



Report to:	Strategy and Resources Committee	Date:	28 September 2015
Report title:	Polling District and Polling Place Review		
Report from:	Gerald Almeroth, Strategic Director, Resources		
Ward/Areas affected:	Stonecot Ward The Wrythe Ward Carshalton & Clockhouse Ward Wallington South Ward		
Chair of Committee/Lead Member:	Councillor Ruth Dombey, Leader of the Council		
Author(s)/Contact Number(s):	Martha Matheou, Head of Electoral Services 020 8770 5100		
Corporate Plan Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Open Council • A Fair Council 		
Open/Exempt:	Open		
Signed:		Date:	16 September 2015

1. Summary

- 1.1 A review of polling stations has been carried out and the report sets out recommended changes to five polling places according to the relevant legislation requirement, which in effect are to amend the current temporary locations to permanent locations. A further full review on polling districts will take place in 2016.

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to approve the following changes:

- 2.1 Polling District CA
Change of location from Cheam Park Farm Infants School, Molesey Drive, North Cheam, SM3 9UU to St Oswald's Church, Brocks Drive, North Cheam, SM3 9UW
- 2.2 Polling District LC
Change of location from Victor Seymour Infants School, Denmark Road, Carshalton, SM5 2JE to Strawberry Lodge Conference Centre, Strawberry Lane, Carshalton, SM5 2NQ
- 2.3 Polling District NB
Change of location from Stanley Park Junior School, Stanley Park Road, Carshalton, SM5 3JL to The Church of the Good Shepherd, Queen Mary's Avenue, Carshalton, SM5 4NP
- 2.4 Polling District NC
Change of location from Oaks Park Cafe, Oaks Park, Croydon Lane, Banstead, SM7 3BA to Oaks Golf Club, Woodmansterne Road, Carshalton, SM5 4AN
- 2.5 Polling District PB

Change of location from Wallington Public Hall, 3 Stafford Road, Wallington, SM6 9AQ to Holmwood Hall, Wallington United Reformed Church, Holmwood Gardens, Wallington, SM6 0EU

3. Background

3.1 In accordance with the requirements of Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended), the London Borough of Sutton has undertaken a review of polling places for use in connection with parliamentary elections held with the Sutton and Cheam and Carshalton and Wallington constituencies. The Notice appeared in the Local Guardian on the 17 August 2015. Prior to the Notice a review had already been conducted and a consultation period from voters and political parties (via their Election agents) in the form of feedback at polling stations and during Election Agents meeting during the May 2015 General election.

3.2 Polling District CA

Cheam Park Farm Infants School has to close for polling day for security purposes (children's safety). The Nursery which is the alternative location is at the rear of the school, has lots of nursery equipment and layout is not ideal.

St Oswald's Church is a two minute walk from old location. It has disabled access and causes no disruptions to the school or Children's education. It is agreed with the school that if the Church is unavailable (for what any reason) that the nursery is used if it is needed.

3.3 Polling District LC

Victor Seymour School finds the disruption of polling very inconvenient. They prefer the use of the Children's Centre adjacent to the school, which is two small rooms but the layout is quite confusing to voters and therefore requires an extra member of staff to guide voters to the correct room. Room capacity is small so the stations become overcrowded and queues form at busy periods.

Strawberry Lodge is within the electorate catchment area and the hall is large with disabled parking facilities and entrance.

3.4 Polling District NB

Stanley Park Junior School are not happy to remain open on polling day due to their security procedures. School closure causes inconvenience to the school and children's education. Parking is limited and the school is situated on a busy road.

The Church of the Good Shepherd is a 10 minute walk from the school and has its own parking facilities ensuring disabled parking and access are catered for.

3.5 Polling District NC

Oaks Park Café was due to be refurbished and so the location was changed to the Golf Club temporarily. The Café is situated in the Park and has uneven walking surface for electors. Voters enter the park which is not ideal in terms of lighting in the evening. The café's layout is small with fixed garden tables outside entrance.



The Golf Club is ideal and far more accessible to voters as it has disabled access and parking facilities, with good lighting to the entrance.

3.6 Polling District PB

Wallington Public Hall has been sold and will be demolished. With no other hall in the area the new location at Holmwood Hall is shared with another polling district (PA). This double location was used at the General Election in 2015 and worked well.

4. Issues

4.1 Polling District CA

Many complaints are received from parents with regard to the closure of Cheam Park Infants School. The Head is not happy that the school has to close for the day and also receives many complaints from parents personally. Voters and Councillors appear to be happy with St Oswald's location, which has been used for two different elections recently.

4.2 Polling District LC

Parents and School Governors have complained each year about the use of the school and the disruption to the teaching day. Strawberry Lodge was used in 2015 election and voters confirmed at the station (those willing to comment) that the location and size of the hall worked well and was not an inconvenient change. Strawberry Lodge is well known in the area and so easy to find. The Senior Presiding Officer at the General election in 2015 commented that the new location is easier to manage in terms of staffing and layout and the flow of voters worked very well.

4.3 Polling District NB

Parents, School Governors and Councillors have complained each year about the use of the school and the disruption to the teaching day. The Church of the Good Shepherd was used in 2015 election and voters confirmed at the station (those willing to comment) that the location and size of the hall worked well and was not an inconvenient change. The Church has parking facilities and so easier to access, as the old polling place was located on a busy road. Staff and polling station inspectors gave good feedback with regard to access and location of the new polling station.

4.4 Polling District NC

The café is located in the park and so security and lighting is an issue. NB polling district only has 400 voters and 200 of those vote by post. It was not possible to use the café in the By-Election held in 2012 and so the polling station was moved temporarily to the Golf Club. The electorate was written to in 2012 highlighting the change and voters were asked if they would rather vote by post as this is a rural area and both locations require the voter to use transport to reach either location. There was no negative feedback at the time or since the change. The Golf club offers parking and security with good disabled access and lighting and the Club Manager is very accommodating. The use of the Club for the last three elections was due to the uncertainty of the refurbishment of the café. The club has worked well in terms of voter and staff feedback and so it is recommend that this be a permanent change.



4.5 Polling District PB

Shared location with another polling district has meant that Holmwood Hall now caters for 3,200 electors. This was not ideal but all other locations or neighbouring polling places did not have the same room capacity. Wallington Public Hall was sold and so the new location was temporary for 2015 election. The location worked well in terms of capacity for both the General election and the recent By-Election. This is the only sized hall that can cater for the electorate sizes of both polling districts and so is the only alternative for the new polling station location.

5. Options Considered

5.1 Make no changes to locations except for the move from Wallington Public Hall to Holmwood Hall. Due to the new locations hall size, layout and disability access including positive feedback from voters option to approve all locations as permanent.

6. Impacts and Implications

Financial

6.1 There are no implications as all polling stations incur costs and so these costs will be transferred from one polling place to another.

Legal

6.2 Representation of the People Act 1983, Sections 18A, 18B, 18C, 18D and 18E and Schedule A1 (as amended by section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013).

7. Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix Letter	Title
None	N/A

Background Documents
None

Audit Trail		
Version	Draft	Date: 02/09/15
Consultation with other officers		
Officer	Comments Sought	Comments checked by
Finance	Yes	Gerald Almeroth
Legal	No	N/A