

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 1 November 2007

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Polling Districts/Polling Stations Review –
Appointment of Working Party

WARDS: All Wards

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires all local authorities to review their polling districts, polling places and polling stations by the end of 2007. These are defined as follows:

Polling district: The area created by the division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.

Polling place: The building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the Returning Officer.

Polling station: The room or building chosen by the Returning Officer where the poll takes place for each Election.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

That a Working Party of elected representatives be nominated to undertake the review of polling districts and polling places, following consultation, as required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The last major review of polling districts/polling stations took place in 2003 with the last Periodic Electoral Review. The polling districts and stations agreed at that time worked on a five year projection basis and were deemed suitable over that period of time, despite projected significant increase in properties for some wards.

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires the Council to carry out a review of all its polling stations by 31 December 2007 and every four years after that. The main purpose of the review is to ensure that all residents have reasonable facilities for voting.

As part of the review process we have to consult electors, councillors and other interested parties. Details of all polling districts and polling

stations are on the Council's website and notices have been placed in the Direct Link offices and any comments are required by 12 November.

On completion of the consultation exercise a report will be prepared for submission to a Member Working Party. The Working Party will make recommendations to Council who will make the final decision on the recommendations.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific policy implications although it is important to ensure that all electors have equal access to polling stations and places in line with the Council's priority on accessibility of services.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Subject to the decisions on the location of polling stations there may or may not be financial implications.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton – If polling stations are situated in the right places it could encourage voter turnout for electors in this age group.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton – There are no implications arising from this report.

6.3 A Healthy Halton – The provision of polling stations in suitable locations could encourage engagement with the democratic process and in turn promote a healthy living environment.

6.4 A Safer Halton – The location of polling stations in a safe environment for all electors could encourage voter turnout.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal - There are no implications arising from this report.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

If the Working Party is not appointed the review required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 will not be completed.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

It is important to ensure that all electors have equal access to polling stations and places in line with the Council's priority on accessibility of services.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There are no background papers under the meaning of this Act.