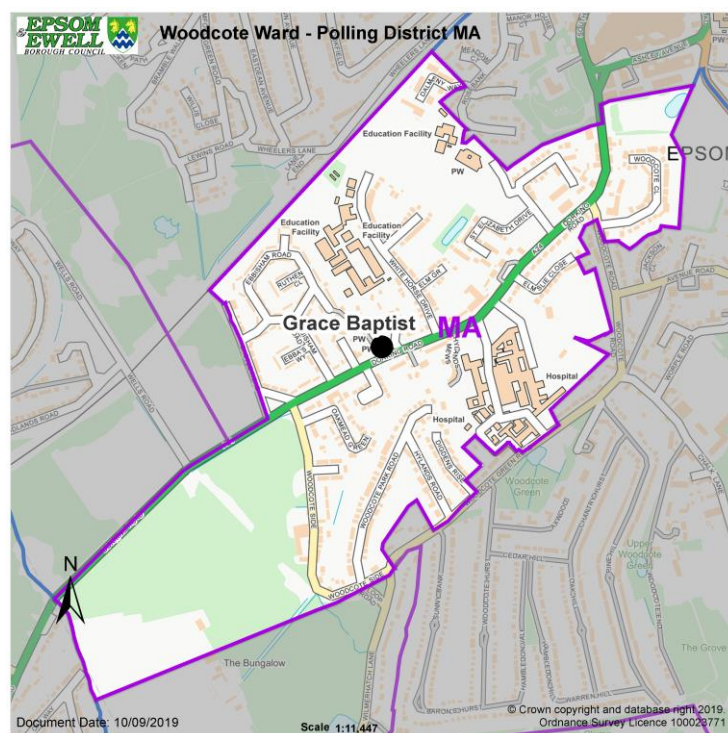
No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place to be appropriate.

Woodcote Ward

Number of Polling Districts	Three
Number of Polling Places	Three
Electorate in Ward	4475
Postal Voters	804
Notes	There are no planned developments which would significantly affect the electorate of this Ward

Polling District	M(A)
Electorate in District	1662
Postal Voters	279
Polling Place	Grace Baptist Church, 32 Dorking Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	24
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - adequate Parking – limited off-street parking on site

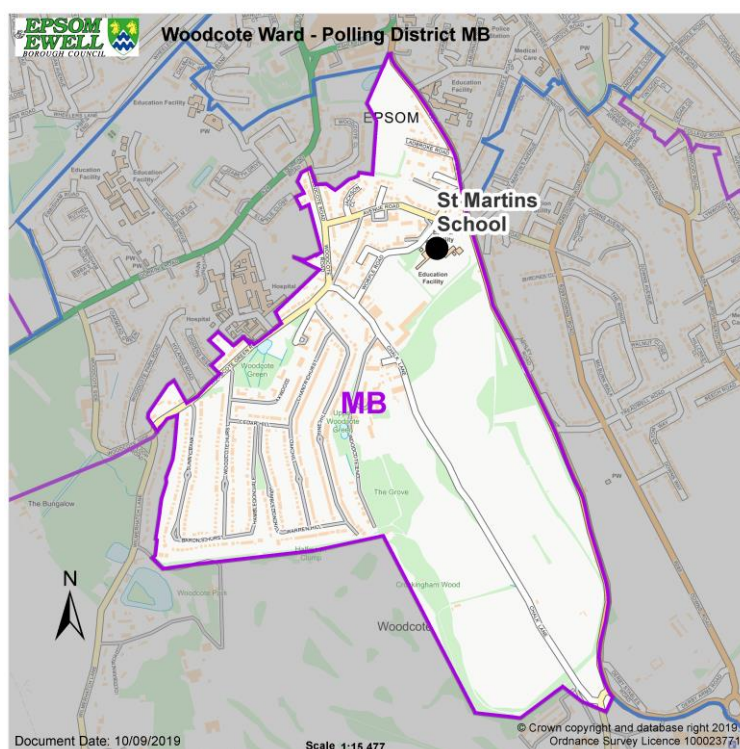
**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Woodcote Ward (cont)

Polling District	M(B)
Electorate in District	1538
Postal Voters	329
Polling Place	St. Martins C of E Junior School, Ashley Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	25
Proposal	No change
Comments	<p>Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access – adequate Vehicle access via Ashley Road only Parking – off-street parking available on school premises</p> <p>It is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible but there are no other suitable premises in the area. Schools are notified of scheduled elections as early as possible, preferably before the start of the academic year, to allow schools the option of setting an INSET day.</p> <p>The polling station is located in the Music block, as this building is separate from the main building and can be cordoned off from the rest of the School so that it can remain open on polling day.</p>



Woodcote Ward MB (cont)**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

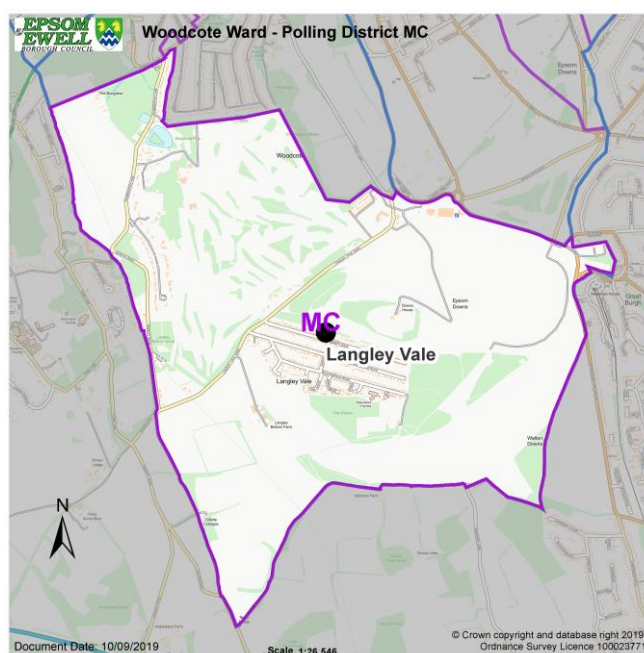
At the time of the previous review, it was reported that as a result of reconfiguration of the premises, discussions with the new Headteacher had resulted in the offer of the use of a separate classroom block close to the Ashley Road entrance. These facilities had the advantage of being self-contained and close to the car park for disabled voters. Since this review the accommodation has been used, without the rest of the school having to close. A ramp for the slight lip into the classroom was provided and for the curb from the car park.

With the use of this classroom block polling day has been successful with the school remaining open for all elections. The access to the polling station for vehicles is via Ashley Road only and a message to voters is now included on all poll cards so they are aware.

In the absence of any alternatives, I consider the polling district and polling place appropriate.

Woodcote Ward (cont)

Polling District	M(C)
Electorate in District	1275
Postal Voters	196
Polling Place	Langley Vale Village Hall, Rosebery Road, Epsom
No. of Stations	1
Map Ref.	26
Proposal	No change
Comments	Premises and location satisfactory Disabled access - good Parking – on-street parking available around venue.

**Acting Returning Officer's Representations**

During the 2011 review concerns about accessibility for disabled people due to the sloping access to the Village Hall. It was suggested that the adjacent Church Hall or the school at Langley Vale might be a more appropriate venue.

It is Council policy to avoid the use of schools wherever possible and the School is less conveniently located than the current polling station. A site visit was also made to the Church Hall and although the slope to the building is less than at the Village Hall, the layout of the building was considered unsuitable as a polling place and there would be no advantage in relocating there.

No adverse feedback has been received post the May 2019 elections.

I therefore consider the current polling district and polling place appropriate.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Polling District & Polling Places Review 2019						
2							
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
4							
5	General	2					
6			1	Epsom resident, happy with current arrangement for polling station.	Comments are noted.	No further action.	
7			2	Concerned about impact on schools from being a polling station. Asks for re consideration of schools as polling stations, when they have to close and asks for alternative places. Asks if polling day could be moved to prevent impact on schools, such as to a weekend or bank holiday.	Comments are noted in relation to the use of Schools and whenever possible, alternatives are found and used. The change to a polling day is something the Returning Officer has no control over.	No further action.	
8							
9	Court	22					
10			1	Resident at Livingstone Park, suggests rather than closing Southfield Park School to use Horton Chapel instead.	Comments are noted.	Southfield School is currently a double polling station, which is why it needs to close on a polling day. Recommendation to create additional new polling district and new polling place (Bowlers Pavilion, Court Recreation Ground) to mitigate the need for Southfields School to close. School has confirmed it would not need to close as a result of being a single polling station. Suitability of Horton Chapel to be investigated once the Chapel is ready.	
11			2	Parent of children at Southfield School, accepts inset days have been used to cover pre planned election days, but would suggest an alternative venue to be found, suggestions Horton Chapel instead.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
12			3	Asks for Horton Chapel to be used instead of Southfield Park School, to avoid loss of education and community use of Chapel better suited as a polling station.	Comments are noted.	As above.	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
13			4	Objects to Southfield Park School's use resulting in lose of education. Suggests strong consideration of an alternative, e.g. Horton Chapel	Comments are noted.	As above.	
14			5	Asks for Horton Chapel to be used instead of Southfield Park School, as it is difficult for parents to re-arrange childcare, and effects of loss of education on the children	Comments are noted.	As above.	
15			6	Grandparent of children at Southfield Park School, says that frequency of polls causing loss of important schooling days, suggest another local venue	Comments are noted.	As above.	
16			7	Governor of school, objects to Southfield Park School use. Suggests alternative sites such as Health & Wellbeing Centre in Longmead and Horton Chapel. Suggests that evidence of finding alternative sites not provided in review, that Epsom & Ewell High School proposed when other nearer locations should be used. Expresses concern that parking and traffic matters are priorities over education considerations.	The purpose of consultation on a polling station review is to enable suggestions to be put forward. There is a continuing program of review and sometimes it is not possible to change locations of a polling station. The regulatory framework for elections is around ensuring the electorate have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable.	As above.	
17			8	Southfield Park Primary School, confirms use of school as a polling station since 2004 and that the school community have tried to identify alternative venues to avoid the school closing. Considers Horton Chapel, once refinished as a good alternative. Confirms that knowing INSET days in advance helps, however, snap elections or changes to dates is disruptive to the School. Asks for the School to be replaced with Horton Chapel.	Comments are noted.	As above.	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
18			9	Livingstone Park resident, asked for use of Southfield Park Primary School as polling station be reviewed. States it is highly disruptive to children's learning in light of the number of closures recently.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
19			10	Asks for School use as polling station be ended in light of effect on education. Suggests Horton Chapel as an alternative.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
20			11	Parent of children at Southfield Park Primary School, effect on children on loss of teaching time within context of the school's make up, which presents challenges. Suggests use of Horton Chapel or a church hall.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
21			12	Parent of children of Southfield Park Primary School, concerned at effect on teaching time. School has a diverse community as such effect of constant closures does have an impact. Ask if Horton Chapel, Concrode Hill or even Epsom Primary School to be considered.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
22			13	Asks for Horton Chapel to replace Southfield Park.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
23			14	School's use as a polling station is very disruptive to the pupil's learning. Suggests Horton Chapel as an alternative.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
24			15	Within a background of promoting school attendance, and avoid loss of teaching time and other school activities, requests Horton Chapel to be used instead of Southfield Park Primary School.	Comments are noted.	As above.	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
			16	Parent of children at Southfield School, asks for School use as polling station be ended in light of effect on education and effect on holiday allowance of parents and cost of holiday clubs for children to attend. Accepts little alternatives available, but asks for other polling stations to be used by splitting areas and for consideration be given to the use of Horton Chapel.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
25			17	Concerned at use of School and its short notice closures as a result of elections. The effect on missing a day's school, and school clubs being cancelled and parents child care arrangement having to be changed. Asks to relocate polling venue to Horton Chapel.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
26			18	Parent of child at Southfield School, disruptive to use school as polling station and impacts children's education and is disruptive to working parents. Very difficult to find childcare at short notice for when the school is closed. Ask for consideration of Christ Church, Concorde Hall, St Barnabas Hall and Horton Chapel once completed. If school has to be used, asks if the school can remain open by providing alternative access to school hall.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
27			19	Parent of child at Southfield School, in light of priority to school attendance, odd that school should have to close. Inconvenience to working parents who have to take time off to look after children.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
28							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
29			20	Objects to use of Southfields School. Suggests options such as automation be considered. The use of Horton Chapel when ready, Old Moat Garden Centre, a temporary structure. Suggests the Council is being lazy by using a school and not somewhere else.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
30			21	Parent of child at Southfield School, suggests in light the affect on children's education and having to take annual leave for the days the school is closed, that Horton Chapel is used as an alternative.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
31			22	Objects to use of Southfields School because of the effect on the children from lost days of education and the cost and inconvenience to parents. Suggests use of Horton Chapel or the use of portakabins, Concorde Hall, Epsom Sure Start, Cherryfield Nursery. Suggests use of pubs, shops and businesses in local area as other alternatives.	Comments are noted.	As above.	
32							
33	Ewell	1					
34			1	A part of the area is close to Epsom Town than Ewell, and feels less connected with Ward. With increased frequency of elections need to ensure children's education is not adversely impacted. Residents have to sometimes walk long distances, or past polling stations which are closer to them than their allocated ones. therefore wishes to make electoral participation as easy as possible.	Comments are noted, however, this issue is something which needs to be investigated as part of a boundary review. There are options such postal voting which would mitigate the need to go to the polling station.	No further action.	
35							
36	Nonsuch	13					

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
37			1	Objects to use of Wallace Fields Junior school. Asks for other suitable sites to be considered so as not to disrupt children's learning and causing childcare issues for working parents.	Comments are noted in relation to the use of Schools. Whenever possible alternatives are found and used.	Although no suitable alternatives have been found, the Council will continue seek solutions to the use of Wallace Fields Junior School. This will include the use of temporary structures if a suitable location can be found.	
38			2	Ward Councillor on behalf of residents who are unhappy at use of Wallace Fields Junior School. Suggests other locations such as Nescot and whether a temporary structure could be placed in school's playground. Also suggests use of Bourne Hall or Glyn Hall accepting these are some distance away.	The relevant regulations focus on the needs of the electorate in terms of access to polling stations. The effect of the number of elections on the school community is of concern and one which the Council has been attempting to resolve. The suggested alternatives sites have been investigated: Glyn Pavillion is not suitable and Bourne Hall is currently already a double polling station and not in the Polling District.	As above.	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
			3	Ward Councillor of Ward in which Wallace Fields School is in, expresses concerns of his residents of the continued use of the school as a polling station. Reasons relate to loss of pupil learning time and disruption and the need to find alternative child care. Suggest consideration of other alternatives, such as Alexandra Park & St Martin's Church, accepting they are outside the Nonsuch catchment area.	The relevant regulations focus on the needs of the electorate in terms of access to polling stations. However, effect of the number of elections which have taken place on the school community is of concern and once which the Council has been attempting to resolve. The suggested alternatives sites have been investigated, Alexandra Recreation Ground has two pavilions, one of which is currently used as a single polling station and is not suitable as a double station. The other pavilion is not in a fit state for use as a polling station. St Martin's Church is already in use as a polling station. Both are in different Wards which helps to illustrate the difficulties in finding suitable premises within the Ward.	As above.	
39			4	Objection to use of Wallace Fields School as polling station. School having closed 3 times in the last year, is as odds with government policies to fine parents for non attendance of children. Suggests Nescot. Also expresses concern that residents of the new development at Sycamore Gardens have to go to St Paul's when Nescot is so close.	The relevant regulations focus on the needs of the electorate in terms of access to polling stations. The Authority is aware of the concern of the effect of the number of elections, on the school community, and have been attempting to find suitable alternatives. Currently Nescot have not been able to provide a suitable place for a polling station. However, enquires remain on going to search for a suitable alternative.	As above	
40			5	Objection to use of Wallace Fields School as polling station. Asks why Nescot is not used.	See response directly above.		
41							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
			6	Uses Wallace Fields as a polling station and objects to use of Wallace Fields School as polling station on the basis of disruption to education of children. Highlights that the polling station appears very quiet. Asks if Nescot or Alexandra Rec Hall could be used.	The relevant regulations focus on the needs of the electorate in terms of access to polling stations. The Authority is alive to the concerns of the school community, and have been attempting to find suitable alternatives. Currently Nescot have not been able to provide a suitable place for a polling station. Following a review of Alexandra Recreation Pavillion, the site is not suitable as a polling station. However, enquires remain on going to search for a suitable alternative.	As above.	
42			7	Asks for an alternative to be found to Wallace Fields School, so as to avoid the difficulties to parents and children from use as a polling station.	The effect of the number of elections which have taken place on the school community is of concern and once which the Council has been attempting to resolve.	As above.	
43			8	Objection to use of Wallace Fields School as polling station in light of disruption to children's education and to parents having to take days off. Asks for other solutions, e.g. consider the use of temporary structure.	In the event of a suitable alternative site not coming forward, the Authority will explore options for mobile structures, once a suitable site for that structure has been located to replace the use of Wallace Fields Junior School.	As above.	
44			9	Head Teacher of Wallace Fields Junior School, confirmed parents had been advised of the review. An assumption had been made in light of the Council Motion and some literature which had been distributed thereafter that the School would not be used.	A suitable alternative site needs to be found to enable the use of Wallace Fields Junior School to cease. Enquires remain on going to search for a suitable alternative.	As above.	
45							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
			10	Parent of child at Wallace Fields School, objects to school use. Concerned as to the effect of the loss of education on daughter. Suggests Nescot, and comments other schools such as St Martin's do not close.	The Authority is aware of the effect of the number of elections, on the school community, and have been attempting to find suitable alternatives. Alternatives sites have been investigated, Alexandra Recreation Ground has two pavilions, one of which is currently used as a single polling station and is not suitable as a double station. The other pavilion is not in a fit state for use as a polling station.	As above.	
46			11	Objection to use of Wallace Fields School. Concerned at the impact on the school from closure on polling days. Impact on parents who have to find alternative arrangements, on children, some of whom have to prepare of Key Stage exams. Asks if equality Impact assessment has been carried out. Suggest the use of church halls, and Nescot.	The relevant regulations focus on the needs of the electorate in terms of access to polling stations. Equality Impact Assessments are often carried out prior to implementing a policy, with a view to ascertaining its potential impact on equality. They are not required by law, although are a way of facilitating and evidencing compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Regulations currently expect the use of publically funded facilities to be used as polling places. The Authority is alive to the impact of the number of elections on the school community, and has been attempting to locate suitable alternative premises.	As above.	
47							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
			12	Parent objection to use of Wallace Fields School as polling station in light of disruption to children's education particularly at time of Key Stage exams. Also to parents, who have to have to take time off work. Asks for other options to be considered and suggested Alexandra Park, Glyn pavilion and Nescot.	The relevant regulations focus on the needs of the electorate in terms of access to polling stations. The Authority is alive to the concern concerns on the effect of the number of elections, on the school community, and have been attempting to find suitable alternatives. Currently Nescot have not been able to provide a suitable place for a polling station and following a review of Alexandra park and Glyn Pavilion, the sites are not suitable for use as a polling station. However, enquires remain on going to search for a suitable alternative.		
48			13	Parent of child at Wallace Fields School, objects to school use. Concerned as to the effect of the loss of education on children as a result of the number of elections having been held. Raises points around school attendance, yet can take time for elections.	The Authority is alive to the concern concerns on the effect of the number of elections, on the school community, and have been attempting to find suitable alternatives.	As above.	
49							
50							
51	Ruxley	2					
			1	Question of whether Clarendon Park voters could use Southfield Park Primary School.	The use of Southfield Park Primary School, is under review and it would not be appropriate to extend its use further.	No further action.	
52							

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
3	Ward	Total	No	Summary of representation	EEBC Response	Outcome	
			2	Epsom & Ewell High School, asking for the school to no longer be used. Raise a safeguarding issue in that the Council do not provide any traffic or security support to the school on polling day. Refer to an incident when a member of staff had their foot run over by a voter. Also confirm that they had to partially close the school for certain Year groups as a result of safeguarding concerns.	The Authority is alive to the concern on the effect of the number of elections on the school community, and have been attempting to find suitable alternatives. This search is continuing. Changes to access arrangements during school hours as addressed previous issues.	Maintain search for alternative location.	
53							
54							
55	Town & College Wards	1					
56							
			1	Suggest a ward boundary change to Town Ward with areas moving to College Ward.	This is a matter for the Boundary Commission at the time of a local review.	No further action.	
57							
58							
59	Woodcote	1					
			1	Ward Councillor, raising concerns around impact of future development on numbers of voters. Confirms that MA & MB Polling stations work well, however MC presents challenges in terms of steep slope to access the Hall where the polling station is located.	The comments are noted, however, the current stations fulfil the suitability criteria.	No further action.	
60							

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**Minutes of the Meeting of the STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held on
24 September 2019**

PRESENT -

Councillor Eber Kington (Chairman); Councillor Clive Smitheram (Vice-Chair);
Councillors Arthur Abdulin, Steve Bridger, Kate Chinn, Nigel Collin, Hannah Dalton,
David Gulland, Colin Keane and Barry Nash

Officers present: Kathryn Beldon (Chief Executive), Damian Roberts (Chief Operating
Officer), Rod Brown (Head of Housing and Community), Judith Doney (Head of Digital
and Service Transformation), Amardip Healy (Chief Legal Officer), Brendan Bradley
(Chief Accountant), Siobhan Gavigan (Revenues Manager), Annette Snell (Housing
Operations Manager) and Sandra Dessent (Committee Administrator)

17 QUESTION TIME

No questions were asked or had been submitted by members of the public

18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made regarding items on this agenda

19 LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

The Committee received a report detailing a proposal to commission consultation
experts and specialist software for the Local Plan public consultation. The aim of
the consultation is to reach businesses, community groups and stakeholders and
to maximise opportunities for engagement with the Local Plan process.

The success of the Future 40 consultation was noted and it was commented that
whilst the Local Plan consultation was anticipated to be equally successful the
methodology was different. It was agreed to circulate more information on the
estimated number of responses for the Local Plan consultation.

It was anticipated the consultation would commence in November, however
there was a possibility of the date would changing in the event of a General
Election being called.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to the proposed commissioning of
consultation and engagement experts and specialist software to enable residents
to comment for the Local Plan consultation with a budget of up to £75,000 as set
out in paragraph 4.3 of the report.

20 LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

This report provided an update to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and proposed a simpler, less administratively burdensome process for providing support. It was anticipated that a new scheme would be presented to the Committee in autumn 2020. It was proposed to continue with the current minimum payment scheme for a further year to allow time to develop a new software system based on providing support through a discount scheme. This would replace the existing approach of means testing (as set out in paragraph 3 of the report).

The Committee noted that alongside the existing scheme the Council operated and funded a Discretionary Hardship Fund of £25,000 which had been a great help to those experiencing exceptional financial hardship. It also served to identify those being adversely affected by the Equality Impact Assessment.

The challenges faced as a result of the change to Universal Credit was discussed, and it was noted that despite the issues encountered the overall collection rate for all residents was 99.1.

Having considered the proposed actions and the 2020/21 scheme, the Committee:

- (1) Agreed to continue the current scheme for the 2020/21 financial year with the underlying means tested applicable amounts being uplifted by the same percentage as the Housing Benefit rates applicable from April 2020 and applying any further Regulation changes that might apply for that financial year;
- (2) Agreed the continuation of the Discretionary Hardship Fund for exceptional cases;
- (3) Agreed the actions proposed to change the scheme to a council tax discount to be implemented from 1 April 2021.

21 FLEXIBLE HOUSING SUPPORT GRANT

This report identified the growth in demand for homelessness assistance since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the resulting increase in expenditure for the provision of the homelessness service in 2019/20. The report recommended the use of the Flexible Housing Support Grant to increase homelessness prevention activity, reduce the use of expensive out of borough nightly paid accommodation through the increased use of Private Sector Leased properties and to purchase a new temporary accommodation rent accounting module and upgrade the existing Abritas Housing Services system.

Prior to the Committee meeting information had been circulated regarding a breakdown of the proposed spend of £106,950 as follows:

- a) Provide an additional member of staff (1 FTE) on a 2 year fixed term contract to supplement the existing team of 3 Housing Options Officers to

provide additional capacity to complete preventative work earlier so as to avoid the need to place households in temporary accommodation.

- b) To provide an additional 0.5 FTE member of staff, on a 2 year fixed term contract to support the expansion of the PSL scheme.

It was confirmed that should there be a wish to extend the scheme after two years a new proposal would come back to the Committee.

To assist with the implementation of the scheme Councillors were asked to forward any contact from residents regarding homelessness issues to the housing service for an update. It was noted that a revised Homelessness Strategy would come before the Committee at a future date.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- (1) Approved the use of £106,950 of Flexible Housing Support Grant to increase homelessness prevention activity and increase the supply of Private Sector Leased properties; and
- (2) Approved the use of £63,000 of Flexible Housing Support Grant to purchase a new temporary accommodation rent accounting module and upgrade the existing Abritas Housing Services system to assist homelessness prevention & relief administration.

22 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

The Committee received a report regarding the review of polling places and in accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 it was compulsory and had to be completed by 31 January 2020.

A consultation was underway and it was proposed that a working group be established to consider representations for the proposals.

In response to a question regarding a motion moved at Council (Item 7, Motion 2, Annex 2 – Minute no.18). it was confirmed that one of the aims in establishing a working party was to manage and collate the feedback from the two schools that were effected by closure during term time. Furthermore the two schools had been sent the consultation document in order that the parents/guardians could be made aware of the review and have the opportunity to make comments.

It was confirmed that Councillor Christine Howells from Nonsuch Ward had been nominated to sit on the working group.

Suggestions were made to combine polling places however the Committee was informed that the Council were constrained by electoral registration rules.

Members involved in the working group were reminded that three meetings had been arranged to consider the representations on 16, 17 and 18 October

Accordingly, the Committee agreed:

- (1) That a Working Group be established to consider all representations received in respect of the public consultation in respect of Polling Districts, polling Places and Polling Stations;
- (2) That the Working Group comprise of 5 members with the Chairman of the Residents' Association, the Leader of the Liberal Democrat group and the Leader of the Labour group having nominated 3 members, 1 member and 1 member respectively as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report, and Councillor Christine Howells as the nominated representative from Nonsuch Ward agreed at the meeting.
- (3) That this Committee considers the proposals of the Working Group at its meeting on 26 November 2019.

23 BUDGET TARGETS 2020/21

This report detailed proposed budget targets for 2020/21 and provided an update on financial planning for 2021/22 to 2023/24 as recommended by the Financial Policy Panel on 10 September 2019.

It was recognised that in order to achieve the forecasted savings there would a reduction in operational costs and Officers were encouraged to exercise caution and carefully monitor the head count to ensure that resources were sufficient to achieve the Council's aspirations.

Having considered the budget targets, the Committee:

- (1) Noted the recommendations of Financial Policy Panel held on 10 September 2019.
- (2) Agreed the following overall budget targets for 2020/21:-
 - a) estimates are prepared including options to reduce organisational costs by £544,000 in 2020/21 subject to government grant announcement, to minimise the use of working balances and maintain a minimum working balance of £2.5 million in accordance with the medium term financial strategy;
 - b) that at least £290,000 additional revenue is generated from an increase in discretionary fees and charges, based on a minimum overall increase in yield of 3.0%, with the exception of car parking which is set at 6.0% as these charges are adjusted every two years;
 - c) that a provision for pay award is made of £400,000 that allows for a 2% cost of living increase;
- (3) Agreed that further savings are identified for inclusion within the new Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2020-2024 to reduce the Council's

net operating costs by a minimum of £1,825,000 over the period 2020/21 to 2023/24;

- (4) That Capital Member Group seeks to maintain a minimum capital expenditure programme to control the use of capital reserves between 2020 and 2024, subject to an appropriate prioritisation of spend to save and externally funded schemes.

24 STRATEGIC STATEMENT ON ECONOMY AND PLACE

The Strategic Statement sets out the Council's strategic priorities for economy and place in the context of the Council's new long-term vision for the borough, and in advance of the new Corporate Plan and the forthcoming detailed strategies that will emerge over the autumn through the Council's Local Plan process.

It was highlighted that the focus of the Statement was maximising the social, economic and environmental outcomes that could be achieved, alongside core considerations of financial viability, future decisions relating to the Council's own asset management (purchase, disposal, use and development) and will need to demonstrate a clear contribution to one or more of the following strategic priorities:

- a) Contribution to the delivery of the Council's Long-term vision and the delivery of the strategic priorities set out in its Corporate Plan
- b) Providing an opportunity to facilitate "Good Growth" as set out in the Surrey-wide Place Ambition
- c) Within the Town Centre - contribution to priorities set out in the Council's Plan E – Area Action Plan, including the defined opportunity areas.
- d) The scope for the protection of key employment sites, further strengthening the protection provided by the Council's Article 4 Directions
- e) Contributes to the priorities set out in the Council's Housing Delivery Action Plan.

Having considered the strategy set out in the report, the Committee agreed the Strategic Statement on Economy and Place

25 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 30 July 2019 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting began at 7.30 pm and ended at 8.15 pm

COUNCILLOR EBER KINGTON (CHAIRMAN)

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