

## **Boundaries Panel**

Thursday 4 November 2021 at 7pm

**PRESENT:** Councillors Summers (chair), Conti, Kelly, Mahfouz, Rice, Sabiers and Woodroffe.

**1. Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Councillor Nagpal sent apologies for this meeting.

This meeting was held in a hybrid format with members and officers able to join the meeting remotely.

However, regulations did not allow for members attending virtually to be counted as present in the attendance section of the minutes, and their attendance would not count as attendance in relation to section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members attending virtually would be able to speak but would not be able to vote.

**Member joining remotely:**

Councillor Ball

**3. Matters to be Considered in Private**

There were none.

**4. Urgent Matters**

There were none.

**5. Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

**6. Minutes**

**Resolved:**

That the minutes of the last meeting of the Boundaries Panel held on 31 August 2021 be agreed as a true and correct record subject to the following amendment – to note that Councillor Rice was present.

**7. Polling District and Polling Place Review 2022– Approval of Final Proposals and Conclusion of Review**

The Boundaries Panel considered the final proposals on polling districts and polling place arrangements for the new wards and ward boundaries which must be in place in time for the local elections in May 2022.

Two wards had received representations as follows:

Ealing Broadway ward - a representation had been received from Mr W French concerning the proposed move of polling place from the Telfer Room, Ealing Town Hall to Christ the Saviour Parish Church Hall, New Broadway, W5 2XA. The Panel understood that this move was necessary due to Ealing Town Hall being redeveloped and therefore no longer available for use as a polling station. Christ the Saviour Church

Hall was very close to the previous polling station location. The Panel agreed to move the location of the Polling station from the Telfer Room to Christ the Saviour Church Hall.

Ealing Common Ward – A petition was received containing 151 signatures requesting that the polling station be retained on the Trees Estate. The preliminary review had proposed that the temporary polling place located on the Trees Estate be moved to the Assyrian Centre, W5 4SL. Individual members of the Boundaries Panel had also been approached by residents expressing concern that they would not be able to vote if the polling place was moved. The Panel considered the distance between the previous location of the temporary polling place and the proposed new location of the Assyrian Centre which was approximately 200m, further from the east of the district. Members noted that the route to the Assyrian Centre from the previous polling place location was not a straight route but involved meandering around the estate and negotiating the South Ealing Road.

The Panel noted the increased costs associated with retaining the temporary polling place and the possibility that it could not be used during the pandemic due to not meeting the required health and safety standards in such a circumstance. The Panel further noted that residents could elect to receiving a postal vote.

Members agreed that residents were more likely to vote if the polling place remained on the Trees estate and in order to maximise democracy, the Panel agreed to retain the temporary polling Place on Lilac Gardens/ Sycamore Avenue on the Trees Estate W5.

Greenford Broadway Ward - The Panel considered Polling Districts NQ and NS within Greenford Broadway Ward with particular regard to those living on the Westridge Estate, that these two polling districts should be reconfigured to enable those living on the Westridge Estate to vote at polling district NS (Greenford Library UB6 9LG) which was easier to travel to. The Panel agreed to delegate this decision to the Head of Elections following consultation with the chair of the Boundaries Panel; The Head of Elections would reconfigure the Boundary between these two polling districts with a north/ south division and report back to the chair of the Boundaries Panel.

North Acton – The Panel was concerned that residents on the Wesley Estate would need to walk 0.6m further to access the revised polling place of BQ (St Gabriel's Church Hall, W3 0JD). The Panel noted the specific problem with vandalism on the previous location of the temporary polling station located in Wesley Gardens Playing Field and the additional costs incurred for temporary polling stations. The Panel agreed to reinstate the temporary polling station located in Wesley Gardens Playing Field for the electorate on the Wesley Estate.

North Acton – The Panel noted that part of this district would need to cross Horn Lane to access the polling place at St Gabriel's Church Hall, W3 0JD and agreed to create a small polling district out of BQ in the Jenner Ave area and to add a second polling station in the Westcott Park Community Centre which would be easier for voters to travel to.

The Panel noted that Friary Park was being redeveloped and for the future the Panel aspired to locating a new polling station in the Community Centre on the new development.

Northfields – VP This was a large district which had previously been divided into three polling districts. To reduce the distance voters would need to travel, the Panel agreed to split this district into 2 and restore the previously used polling place of St Thomas' Church. The Panel agreed for the Head of Elections to determine the dividing line following consultation with the chair of the Boundaries Panel.

Northfields – VQ – The Panel asked if Northfields Library W5 4UA could be used as a polling place for this district replacing the Log Cabin Centre in order to minimise the impact on people who use the Log Cabin. The Panel agreed that VQ should be relocated to Northfields Library subject to satisfactory assessment by the Head of Elections. If, following assessment, Northfields Library was not suitable then the polling place would revert back to the Log Cabin.

### **Resolved:**

That the Boundaries Panel:

- i) noted all representations on the proposals received from public consultation at Appendix D.
- ii) Subject to any final changes required, approved the arrangements for polling districts and polling places on the twenty-four new wards, as set out in Appendices B and C of the report and attached to these minutes, subject to the following changes below:
  - a) to retain the temporary polling Place on Lilac Gardens/ Sycamore Avenue on the Trees Estate W5
  - b) that Polling Districts NQ and NS within Greenford Broadway Ward be reconfigured with a north/ south division, to enable those living on the Westridge Estate to vote at polling district NS (Greenford Library UB6 9LG). The Panel agreed to delegate this decision to the Head of Elections, following consultation with the chair of the Boundaries Panel.
  - c) to reinstate the temporary polling station located in Wesley Gardens Playing Field for the electorate on the Wesley Estate.
  - d) to split VP district into 2 and restore the previously used polling place of St Thomas' Church. The Panel agreed for the Head of Elections to determine the dividing line following consultation with the chair of the Boundaries Panel.
  - e) that VQ should be relocated to Northfields Library subject to satisfactory assessment by the Head of Elections. If, following assessment, Northfields Library was not deemed to be a suitable polling place, then the polling place would revert back to the Log Cabin.
- iii) noted that Friary Park was being redeveloped and for the future the Panel aspired to locating a new polling station in the Community Centre on this new development.
- iii) notes that following agreement, the conclusions of the review will be published on 29 November 2021
- iv) notes that ahead of the local government elections scheduled to be held in May 2022, the necessary alterations to the register of electors to reflect the new wards, new polling districts, and new polling places will be published through a revised register of electors on 1 February 2022.

### **Reason for Decision and Options Considered**

Following conclusion of the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBCE) review of Ealing Council ward boundaries (of which final recommendations can be found on the LGBCE website ([see this link](#))) the council was required to undertake a full review of all polling districts and polling places on the new ward boundaries which come into force for the local elections in 2022.

As part of the review, all existing polling places and newly proposed polling places, were assessed by the Acting Returning Officer (ARO).

Ahead of a public consultation, preliminary review proposals from the ARO were presented in a report to the meeting of Boundaries Panel Committee 31 August 2021 (see [this link](#)). At that meeting Boundaries Panel amended the review proposals (see [this link](#)).

The Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places was published on 17 September 2021.

Public consultation on the ARO's review proposals as amended by Boundaries Panel took place between 17 September 2021 and 18 October 2021. The public consultation was supported by a dedicated local webpage that provided information on the background to the review, the proposals, and the consultation (see [this link](#)).

Comments and representations on the review proposals were sought from the public through social media and press releases. Local political parties, MPs, AM, Councillors, election agents and disability groups were directly invited for views.

All representations received via the consultation can be viewed at Appendix D. No changes were recommended from those approved by Boundaries Panel on 31st August.

The ARO's review proposals, as amended by Boundaries Panel, for the new polling places, polling stations and polling districts for the new wards, were set out in the schedule at Appendix B to the report. Detailed ward maps showing proposals could be found at Appendix C to the report. The proposals could also be viewed interactively on the authority's internal website here:

[https://maps.ealing.gov.uk/Webreports/elections/polling\\_districts\\_2022.html](https://maps.ealing.gov.uk/Webreports/elections/polling_districts_2022.html)

A polling station cost analysis, based on existing 2021 polling station costs, could be found at Appendix E to the report.

Councillor Summers (Chair)

The duration of the meeting was from 7pm to 8:20pm