

# Shaw Polling Station Review

**Council**

**18<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

**Author: Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer**

Wards: Shaw

Locality Affected: South

Parishes Affected: None

## **Purpose**

To consider recommendations to change the polling places for the Shaw ward following a polling places review of the Shaw ward in line with Electoral Commission guidance.

## **Recommendation**

Council is recommended to request that the Council adopt changes to the polling places for the Shaw ward as follows:

1. Create 6 polling districts SHA – SHF for the Shaw ward as set out on the map at appendix A.
2. Create the following polling stations to serve the 6 Shaw ward polling districts:

Polling District	Polling Station
SHA	Roughmoor Hall
SHB	Holy Trinity Church
SHC	Saltway Centre
SHD	Shaw Ridge School
SHE	West Lea School
SHF	Peatmoor School

3. Implement the proposed changes with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty on local authorities to keep their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places under review.
- 1.2 The polling districts and polling stations within the Shaw ward have been reviewed following requests from Brookfield School and Robert Buckland, MP Swindon south to seek an alternative polling station venue to

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Brookfield school.

- 1.3 The elections held in 2012 also highlighted the need to review the use of the Saltway Centre. In recent years this has been used as a double polling station but the size of the electorate means that the room that is used is no longer large enough to cope with the volumes of electors, particularly at Parliamentary elections.

## **2. Detail**

- 2.1 Consultations have been undertaken with the ward members for Shaw and Robert Buckland, MP Swindon South regarding alternative venues within Shaw that could be used as polling stations. Two venues were identified as possible polling station venues, namely, Holy Trinity Church (Shaw Village Centre) and Roughmoor Hall.
- 2.2 Visits were made to both venues. The venues provide suitable accommodation for polling stations and are in convenient locations to serve the Shaw ward. Both venues are available for use as polling stations.
- 2.3 The use of Holy Trinity Church and Roughmoor Hall would allow the polling districts for the Shaw ward to be redrawn to create 6 polling districts rather than 5. This would enable the removal of Brookfield School as a polling station and the reduction of Saltway Centre to a single polling station.
- 2.4 The proposed polling districts and polling stations for the Shaw ward are set out on the map at appendix A.
- 2.5 The ward members for Shaw and the Robert Buckland, MP Swindon South, have been consulted on the proposals. They made suggestions for a number of streets (whole of Old Shaw Lane, Randall Crescent, Cartwright Drive and the streets coming off Cartwright Drive) to be included in the SHD polling district which will use Shaw Ridge School as their polling station. These suggestions have been incorporated in this proposal.

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- 2.6 Based on current electorate figures, the proposed changes would result in the following electorate figures for each of the proposed polling stations.

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors
SHA	Roughmoor Hall	1649
SHB	Holy Trinity Church	1267
SHC	Saltway Centre	2036
SHD	Shaw Ridge School	1853
SHE	West Lea School	696
SHF	Peatmoor School	1068
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8569</b>

- 2.7 These figures are in line with the Electoral Commission's guidance which recommends that the elector/polling station ratio does not exceed 2,500 electors per polling station.
- 2.8 Under the proposals the electorate allocated to the Saltway Centre would reduce by 1292.
- 2.9 The electorate allocated to the Shaw Ridge School would increase by approximately 1000 electors (including postal voters). This polling station is sited in the community building attached to the school which has a separate entrance with a sizable hall easily able to accommodate the increased volumes. The school does not need to close as the polling station is in a separate building.

## 3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 No other options have been put forward by interested parties.

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## **Risk Management**

### *Financial and Procurement Implications*

1. The cost of the additional polling stations will be approximately £400.

### *Legal / Human Rights Implications*

2. All legal implications are dealt with in the body of the report

### *Links to Corporate Plans and Policies (in particular to Swindon 2010 Promises)*

3. Easy access to polling stations and the exercise of the right to vote supports the democratic process.

## **Consultees**

1. The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
2. The Ward Councillors have been consulted on proposed polling station venues and polling districts.
3. The Member of Parliament for Swindon South has been consulted.

## **Background Papers and Appendices**

**Appendix 1** – map showing proposed polling districts and polling places for the Shaw ward.