



Reading
Borough Council

Working better with you

Summons and Agenda 26 March 2019

**Chief Executive
Reading Borough Council
Civic Offices, Bridge Street,
Reading, RG1 2LU**



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Peter Sloman
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Civic Offices, Bridge Street,
Reading RG1 2LU
☎ 0118 937 3787

To: All Members of the Council

Direct: ☎ 0118 937 2303
e-mail:
michael.popham@reading.gov.uk

18 March 2019

Your contact is: Michael Popham - Democratic Services Manager

Dear Sir/Madam

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Reading Borough Council to be held at **Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Reading**, on **Tuesday, 26 March 2019 at 6.30 pm**, when it is proposed to transact the business specified in the Agenda enclosed herewith.

Yours faithfully

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

1. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive Mayor's Announcements.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

9 - 18

The Mayor to sign the Minutes of the proceedings of the previous Council Meeting.

4. PETITIONS

To receive petitions in accordance with Standing Order 8.

5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Questions in accordance with Standing Order 9.

6. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

Questions in accordance with Standing Order 10.

7. COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2019/20

19 - 26

Report by Director of Resources

8. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20

27 - 56

Report by Chief Executive

9. REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES 2018/19

57 - 86

Report by Returning Officer

10. PRIVATISATION OF SPECIALIST CANCER SCANNING SERVICES

Councillor Hoskin to move:

This Council notes:

- NHS England has announced it is privatising Positron Emission Tomography - Computed Tomography (PET-CT) cancer scanning services for the Thames Valley area which includes Reading. This will hand the contract over to InHealth, a private company and take it away from the internationally respected NHS Churchill Hospital in Oxford.
- That PET-CT scanning provides 3D scans of inside the body that are an essential specialist resource in helping doctors spot tumours, plan the best treatment and monitor whether that

treatment is working.

- That specialist cancer doctors at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust have declared they have “concerns about the potential impact on the safety and quality of patient care at the loss of the current PET-CT service”.
- That Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat MPs in the Thames Valley have raised objections to this privatisation and concerns about potential impact of patient care.
- The lack of public consultation on these proposals.

This Council believes:

- That, as asserted in its carried motion of 27 March 2018 “NHS services should remain in public ownership and that elements of the system that have been privatised ought to be brought back into public ownership”.
- That privatisation of trusted and respected NHS services can potentially harm patient care and obstruct the collaborative and integrated health and care services that would best serve the people of Reading and the wider area.

This Council resolves:

- To formally object to the privatisation of the Thames Valley’s specialist PET-CT scanning services.
- That the Chief Executive writes on behalf of the Council to the Chief Executive of NHS England and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to call for a halt to this procurement exercise, particularly highlighting the lack of consultation with the public, councils or MPs, and the lack of a transparent assessment of the potential risks to clinical care and patient safety.
- To send a copy of this letter to councils and MPs in the Thames Valley area covered by these services and encourage them to raise any concerns they may have with NHS England.
- Explore the possibility of a joint health scrutiny of this privatisation with other concerned councils.

WEBCASTING NOTICE

Please note that this meeting may be filmed for live and/or subsequent broadcast via the Council's website. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during a webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy.

Members of the public seated in the public gallery will not ordinarily be filmed by the automated camera system. However, please be aware that by moving forward of the pillar, or in the unlikely event of a technical malfunction or other unforeseen circumstances, your image may be captured. **Therefore, by entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.**

Members of the public who participate in the meeting will be able to speak at an on-camera or off-camera microphone, according to their preference.

Please speak to a member of staff if you have any queries or concerns.

This page is intentionally left blank

Present: Councillor D Edwards (Mayor);

Councillors David Absolom, Debs Absolom, Ayub, Ballsdon, Barnett-Ward, Brock, Eden, K Edwards, Emberson, Ennis, Gavin, Gittings, Grashoff, Hacker, Hopper, Hoskin, James, Jones, Khan, Lovelock, Manghnani, Maskell, McDonald, McEwan, McGonigle, McKenna, O'Connell, Page, Robinson, Rowland, D Singh, R Singh, Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Terry, Vickers, Warman, White, J Williams, R Williams and Woodward.

Apologies: Councillors Davies, Kaur and Pearce.

39. MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor announced that Councillor Ashley Pearce's wife, Karen, had recently given birth to twins, Claudia and Miles. The Council extended its good wishes to the new-born babies and their parents.

Councillor Hopper, at the invitation of the Mayor, made a personal statement at the meeting, which would be his last full Council, as he would be standing down as a Councillor due to his move away from Reading. The Mayor and other Councillors paid tribute to Councillor Hopper for his contribution to the Council and wished him well in his future endeavours.

40. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

41. PETITION

Jennifer Leach and Skye presented a petition in the following terms:

"Declare a Climate Emergency in Reading

- Humans have caused irreversible climate change to Planet Earth; the impact of this is already being felt around the world.
- We were warned last month by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) that we have **twelve years left** to limit this damage. If we do not, our world will most likely face runaway Global Warming and full Climate Breakdown.
- Our current plans and actions are not enough. We must act now, decisively and radically, to reduce our carbon footprint.
- Individuals cannot be expected to make this reduction on their own. Society needs to change its laws, taxation and infrastructure, to make low-carbon living easier and the new norm.
- City Councils around the world are responding by declaring a **Climate Emergency** and committing resources to address this emergency.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

- This petition urges Reading Borough Council to do the same.”

RESPONSE by Councillor Page (Lead Councillor for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport):

I thank Ms Leach for presenting the petition on this very important issue. Later this evening I will be moving a Climate Emergency resolution, which I hope will receive substantial support and I attach a copy of the text below (see the full text in the resolution of Minute 48 below).

42. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 9

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	Answer
1.	Glenn Dennis	Unoccupied Residential Properties	Cllr Ennis
2.	Richard Stainthorp	Station Hill	Cllr Page
3.	Roger Lightfoot to be asked by Peter Burt	Arthur Hill and Central Pools	Cllr Hoskin
4.	Peter Burt	Consultancy Fees	Cllr Lovelock
5.	Peter Burt	Sport and Leisure Service	Cllr Hoskin
6.	Colin Lee	Reading Sport and Leisure	Cllr Hoskin
7.	Colin Lee	Sport and Leisure Contract	Cllr Hoskin
8.	Colin Lee	Rivermead - Externalised Management Contract	Cllr Hoskin
9.	John Hoggett	Fees & Charges	Cllr Lovelock

As there was insufficient time, pursuant to Standing Order 9(6), written replies to Questions 8 and 9 above would be provided in accordance with Standing Order 11(3).

(The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

43. QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER NO 10

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	Answer
1.	Cllr White	Reading Council Accounts Blunder	Cllr Lovelock

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

2.	Cllr J Williams	Council Spending - Arthur Hill Swimming Pool	Cllr Hoskin
3.	Cllr McGonigle	East Reading MRT Costs	Cllr Page
4.	Cllr J Williams	Sports Forum	Cllr Hoskin

(The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

44. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT ON THE ROBUSTNESS OF THE COUNCIL'S 2019/20 BUDGET

The Director of Resources submitted a report fulfilling the requirement on her under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 as the Council's Chief Finance Officer to report on the robustness of the estimates made for the purposes of the calculations of the budget and the adequacy of the proposed level of financial reserves. The Council had a duty to have regard to the advice set out in the report when considering setting its 2019/20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy for the subsequent two financial years. The Statement of Reserves and Balances, which provided a summary of estimated reserve movements from 31 March 2019 and 31 March 2022, were attached to the report for information.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved -

That the Chief Finance Officer's report on the robustness of the Council's 2019/20 budget and indicative budgets for the subsequent two financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 be noted and the opinion contained therein be taken into account in making the decisions set out in Minutes 45-47 below.

45. 2019/20 BUDGET & MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY TO 2021/22

The Director of Resources submitted a report asking the Committee to recommend to Council, on 26 February 2019, the draft 2019/20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and associated spending plans for the three years 2019/20 to 2021/22. The report covered all aspects of the Council's spend: General Fund revenue expenditure funded by the Council tax payer; Government grant and other sources of income; Housing Revenue Account (HRA) expenditure, funded by Council tenants' rents; and the Council's Capital Programmes (General Fund and HRA) funded by grants and contributions, capital receipts, revenue and prudential borrowing. The proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy had been informed by and supported delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and sought to ensure that the Council was "fit for the future" with sound finances that allowed the Council's future funding challenges and spending pressures to be met.

The report stated that the MTFS 2019 - 2022 provided for a balanced budget position across the three years, as well as making a net contribution to reserves over the three years of £2.4m by using part of the benefit from the business rate pilot, which would

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

enable reserves to move back towards a more resilient level. The Strategy provided for a robust financial position, which relied on significant service transformation to drive increased efficiency savings and income generation in order that service reductions could be minimised. In particular it assumed:

- a) Revenue Support Grant from Government had effectively reduced to zero in 2019/20 due to the Business Rates pilot and would remain at zero following the Business Rates reset;
- b) Council Tax increases of 2.99% in 2019/20 and 1.99% in both 2020/21 and 2021/22;
- c) The benefit of Business rate growth forecast in 2019/20 had been discounted in 2020/21 because the impact of the planned business rate reset was as yet unknown;
- d) £27.5m of efficiencies and increased income across the period;
- e) A contingency provision over the three years (£4.4m 2019/20; £4.1m 2020/21; and £3.4m 2021/22) to mitigate possible slippage or non-achievement of higher risk savings and budget pressures over the period;
- f) Facilitates capital investment of £464m over the period 2019/20 to 2021/22 of which £249m would be for invest to save purposes;
- g) £6.4m of transformation funding (over the period 2019/20 to 2021/22) to support delivery of efficiency savings assumed within the MTFS; and
- h) Service reductions of £2.6m.

On 1 December 2018, the Council had incorporated a Local Authority Company, Brighter Futures for Children, to provide services previously delivered directly by the Council. The cost of providing those services, as well as funding for transformational change (an additional £2.1m in 2019/20) had been included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

The report had appended:

- Appendix 1 Summary of General Fund Budget 2019-20 to 2021-22;
- Appendix 2 General Fund Revenue Budget by Service 2019-20 to 2021-22;
- Appendix 3 Detailed General Fund Budgets 2019-20 to 2021-22;
- Appendix 4 Housing Revenue Account Budget 2019-20 to 2021-22;
- Appendix 5 General Fund and HRA Capital Programme 2019-20 to 2021-22;
- Appendix 6 Flexible Capital Receipts Strategy;
- Appendix 7 Fees and Charges (a correction to four lines in the list of fees and charges for April 2019 was circulated at the meeting for clarification);
- Appendix 8 Dedicated Schools Grant 2019/20;
- Appendix 9 Equality Impact Assessment

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved -

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

That the proposed 2019-20 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account budgets, draft Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Strategy as set out in Appendices 1-9 be approved, noting the following:

- (a) the Council's General Fund Budget Requirement of £139.5m for 2019/20;
- (b) the proposed service savings and efficiencies of £10.5m together with additional income of £4.4m in 2019/20 required to achieved a balanced budget for that year;
- (c) the proposed growth in 2019/20 service budgets of £12.5m;
- (d) the overall savings proposed within the MTFs of £30.1m (of which changes to income, fees and charges is £6.2m) and three-year growth changes to service budgets of £30.9m;
- (e) the increase in the Band D Council Tax for the Council of 2.99% or £47.24 per annum representing a Band D Council Tax of £1,627.23 per annum as set out in paragraph 15.1;
- (f) the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2019/20 of £42.7m as set out in Appendix 4 and a reduction of 1.00% (£/wk) in social dwelling rents from April 2019 giving a revised weekly average social rent of £99.39 as set out in paragraph 19.3;
- (g) the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes as set out in Appendix 5;
- (h) the Strategy for the use of flexible capital receipts to deliver future transformation and ongoing savings as set out in Appendix 6;
- (i) the changes to Fees and Charges outlined in Appendix 7 of the report (and the minor corrections circulated at the meeting);
- (j) the allocation of the £76.4m dedicated schools grant as set out in Appendix 8;
- (k) the Equality Impact Assessment requirements as set out in Appendix 9.

A recorded vote having been demanded on the motion set out above and the two subsequent motions set out in Minutes 46 (Council Tax Setting) and 47 (Treasury Management Strategy), the voting was as follows:

For the motion: 28 Councillors David Absolom, Debs Absolom, Ayub, Barnett-Ward, Brock, Eden, D Edwards, K Edwards, Emberson, Ennis, Gavin, Gittings, Hacker, Hoskin, James, Jones, Khan, Lovelock, Maskell, McEwan, McKenna, O'Connell, Page, Rowland, D Singh, Terry, R Williams and Woodward.

Against the motion: 15 Councillors Ballsdon, Grashoff, Hopper, Manghnani, McDonald, McGonigle, Robinson, R Singh, Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Vickers, Warman, White and J Williams.

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

46. COUNCIL TAX SETTING

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking approval of the calculations for determining the Council Tax requirement for the year 2019/20, in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The report also sought approval to set the Council Tax amounts for each property valuation band in the Borough including precepts from the Thames Valley Police and Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved -

- (1) That the following amounts that had been calculated for the year 2019/20 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 be agreed:
 - (i) £396,276,100 being the estimated aggregate expenditure of the Council in accordance with section 31A (2) of the Act;
 - (ii) £305,339,705 being the estimated aggregate income of the Council for the items set out in section 31A (3) of the Act;
 - (iii) £90,936,395 being the amount by which the aggregate at (i) above exceeds the aggregate at (ii) above, calculated in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as the Council's Council Tax Requirement for the year (Item R);
 - (iv) £1,627.23 being the amount at (iii) above (Item R) divided by the Council's tax base (Item T) calculated in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year, representing an increase of 2.99% in the Council's own tax;
- (2) That that the net tax base of 55,884 Band D equivalent properties (being the gross tax base adjusted for an assumed collection rate) used for setting the budget requirement for 2019/20 that was agreed by Full Council on 22 January 2019 be noted; and
 - (i) that the Band D charge for Reading Borough Council as calculated in (1)(iv) above be allocated to Band D equivalent dwellings as shown in section 4.4 of the report; and
 - (ii) that including the Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service and Thames Valley Police precepts Council Tax by property valuation band be as set out in section 4.7 of the report.

47. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking approval for a Treasury Management Strategy, which had to be in place before the start of each financial year, in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2017 and the CIPFA Prudential Code. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS), was

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

attached to the report at Appendix A, setting out the parameters for the Council's planned Treasury activity during 2019/20, which the Council's Treasury Team would manage on a day-to-day basis. The TMSS reflected the Council's Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2021/22 with non-treasury investments being registered in the Council's Commercial Investment Strategy. The report also had appended the Treasury Management Policy 2019/20 (Appendix B); Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy 2018/19 & 2019/20 (Appendix C); and existing investment and debt portfolio position (Appendix D).

The following motion was moved by Councillor Lovelock and seconded by Councillor Page and CARRIED:

Resolved -

- (1) That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix A, be approved;
- (2) That the Treasury Management Policy for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix B, be approved;
- (3) That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2018/19 and 2019/20, as set out in Appendix C, be approved; and
- (4) That the existing investment and debt portfolio position, as set out in Appendix D, be noted.

48. CLIMATE EMERGENCY - TOWARDS A ZERO CARBON READING

Pursuant to Notice, the motion set out in the resolution was moved by Councillor Page and seconded by Councillor Eden and CARRIED:

In accordance with Standing Order 14(10)(a), Councillor Page received the consent of the Council to alter the motion he had submitted in writing, in the following way:

At the end of the first paragraph add the following words:

“As such, this Council commits to playing as full a role as possible - leading by example as well as by exhortation - in achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.”

After the eighth paragraph add the following new paragraph:

“Council also requests officers to ensure that forthcoming revisions to the Local Transport Plan and Climate Change Strategy (and any other relevant policy statements) reflect the urgency of this resolution.”

At the end of the new tenth paragraph add the following words:

- “amending local authority procurement powers to require the delivery of carbon neutral environmental strategies by private sector suppliers.”

Revise the penultimate paragraph to include the following words: “accept its moral and ethical responsibilities” and the paragraph being reworded to read as follows:

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

“The Council calls on the Government to accept its moral and ethical responsibilities and give Reading as soon as possible the additional powers and funding needed to ensure that Reading is carbon neutral by 2030.”

Replace the final paragraph with the following words:

“The Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to our local MPs, and to the Prime Minister and to relevant Government departments (DEFRA, MHCLG, DfT, and Treasury) setting out the above requirements and the need for new legislation and financial support to deliver this radical agenda.”

The following amendment was moved by Councillor Ballsdon and seconded by Councillor Hopper and LOST:

‘After the sixth paragraph, which concludes with the words “.....to act quickly” insert the following additional paragraphs:

“This Council welcomes the improvements the Government has made since 2010, including banning plastic microbeads in personal care and cosmetic products; cut plastic bag use by 86%; doubling maximum litter fines to £150; cutting harmful emissions of nitrogen oxides by 27% and put in place a £3.5 billion plan to improve air quality and further reduce emissions.

This Council supports the Government banning plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds and also ending the confusion over recycling.”’

Resolved -

Reading Borough Council (RBC) believes the world is now clearly in the midst of a climate emergency and that more concerted and urgent action is needed at local, national and international level to protect our planet for future generations. As such, this Council commits to playing as full a role as possible - leading by example as well as by exhortation - in achieving a carbon neutral Reading by 2030.

RBC has a long standing commitment to action on climate change. A signatory of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change in 2006, the Council was one of the first authorities to produce a detailed Climate Action Plan.

We note that CO₂ emissions in the Borough have fallen by 41% since 2005, which is greater than all but 19 of the 405 authorities in Great Britain, and that Reading Borough Council has reduced its own emissions by 53% since 2008.

Reading is urban in nature and the majority of emissions are from the use of fossil fuels and energy to run buildings and transport. Methane is also harmful to the climate. In Reading, these emissions are primarily from food, human waste and landfill. Gases from the latter two are captured and used to generate energy.

Despite good progress at local level, new evidence continues to emerge about the scale of the likely impacts of climate change. We are now aware through the launch of the Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

Change in October 2018 that, in order to reduce the risks of severe climate change, all countries must act much more quickly.

This Council was proud to host the Model Climate Conference in December 2018 in this Chamber attended by students from local secondary schools, which coincided with the Katowice Climate Conference (COP24), and resulted in all the participating students stressing the urgency of climate action and pressing the Council, Government and others to act quickly.

RBC notes that we have already set out a number of ambitious policies and actions which will help to pave the way for the delivery of a Zero Carbon future such as:

- 'Zero Carbon Standards' within its draft Local Plan,
- The RBC Carbon Plan
- The forthcoming consultation on options, such as a Clean Air Zone, for improving local air quality and reducing congestion prior to publishing our draft Fourth Local Transport Plan
- The Reading Climate Change Partnership and Strategy - Reading Means Business on Climate Change
- The Launch of Reading Community Energy Society

This Council therefore instructs officers to report to the SEPT and Policy Committees on further potential measures that could accelerate the timescale for reducing carbon dioxide emissions to zero by 2030, but recognises that this date can only be achieved with substantial policy changes from national government.

Council also requests officers to ensure that forthcoming revisions to the Local Transport Plan and Climate Change Strategy (and any other relevant policy statements) reflect the urgency of this resolution.

The Council also calls on the Government to follow the recommendations of the Committee on Climate Change and radically improve the policy framework including, for example:

- detailed and practical proposals for retrofitting private and public housing stock, where the Green Deal failed.
- upgrade social housing energy efficiency to higher standards
- more support for renewable electricity and heat (and not taxing them unfairly)
- more support for establishing renewably powered heat networks
- more support for the smart technologies and storage and connecting to local power grids.
- more support for electric vehicle infrastructure and ownership, whilst incentivising the scrappage of older polluting vehicles
- more national investment in cycling and walking policies, and the expansion of public transport and car clubs using the latest zero carbon technology
- working with local businesses to improve their energy efficiency
- putting solar arrays on most of the suitable roof space and erecting more large wind turbines

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES - 26 FEBRUARY 2019

- developing local energy storage facilities
- establishing national recycling standards on industry and supermarkets whilst supporting the roll-out of food waste collection and its use for the generation of clean local energy
- building a town centre district energy system which harnesses heat from local rivers or watercourses
- establishing the widespread use of ground-source heat pumps and potentially air source heat pumps
- amending local authority procurement powers to require the delivery of carbon neutral environmental strategies by private sector suppliers

The Council calls on the Government to accept its moral and ethical responsibilities and give Reading as soon as possible the additional powers and funding needed to ensure that Reading is carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council therefore instructs the Chief Executive to write to our local MPs, and to the Prime Minister and to relevant Government departments (DEFRA, MHCLG, DfT, and Treasury) setting out the above requirements and the need for new legislation and financial support to deliver this radical agenda.

(The meeting closed at 8.50pm).

Agenda Item 7

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

TO:	COUNCIL		
DATE:	26 MARCH 2019		
TITLE:	COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR LOVELOCK	PORTFOLIO:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
SERVICE:	COUNCILLOR SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	AMY BRYAN	TEL:	0118 937 2368
JOB TITLE:	COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATOR	E-MAIL:	amy.bryan@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Further to Minute 41 of the Council's meeting on 27 March 2018, this report recommends that the Council consider the findings of the Independent Remuneration Panel and adopt a scheme of Councillors' Allowances for the financial year 2019/20.
- 1.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel considers a scheme of allowances and makes recommendations to Council. This year the Panel are conducting a full review and until that review has been completed the Remuneration Panel has recommended that the scheme remain unchanged from the scheme currently in place.
- 1.3 The Remuneration Panel's Findings following their full review will be submitted to a future meeting for consideration.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 Council is asked to note that the Independent Remuneration Panel is currently conducting a full review of Councillors' Allowances and will report to a future meeting of the Council on its findings.
- 2.2 That, pending the outcome of the Independent Remuneration Panel's review and its consideration by Council, the scheme for Councillors' Allowances for 2019/20 be unchanged, as set out in Appendix A to the report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council on 27 March 2018 agreed a scheme for Councillors' Allowances for 2018/19, with the following features:
 - (i) The total amount to be spent on Councillors' Allowances be £448,597;
 - (ii) The level of basic allowance to be paid to each councillor be £8,220 per annum.

- (iii) That the remaining £70,477 be spent on special responsibility allowances (SRA) to be paid at the following levels to the office holders as specified below:

Office Holder	Level of SRA pa
Leader of the Council	£7,004
Deputy Leader of the Council	£5,722
Tier 1 to be paid to the Lead Councillors and to the Leader of the main opposition Group	£3,816
Tier 2 to be paid to the Chairs of Committees and the Leader of the other political groups	£2,147
Tier 3 to be paid to Vice-Chairs of Committees and to other councillors carrying out other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require the commitment of equivalent time and effort as for other categories of activity which would qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance under Paragraph 5(1)(i) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and to the independent person appointed in accordance with Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to carry out the functions specified in that Act in relation to the Members' Code of Conduct and Local Standards Committee	£1,074

- (iv) Councillors may claim for the cost of a carer to look after children or disabled or elderly dependent relatives whilst undertaking approved duties on behalf of the Council as follows:

- Up to £8.75 per hour for childcare, up to 15 hours per week;
- Up to £8.75 per hour for the carer of a disabled or elderly dependent relative (including a disabled child), up to 15 hours per week;

and provided that the above claims were supported by a signed receipt from the carer confirming the hours and amount claimed and that the carer was not a close relative. These allowances are taxable.

- (v) An approved duty is defined as follows:

- a meeting of the executive
- a meeting of a committee of the executive
- a meeting of the authority
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the authority
- a meeting of some other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations
- a meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or sub-committee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the authority is not divided into political groups)
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member

- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996
- any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

3.3 The Council, on 13 November 2001, set up an independent Remuneration Panel to review annually the Council's scheme for Councillors' Allowances and to make recommendations for a scheme of allowances to include:

- i) the amount of basic allowance to be paid to all Councillors;
- ii) the duties in respect of which Councillors should receive a special responsibility allowance, and the amount of such an allowance;
- iii) allowances for the care of children or dependants.

3.4 The Remuneration Panel was set up to include at least three and no more than five independent members appointed to represent stakeholders of the Council. Its current membership is:

- Francis Connolly - member with experience of the local voluntary sector and local business
- Dick Taylor - member with past experience of local government (officer)
- Linda Fort - member with experience of the local media
- Mick Pollek - member with experience of the local trade union movement
- Lady Audrey Durant - member with experience of the local voluntary sector

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 The Panel are currently conducting a review of the Councillors Allowances Scheme and until that review has been completed the Panel recommend no change be made to the scheme. The Panel's findings following their review will be submitted to a future meeting.

4.2 The Panel's interim findings are set out at Appendix A.

Pensions

4.3 The changes made by the Government to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for Councillors excluded any new membership from 1 April 2014 and access for existing Councillors ended with their current fixed term of office. All membership to the Local Government Pension Scheme by Councillors expired in May 2016.

Information Commissioners Office (ICO)

4.4 The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) wrote to all Councils explicitly asking that all Councillors checked and understood their obligations under the Data Protection Act, as the ICO felt there was a potential personal risk exposure for many Councillors of inadequate registration in context with information held at home from carrying out their role as a representative of the residents in a ward or as an independent councillor not affiliated with any political party that would not be covered by existing Council or Political Registrations.

4.5 Since May/June 2015 the Council has operated a bulk registration of all Councillors with the ICO on an ‘opt out basis’ rather than ‘opt in’.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The provision for the payment of allowances to Councillors gives local authorities the scope to set allowances schemes to suit local needs and to help ensure that Councillors are not financially disadvantaged in serving as elected Members.

5.2 Ensuring Councillors are recompensed fairly for their services will help to attract candidates of high calibre and help to retain them, thereby enhancing the stability and experience of Reading’s elected Councillors.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 South East Employers conducts an annual survey of members’ allowances that provides benchmarking data and this has been used to compare the level of allowances in Reading with other Berkshire authorities (as set out in the table below). The Leader’s SRAs ranged from £18,865 in West Berkshire to £28,954 in Bracknell; Deputy Leader’s SRAs ranged from £11,319 in West Berkshire to £17,372 in Bracknell; and Lead Councillors’ SRA ranged from £9,433 in West Berkshire to £15,926 in Bracknell. The average SRA allowances received across the Berkshire authorities (excluding Reading) are £11,695 for a Lead Councillor role and £22,414 for the Leader.

The basic Councillor allowance in Reading is broadly comparable at £8,220 with those of other Berkshire authorities, being just over £600 above the lowest (West Berkshire) and just under £500 below the highest figure (Bracknell).

	Basic Allowance	Leader’s SRA	Deputy Leader’s SRA	Lead Councillor’s SRA
Bracknell Forest Council	£8,687	£28,954	£17,372	£15,926
Reading Borough Council	£8,220	£7,004	£5,722	£3,816
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£8,143	£24,428	£13,434	£12,215
Slough Borough Council	£7,626	£19,827	£13,878	£10,905
West Berkshire Council	£7,546	£18,865	£11,319	£9,433
Wokingham Borough Council	£7,784	£20,000	-	£10,000

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not relevant to this decision.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to set up and maintain an independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the authority concerning the allowances to be paid to elected members.

8.2 The relevant regulations governing the payment of allowances to elected members are:

- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 1991 No. 351
- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1995 No. 553
- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2001
- Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001
- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003
- The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014.

8.3 The Local Government Act 2000 (Commencement No 6), made on 15 February 2001, brought into force from 19 February 2001 all the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 which relate to allowances except the abolition of attendance allowance which was abolished from 28 July 2001.

8.4 The relevant regulations came into force on 4 May 2001 and from that date local authorities have been under a duty to set up an independent Remuneration Panel. Any decision to amend, revoke or replace an allowances scheme will have to be taken having regard to the recommendations of the Panel. This will apply to the Council's current scheme, which will expire on 31 March 2018.

8.5 Under Regulation 2(5) of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, the adoption of the Councillors' Allowances scheme may not be the responsibility of the executive of the authority. Regulation 2(7) goes further and states that the Council may not delegate this function to a Committee or to an officer. The Council has to take all decisions relating to the adoption of its Scheme of Councillors' Allowances.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The 2018/19 budget for Members' Allowances was £500,300. No increase in allowances has been recommended at this time so there are no increased financial costs. If there are any financial implications as a result of the Panel's full review of Councillors' Allowances, which is currently being undertaken, these will be set out in the report to that meeting.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003
The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014



READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCHEME FOR COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES - 2019-2020

FINDINGS OF REMUNERATION PANEL

Reading Borough Council has received interim recommendations from an independent Remuneration Panel, pending completion of its full review of the scheme of allowances to be paid by the authority to Councillors for the financial year 2019-2020. The Panel's interim recommendation is for the Councillors' Allowances scheme to remain unchanged at this stage, as set out below, and for the Panel to submit the findings from its full review to a future meeting of the Council for consideration.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF REMUNERATION PANEL

- (1) That, for 2019-20, the total sum for the payment of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to councillors remain at the same level as set for 2018-19 at £448,597;
- (2) That, within this total sum, the provision for the payment of Basic Allowance to all councillors remain at £378,125; and the Basic Allowance paid to individual councillors remain the same at £8,220 a year;
- (3) That the Special Responsibility Allowances payments remain the same, as follows:
 - (a) the amount paid to the Leader to be £7,004;
 - (b) the amount paid to the Deputy Leader to be £5,722;
 - (c) the amount paid to SRA Tier 1 to be £3,816;
 - (d) the amount paid to SRA Tier 2 to be £2,147;
 - (e) the amount paid to SRA Tier 3 to be £1,074.

No councillor shall receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance;
- (4) That the existing categorisation of tiers should remain unchanged, as follows:
 - Tier 1 to be paid to the Lead Councillors and to the Leader of the main opposition Group;
 - Tier 2 to be paid to the Chairs of Committees and the Leader of the other political groups;
 - Tier 3 to be paid to Vice-Chairs of Committees and other councillors carrying out other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require the commitment of equivalent time and effort as for other categories of activity which would qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance under Paragraph 5(1)(i) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and to the independent person appointed in accordance with Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to carry out the functions specified in that Act in relation to the Members' Code of Conduct and Local Standards Committee;

(5) That the 2019-20 arrangements for the payment of Dependant Carers' Allowance be paid in line with the living wage, currently as follows:

- (a) Up to £8.75 per hour for childcare for up to 15 hours a week
- (b) Up to £8.75 per hour towards the cost of a care attendant for an elderly or disabled relative (including a disabled child) for up to 15 hours a week

The person providing the care may not be a close relative defined as spouse, partner (opposite or same sex cohabitantes), parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents and grandchildren. The paid care attendant must sign a receipt to show that they have cared for the dependent during the hours claimed for;

(6) That, subject to (8) below, the level of subsistence allowances, with the exception of overnight subsistence, remain the same as officers receive. The allowances are currently:

- Subsistence
 - Breakfast allowance £8.26
 - Lunch allowance £11.41
 - Tea allowance £4.52
 - Evening meal allowance £14.13
 - Overnight subsistence £82.21 a day outside London
£93.77 a day in London or at LGA Annual Conferences

(7) That the level of travel allowances be set as the same as officers receive, as follows:

- Travel by councillor's own motor vehicle - 45 pence per mile
- Travel by councillor's own bicycle - 37 pence per mile
- Travel by councillor's own motorcycle - 40.9 pence per mile
- Bus travel - cost of the ordinary fare, cheap fare or portion of any weekly ticket;

(8) That the subsistence limits referred to in (6) above be exceeded in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, e.g. to enable a Councillor and an officer attending a conference to stay at the same accommodation, subject to there being sufficient budget provision;

(9) That provision for Co-optees' Allowances are payable solely to non-councillor members of the Standards Committee attending meetings of the Committee or any Sub-Committee set up by the Committee as part of its process of assessing, investigating and hearing complaints about Councillors; the allowances to be paid at the daily rate equivalent of the Councillors' Basic Allowance; the Monitoring Officer to be authorised to settle the rate to be paid on each occasion;

(10) That the salary sacrifice schemes available to Council staff also be made available to Councillors.

This page is intentionally left blank

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

TO:	COUNCIL		
DATE:	26 MARCH 2019		
TITLE:	PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR JASON BROCK	PORTFOLIO:	CORPORATE AND CONSUMER SERVICES
LEAD OFFICER:	SHELLA SMITH	TEL:	0118 937 4697
JOB TITLE:	HEAD OF HR AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	E-MAIL:	Shella.smith@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide Council with a Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 for approval, following its endorsement by Personnel Committee on 14 March 2019.

1.2 Appendices

Appendix 1: Pay Policy Statement 2019/20

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20, be approved, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Local Authorities are required under section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 (the Act) to prepare a Pay Policy Statement. The statement must articulate the Council's policy towards the pay of the workforce, particularly senior staff and its lowest paid employees.

3.2 The Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20 is attached as Appendix 1. It has been updated as follows:

- Updated throughout to reflect changes in job titles (e.g. Heads of Service are now referred to as Assistant Directors).
- Addition of a requirement for the Assistant Director of HR and Organisational Development to approve all acting up and honoraria

payments, in addition to the Assistant Director for the service area, to ensure proper application of the Council's policy (paragraph 14.6).

- Addition of the new salary sacrifice schemes offered to all employees (paragraph 15.2). The bus to work salary sacrifice scheme has been removed as it is no longer in operation following changes in tax legislation.
- New pay scales at Annex F, which reflect the relevant national agreements.

- 3.3 Each local authority is an individual employer in its own right and has the autonomy to make decisions on pay that are appropriate to local circumstances and which deliver value for money for local taxpayers. The provisions of the Localism Act do not seek to change this or to determine what decisions on pay should be taken but they require individual employing authorities to be more open about their own policies in relation to pay and how decisions are made in this regard.
- 3.4 Section 40 of the Act requires authorities in developing their Pay Policy Statement to have regard to any guidance published by the Secretary of State. This includes Communities and Local Government guidance on Openness and Accountability in Local Pay and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency (as amended).
- 3.5 The government has taken steps to increase transparency on the pay and reward of public sector employees and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency which amongst other things asks councils to consider the way they release data on senior salaries.
- 3.6 In March 2011 the Hutton Review of Fair Pay was published which made several recommendations for promoting pay fairness in the public sector by tackling disparities between the lowest and highest paid in the public sector.
- 3.7 The provisions contained in the Act bring together the need for increasing accountability, transparency and fairness in the setting of pay which culminated in the formalisation of the Council's Pay Policy Statement, which outlines the pay and reward of the most senior employees set within the context of the pay of the wider workforce.
- 3.8 The Act sets out in detail the specific elements which the Pay Policy Statement must include as a minimum. The Act requires that in addition to the determination of senior salaries, authorities must make clear what approach is taken to awarding other elements of pay including:
- severance payments,
 - any additional fees (e.g. election duties),
 - pay increases,
 - honorarium payments etc.

- 3.9 The Act requires that authorities include in their Pay Policy Statements their approach to the publication of and access to information relating to the remuneration of Chief Officers. Reference to the council's Statement of Accounts where this information is published is included within the proposed policy.
- 3.10 The Act requires that Pay Policy Statements are produced annually and are considered by full Council. Any subsequent amendments required to the policy should also be considered by full Council. This should be carried out in accordance with part 5A of the Local Government Act 1972. The Secretary of State does not consider that any of the grounds for exclusion of the public would be met for discussions around Pay Policy Statements.
- 3.11 The Act requires that the Council's approach to pay, as set out in the Pay Policy Statement, is accessible for council tax payers for them to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration are fair therefore the approved Pay Policy Statement is published on the Council's website.
- 3.12 The Hutton report highlighted that there is value in ensuring decisions about senior pay are taken in the context of similar decisions on lower paid staff and the Act requires Authorities to set their policy on remuneration for the highest paid employees alongside policies on the lowest paid.
- 3.13 The Hutton report and The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency also suggest that the organisation's pay multiple is published. The 'pay multiple' (in this context) is described as the ratio between the highest paid employee and the 'median average' earnings across the organisation which acts as a means of illustrating the relationship between the highest and lowest paid.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no significant legal issues arising from this report.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report as the Pay Policy Statement is based upon existing policies and procedures.

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no significant equalities issues arising from this report.

7. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 7.1 As the Pay Policy Statement is largely a matter of fact in terms of how the Council currently determines the pay and conditions of its staff, consultation with staff is not required. However, the statement in Appendix

1 has been presented to the Council's Local Joint Forum on 14 March 2019 for information.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Reading Borough Council's pay policy aims to ensure value for money whilst enabling the Council to deliver high quality services to the residents of Reading. The Council seeks to set pay rates that are adequate to secure and retain high quality employees dedicated to the service of the public, but will determine overall pay and benefits at an appropriate level in accordance with equality, affordability and other relevant factors.
- 1.2. Pay levels will not be unnecessarily generous or otherwise excessive.
- 1.3. Reading Borough Council agrees that local authorities should be able to determine their own pay structures in order to address local priorities and to compete in the local labour market.
- 1.4. Reading Borough Council is committed to equality, transparency and fairness across all of its activities and particularly in relation to the pay and conditions of its staff.
- 1.5. This document has the following Annexes:
 - Annex A: Requirements and Recommendations to Publish Personal data concerning Staff
 - Annex B: Governance Arrangements for Pay and Conditions of Service
 - Annex C: Summary of Conditions of Service
 - Annex D: Council Employees in Salary Bands as at 1 April 2018
 - Annex E: Pension Discretions Statement
 - Annex F: Pay scales for staff employed on NJC (Green Book) conditions and Senior Managers (JNC).
- 1.6. The following related documents related to pay and remuneration can be accessed through the Council's website:
 - Details and responsibilities of all job roles paid above £50,000
 - Market Supplement Policy
 - Council Senior level organisational chart

2. LEGISLATION

- 2.1. The authority appoints its staff, and determines the terms and conditions of service on which they hold office, under Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1978. This includes procedures for dismissal. Full Council has delegated this power to the Personnel Committee, with the exception of the Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer for whom separate statutory procedures apply.
- 2.2. Sections 38 - 43 of the Localism Act 2011 require that the authority produce a policy statement that covers a number of matters concerning the pay of the authority's staff, principally Chief Officers. This policy statement meets the requirements of the Localism Act in this regard and also meets the requirements of guidance issued in February 2012 and February 2013 by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to which the authority is required to have regard under Section 40 of the Act.
- 2.3. This policy also has some connection with the data on pay and rewards for staff which the authority publishes under the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency and the data which is published under The Accounts and Audit

(England) Regulations (2011). A revised draft Code was published in December 2013. It should be noted that the requirements to publish data under the Secretary of State's guidance, the Code of Practice and the Regulations do differ, the data requirements of the Code of Practice and the Accounts and Audit Regulations are summarised at Annex A to this policy statement.

- 2.4. Any decision under powers delegated in the Council's Constitution / Scheme of Delegation with regard to remuneration to be taken during 2019/20 will be bound by and must comply with this Statement. No decision at variance with this Statement may be taken without the specific agreement of full Council.
- 2.5. The Head of Paid Service and Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services must be consulted prior to any decision impacting on remuneration where there is any question regarding compliance with the Statement.

3. SCOPE OF THIS STATEMENT AND DEFINITION OF TERMS

- 3.1. This pay policy statement meets the statutory duty to provide the Council with a description of the policy on staff remuneration for annual approval. It provides information on remuneration arrangements for staff directly employed by the Council, excluding staff in schools.
- 3.2. This statement sets out the Council's policy with regard to:
 - the remuneration of 'chief officers' (the senior pay group - see below)
 - the remuneration of the lowest paid employees
 - the relationship between chief officers' remuneration and that of other officers
- 3.3. In this policy the 'senior pay group' (senior managers) covers posts in the top three tiers of the organisation. These include the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors. Posts in this group in Reading are as follows:
 - (a) the Head of the Authority's Paid Service [Chief Executive]
 - (b) the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services;
 - (c) the Executive Director of Social Care & Health;
 - (d) the Executive Director of Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services
 - (e) the Executive Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)
 - (f) the Monitoring Officer (Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services)
 - (g) persons who, as respects all or most of their duties, report directly to or are directly accountable to the Head of the Council's Paid Service
 - (h) persons who, as respects all or most of their duties, report directly to or are accountable to the posts listed in (b), (c), (d) and (e) above (other than staff whose duties are of a clerical or support nature)
- 3.4. The senior management structure of the organisation can be found in Part 7 of the Council Constitution on the Council's website.
- 3.5. The Council defines its lowest paid employees as those staff paid on the first spinal column point of the Council's pay grades for National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services staff [RG Grades]. This definition is adopted as it refers to the lowest level of pay for staff on non-casual or apprentice contracts of employment.
- 3.6. The relationship between the remuneration of the lowest paid employees and that of the Council's senior officers is as described in this statement and by reference to the published data referred to.
- 3.7. "Remuneration" for the purposes of this statement includes these elements:
 - basic salary
 - pension
 - all other allowances arising from employment

4. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND DECISION MAKING

- 4.1. Full Council has delegated to the Personnel Committee the power to appoint and determine the terms and conditions of employment for all staff, including the application of any discretions under the pension schemes. The terms of reference of the Personnel Committee are set out in Article 8 of Part 2 of the Council's constitution.
- 4.2. Full Council, and the Personnel Committee, have extensive and long-standing arrangements to delegate the exercise of this power to Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors, in respect of the staff employed in their service areas.
- 4.3. The delegation is subject to the Council's Officer Employment Rules, which are set out in Part 4 of the Council's constitution.
- 4.4. A summary of the arrangements for determining terms and conditions of service for staff, including the Officer Employment Rules, can be found in **Annex B**.
- 4.5. The Council, and the Personnel Committee, have adopted a range of policies which apply to the recruitment and employment of the staff of the authority. Policies which are specifically relevant to this Statement include:
 - Low Pay Policy
 - Recruitment and Selection Policy
 - Employment Stability Agreement and Pay Protection Policy
 - Appraisal Scheme and Performance-Related Progression Scheme
 - Policies relating to Market Supplements; Starting Salary on Appointment; Honorarium and Acting-Up Payments
- 4.6. The Scheme of Delegation provides for Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors to manage, review and apply the Council's Human Resources policies, and to determine the appropriate pay and conditions for the appointment of staff within these policies.

5. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

- 5.1. Reading Borough Council applies terms and conditions of employment that have been negotiated and agreed through appropriate collective bargaining mechanisms (national or local) or as a consequence of authority decisions, these are then incorporated into contracts of employment.
- 5.2. The Council is a member of the local government employers association for national collective bargaining in respect of chief executives, chief officers and other employees. There are separate negotiations and agreements in respect of each of these groups. Changes from national negotiations generally take effect from 1 April each year and are retrospective to 1 April where agreements are made later than 1 April. It is the authority's long-standing policy to implement national agreements. The head of paid service and chief officers are under the JNC conditions of service, with locally determined pay. All other employees are under the relevant national agreement on pay and conditions of service applying to the particular service area, with local variations to pay. Pay for staff on NJC conditions was last increased nationally ('cost of living' increase) in April 2019. The last time that pay for staff on JNC conditions was varied as the result of a national pay award was in April 2019. The Council will apply any settlement reached nationally in respect of staff covered by national bargaining machinery where this is the locally agreed mechanism for determining cost of living increases.
- 5.3. A summary of the arrangements for determining terms and conditions of service for staff is set out in **Annex C**:

6. POLICY ON REMUNERATING SENIOR MANAGERS

- 6.1. **Head of Paid Service:** The Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) is paid on a locally determined salary which is reviewed and approved by Personnel Committee when the post becomes vacant. Independent external consultancy advice on appropriate remuneration levels (taking account of role and responsibilities, recruitment and retention factors and local and regional salary benchmarks) is presented to Personnel Committee to inform their decision-making in this matter.
- 6.2. The locally determined salary will be within the parameters of the Pay Policy Statement, and will be set out in the Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting which approves the salary, which will be published on the Council's website. The salary range will also be published in the job advertisement to fill the vacant post.
- 6.3. At the conclusion of the recruitment process, the decision to appoint a person to fill the post of Head of Paid Service will be taken by full Council, which will be advised of the local salary, and the point at which the appointment was recommended to be made.
- 6.4. No other payments or benefits are payable to the Head of Paid Service (e.g. bonus, performance related pay, health insurance, car lease) other than those referred to elsewhere in this policy statement as being applicable to all employees.
- 6.5. Unless otherwise determined on appointment, the salary for the Head of Paid Service is subject to annual review by the Personnel Committee (on the anniversary of the date of appointment), in accordance with the following principles:
- That any salary progression is subject to a satisfactory annual appraisal;
 - That the salary / scale is uplifted by the pay award nationally agreed for the JNC for Chief Executives;
 - That these principles take effect on the anniversary of the date of appointment without need for Personnel Committee decision, unless an exception report is initiated by the Leader of the Council.
- 6.6. **Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors:** Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors, including the Managing Director for Homes for Reading, are paid on locally determined incremental Reading Senior Management / Corporate Director (RSM / CD) salary scales. These scales were established and approved by Personnel Committee following an independent review of senior salaries carried out by the Hay Group in 2001/2, using relevant regional public sector salary benchmarks. These scales are uplifted by the pay award nationally agreed (if any) for the JNC for Chief Officers. Exceptionally, the JNC pay award is not implemented for the senior pay group in times of severe budget challenge.
- 6.7. There are no other additional elements of remuneration in respect of overtime, flexi-time, bank holiday working, stand-by payments, etc., paid to these senior staff, as they are expected to undertake duties outside their contractual hours and working patterns without additional payment.
- 6.8. No other payments or benefits are payable to Corporate Directors and Heads of Service (e.g. bonus, performance related pay, health insurance, car lease) other than those referred to elsewhere in this policy statement as being applicable to all employees.

7. POLICY ON REMUNERATING THE LOWEST PAID IN THE WORKFORCE

- 7.1. This policy statement reconfirms the Council's long-standing Low Pay Policy. The new (1/4/19) grading structure allows for all staff, except apprentices, to be paid an hourly rate no lower than the Living Wage (£9.00 per hour).
- 7.2. The Council previously paid a Living Wage supplement to increase the hourly rate of employees to the Living Wage, where necessary. The salary scales effective from 1st

April 2019 remove the requirement for such a supplement and the Living Wage is therefore reflected in all staff's substantive rate.

- 7.3. Apprentices are paid the nationally recommended allowance rate of £136.90 for the first 12 months of employment and thereafter are paid the National Minimum Wage (NMW) as applicable to the employee's age. These rates are updated as the national allowances are revised.
- 7.4. Reading Borough Council is also committed to the development and publication of a local policy to promote and require, to the extent permitted by law, the application of the Council's low pay policy to staff working for the Council's contractors in addition to the application of TUPE. The Council became an accredited Living Wage Employer in 2015.

8. PAY MULTIPLES

- 8.1. The highest paid salary in this authority is up to £159,200 which is the top of the annual salary range paid to the Head of Paid Service. The current ratio between the lowest paid employee (scp 11, £17,007 per annum as at 1/4/18) and the highest paid employee is 1:9.36. The Council will work to maintain a ratio of no more than 1:10 between the lowest paid and the highest paid. This ratio is 1:9.17 with effect from 1st April 2019.
- 8.2. This authority does not have a policy on maintaining or reaching a specific highest / **median** 'pay multiple', however the authority is conscious of the need to ensure that the salary of the highest paid employee is not excessive and is consistent with the needs of the authority as expressed in this policy statement. The authority's approach to the payment of other staff is to pay that which the authority needs to pay to recruit and retain staff with the skills, knowledge, experience, abilities and qualities needed for the post in question at the relevant time, and to ensure that the authority meets any contractual requirements for staff including the application of any local or national collective agreements, or authority decisions regarding pay. The median salary paid by the Council is £26,470. Pay multiple therefore between the highest and median salary is 1: 6.01.
- 8.3. Pay multiples will be monitored each year within the Pay Policy Statement, and will be benchmarked against comparable authorities as others' pay policy statements are published.
- 8.4. In terms of overall remuneration packages the Council's policy is to differentiate by setting different levels of basic pay to reflect differences in responsibilities (job evaluation) but not to differentiate on other allowances, benefits and payments it makes.

9. PAY AND GRADING STRUCTURE

- 9.1. The Council uses established formal job evaluation procedures to identify the relative worth of jobs within the council (including the senior pay group), and to allocate jobs to the appropriate pay grade.
- 9.2. For the senior pay group (RSM / CD Grades) RBC uses the Hay job evaluation scheme, for other jobs we use the national NJC for Local Government Employees JE scheme.
- 9.3. The NJC Job Evaluation Scheme, which is recognised by employers and trades unions nationally, allows for robust measurement against set criteria resulting in fair and objective evaluations and satisfies equal pay requirements
- 9.4. Pay grades are shown at Annex F.

10. PAY PROFILE

- 10.1. **Annex D** shows employees at 1 April 2018 by salary band and then by gender, ethnic origin and disability. Salary bands are based on the RG pay scales introduced in May 2011.
- 10.2. The numbers of black and minority ethnic employees and disabled employees are shown as a proportion of employees who have made a positive declaration.
- 10.3. Female employees continue to form the greater percentage across all salary bands. Each band, apart from Apprentices as shown in RG1, has over 50% women, with the proportion reaching 70.97% in RG3.
- 10.4. The overall number of employees who have declared a disability across salary bands ranges between 2.25% and 6.67%. The proportion of people with a disability is relatively even across most of the bands apart from the highest bands.

11. PAY PROGRESSION

- 11.1. Under the Council's Performance Related Progression Scheme the award of an annual increment is dependent upon an employee's achievement of performance targets and competency objectives. The scheme also links incremental progression with whether performance is improving or declining. No increment can be awarded if an employee is subject to formal disciplinary or capability (poor performance) procedures.
- 11.2. The following principles apply to pay progression for all RBC staff with effect from 1st April 2012:
 - 'Gateways' will be established 2 or 3 increments from the top of each grade depending on its length. Progression within a grade beyond the gateway will be for wider responsibility which meets agreed competency levels, based on job evaluation (JE) factor levels;
 - Progression up to the gateway within the grade will be subject to a satisfactory assessment of performance and contribution based on management evidence throughout the year;
 - Progression between grades within career grades will be dependent on meeting competencies at the next grade level;
 - On progression matters, there will be one appeal level above the approving manager (i.e. designated officer or Head of Service);
 - Regular supervision and appraisal are fundamental to employee progression.
- 11.3. Accelerated incremental progression within the evaluated grade is only possible where there is objective evidence of outstanding performance or there is evidence that demonstrates inequality of pay level with comparable peers. Any such increase must be approved by the Executive Director and reasons provided to HR.
- 11.4. In addition to 11.3, accelerated increments would be paid for the progression within an existing career grade structure where skills and competencies (including academic attainment) have been achieved which meet predetermined career grade progression criteria.
- 11.5. The acceleration of an employee through the gateway of their existing grade, needs to be evidenced and certified by the Service Manager as meeting pre-existing and defined career progression criteria and approved by the Executive Director. Copies of the evidence to support such a decision need to be placed on the employee's personal file held by HR.
- 11.6. Any career grade progression is conditional upon budget provision being available.

- 11.7. Employees successfully moving posts within the Council will be subject to the principle of annual incremental progression assessment. They will no longer receive an automatic increment 6 months after being in their new post.

12. LOCAL PAY ARRANGEMENTS

- 12.1. **Child Care Solicitors** - This section, based in RBC's Legal Service, provides a service to other Berkshire Unitary Councils. Staff who were employed by the former Berkshire County Council retain local pay and progression arrangements which were inherited by RBC as a result of Statutory Transfer Order / TUPE provisions.

13. REMUNERATION ON APPOINTMENT AND PROMOTION

- 13.1. The Council's policy is to not pay any form of "signing on" fee or incentive payment when recruiting, except where there are significant recruitment difficulties that jeopardise service delivery, as identified and approved by CMT.
- 13.2. The starting pay point for all new employees (including internally appointed or promoted employees) should normally be the first point of the appropriate grade. There may be circumstances (e.g. offers from other employers, market forces) where it is necessary to make an offer that is at a higher point within the grade. The authority to make an offer higher than the starting point lies with the Deputy/Assistant Director, who must also consider the equality of such an exception and must inform the Assistant Director of HR and Organisational Development of the reason for the exception. This policy applies to all staff.
- 13.3. At the point of any assimilation to a new grade, employees moving to a higher grade will be placed at the bottom of that new grade.

14. OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE REMUNERATION PACKAGE

- 14.1. **Pension:** Pension provision is an important part of the remuneration package. All employees may join the local government pension scheme (or the Teachers Pension Scheme for relevant staff) and are enrolled automatically unless they wish to opt out. The scheme is a statutory scheme with contributions from employees and from employers. The current employer contribution rate for Reading Borough Council is 16.7%. This rate is reviewed and set every three years by the actuary. Reading Borough Council is part of the Berkshire scheme, administered by the Royal Borough of Maidenhead and Windsor. Neither the scheme nor the Council adopt different policies with regard to benefits for any category of employee: the same terms apply to the Chief Executive, chief officers and other staff.
- 14.2. **Election / Returning Officer Fees:** The Returning Officer is an officer of the Borough Council who is appointed under the Representation of the People Act 1983. Whilst appointed by the Borough Council, the role of the Returning Officer is one which involves and incurs personal responsibility and accountability and is statutorily separate from his/her duties as an employee of the Borough Council. As Returning Officer, he/she is paid a separate allowance for each election for which he/she is responsible.
- 14.3. Separate fees will be paid to the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services for undertaking Returning Officer duties which are not part of the post's substantive role. These fees will be paid in line with the amount recommended by the Government or Electoral Commission for Parliamentary and European elections and referendums, or as set out in the Council's budget estimates for local elections.
- 14.4. The Returning Officer may appoint one or more Deputy Returning Officers, and pay a fee to them for undertaking the duties that the Returning Officer allocates to them.
- 14.5. **Market Supplements:** The Council may pay a market supplement, in addition to base salary, in order to recruit or retain staff with special skills experience or knowledge. Market supplements are applied, reviewed and withdrawn in accordance with the

Council's market supplement policy, which is published on the Council's website. The Head of Paid Service has delegated authority to determine posts for which salary supplements will be paid, and the amount and duration of the supplement, in consultation with the Assistant Director of HR and Organisational Development and the relevant Executive Director.

14.6. Honorarium and other temporary additional payments:

Under the Council's scheme of delegation to officers, Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors are authorised to approve additional payments in the circumstances described below:

(a) 'Acting-up' - The employee will either receive the 'rate for the job' that they are covering if they are undertaking the full range of duties and responsibilities. As a minimum, this means that they will be paid at the first spinal column point of the grade of the post that they are acting up into. If the employee is not undertaking the full range of duties of a higher graded post, then an acting up allowance will be paid. The allowance will be a percentage of the difference between the first point on the grade of the post being covered and the employee's current salary equivalent to the percentage proportion of higher responsibility being undertaken.

(b) **Honorarium payments** - Where an employee is undertaking work on a project or discrete piece of work which would fall outside of the normal range of duties expected for his / her particular post, then the employee shall be eligible for an honorarium payment for the duration of the project.

The level of payment made should be determined with regard to the level of responsibilities being undertaken and this should be determined with regard to the Council's Job Evaluation Scheme. All such payments must be approved by the Assistant Director of HR and Organisational Development to ensure proper application of the Council's policy.

The employee will be paid an amount appropriate to the proportion of their time being spent working at this higher level on a monthly basis for the duration of the project / programme.

15. NON-PAY ELEMENTS AND BENEFITS

15.1. Annual Leave: The following annual leave entitlements apply

- The minimum annual leave allowance (on appointment) will be 24 days per year
- There will be an additional 5 days at 5 years continuous local government service (granted from anniversary of start date).
- There will be an additional 3 days at 10 years Reading Borough Council service (granted from following 1 April).
- The minimum annual leave allowance (on appointment) will be 30 days per year for the senior pay group
- The maximum annual leave allowance for all staff will be 32 days.

15.2. Salary Sacrifice Schemes / Employee discount schemes: All employees can access salary sacrifice schemes for childcare vouchers, Kennet Day Nursery, Added Voluntary Contributions (AVCs), bicycle purchase, and lease cars (from 2019). There are also non-subsidised employee discount schemes.

15.3. Flexible Working: All employees can access flexible working arrangements subject always to the needs of the service.

15.4. Car Allowances / Expenses: The Council will meet or reimburse authorised travel, subsistence and (exceptionally) accommodation costs for attendance at necessary and approved meetings and training events. The Council does not regard such costs as remuneration but as non-pay operational costs. This policy is applied consistently to

the Head of Paid Service, chief officers and other employees. The locally determined car allowance reimbursement rate for necessary and approved work-related travel is 45p per mile for **all authorised car users**. No other car allowance (e.g. monthly lump sum) is payable to any employee.

16. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- 16.1. Under the Council's Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the decision to effect dismissal or retirement on the grounds of redundancy or efficiency of the service is a decision of Personnel Committee for posts at Deputy/Assistant Director and above. The decision is delegated to the relevant Executive Director for all posts below this level.
- 16.2. However, the final decision as to the compensation to be paid as a result of such dismissal decisions, **for all posts**, is a decision of Personnel Committee. Personnel Committee also need to approve any employee requests for early retirement which require employer consent and entail a cost to the Council.
- 16.3. Each of the proposals presented to the Committee must first be considered and agreed by an officer panel comprising the Executive Director of Resources (S151 Officer), Monitoring Officer and the Assistant Director of HR and Organisational Development. This panel is established to monitor applications on the basis of consistency, legality and financial prudence. In terms of financial prudence, each case must demonstrate a 'payback period' within one year, or, exceptionally, two years in 'efficiency of the service' cases if sufficient service and efficiency benefits to the Council can be demonstrated. This Panel also assesses associated questions e.g. exercise of exceptional discretion; reasonableness of alternative employment in redundancy cases etc.
- 16.4. In the event that the compensation to be paid exceeds £100,000 in total, then full Council will be offered an opportunity to vote on the matter prior to approval.
- 16.5. **Discretionary Enhancement of Redundancy Payments:** The policy for the award of any discretionary payments is the same for all staff regardless of their pay level. Redundancy payments under regulation 5 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England & Wales) Regulations 2006 provide discretion to pay up to an overall lump sum of 2 times the statutory redundancy payment formula based on actual weeks pay, capped at 52 weeks' pay (may be adjusted following consultation). This is payable to employees made redundant with 2 or more years continuous service regardless of their age. Discretionary compensation can be reduced in cases where an offer of suitable alternative employment is deemed to have been unreasonably refused.
- 16.6. **Settlement Agreements:** In exceptional circumstances, and specifically so as to settle a claim or potential dispute the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services can agree payment of a termination settlement sum (subject to a decision of Personnel Committee if outside the normal framework for termination payments as set out in this section).
- 16.7. **Policy on Re-Employment:** The policy for re-employment following redundancy / efficiency termination is the same for all staff regardless of their pay level. Employees in receipt of compensation payment for loss of employment which has had discretionary enhancements applied to it are not permitted to take up employment with Reading Borough Council within 12 months of the ending of their current employment.
- 16.8. **Flexible Retirement:** In accordance with Superannuation Regulations, rather than continuing in their current job to age 65 employees can, on or after age 55 and with Council consent, reduce their hours of work or the grade in which they are employed and draw (some or all of) their accrued pension benefits whilst continuing in employment and building up further benefits in the Scheme - enabling them to ease

into retirement. Employees must be 55 or over and have 3 or more months' membership in the LGPS (including transferred rights) in order to be eligible to make a flexible retirement request following a reduction in hours or grade. Pension benefits will normally be reduced if paid before age 65. This policy is open to all employees, subject to financial requirements being met (net savings to the Council and a pay back period of no more than 2 years).

17. PENSION DISCRETIONS

17.1. The Council's current policy statement on the use of discretions under the relevant Superannuation Regulations is attached as **Annex E**.

18. PAY PROTECTION

18.1. The Council's pay protection policy is approved by the Personnel Committee as part of the Employment Stability Agreement. The policy provides a mechanism for assisting employees to adjust to a reduction in pay as a result of organisational change.

19. PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION ON THE REMUNERATION OF STAFF

19.1. This Pay Policy Statement will be published on the Council's website. In addition, details of all posts paid above £50,000 will be published.

20. AMENDMENTS TO THE POLICY

20.1. As the policy covers the period April 2019 to the end of March 2020, amendments may need to be made to the policy throughout the relevant period. As the Localism Act 2011 requires that any amendments are approved by the Council by resolution, proposed amendments will be reported to Personnel Committee for recommendation to the Council.

21. POLICY FOR FUTURE YEARS

21.1. This policy statement will be reviewed each year and will be presented to full Council each year for consideration in order to ensure that a policy is in place for the authority prior to the start of each financial year.

PAY POLICY STATEMENT - ANNEX A

The Secretary of State for CLG Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency indicates that local authorities should publish the following data concerning staff:

- Salaries, job descriptions, responsibilities, budgets (including overall salary cost of staff reporting), and numbers of staff for all staff in receipt of a salary of more than £50,000
- An organisational chart of the staff structure of the authority including salary bands and details of currently vacant posts
- The 'pay multiple' - the ratio between the highest paid salary and the median average salary of the whole authority workforce

The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations (2011) require that the following data is included in the authority's accounts:

- Numbers of employees with a salary above £50k per annum (pro-rata for part-time staff) in multiples of £5k
- Job title, remuneration and employer pension contributions for senior officers. Senior officers are defined as Head of Paid Service, Statutory Chief Officers and Non-Statutory Chief Officers by reference to Section 2 of the 1989 Local Government & Housing Act.
- Names of employees paid over £150k per annum

For the above remuneration is to include:

- Salary, fees or allowances for the current and previous year
- Bonuses paid or receivable for the current and previous year
- Expenses paid in the previous year
- Compensation for loss of employment paid to or receivable, or payments made in connection with loss of employment
- Total estimated value of non-cash benefits that are emoluments of the person

For the above pension contributions to include:

- The amount driven by the authority's set employer contribution rate
- Employer costs incurred relating to any increased membership or award of additional pension

PAY POLICY STATEMENT - ANNEX B

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

[Note: these provisions are subject to amendment as the source documents are amended]

1.1. Constitution of Reading Borough Council

Part 3.3 Responsibility for Council Functions (Schedule 1, Part 2):

37. Power to appoint staff, and to determine the terms and conditions on which they hold office (including procedures for dismissal)	Section 112 of the Local Government Act 1972.	Personnel Committee General Delegation to Executive Directors and Deputy/Assistant Directors
40. Power to appoint officers for particular purposes (appointment of “proper officers”)	Section 270(3) of the Local Government Act 1972	Personnel Committee
43. Duty to designate officer as head of the authority’s paid service, and to provide staff, etc	Section 4(1) of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (c. 42)	Council

1.2. Constitution of Reading Borough Council - 27 May 2015: Article 4, 4.2 Functions of the full Council:

Only the Council will exercise the following functions:

[...] (g) confirming the appointment of the Head of Paid Service;

1.3. Constitution of Reading Borough Council : Article 12 - Officers:

12.1 Management structure

[...]

(b) Chief Officers

The full Council will confirm the appointment of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) and the Personnel (Appointments) Committee will make appointments to the following posts (or such other similar posts as it may decide from time to time), who will be designated chief officers:

- Executive Director of Social Care and Health
- Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services
- Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhoods
- Executive Director of Resources

(c) Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer and Deputies

The Council has designated the following posts as shown:

- Chief Executive- Head of Paid Service
- Executive Director of Resources - Chief Finance Officer and Section 151 Officer
- Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services - Monitoring Officer

The Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2015 prescribe that the dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer must be confirmed by the full Council.

The Council has designated the following Deputy post as shown:

□ Assistant Director of Finance - Deputy Chief Finance Officer and Deputy Section 151 Officer

Such posts will have the functions described in Article 12.2-12.4 below.

12.2 Functions of the Head of Paid Service

(a) Discharge of functions by the Council

The Head of Paid Service will report to full Council or the Policy Committee on the manner in which the discharge of the Council's functions is co-ordinated, the number and grade of officers required for the discharge of functions and the organisation of officers.

(b) Restrictions on functions

The Head of Paid Service may not be the Monitoring Officer or the Section 151 Officer.

[...]

12.7 Employment

The recruitment, selection and dismissal of officers will comply with the Officer Employment Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

1.4. The powers and duties of the **Personnel Committee** include the following:

“6. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- (1) Subject to Officer Employment Procedure Rules set out in the constitution:
 - a) to arrange for the appointment of the Council's Head of Paid Service, and make recommendations to Council in this respect
 - b) to appoint Executive Directors, the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and posts falling within the definition of Deputy Chief Officer in Section 2(1) of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989
 - c) to dismiss Executive Directors, the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer and posts falling within the definition of Deputy Chief Officer in Section 2(1) of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989
 - d) to settle all matters relating to the above appointments or dismissals
- (2) To take any decisions affecting the remuneration, terms and conditions of service of the Head of Paid Service;
- (3) To undertake performance appraisals of the Head of Paid Service and Executive Directors; and to set annual targets against which performance can be measured.

[...]

- (6) To determine the level of compensation to be paid in individual cases of voluntary redundancy and early retirement and other personnel matters where appropriate.

[...]

1.5. The **Officer Employment Procedure Rules** are in Part 4 of the Constitution.

PAY POLICY STATEMENT - ANNEX C**SUMMARY OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE****Chief Executive**

The terms and conditions for the Head of Paid Service are as set out by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Executives, and as amended locally. Pay is determined locally.

Executive Directors

The terms and conditions for the Executive Directors are in accordance with the Scheme of Conditions of Service agreed by the National Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers, and as amended locally. Pay is determined locally.

Deputy/Assistant Directors (third tier - i.e. reporting directly to the Head of Paid Service or an Executive Director)

The terms and conditions for Deputy/Assistant Directors are as set out by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers, and as amended locally. Pay is determined locally.

NJC Staff

The Terms and conditions for NJC staff are determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services, and as amended locally.

Craft Employees

The Terms and conditions for NJC staff are determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Craft and Associated Employees, and as amended locally.

Teachers

The terms and conditions for Teachers are as set out in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.

Soulbury Staff

The Soulbury Committee determines the national salary framework for Soulbury staff and terms and conditions, as amended locally.

Youth Workers

The terms and conditions for Youth Workers are as determined by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Youth and Community Workers, and as amended locally.

Coroners

The terms and conditions for Coroners are set by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Coroners, and as amended locally.

PAY POLICY STATEMENT - ANNEX D

Council Employees in Salary Bands as at 01.04.18

Grade Bandings		Total Staff	Women		BME			Disability		
			No	%	No	ND	%	No	ND	%
RG1	Up to 17,007	17	7	41.18%	5	0	29.41%	1	2	6.67%
RG2	17,972	194	137	70.62%	62	23	36.26%	5	42	3.29%
RG3	20,541	310	220	70.97%	61	21	21.11%	11	32	3.96%
RG4	25,463	536	355	66.23%	93	15	17.85%	20	36	4.00%
RG5	30,756	383	247	64.49%	88	9	23.53%	19	24	5.29%
RG6	35,229	265	160	60.38%	57	14	22.71%	7	21	2.87%
RG7	40,858	181	124	68.51%	33	4	18.64%	6	11	3.53%
RG8	46,608	116	68	58.62%	18	8	16.67%	5	10	4.72%
RG9	52,362	71	46	64.79%	16	5	24.24%	2	7	3.13%
RG10	56,270	33	22	66.67%	1	3	3.33%	1	4	3.45%
Above 56,271		47	27	57.45%	3	2	6.67%	1	8	2.56%
		2153	1413	65.63%	437	104	21.33%	78	197	3.99%

Page 45

- 1 - Based on 2018 pay bands and earnings
 2 - As a proportion of employees who have made a positive declaration
 3 - Excludes schools

* All are Apprentices

PAY POLICY STATEMENT - ANNEX E

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME REGULATIONS 2013
STATEMENT OF POLICY ABOUT EXERCISE OF DISCRETIONARY FUNCTIONS
SCHEME EMPLOYER DECLARATION**

The Scheme employer known as **Reading Borough Council** ('the Council') has prepared this written statement of policy in relation to its exercise of certain discretionary functions available under the Local Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. The Scheme employer declares that it will keep this statement under review and publish the statement (and any amendments made thereto) in a place that is easily accessible to all of its eligible Scheme employees and that it will provide to the administering authority the most up to date version of the statement at all times.

**PART A - Formulation of COMPULSORY policy in accordance with Regulation 60 of the
Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

Regulation 16 – Additional Pension Contributions

The Scheme employer may resolve to fund in whole or in part any arrangement entered into by an active scheme member to pay additional pension contributions by way of regular contributions in accordance with **Regulation 16(2)(e)**, or by way of a lump sum in accordance with **Regulation 16(4)(d)**.

The Scheme employer may enter into an APC contract with a Scheme member who is contributing to the MAIN section of the Scheme in order to purchase additional pension of not more than the additional pension limit (£6,500 from 1st April 2014 subject to annual increase in line with the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971).

The amount of additional contribution to be paid is determined by reference to actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Consideration needs to be given to the circumstances under which the Scheme employer may wish to use their discretion to fund in whole or in part an employee's Additional Pension Contributions.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the whole or part funding of an active member's additional pension contributions

The Council has resolved not to adopt this discretion at this time.

Regulation 30(6) – Flexible Retirement

An active member who has attained the age of 55 or over and who with the agreement of their employer reduces their working hours or grade of employment may, with the further consent of their employer, elect to receive immediate payment of all or part of the retirement pension to which they would be entitled in respect of that employment as if that member were no longer an employee in local government service on the date

of the reduction in hours or grade (*adjusted by the amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State - separate policy required under Regulation 30(8)*).

As part of the policy making decision the Scheme employer must consider whether, in addition to the benefits the member may have accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw), to permit the member to choose to draw all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 31 March 2008 and before 1 April 2014 and all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 1 April 2014.

Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of allowing an employee to draw all or part of their pension benefits earlier than their normal retirement age.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning flexible retirement

The Council has resolved that it will give such an opportunity to its employees. Flexible Retirement under this discretion will be subject to an agreed policy framework. The Council has resolved that waiving actuarial reduction in full or in part will only be considered where there will be a sufficient financial or other benefit to the authority. An exception to this requirement is the employee's exceptionally difficult personal or domestic circumstances

Regulation 30(8) – Waiving of Actuarial Reduction

Where a Scheme employer's policy under regulation 30(6) (flexible retirement) is to consent to the immediate release of benefits in respect of an active member who is aged 55 or over, those benefits must be adjusted by an amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State (commonly referred to as actuarial reduction or early payment reduction).

A Scheme employer (or former employer as the case may be) may agree to waive in whole or in part and at their own cost, any actuarial reduction that may be required by the Scheme Regulations.

Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of agreeing to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the waiving of actuarial reduction

That the Council does not consent to waive any actuarial reduction for staff electing to retire at age 55 or over, unless there is a sufficient financial or other benefit to the Council. An exception to this requirement is the employee's exceptionally difficult personal or domestic circumstances.

Regulation 31 – Award of Additional Pension

A Scheme employer may resolve to award

- (a) an active member, or

(b) a member who was an active member but dismissed by reason of redundancy, or business efficiency, or whose employment was terminated by mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency,

additional annual pension of, in total (including any additional pension purchased by the Scheme employer under Regulation 16), not more than the additional pension limit (£6,500 from 1st April 2014 subject to annual increase in line with the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971).

Any additional pension awarded is payable from the same date as any pension payable under other provisions of the Scheme Regulations from the account to which the additional pension is attached.

In the case of a member falling within sub-paragraph (b) above, the resolution to award additional pension must be made within 6 months of the date that the member's employment ended.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the award of additional pension

The Council has resolved not to adopt this discretion at this time

Schedule 2 - paragraphs 2 and 3

Where a scheme member retires or leaves employment and elects to draw their benefits at or after the age of 55 and before the age of 60 those benefits will be actuarially reduced unless their Scheme employer agrees to meet the full or part cost of those reductions as a result of the member otherwise being protected under the 85 year rule as set out in previous Regulations.

So as to avoid the member suffering the full reduction to their benefits the Scheme employer can 'switch on' the 85 year rule protections thereby allowing the member to receive fully or partly unreduced benefits but subject to the Scheme employer paying a strain (capital) cost to the Pension Fund

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the 'switching on of the 85 year rule

That the Council **does not** consent to switch on the 85 year rule for staff electing to retire at age 55, unless there is a sufficient financial or other benefit to the Council. An exception to this requirement may be the employee's exceptionally difficult personal or domestic circumstances.

PART B - Formulation of RECOMMENDED policy in accordance with the

Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

Regulation 9(1) & (3) - Contributions

Where an active member changes employment or there is a material change which affects the member's pensionable pay during the course of a financial year, the Scheme employer may determine that a contribution rate from a different band (as set out in Regulation 9(2)) should be applied.

Where the Scheme employer makes such a determination it shall inform the member of the revised contribution rate and the date from which it is to be applied.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the re-determination of active members' contribution bandings at any date other than 1st April

The Council shall re-determine contribution rates on 1st April each year only. Staff joining the scheme shall be placed in a contribution band consistent with their contracted, actual pay in the first instance except for casual staff who shall initially be placed on the lowest contribution band. The banding placement for individual staff shall be re-determined wef from the 1st April only in subsequent years following initial placement and adjusted as necessary in the light of the pensionable pay actually earned in the previous year (using a '12 month equivalent' calculation for staff who have not worked a full year).

Regulation 17(1) - Additional Voluntary Contributions

An active member may enter into arrangements to pay additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) or to contribute to a shared cost additional voluntary contribution arrangement (SCAVCs) in respect of an employment. The arrangement must be a scheme established between the appropriate administering authority and a body approved for the purposes of the Finance Act 2004, registered in accordance with that Act and administered in accordance with the Pensions Act 2004.

The Scheme employer needs to determine whether or not it will make contributions to such an arrangement on behalf of its active members

Scheme Employer's policy concerning payment of Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions

The Council will pay SCAVC contributions where an employee has elected to pay AVCs by salary sacrifice. The amount of these employer SCAVC contributions will not exceed the amount of salary sacrificed by the employee. This is a Council discretion which is subject to the employee meeting the Council's conditions for acceptance into the salary sacrifice shared cost AVC scheme and may be withdrawn or changed at any time.

Regulation 22 - Merging of Deferred Member Pension Accounts with Active Member Pension Accounts

A deferred member's pension account is automatically aggregated with their active member's pension account unless the member elects within the first 12 months of the new active member's pension account being opened to retain their deferred member's pension account.

A Scheme employer can, at their discretion, extend the 12 month election period.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning merging of Deferred Member Pension Accounts with Active Member Pension Accounts

The Council has resolved not to extend the time limit for election beyond 12 months.

Regulation 100(6) - Inward Transfers of Pension Rights

A request from an active member to transfer former pension rights from a previous arrangement into the Local Government Pension Scheme as a result of their employment with a Scheme employer must be made in writing to the administering authority and the Scheme employer before the expiry of the period of 12 months beginning with the date on which the employee first became an active member in an employment (or such longer period as the Scheme employer and administering authority may allow).

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the extension of the 12 month transfer application period

The Council has resolved not to extend the time limit for election beyond 12 months.

Regulation 21(5) - Assumed Pensionable Pay

A Scheme employer needs to determine whether or not to include in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay, any 'regular lump sum payment' received by a Scheme member in the 12 months preceding the date that gave rise to the need for an assumed pensionable pay figure to be calculated.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning inclusion of 'regular lump sum payments' in assumed pensionable pay calculations

That the Council does include in such calculations an element for 'regular lump sum payment' where it is fair, equitable and justifiable to do so.

Regulation 74 - Applications for Adjudication of Disagreements

Each Scheme employer must appoint a person ("the adjudicator") to consider applications from any person whose rights or liabilities under the Scheme are affected by:

- (a) a decision under regulation 72 (first instance decisions); or
- (b) any other act or omission by a Scheme employer or administering authority,

and to make a decision on such applications.

Responsibility for determinations under this first stage of the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) rests with "the adjudicator" as named below by the Scheme employer:

Name: Christopher Brooks

Job Title: Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Address: Civic Centre, Reading, Tel No: _____ 0118
9372602

Email: chris.brooks@reading.gov.uk

Adjudicator's Signature: _____

Date: _____

SCHEME EMPLOYER CONFIRMATION

It is understood that the discretions contained within this statement of policy are applicable to all eligible members of the Scheme. The Scheme rules allow for a revised statement to be issued at least one month in advance of the date that any new policy takes effect. The revised statement must be sent to the administering authority and the employer must publish its statement as revised in a place that is accessible to all of its eligible scheme members.

The policies made above:

Have regard to the extent to which the exercise of the discretions could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service;

Will not be used for any ulterior motive;

Will be exercised reasonably;

Will only be used when there is a real and substantial future benefit to the employer for incurring the extra costs that may arise;

Will be duly recorded when applied.

Signed on behalf of the Scheme Employer: _____

Name in Block Capitals:

Position: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Scheme Employer's Name: READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Date:

PAY POLICY STATEMENT - ANNEX F

KEY PAY SCALES FOR COUNCIL STAFF (1ST APRIL 2019)

New NJC Pay Structure - April 2019						
GENERAL PAY SCALE						
SCP	Per Annum		Per Hour		Current Grades	SCP
53	£	57,395	£	29.75		53
52	£	56,012	£	29.03		52
51	£	54,629	£	28.32		51
50	£	53,409	£	27.68		50
49	£	52,189	£	27.05		49
48	£	50,969	£	26.42		48
47	£	49,748	£	25.79		47
46	£	48,530	£	25.15		46
45	£	47,540	£	24.64		45
44	£	46,572	£	24.14		44
43	£	45,591	£	23.63		43
42	£	44,632	£	23.13		42
41	£	43,662	£	22.63		41
40	£	42,683	£	22.12		40
39	£	41,675	£	21.60		39
38	£	40,760	£	21.13		38
37	£	39,782	£	20.62		37
36	£	38,813	£	20.12		36
35	£	37,849	£	19.62		35
34	£	36,876	£	19.11		34
33	£	35,934	£	18.63		33
32	£	34,788	£	18.03		32
31	£	33,799	£	17.52		31
30	£	32,878	£	17.04		30
29	£	32,029	£	16.60		29
28	£	31,371	£	16.26		28
27	£	30,507	£	15.81		27
26	£	29,636	£	15.36		26
25	£	28,785	£	14.92		25
24	£	27,905	£	14.46		24
23	£	26,999	£	13.99		23
22	£	26,317	£	13.64		22
21						21
20	£	25,295	£	13.11		20
19	£	24,799	£	12.85		19
18						18
17	£	23,836	£	12.35		17
16						16
15	£	22,911	£	11.88		15
14	£	22,462	£	11.64		14
13						13
12	£	21,589	£	11.19		12
11	£	21,166	£	10.97		11
10						10
9	£	20,344	£	10.54		9
8	£	19,945	£	10.34		8
7	£	19,554	£	10.14		7
6	£	19,171	£	9.94		6
5	£	18,795	£	9.74		5
4	£	18,426	£	9.55		4
3	£	18,065	£	9.36		3
2	£	17,711	£	9.18		2
1	£	17,364	£	9.00		1

GENERAL PAY SCALE				SOCIAL WORKERS & OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS			
SCP	Per Annum	Per Hour	Current Grades	SCP	Current Grades	SCP	
53	£ 57,395	£ 29.75		53		53	
52	£ 56,012	£ 29.03		52		52	
51	£ 54,629	£ 28.32	RG10	51		51	
50	£ 53,409	£ 27.68		50		Service Manager = RGSW10	50
49	£ 52,189	£ 27.05	RG9	49		49	
48	£ 50,969	£ 26.42		48		48	
47	£ 49,748	£ 25.79		47		47	
46	£ 48,530	£ 25.15		46		Team Manager = RGSW9	46
45	£ 47,540	£ 24.64	45	45			
44	£ 46,572	£ 24.14	RG8	44		44	
43	£ 45,591	£ 23.63		43		43	
42	£ 44,632	£ 23.13	RG7	42		42	
41	£ 43,662	£ 22.63		41		ATM = RGSW8	41
40	£ 42,683	£ 22.12		40			40
39	£ 41,675	£ 21.60		39		see note 1	39
38	£ 40,760	£ 21.13	38	38			
37	£ 39,782	£ 20.62	RG6	37		37	
36	£ 38,813	£ 20.12		36		Higher specialist SW / OT = RGSW7	36
35	£ 37,849	£ 19.62		35			35
34	£ 36,876	£ 19.11		34		34	
33	£ 35,934	£ 18.63		33		33	
32	£ 34,788	£ 18.03		32		see note 2	32
31	£ 33,799	£ 17.52	RG5	31		31	
30	£ 32,878	£ 17.04		30		Experienced SW / OT = RGSW6	30
29	£ 32,029	£ 16.60		29			29
28	£ 31,371	£ 16.26		28		SW/OT=RGSW5b see note 3	28
27	£ 30,507	£ 15.81	27	27			
26	£ 29,636	£ 15.36		26		26	
25	£ 28,785	£ 14.92		25		SW/OT NQ=RGSW5a	25
24	£ 27,905	£ 14.46		24			24
				Notes for SW & OT grades:			
				1. Only Children's Social Workers and OTs and Adults Approved Mental Health Practitioners can progress above the gateway in RGSW7			
				2. Only Children's Social Workers and OTs and Adults Supervising Social Workers and OTs can progress above the gateway in			
				3. For Social Workers (not OTs) progression to RGSW5b can only be attained by passing the Assisted Year of Supported Employment			

NB28				JNC READING SENIOR MANAGEMENT				EFFECTIVE DATE		1-Apr-19
PAYAWARD		2.0%								
ANNUAL 01/04/2018	GRADE			SCP	ANNUAL 01/04/2019	MONTHLY 01/04/2019	WEEKLY 01/04/2019	HOURLY 01/04/2019		
52246	RSMD			1	53291	4440.91	1022.01	27.6220		
53570	RSMD			2	54641	4553.45	1047.91	28.3220		
54893	RSMD			3	55991	4665.91	1073.79	29.0215		
56217	RSMD			4	57341	4778.45	1099.69	29.7215		
57544	RSMD			5	58695	4891.24	1125.65	30.4230		
58867	RSMD	RSMC		6	60044	5003.70	1151.53	31.1225		
60190	RSMD	RSMC		7	61394	5116.15	1177.41	31.8219		
61514	RSMD	RSMC		8	62744	5228.69	1203.31	32.5219		
62839	RSMD	RSMC		9	64096	5341.32	1229.23	33.2225		
64163		RSMC		10	65446	5453.86	1255.13	33.9224		
65487		RSMC		11	66797	5566.40	1281.03	34.6224		
66813		RSMC		12	68149	5679.11	1306.97	35.3235		
68137		RSMC		13	69500	5791.65	1332.87	36.0235		
69461		RSMC	RSMB	14	70850	5904.19	1358.77	36.7234		
70784		RSMC	RSMB	15	72200	6016.64	1384.65	37.4229		
72109		RSMC	RSMB	16	73551	6129.27	1410.57	38.1234		
73436		RSMC	RSMB	17	74905	6242.06	1436.52	38.8250		
74756			RSMB	18	76251	6354.26	1462.35	39.5229		
76086			RSMB	19	77608	6467.31	1488.36	40.2260		
77413			RSMB	20	78961	6580.11	1514.32	40.9276		
78734			RSMB	RSMA	21	80309	6692.39	1540.16	41.6260	
80057			RSMB	RSMA	22	81658	6804.85	1566.04	42.3255	
81385			RSMB	RSMA	23	83013	6917.73	1592.02	43.0276	
82706				RSMA	24	84360	7030.01	1617.86	43.7260	
84028				RSMA	25	85709	7142.38	1643.72	44.4249	
85359				RSMA	26	87066	7255.52	1669.76	45.1286	
86678				RSMA	27	88412	7367.63	1695.56	45.8259	
88003				RSMA	28	89763	7480.26	1721.48	46.5264	
89330				RSMA	29	91117	7593.05	1747.44	47.2280	
90650				RSMA	30	92463	7705.25	1773.26	47.9259	
91973				RSMA	31	93812	7817.71	1799.14	48.6254	
96209				CDIR	32	98133	8177.77	1882.00	50.8649	
99172				CDIR	33	101155	8429.62	1939.96	52.4314	
102346				CDIR	34	104393	8699.41	2002.05	54.1095	
105618				CDIR	35	107730	8977.53	2066.06	55.8394	
106663				CDIR	36	108796	9066.36	2086.50	56.3918	
109859				CDIR	37	112056	9338.02	2149.02	58.0815	
113054				CDIR	38	115315	9609.59	2211.52	59.7707	
119636				CDIR	39	122029	10169.06	2340.27	63.2506	

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT BY RETURNING OFFICER

TO:	COUNCIL		
DATE:	26 MARCH 2019		
TITLE:	REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES 2018-19		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR LOVELOCK	PORTFOLIO:	CORPORATE SERVICES
SERVICE:	ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION	WARDS:	BOROUGH-WIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	CHRIS BROOKS	TEL:	0118 937 2620 / 2731
JOB TITLE:	HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	E-MAIL:	Chris.brooks@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Further to Minute 52 of Policy Committee on 26 November 2018, and in accordance with the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (the 2006 Act), which requires the Council to undertake a review of its polling districts and polling places every four years to a national timetable, this report sets out the results of the consultation exercise undertaken for the 2018-19 review of polling districts and polling places in Reading, and identifies the responses received. It also reviews the deployment of polling stations within polling places.
- 1.2 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (the 2013 Act) introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places. The current compulsory review must be started and completed between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2020 (inclusive). Subsequent compulsory reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2018. That is, the next review must be started and completed between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.
- 1.3 The last review took place in 2014, and was reported to full Council on 21 October 2014 (Minute 30 refers)
- 1.4 Notice of the 2018-19 review was published on 3 December 2018, on the Council's website, at the Civic Offices, and in the Council's libraries. The deadline for responses was 2 January 2019. Letters and emails were sent to the following interested parties, specifically to invite them to participate in the review:
 - All Councillors
 - The Borough MPs
 - Party Agents
 - Polling Station Inspectors at 2018 Elections
 - Organisations receiving papers for the Access Forum
 - Polling Station venue managers

- Community & Residents' Groups and Associations
- 1.5 This year's review attracted 37 responses: a significant increase from the 7 responses generated by the 2014 review. These are set out in the schedule at **Appendix A**. The appended schedule also includes comments on polling places received by my Electoral Services team over the past year, outside the consultation period. These are shown in *italics* and shaded.
 - 1.6 As Returning Officer, I must make a written submission to the review process which comments on the existing polling stations and any new polling stations that may be used based on proposals made in the review. My written submission is at **Appendix B**.
 - 1.7 Both the results of the consultation (Appendix A) and my written submission (Appendix B) have been published on the review page of the Council's website from Friday 8 February 2019.
 - 1.8 This report reviews both attachments, and recommends changes below to the Council's polling places and stations in their light. In the text below I have shown the cross-reference to the relevant paragraph in the report.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the results of the consultation on the 2018-19 review of polling places (Appendix A), and the Returning Officer's written submission (Appendix B), be received and noted;
- 2.2 That the following changes to polling places be noted: [para. 3.5]
 - a) The change of name of the polling place for Caversham polling district 3 (MB) to The Weller Centre (from Amersham Road Community Centre);
 - b) The relocation of the polling station for Norcot polling District 1 (E) at St George's Church, St George's Road, from the Church Hall to the church;
 - c) The Returning Officer's intention to return the polling place for Mapledurham ward (Y) to the Mapledurham Pavilion, when this has been rebuilt and the suitability of the new building to host a polling station has been confirmed; [para. 3.6]
- 2.3 That, following the closure and disposal of Southcote Library at Southcote Lane, the polling place for Southcote polling district 2 (FB) be moved the Southcote Community Hub in Coronation Square; [para. 4.3.1]
- 2.4 That, in the case of building works at Battle Library making the building not being available for future elections, the polling place for Battle polling district 1 (A) be moved temporarily to Emmanuel Church, Oxford Road, next door; [para. 4.3.1]
- 2.5 That with regard to Whitley ward:
 - a) The Returning Officer's intention to explore options for a new polling district and polling place in Whitley ward, to serve the new developments west of the Basingstoke Road and in Green Park, be noted; [para. 4.3.2]
 - b) Polling districts S and SC, both of which currently poll at Whitley Park Primary School, be merged; [para. 4.4.3]

2.6 That the following changes be made to the number of polling stations at the polling places listed below: [para. 4.4.3]

- a) Battle polling district 1 (A) - Battle Library - establish second polling station
- b) Katesgrove polling district 2 (BA) - Christchurch Centre, Milman Road - reduce to 1 polling station
- c) Kentwood polling district 1 (C) - St Mary Magdelene Hall - reduce to 1 polling station
- d) Norcot polling district 1 (EA) - St Michael's Primary School - reduce to 1 polling station
- e) Redlands polling district 2 (RA) - Redlands Primary School - reduce to 1 polling station

2.7 That the position and responses concerning the use of Caversham Primary School as the polling place for both Caversham polling district 4 (MC) and Thames polling district 3 (WB) be noted, and in this respect: [paras. 4.5.8 and 4.5.9]

a) the lack to date of suitable alternative polling places in Thames ward polling district 3 (WB), and the Returning Officer's continuing efforts to find a suitable alternative locations, be noted and endorsed;

b) the Returning Officer consult with Thames ward Councillors about a more comprehensive review of polling districts in the ward, with a view to bring suitable locations for polling places in other parts of the ward into play;

c) The Returning Officer consult with Caversham ward Councillors about the following options:

- Combining polling district 4 (MC) with polling district 2 (MA), with the polling place at Thameside Primary School (two polling stations)
- Identifying a suitable alternative location in polling district 4 (MC)
- Modifying the polling district boundary between Caversham polling districts MA and MC, to extend polling district 4 (MC) eastwards, to include the area north of Church Street and west of Prospect Street; and moving the polling place to Caversham Library.

d) Caversham Primary School to continue to be the polling place for both Caversham polling district 4 (MC) and Thames polling district 3 (WB), and host three polling stations, until suitable alternative polling places for both wards and polling districts can be identified and agreed.

2.8 That the position and responses concerning Kentwood polling district 4 (CC), in the light of the closure and imminent demolition of the Norcot Community Centre, Lyndhurst Road, be noted, and in this respect: [para. 4.5.10]

a) a temporary polling station be set up at the Lyndhurst Road Community Centre, operating from the Council's Emergency Planning vehicle, for the duration of the works to build a new community facility at the site;

b) the Returning Officer consult with Kentwood ward Councillors about a more comprehensive review of polling districts in the ward, with a view to bring polling places in other parts of the ward into play, as described in para. 4.5.10;

2.9 The Head of Legal & Democratic Services, as Returning Officer, be authorised to implement all appropriate actions arising from the review and discussed in this report, in consultation where appropriate with affected ward Councillors.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The 2006 and 2013 Acts do not provide for a review of constituency or ward boundaries, and the review of polling districts and polling stations must therefore take place within the existing constituency and ward boundaries.

3.2 The Council's ward boundaries were last reviewed in 2001-02. This established the current boundaries of wards. There have been no further changes to ward boundaries to date. However, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England review the position annually, based on the electoral register for the authority published on 1 December each year, and have given the Council notice that they will include Reading in their review programme for 2019-20.

3.3 Reading has 16 wards, in which 15 elect three Councillors, and one - Mapledurham - elects one Councillor. With the exception of Mapledurham ward, each ward is divided into a smaller number of polling districts, with their own polling place. The polling place is the building within which the polling station is located. Some polling places have more than one polling station. Two polling places - Alfred Sutton School and Caversham Primary School - each hosts three polling stations; at Caversham Primary school, two are for Thames ward (polling district WB) and one is for Caversham ward (Polling district MC).

3.4 Reading has 51 polling places, covering 53 polling districts, and 75 polling stations. The current pattern of polling district boundaries was established following the 2002 ward boundary review, and has not changed since the review undertaken in 2007.

3.5 Changes have been made to the location of some of the polling places in the polling districts, to reflect changes in building use or, in some case, demolition. Since the polling place review in 2014, four changes have been made to polling places:

- The polling place for Battle polling district 1 (A) has changed from Cranbury College to Emmanuel Methodist Church [Agreed by Council, 14 May 2017 - Minute 13]
- The polling place for Mapledurham ward (Y), has changed from the Mapledurham Pavilion to Caversham Heights Methodist Church [Agreed by Council , 22 March 2016 - Minute 57] (see also 3.6 below)
- The name of the polling place for Caversham polling district 3 (MB), has changed from Amersham Road Community Centre to The Weller Centre;
- The polling station for Norcot polling district 1 (E), at St George's Church, has changed from St. Georges Church Hall to St. Georges Church, due to the demolition of the Church Hall, and will move into a new community facility being built at St George's Church.

3.6 It is intended to return the polling place for Mapledurham ward to the Mapledurham Pavilion, when this has been rebuilt and the suitability of the new building to host a polling station has been confirmed.

4. REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

4.1 Review Process

- 4.1.1 A polling district is a sub-division of a constituency or ward. A polling place is a geographical area within a polling district in which a polling station can be located: there is no legal definition of the term “polling district”, which therefore can be defined tightly (the building in which the polling station will be located) or widely (the entire polling district). It is possible to have a polling station outside the polling district in special circumstances, in which cases the polling place must be clearly specified.
- 4.1.2 The review is required under Section 16 of the 2006 Act, which amends Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983. Under Section 18C of the amended 1983 Act, a review of each polling district and polling place must be completed before the end of a period of four years starting with the completion of the previous review. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 changed the timing of compulsory reviews of Parliamentary polling districts and polling places, aligned to the timetable for five-yearly General Elections. Under this, the current review must be completed by 31 January 2020.
- 4.1.3 The end results must be published in the next new electoral register. Therefore the results of the 2019 review will be incorporated into the new electoral register published on 1 December 2019.
- 4.1.4 The responsibility for signing off the review rests with full Council. The legal position is that Sections 18 and 31 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 allow constituencies and wards to be divided into polling districts. Under the Functions and Responsibilities Regulations issued under Section 17 of the Local Government Act 2000, these are functions which cannot be exercised by the executive. Council could delegate these functions to a Committee (or to an officer) but to date it has not done so.
- 4.1.5 The process is based on parliamentary constituencies. Under Schedule A1 of the Parliamentary Election Rules it involves a number of specified stages:

The Council must:

- Publish notice of review
 - done 3 December 2018
- Consult with Returning Officer(s) for parliamentary constituencies in Council areas - and publish these when received (within 30 days of receipt)
 - I am the only Returning Officer for Reading. My response is at Appendix B.
- Seek representations from persons with an expertise in relation to access and disability - who must also have an opportunity to comment on the Returning Officer’s representations (see para. 7 below)
- Any elector may also make representations - which may include proposals for specified alternative polling places (see para. 4 below)
- On completion of the review, compile and adopt a revised scheme - which must be published, with reasons given for decisions.

The Returning Officer must:

- Make representations about the location of polling stations within polling places
- Allocate electors to polling stations (after review)

4.1.6 This report marks the completion of the review, and recommends revisions to the Council’s arrangements for polling districts and polling places to apply until the next review (scheduled for 2022), for the reasons given in this report and its appendices.

4.2 Projected Growth

4.2.1 Appendix B includes indicative information on projected new residential developments in individual wards and polling districts, based on the Council’s Residential Planning Commitments report as at 31 March 2018. The Commitments report shows planning consents given for a total of 3,975 new dwellings (hard commitments - of which 1,206 were under construction), with the possibility of a further 2,981 dwellings on sites identified as suitable for housing (soft commitments). These figures are for all consents and give a total of 6,956 new dwellings with hard or soft commitments. The electoral register currently has 72,283 dwellings, so if all of these dwellings were to be built, it would represent an increase of nearly 10% in dwelling numbers across the Borough.

4.2.2 The sites listed in Appendix B are for developments of 20 or more dwellings. The majority of the new residential development is projected to take place in two wards: Abbey (3,600 dwellings) and Whitley (2,100 dwellings).

4.3 Comments on Polling Places

4.3.1 Appendix B also includes my comments on polling places. Most are acceptable. However, the following should be noted:

Polling District	Polling Place	Comments
Battle A	Battle Library	Will be available May 2019. Planned building works delayed to start the following week.
Kentwood CC	Norcot Community Centre, Lyndhurst Road	Closed and boarded up - due to be demolished - new build to be residential with community facility Not available May 2019 and possibly 2020. For this year’s elections, a mobile polling station will be provided in Lyndhurst Road in the emergency planning vehicle. (See also para. 4.5.10 below)
Southcote FB	Southcote Library	Building has closed. The polling place to move permanently to the Southcote Community Hub in Coronation Square, which is where the Library has re-located.

4.3.2 The growth of residential development in Whitley ward is predominantly to the west of Basingstoke Road, especially to the west of the A33 relief road (Green Park, Madejski stadium). This suggests the need for a new polling district and polling place in that part of the ward, west of Basingstoke Road. This would affect current polling districts Whitley S (Whitley Park School) and Whitley SB (Whitley Wood Community Centre). This option will be explored.

4.4 Polling Station Electorates

- 4.4.1 Appendix B further includes details of the current electorate for each polling district, broken down by absent (postal) voters and voters in person. This is relevant to the review because the Electoral Commission guidance is that polling stations should not have more than 2,500 electors who vote in person at the polling station.
- 4.4.2 Polling places can host more than one polling station, and 22 (out of 51) do. Two host 3 polling stations.
- 4.4.3 From an initial scan of Appendix B, the following polling places may justify a change of arrangement in the number of polling stations:

Polling District	Polling Place	Comments
Battle A (1 PS)	Battle Library	2,460 voters in person Will need 2 polling stations
Katesgrove BA (2 PS)	Christchurch Centre Milman Road	1,379 voters in person Could reduce to 1 polling station
Kentwood C (2 PS)	St Mary Magdelene Hall	1,793 voters in person Could reduce to 1 polling station
Norcot EA	St Michael's Primary	1,569 voters in person Could reduce to 1 polling station
Redlands RA	Redlands Primary	1,087 voters in person Could reduce to 1 polling station (Also suggested by ward Councillor)
Whitley SC	Whitley Park Primary	330 electors. Does not need to be a separate polling district. This is a legacy from 2002 ward boundary review. Merge with Whitley S

4.5 Consultation

- 4.5.1 The results of the consultation exercise are set out in **Appendix A**. This presents the results of the consultation by ward in alphabetical order, with the anonymised respondents being categorised by the polling district in which they live; and whether a member of the public, or polling place, or election staff, or a Councillor or officer.
- 4.5.2 As mentioned above, 37 responses were received through the consultation. In addition, for completeness, details of five critical comments about polling stations, received over the preceding 12 months, have been included, shown in italics and shaded, to give a total of 42 responses.
- 4.5.3 Of the 37 responses received through the consultation, 24 were from respondents who lived in the polling district about which they were commenting, and 13 (35%) were not. Therefore a third of responses were about a polling place that the respondent did not use. This interesting statistic is evidence of a campaign about using schools as polling stations and will be discussed in more detail in paras. 4.5.7 and 4.5.8 below.
- 4.5.4 No comments were received about the polling places in the following six wards:

Reading East	Reading West
Church	Minster
Katesgrove	Norcot
Mapledurham	Tilehurst

- 4.5.5 Two polling places received positive comments about their use as polling places:

- New Hope Centre (Abbey L)
- Sir Herman Gollancz Hall (Abbey LA)

4.5.6 The following polling places received a small number of critical comments:

Abbey

- St John & St Stephen Church, Orts Road (LC) - no disabled parking

Battle

- Oxford Road Primary School (AC) - disagree with schools being used as polling places

Caversham

- Thameside Primary School (MA) - disagree with schools being used as polling places

Kentwood

- St Mary Magdelene Hall (C) - difficult to access by foot up a steep incline. Also dislike of tellers.

Park

- Alfred Sutton Primary School (PA) - disagree with schools being used as polling places

Peppard

- Micklands Primary School (VB) - disagree with school being used as polling place

Redlands

- St Luke's Church Hall (R) - a long way from Granby Gardens
- Uneven pavement in highway outside

Southcote

- Southcote Primary School - disagree with schools being used as polling places (2 comments)

Thames

- Highdown School (W) - difficulties of ensuring adequate signage
- Caversham Primary School (WB) - a long way from Mayfield Drive (off Henley Road)

Whitley

- Whitley Park Primary School - poor accessibility from Kennet Island / Green Park (4 comments)

4.5.7 Use of Schools as Polling Stations

Local Authorities across the country use schools as polling places and have done so for generations. Schools which are maintained from public funds have a duty to make themselves available for use as polling places if required by the Returning Officer.

In Reading, 22 of our 51 polling places are schools (43%). Being a local polling station reinforces the school's position within its local community and brings local residents into the school to vote.

Of the 22 schools, 20 are Primary or Nursery schools. In all cases, nowadays the school will close and treat polling day as an inset day.

The date of local elections is set by statute, and is the first Thursday in May each year. Schools that are polling places can plan on this basis and schedule an inset day. My Elections team gives timely notice of forthcoming known election dates to all polling places, including schools. Since 1997, the Government has arranged all general elections and national referenda to be held on the same day as local elections, as are PCC elections; with the exception of the 2017 general election, which was called outside the provisions of the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011.

At election time, the Department for Education issues the following standard advice to schools that are used as polling places. Local authorities have the power to require a school to act as a polling station. The decision to close the school rests with the head teacher and will usually depend on whether arrangements can be made for voting to take place separately from the rest of the school premises, with a separate entrance and exit. If the school decides to close on polling day, it should try to make up the lost education by re-arranging the school calendar so that the school meets the requisite 190 days, or holding a non-contact (“inset”) day on polling day so that teachers are at work but not the pupils.

As can be seen above, a number of schools that are polling places attracted responses suggesting that an alternative arrangement should be found. Common themes were the inconvenience of childcare and the disruption to education. The latter will not arise if the school treats polling day as an inset day, as suggested by the Department of Education.

Also as mentioned above, there is evidence of an active campaign about the use of Caversham Primary School, which attracted 10 responses from people who do not use it as a polling station.

During the year preceding the consultation exercise, I received two complaints about the use of Southcote Primary School as a polling place, and one about Micklands Primary. Interestingly, the consultation did not generate any negative comments about either location. The position in Southcote ward may have been aggravated by holding two by-elections over the past four years. The complainant about Micklands was a parent, not a voter at the school.

4.5.8 Caversham Primary School

Caversham Primary School is the polling place for two polling districts in different wards - Caversham MC, and Thames WB. It hosts three polling stations.

The use of the school as a polling place was the subject of a local campaign, possibly encouraged by the school, which generated 21 responses, split between polling districts as follows:

- Caversham MC - 4
- Thames WB - 6
- Thames WA - 7
- Mapledurham Y - 1
- Unknown - 3

Of these, 20 proposed moving the polling place(s) away from Caversham Primary School; and 1 supported the use of the school as a polling place. One was a Caversham ward Councillor.

As can be seen above, only 10 (half) of the responders proposing moving the polling place away from the school were voters at the school (ie voters living in Caversham MC and Thames WB).

Caversham Primary School has been used as a polling place for very many years. Before the 2002 ward boundary review it was the polling place for the eastern part of Caversham ward. The 2002 ward boundary review moved the ward boundaries north of the river, and left the school just over the border into Thames ward. The polling place for what is now polling district Caversham MC was moved to Thameside Primary School. However, in the 2007 polling places review there was a local campaign to restore this area's polling place to Caversham Primary School, which was agreed by Council on 16 October 2007 (Minute 30 refers).

As Caversham and Thames wards are currently constituted, Caversham Primary School, in Hemdean Road, is inconveniently located in the south-western corner of Thames WB, and is a long way from the eastern parts of that polling district, north of Henley Road. One response, from a resident in Mayfield Drive (off Henley Road) asked for the return of voting at New Bridge Nursery, in Lower Caversham, a move which is not possible because that polling place is in Caversham ward.

4.5.9 Alternative Options to Caversham Primary School

If the Council were minded to explore options to move the polling places for Caversham MC and Thames WB (two polling stations) from Caversham Primary School, the options are limited, but set out below. Despite the inconvenience of the school as the current place for both polling districts, I would not recommend moving from the school unless a more suitable polling place can be identified in a more convenient part of the Thames WB polling district.

Thames WB

As currently constituted, Thames ward polling district WB does not have any other public buildings that could be suitable to serve as a polling place. A location along the southern part of Peppard Road would be geographically more desirable, if one could be found. No practical alternative locations in the polling district were suggested by any respondent.

For Thames WB, St Anne's School and the Chiltern Nursery have been approached but are not options. My officers are currently exploring the option of the Army Cadets hut in Balmore Park.

Caversham MC

It would be easier to move the Caversham MC polling place. As mentioned above, it was moved to Caversham Primary School in 2007 from Thameside Primary School (the polling place for Caversham MA), to which it could return. This would involve a merger of Caversham MA and MC polling districts. The polling place at Thameside Primary School would require a second polling station.

My officers are exploring the option of Hemdean House School, in Hemdean Road, which unlike Caversham Primary School (nearly) is in the Caversham MC polling district.

Caversham Library has also been suggested, and the Children's Library could be suitable (but small). The Library is not in Caversham MC polling district. Therefore effecting this would require modifying the polling district boundary between Caversham polling districts MA and MC, to move extend polling district 4 (MC) westwards, to include the area north of Church Street and west of Prospect Street, which would then include Caversham Library. The electorate of Caversham MC polling district is small - 577 voters in person.

4.5.10 Alternative Options to Norcot Community Centre, Lyndhurst Road (Kentwood CC)

This is a more intractable problem, which could mean that the polling district serving the old Norcot Estate could be without a permanent polling place for the duration of the building works, with no guarantee that the community space provided in the new building will be suitable for future use.

There is one other public building at the western edge of the polling district - Norcot Nursery - which is not keen to be used as a polling place because it would require the Nursery's closure on election day, for safeguarding reasons.

The electorate in the polling district who vote in person is high - around 1,650 - but the turnout in local elections is low (around 28%). Therefore for this year's local elections, we plan to use the emergency planning vehicle as a mobile polling station, parked outside the Community Centre. However, this is not a viable option going forward, in particular for a parliamentary election or referendum, and a fall-back replacement polling place is required.

The local ward Councillors have been consulted about alternative locations. One responded to the consultation, but could not identify possible alternative public buildings in the polling district. Two possible suggestions have been made: Rivers gym in Scours Lane, and Waitrose in Oxford Road. The former is out of the way from local residents. Waitrose has been approached but is not an option.

If an alternative polling place cannot be identified in the Kentwood CC polling district, it may be necessary to take more radical action and re-organise the polling districts in the ward. One possibility is set out below:

- Move all of Kentwood CC into Kentwood C polling district, and transfer the polling station to St Mary Magdelene Hall
- Move the south-eastern part of Kentwood C polling district - around Rodway Road - into Kentwood CB polling district, with a move of polling station to Meadow Park Academy (formerly Upcroft Primary School)
- Reorganise the two polling stations at St Mary Magdelene Hall - one covering the former CC polling district, and the other covering the remainder of the CB polling district.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The electoral registration process and elections support the promotion of the participation of Reading people in local democracy.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 The arrangements for public consultation on the review were agreed at the Policy Committee on 26 November 2018. Details are given in para. 1.3 above.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Access

- 7.1 A significant element of the review is to consider the suitability of the existing polling stations in terms of access. Section 16 of the 2006 Act has amended Section 18D of the 1983 Act to require the authority to take sufficient account of the accessibility of disabled persons to polling stations (S18(2)(b)).
- 7.2 Disability audits of the Council's 51 polling places (75 polling stations) were undertaken in 2008 and 2011 by the Council's Property Service, as part of those reviews. These have been reviewed subsequently each year in the light of experience at that year's elections. At each election, I ask Presiding Officers to report back on access issues in their polling stations; and my Deputy Returning Officers also look at access as part of their polling station inspections.
- 7.3 For this review, the Council's Property service has commissioned an access audit of our polling stations, from Faithful and Gould, the Council's surveying consultants.
- 7.4 Officers from my Electoral Services team attended the Council's Access Forum on 29 November 2018. They presented the polling places review to the Forum, and invited participating organisations to respond. The Council's Access Officer, Helen Bryant, did respond, and her comments are included in Appendix A, and are set out below:

“As a disabled person and a wheelchair user, I think that there needs to be an all-round approach to thinking about Polling Stations and access; not only in terms of getting in and out and the space within the building, but also getting to the Polling Stations in the first place.

I had thought that, because I had a power chair, it would be easier for me to get to my Polling Station, but it was almost as hard as when I tried it in my manual wheelchair, because of the state of the pavements and kerbs in the area. It also did not feel safe, in some parts, because of these problems.

Maybe, if possible, it would be wise to have a rethink and ask people who have such needs where they feel would be easier for them to go to vote; it might not always be the place that seems to be the most logical in terms of distance. Distance, for me, is less of a factor than being able to get there safely and easily.

I have reverted to a postal vote again, but if this were to be taken into consideration, and a more easily accessible, existing Polling Station could be used instead, so much the better. Or, it may be necessary to find another building, although none comes to mind at the present time.”

- 7.5 The view of my Polling Station Inspectors and myself is that all of the polling places we use are wheelchair accessible, either directly or through discrete arrangements made at the venue. In some cases there can be a long distance from the road to the room used as the polling station.

Parking

- 7.6 Many polling places, in particular in central Reading, have limited free parking for any voter. This extends to dedicated disabled parking spaces. However, drivers with a Blue Badge can park on double yellow lines if they display their badge and time. The

most difficult polling places to access by car are Sir Herman Gollancz (Abbey LA), Redlands Primary School (Redlands RA), and Newtown Primary School (Park P).

- 7.7 One response commented on difficulties of getting to the polling place due to the state of the public highway. This is beyond the scope of this review. However, I note that full Council, when it considered the results of the 2014 review, resolved to ask the Highways Service to consider the current state of pavements in Redlands Ward at the approach to the polling stations and prepare a repair schedule and carry out the work where necessary.
- 7.8 As mentioned above, 22 of the Council's 51 polling places are schools (43%). Over the past decade, schools have reviewed and upgraded their security and safeguarding arrangements, including installing perimeter fencing and gates. This has had the intended effect of restricting public access, including in some cases vehicular access.

Public Transport

- 7.9 Given the tight urban density of Reading Borough (4.04 hectares), no polling place is more than half a mile from a bus route, and many are located on routes.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Paras. 4.1.2 and 4.1.4 above set out the legal basis for the changes dealt with in this report.
- 8.2 The provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1983 require that every Parliamentary Constituency must be divided into polling districts and that each District Council must divide its area into polling districts for that part of the Constituency within its area. Reading falls within the area of two Parliamentary Constituencies - Reading East and Reading West. I am the Returning Officer for both constituencies.
- 8.3 In exercising its powers, the Council is required to give all electors "such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances". In addition, in choosing polling places, only places which are accessible to electors who are disabled must be chosen so far as is reasonable and practicable.
- 8.4 Unless there are special circumstances, the polling place for any polling district should be located in the district itself.
- 8.5 A polling place is usually the building to which people go to vote and polling stations are the locations within the building at which electors obtain their voting papers.
- 8.6 The Returning Officer is required to provide a sufficient number of polling stations in each polling place and to allocate electors to the polling stations in such manner as he or she thinks most convenient. There is now a total of nearly 19,000 postal voters in local elections in Reading. The review should therefore focus on the remaining 92,400 electors who are not postal voters and will need to vote in person at their local polling station.
- 8.7 For the 2011 Referendum on Alternative Voting, the Chairman of the Electoral Commission, in her capacity as Chief Counting Officer, introduced a national specification for the ratio of the number of electors in person in a polling district to polling stations, and polling staff. This required a maximum limit of 2,500 electors in person per polling station (who are not postal voters); and 2 Poll Clerks if the number

of electors in person was over 1,500. Since then, the Electoral Commission has requested that Returning Officers bear in mind the predicted turnout per election type and staff their polling stations accordingly, bearing the above ratio in mind as guidance.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The 2018/19 budget for electoral registration is £327k, and the budget for local elections is £90k: the cost of the review has been met from within these.
- 9.2 The Council's spend on hiring its 51 polling places for each election is just over £17,000. The rates of hire vary between venues, in a range from £60 to £1,000. The average is £336.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Electoral Commission Guidance - Reviews of Polling Places, Polling Districts and Polling Stations.

No.	Residence	Category	Polling station	Polling District	Comments - Comments
ABBEY L					
1	Abbey L	Polling Station Contact	New Hope Centre	L	Extra allowance will need to be made for the former Cox & Wyman site that has planning permission for 96 dwellings, and probably in the future for the development of the former post office site in Caversham Road (no planning application yet but up to 650 dwellings proposed).
2	Abbey L	Polling Station Contact	New Hope Centre	L	we need to retain this venue for voting
ABBEY LA					
3	N/A	Polling Station Contact	Sir Herman Gollancz	LA	In response to your request for feedback on your review I am happy to inform you that the Board of Management of Reading Synagogue are happy for their attached hall known as the Sir Hermann Gollancz Hall in Clifton Street to continue to be a Polling Station.
ABBEY LC					
4	Abbey LC	Public Comment	St John and St Stephen's	LC	This polling station has a lack of disabled access for voters on Orts Road West. It involves a car or taxi trip of 2 miles to attend to vote, and probably an hour due to traffic congestion. The School has a lack of Disabled Parking Space. Even for able-bodied people, it is a Km round trip across Orts Road Park on a walkway An Alternative Voting Centre is needed. to serve Orts Road West
BATTLE AC					
5	Unknown	Polling Station Staff	Oxford Road Primary School	AC	I disagree with schools being used for polling stations in general- wherever possible it should be held in community centres, church/ faith halls, libraries, leisure centres, gyms etc without the need for children to miss a day of school. As businesses and employers need to be more responsive to Disability access requirements, offices and shopping precincts and business premises should be considered as polling stations. Argyle Church, Fairview centre, Bridge hall, the Spiritualist church on Baker Street are all examples of spaces that could be used that keep our children in school! I understand School staff using the polling day as an informal Inset day, but should be more considerate of the polling station as people are voting. Can more be done to ensure that voters and polling staff are more aware of the rules around use of mobile phones, the secrecy of the ballot and that only assistance dogs are allowed in Polling stations? Rude people on their phones who don't even give their name properly, and there are some ignorant people who think its appropriate to bring their adorable dogs onto school premises! If the school wouldn't allow it on a school day, why would it be different on polling day! Also enforcing zero tolerance of aggressive behaviour towards polling staff.
CAVERSHAM MA					
6	Caversham MA	Public Comment	Thameside Primary school	MA	I am opposed to all schools being used as a polling station. it is disruptive to the school children and to parents. use libraries and places of worship. if they are happy for them to be used and it can be made accessible.
CAVERSHAM MC					
7	Caversham MC	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary School	MC	As a working parent of a pupil at the school, any extra closure days due to voting are problematic. It is difficult to arrange childcare in the middle of a term/week and the children unnecessarily miss another day at school. I would be quite happy to vote at another location if the school could then stay open.
8	Caversham MC	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary School	MC	I believe schools should not be used as polling stations. We are interrupting children's education. Other centre's are available such as sports centres, church halls and other community buildings. Parents are penalised if we take children out of school for a day in term time as it interrupts their education.....is this not the same?! This also causes a greaty inconvenience for working parents as they have to arrange childcare for the day at an extra cost.
9	Caversham MC	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary School	MC	I understand that some parents have requested for an alternative polling station to Caversham Primary School. As a parent of CPS myself, I would like to express my opposition to this proposal. I am happy with CPS remaining a polling station.
10	Caversham MC	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary School	MC	If there was an alternative to the school (the library?) this would be better. As a working parent it's not always that helpful to have the kids out of school for the day
KENTWOOD C					

11	Kentwood C	Public Comment	St Mary Magdalene Hall	C	I have a postal vote because 1) I do not like being bothered by party activists in the doorway of the polling station which I find intimidating; I understand they are not acting illegally but it would be better if they were not allowed to sit at polling stations waiting for voters to enter. party activists bringing those who are disabled or do not have transport are not a problem. as they do not engage or attempt to engage with voters. It is the ones that sit narrowing the access route that are an issue. .2) the polling station is up a very steep incline from the nearest bus stop, and is not that easy to access on foot.
KENTWOOD CC					
12	Kentwood CC	Cllr	Norcot Community Centre	CC	I've been trying to think of a possible alternative to the CC polling station in Kentwood (my own polling station). I can't think of any suitable buildings within the polling district area. One solution that has been suggested to me by a resident is to have a mobile polling station set up in the car park of Waitrose, if the store agrees. The only other place I can think of with parking and a room would be the Rivers gym at Scours Lane, but I think this is probably too far out of the way for some residents.
PARK PA					
13	Battle A	Public Comment	Alfred Sutton Primary School	PA	one day school business disrupted there are church halls and Park library as alternative venues. ASp school - one day of school lost each election, church halls and Park library available as alternative venue
PEPPARD VB					
14	Peppard VA	Public Comment - Parent	Micklands Primary	VB	I would like to know why my sons school is used as a polling station, forcing it to close making my son miss a day's school and me to take a day off from work unpaid
REDLANDS R					
15	Redlands R	Public Comment	St Luke's Hall, Erleigh Road	R	It's a long way from Granby Gardens to St Luke's Hall - not all are car users. I don't have a problem personally.
16	Redlands R	RBC Access Officer	St Luke's Hall, Erleigh Road	R	As a disabled person and a wheelchair user, I think that there needs to be an all-round approach to thinking about Polling Stations and access; not only in terms of getting in and out and the space within the building, but also getting to the Polling Stations in the first place. I had thought that, because I had a power chair, it would be easier for me to get to my Polling Station, but it was almost as hard as when I tried it in my manual wheelchair, because of the state of the pavements and kerbs in the area. It also did not feel safe, in some parts, because of these problems. Maybe, if possible, it would be wise to have a rethink and ask people who have such needs where they feel would be easier for them to go to vote; it might not always be the place that seems to be the most logical in terms of distance. Distance, for me, is less of a factor than being able to get there safely and easily. I have reverted to a postal vote again, but if this were to be taken into consideration, and a more easily accessible, existing Polling Station could be used instead, so much the better. Or, it may be necessary to find another building, although none comes to mind at the present time.
SOUTHCOTE F					
17	Southcote F	Public Comment - Parent	Southcote School	F	I am struggling to find a valid reason why in this day and age of Internet and postal votes why it's deemed acceptable to close Southcote School which has around 570 pupils. That's not including Manor school pupils. Every single parent who works has to take a day off work to facilitate this! On top of all the holidays and inset days it's a major inconvenience. It's not like Polling day is during the holidays, if it was it wouldn't affect parents. The meeting held in 2014 would not necessarily attract any comments because as far as I'm aware no one has ever been asked for their comments? Times have changed and the fact that you use the community centre which is only a 5/10 minute walk from Southcote school seems more than adequate. There is only one doctors surgery in Southcote and we are all expected to get there so if that's acceptable then the use of one venue should be acceptable for voting. Why can't people that want to vote either do a postal vote or get to the community centre or pubs? Or just one venue in Southcote? I think you should be forward thinking on this and come up with some new ideas for the future, move with the times. Councils issue fines to parents if taken out of school for family holidays but yet this is deemed acceptable. I think it's wrong, but then I suppose the government worry that people won't vote unless it's on their doorstep, how sad!
18	Battle A	Public Comment - Parent	Southcote School	F	Polling Day - School closed at Southcote School. Can you please explain why Southcote school is again being closed on Thursday 3rd May 2018 to be used as a polling station? There are several suitable locations in the Southcote area that can be used instead of having to close the school.....again. The continual closure of the school (at least on day a year, if not more as shown in 2015 / 2016) is unacceptable. Why does Reading Council feel that these closures do not impact on a child's learning and the impact on working parents who, like many of us, work full time, some for ourselves? The policy on schools being used for Polling Stations MUST be changed moving forward. Use other acceptable local sites as they do in other Reading Wards without impacting the school.

THAMES W					
19	Thames W	Elector Comment	Highdown	W	I have a complaint regarding the signage. From the graphic I've created, you can see my journey from home to the polling station. In ALL previous elections where Highdown has been used as a polling station, the main entrance is used and there is lots of signage directing people to the polling room. In this instance, there was zero signage between where I live and the entrance/main driveway at Highdown. Not being able to find the polling station, I assumed that a nearby polling station (Emmer Green Primary School) was the new location, as this was clearly signed from St. Barnabus Road which I had driven past earlier that day. So I went there and found out that I was wrong. The Emmer Green Presiding Officer then tried to contact the Highdown Presiding Officer on the call, which took around 10 minutes. No matter. I was told that I had to return to Highdown and "find the Green Gates". So I went back to Highdown, and eventually found the polling station. After casting my vote, I asked to speak to the Highdown Presiding Officer to give some feedback about the lack of signage when coming from the Tredegar Road side of Surley Row.
THAMES WB					
20	Thames WA	Public Comment - Parent	St Andrew's Church Hall	WA	I support moving the Polling Station from Caversham Primary School as the school has to be closed when it is used as a Polling Station. This often means I need to take a day off as holiday or find childcare for the day.
21	Thames WA	Public Comment	St Andrew's Church Hall, Caversham	WA	I would be grateful if the council would reconsider using schools as polling stations, particularly smaller schools, such as Caversham Primary School, which are forced to close to accommodate voters and staff. It is disruptive and unnecessary when so many other buildings could be used, such as church halls, libraries and community centres.
22	Thames WA	Public Comment - Parent	St Andrew's Church Hall	WA	I would support the council looking for alternative polling venues to local schools. In the case of my children's school, Caversham Primary School, it seems very disruptive and inefficient to close down a school of 450 children, meaning 100s of local families need to make alternative arrangements for childcare/work etc for a slow stream of people to have access to a school hall. Perhaps Caversham Library, which currently doesn't even open its doors on a Thursday morning, could be considered as a more convenient location?
23	Thames WA	Public Comment	St Andrew's Church Hall	WA	If it can be avoided, I would rather that a school, Caversham Primary School, is not used as a polling station. It means that I have to take a day off to look after my child and that my daughter misses school.
24	Thames WA	Public Comment	St Andrew's Church Hall	WA	Whilst schools are useful places for polling stations, having to shut them causes a disproportionate impact on working families who then have to find additional childcare. It would be better to use community centres (which can then engage with their communities) or leisure centres.
25	Thames WA	Public Comment	St Andrew's Church Hall	WA	Would like to have alternative polling station to the school
26	Unknown	Public Comment - Parent	St. Andrew's Church Hall	WA	Please do not use schools for polling stations, there are sufficient venues around the area to save having to close schools unnecessarily. This has such a big impact on the wider community. Parents have enough days to cover without adding extras for polling days.
27	Thames WA	Councillor/Parent on behalf of Head Teacher	Caversham Primary School	WB	I have been asked by the Headteacher of Caversham Primary to investigate whether RBC could use an alternative polling station to Caversham Primary. The placement of the hall within the building means that for safeguarding reasons they have to close the entire school to children. With the snap election last year and the referendum the year before on top of the standard local and national elections they are losing at least one teaching day a year, sometimes more. She also mentioned that it is difficult to explain to parents why their children can't miss school for holidays / special occasions etc but can miss school for elections. I suspect that finding alternative space is particularly difficult in this case because Caversham Primary serves polling districts in both Caversham and Thames, and the Caversham district is a small one so possibly not worth staffing as a stand-alone polling station but I would like to know what I can do to facilitate finding an alternative location/ locations. I am also a parent at the school.
28	Thames WB	Public Comment	Caversham Primary	WB	I live in Mayfield Drive, Caversham and my current polling station is Caversham Primary School. I would be very grateful if you would consider changing the polling station for Mayfield Drive back to Newbridge Nursery School as Caversham Primary School is a significant distance from Mayfield Drive and isn't easy to get to by bus (I don't have a car)
29	Thames WB	Public Comment	Caversham Primary School	WB	Keep it local and accessible but consider church halls and libraries as an alternative to closing schools
30	Thames WB	Public Comment	Caversham Primary School	WB	School day is previous for children particularly during the day time mid-week. There are many other alternative venues that are not in heavy use during the day mid-week, eg: church hall, etc.
31	Thames WB	Public Comment	Caversham Primary School	WB	Please can an alternative venue be considered for a polling station instead of Caversham Primary School. As working parents it causes significant disruption to our work when we have to take a day off to look after the children because the school is closed, as well as having an economic impact. In addition, when there is an expectation that children will attend school and not take days off out of term-time, it does not seem acceptable for the school to be closed if there are other suitable venues that could be used.
32	Thames WB	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary School	WB	Please stop using schools as polling stations as it is disruptive to students learning and inconvenient for parents. I am a teacher and cannot take a day off from my school (which is not a polling station) just because my sons' school is closed. There are plenty of libraries, churches, church halls, civic buildings etc which could be used instead.

33	Thames WB	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary School	WB	If possible, I recommend moving the Polling station from schools. The number of disruption days for Caversham Primary school due to polling days are causing disruption for the quality of education for students and teachers. On top of that us parents have to adjust to school days off outside the normal holiday periods.
34	Mapledurham Y	Public Comment - Parent	Caversham Primary	WB	I am happy with my polling station, but my children's school (Caversham primary school) is used as a polling station and I have to make childcare arrangement every time the school is closed for polling day. Surely, there must be an alternative location which is not in use so much during the day that can be used instead - for example the church at the bottom of prospect street, beside the mini roundabout for Waitrose?
35	Unknown	Public Comment	Caversham Primary School	WB	Please could an alternative venue be used such as a church hall or the library so that the school does not have to close for a day.
36	Unknown	Public Comment	Caversham Primary	WB	As a father from a two-parent working family, I question the use of Cav primary school for polling when there are a number of other municipal buildings in the vicinity, or potentially thinking more laterally and using "pop-up" type facilities. With potentially a forthcoming GE and/or people votes coming, the stress of organising emergency child-care for the day, or burning annual leave outside of the ordinary holiday calendar is a particular issue for working parents (who don't have any other options when the school closes). Choosing the local primary school as the default option without exploring every other possible alternative feels like the lazy option. Whilst I appreciate a large majority of the electorate is elderly, you have to remember that most parents of school children aren't. I'd ask therefore you consider the wider impact.
37	Unknown	Public Comment	Caversham Primary	WB	I would prefer an alternative location to Caversham Primary. Traffic/parking is an issue, as is access from main bus routes and it is disruptive for the children at the school.
38	Unknown	Public Comment	Caversham Primary	WB	As a commuter, I always use a postal vote and never used a polling station since moving to Caversham. The disruption to education at Caversham Primary School (and the need to find alternative childcare on polling days) mean I would support a change of location of the nearest polling station. I am also concerned that the high number of recent security alerts and threats were due to the school being publically listed as a polling station. Perhaps we could consider use of the local Library (which now has reduced opening times following significant budget cuts) as an alternative to increase the local value of this important community asset.
WHITLEY S					
39	Whitley S	Public Comment	Whitley Park School	S, SC	For Kennet Island, a better polling station could be the Meeting Point, since it's within the island.
40	Whitley S	Public Comment	Whitley Park School	S, SC	Kennet Island (KI) development is now complete and have a sizable population to have its own polling station within the KI itself. Please consider having a separate polling station within the KI itself for the residents.
41	Whitley S	Public Comment	Whitley Park School	S, SC	Given the increase to the population of Kennet Island and the addition of Green Park Village, would it not be sensible to include an additional venue for voters to make their vote? For example, the meeting point on Kennet Island? Though I'm guessing it's not relevant to this review, surely given the same increase of population that a wavs review of Whitley is also due?
42	Whitley S	Public Comment	Whitley Park School	S, SC	I find it quite easy to vote at the school as I work unsociable hours however it would be much easier to be able to vote in Kennet Island itself.

Key

 Outside of Consultation

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
ABBEY								
L	<i>New Hope Community Church Centre York Road, Reading, RG1 8DU</i>	1,768	275	1,493	26.89%	Coopers' Site, Kings Meadow Rd (315) Napier Road (250)	(2) Retain as PS Make allowance for new residential development in area	VENUE OK No parking
LA 2 polling stations	<i>Sir Herman Gollancz Hall Clifton Street, Reading RG1 7YE</i>	4,186	605	3,581	17.58%	Friar Street [2 sites] (53) Friar St / Greyfriars Rd (135) 29-35 Station Road (33) Station Hill [2 sites] (472) Weldale St / Chatham St (427) Chatham St / Eaton Place (150) North St (40) 9-27 Greyfriars Rd (60) 143-145 Oxford Road (20)	(1) Happy to host PS	VENUE OK No parking 2 PS required
LB	<i>Wesley Church Hall Queen's Rd / Watlington St</i>	1,758	260	1,498	22.82%	Jackson's Corner (33) King's Point (103)		VENUE OK Limited on-street parking

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
						Clarendon House, Queens Rd (49) Abbey Square [2 sites] (1070)		
LC	<i>St John & St Stephen Parish Centre</i> Orts Road, Reading, RG1 3JN	1,484	232	1,252	23.35%	Gas Works Road (20) Princes House, London Road (26) Kenavon Drive (765)	(1) No disabled parking New PS needed for Orts Road west	VENUE OK Limited on-street parking
BATTLE								
A 2 polling stations	<i>Emmanuel Church</i> Oxford Road Reading RG30 1EE	3,546	456	3,090	25.05%			VENUE OK 2 PS required Polling stations re-located from Cranbury Centre since last review. Next to Battle Library, and not in polling district - on north side of Oxford Road Improved access and parking (including disabled parking)
AB	<i>Battle Library</i> 420 Oxford Road Reading RG30 2ES	2,844	384	2,460	26.58%	Portman Road (former Battle Hospital Site (95)		VENUE OK May benefit from 2 nd PS Building works planned

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
								for spring 2019 - may affect use as PS in May 2019.
AC	<i>Oxford Road Community School</i> 146 Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7PJ	1,309	148	1,161	25.63%		(1) Move PS away from school Options: Argyle Church Bridge Hall Fairview Centre Baker Street Spiritualist Church	VENUE OK
CAVERSHAM								
M 2 polling stations	<i>New Bridge Nursery School</i> Montague Street, Caversham, RG4 5AU	2,640	459	2,181	33.42%		(See 27)	VENUE OK
MA	<i>Thameside Primary School</i> Wolsey Road, Caversham RG4 8BY	2,058	370	1,688	33.82%	St Martin's Precinct (40)	(1) Opposed to all schools being used as PSs	VENUE OK
MB	<i>The Weller Centre</i> Amersham Road, Caversham RG4 5BP	1,813	277	1,536	27.97%			VENUE OK Formerly Caversham Children's Centre Building re-designed since last review Security issues

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
MC	<i>Caversham Primary School Hemdean Road, Caversham, RG4 7RA</i>	733	156	577	41.16%		(4) Move PS away from school (3) Caversham Library suggested Keep PS at school (1) (see also Thames WB)	VENUE OK But school and parents have reservations about use as polling place Site shared with Thames WB (2) - held in separate room from Thames Ward PSs - to avoid confusion of electors and votes cast PS moved here from Thameside School following 2007 review
CHURCH								
N 2 polling stations	<i>Reading Scout & Guide Joint HQ 163 Northcourt Avenue, Reading RG2 7HG</i>	2,401	413	1,988	19.20%			VENUE OK Can be cramped as double station
NA	<i>The Ridgeway Primary School Willow Gardens Reading RG2 7EL</i>	1,534	337	1,197	23.50%			VENUE OK
NB	<i>South Reading Youth & Community Centre 252 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, RG2 7QA</i>	1,316	163	1,153	22.56%			VENUE OK Not in ward - on other side of Northumberland Ave

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
NC	<i>Christ the King Church Hall 408 Northumberland Avenue, Reading, RG2 8RN</i>	1,116	182	934	25.32%			VENUE OK Not in ward - on other side of Northumberland Ave
KATESGROVE								
B 2 polling stations	<i>Katesgrove Primary School Dorothy Street, Reading, RG1 2NL</i>	3,471	464	3,007	24.01%	Crown St / Silver St (80) New Century Place [2 sites] (135) Crown St / Southampton St (25) 21 South Street (35)		VENUE OK 2 PS required Polling station now in new building off Katesgrove Lane Access also from Henry Street, but long route involving slope
BA 2 polling stations	<i>Christchurch Centre Milman Road, Reading, RG2 0AY</i>	1,589	210	1,379	27.83%			VENUE OK Query need for 2 PS Very restricted parking
BB	<i>The Palmer Academy Northumberland Avenue, Reading</i>	1,659	260	1,399	23.00%			VENUE OK
KENTWOOD								
C 2 polling stations	<i>St Mary Magdelene Hall Rodway Road, Tilehurst, RG30 6EQ</i>	2,139	346	1,793	33.56%		(1) Up steep incline from nearest bus stop - and not easy to access on foot	VENUE OK Query need for 2 PS
CA	<i>United Reformed Church</i>	1,550	253	1,297	37.74%			VENUE OK

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
	<i>Hall</i> Polsted Road, Tilehurst, RG31 6HP							
CB	<i>Meadow Park Academy</i> Norcot Road, Tilehurst, RG30 6BS	1,606	266	1,340	33.06%			VENUE OK
CC	<i>Norcot Community Centre</i> Lyndhurst Road, Tilehurst, RG30 6UB	1,958	310	1,648	25.76%		(1) No suitable alternative public buildings within area. Mobile polling station, possibly at Waitrose Rivers gym, Scours Lane - but out of the way	VENUE NOT OK Due to be closed and demolished from November 2018 - to be replaced by flats with dedicated community space as part of new build after 18 months. Should not be available as PS in May 2019, and need to establish that community space will work as PS in future elections
MAPLEDURHAM								
Y	<i>Mapledurham Pavilion</i> Upper Woodcote Road, Caversham Heights, RG4 7LB	2,469	513	2,032	Av 39%		None about this PS 1 about Caversham Primary (see Thames WB below)	VENUE OK Moved since last review as Pavilion not available Not in ward - on other side of Woodcote Road Option to return PS to Pavilion from 2020

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
MINSTER								
D	<i>Coley Primary School Wolseley Road, Reading, RG1 6NJ</i>	1,168	160	1,008	27.48%	5-9 Berkeley Ave LVenue OK'n Store (112)		VENUE OK Parking at school
DA 2 polling stations	<i>All Saints Hall Downshire square, Reading, RG1 6NJ</i>	2,599	482	2,117	26.42%			VENUE OK
DB 2 polling stations	<i>Coley Park Community Centre 140 Wensley Road, Coley Park, Reading RG1 6DW</i>	3,382	589	2,793	27.85%	Government Buildings, Wensley Rd (38)		VENUE OK 2 PS Required
NORCOT								
E 2 polling stations	<i>St George's Church Hall St George's Road, Reading</i>	3,419	542	2,877	24.88%			VENUE OK 2 PS required Church hall demolished. PS moved to new community building as part of church
EA 2 polling stations	<i>St Michael's Primary School Dee Road, Tilehurst, RG30 4AS</i>	1,980	411	1,569	26.03%			VENUE OK Query need for 2 PS
EB	<i>Ranikhet Primary School Spey Road, Tilehurst, RG3 4ED</i>	2,204	343	1,861	24.62%	Dee Park - Spey Rd (108)		VENUE OK
PARK								

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
P 2 polling stations	<i>New Town Primary School School Terrace, Reading, RG1 3LS</i>	2,711	334	2,377	42.17%	Alexander House, Kings Road (56)		VENUE OK Limited on-street parking Polling Place moved to cafeteria - separate building accessed from Cholmeley Road.
PA 3 polling stations	<i>Alfred Sutton Primary School 148 Wokingham Road, Reading, RG6 1JR</i>	3,773	574	3,199	38.52%		(1) Move PS away from school - Park Church Hall and Palmer Park Library suggested as alternatives	VENUE OK 3 PS required Good parking at school
PEPPARD								
V 2 polling stations	<i>Emmer Green Youth & Community Centre Grove Road, Emmer Green, RG4 8LN</i>	3,422	765	2,657	36.59%	Lowfield Road (34)		VENUE OK 2 PS required Proposed Lowfield Road development should be in VA polling district - move whole of Cemetery to VA
VA 2 polling stations	<i>The Milestone Centre Northbrook Road, Caversham Park Village, RG40 OPF</i>	2,752	404	2,348	36.68%	199-207 Henley Road (39)	<i>Move PS away from Micklands school</i>	VENUE OK
VB	<i>Micklands Primary School Micklands Road, Caversham</i>	1,314	212	1,102	34.82%			VENUE OK
REDLANDS								
R 2 polling	<i>St Luke's Hall Erleigh Road, Reading</i>	2,278	248	2,030	27.06%	Aspen House 300 Kings Road (78)	(2) A long way from	VENUE OK No free on-street parking

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
stations							Granby Gardens Wheelchair access to site difficult - state of pavements and kerbs in area	
RA 2 polling stations	<i>Redlands Primary School</i> Lydford Road, Reading, Rg1 5QH	1,243	156	1,087	27.47%			VENUE OK Query need for 2 PS No parking Very difficult to access school by car.
RB	<i>Hexham Community Centre</i> 1A Bamburgh Close, Whitley, RG2 7UD	1,161	212	949	32.11%			VENUE OK
RC	<i>Museum of English Rural Life</i> Redlands Road Reading	592	130	462	28.01%			VENUE OK Earley Charity Room
SOUTHCOTE								
F	<i>Southcote Primary School</i> Silchester Road, Southcote, RG3 3EJ	1,970	401	1,569	32.45%	Elvian School (83)	<i>Move PS away from school (2)</i>	VENUE OK
FA	<i>Manor Primary School</i> 110 Ashampstead Rd Southcote, G30 3LJ	1,752	371	1,381	26.47%			VENUE OK
FB	<i>Southcote Library Hall</i> Southcote Lane, Reading	1,462	216	1,246	22.89%			VENUE NOT OK Building closed from

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
	RG30 3BA							November 2018. Library re-located to <i>Southcote Community Hub</i> , Coronation Square, RG30 3QP. PS to move there too.
FC	<i>Prospect School</i> Honey End Lane, Tilehurst, RG30 4EL	1,428	321	1,107	25.23%	Alice Burrows (27)		Restrictions on access to toilets for election staff during school day
THAMES								
W	<i>Highdown School</i> Surley Row, Emmer Green, RG4 8LR	1,126	212	914	33.73%		<i>Difficulties in signing access</i>	VENUE OK Separate Portacabin linked to Sixth-Form Centre Separate access from that Consult re exam times when elections fall outside of May.
WA 2 polling stations	<i>St Andrew's Hall</i> Albert Road, Caversham, RG4 7PW	3,383	669	2,714	41.55%		None re this PC 8 about Caversham Primary School (see WB below)	VENUE OK 2 PS required
WB 2 polling stations	<i>Caversham Primary School</i> Hemdean Road, Caversham, RG4 7RA	2,804	716	2,088	35.29%		(18) 7 from WA 6 from WB 1 from Y 4 unknown	VENUE OK Site shared with Caversham MC - Caversham polling station

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

Polling District	Current Polling Place	Local Electorate Jan 2019	Absent voters Jan 2019	Voters in person Jan 2019	Turnout at Polling Place May 2018	Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)	Consultation Feedback	Returning Officer's Comments
							<p>Move away from school / avoid closing school (17) <i>Plus request to investigate alternative PS from Caversham ward Cllr</i></p> <p>Move Mayfield Drive back to Newbridge Nursery</p> <p>(see also Caversham MC)</p>	<p>is separate room.</p> <p>PS is at western end of polling district - and a long way from Henley Road (area moved from Caversham to Thames ward in 2003 review)</p>
TILEHURST								
G 2 polling stations	Moorlands Primary School Church End Lane, Tilehurst, RG30 4UN	2,766	492	2,274	29.66%	Conwy Close (57)		VENUE OK
GA 2 polling stations	Park Lane Primary School School Road, Tilehurst, RG31 5RD	3,334	572	2,762	31.30%			VENUE OK 2 PS required
GB	Tilehurst Village Hall Victoria Road, Tilehurst RG31 5AB	1,062	134	928	42.51%			VENUE OK
WHITLEY								
S & SC	Whitley Park Primary &	4,051	630	3,421	17.85%	Kennet Island	(4)	VENUE OK

REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES - FEBRUARY 2019

<i>Polling District</i>	<i>Current Polling Place</i>	<i>Local Electorate Jan 2019</i>	<i>Absent voters Jan 2019</i>	<i>Voters in person Jan 2019</i>	<i>Turnout at Polling Place May 2018</i>	<i>Projected growth in dwellings (hard and soft planning commitments - for 20+ dwellings)</i>	<i>Consultation Feedback</i>	<i>Returning Officer's Comments</i>
2 polling stations	<i>Nursery School Basingst Venue Oke Road, Reading, RG2 0JA</i>	330	54	276		Phase 3 (93) Longwater Ave - Pingewood Business Park (700) Land north of Manor Farm Road (550)	Need for new PS in Kennet Island / Green Park (4)	2 PS required Combine S and SC polling districts Volume of development west of A33 Relief road suggests need for new polling district and polling place (see also SB)
SA 2 polling stations	<i>Geoffrey Field Infant School Exbourne Road, Reading, RG22 8RH</i>	2,867	489	2,378	20.37%			VENUE OK
SB	<i>Whitley Wood Community Centre Swallowfield Drive, Reading, RG2 8JD</i>	1,619	234	1,385	22.50%	Worton Grange, Imperial Way (142) Land at Madejski Stadium Shooters Way (624)		VENUE OK Volume of development west of A33 Relief road suggests need for new polling district and polling place (see also S / SC)

Total electorate (local) - 110,899 (January 2019)

Ward average: 7,233 (not including Mapledurham) Mapledurham: 2,411

Electoral Commission ceiling per polling station - 2,500 electors who vote at polling station

Comments in italics: made separately and outside the consultation period