

Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

SUMMARY

- 1.1 A number of comments have been received from stakeholders following the initial review consultation period between 1 October and 22 November 2013. These are shown at Appendix 2. My proposals for future polling districts and polling places, taking into account these comments, were published on 6 December 2013. These proposals are contained in Appendices 2 & 3.
- 1.2 A further consultation period has taken place between 6 December 2013 and 10 January 2014. No additional comments have been received.
- 1.3 Final recommendations for polling districts and polling places are to be put to Council for approval at its meeting on 29 January 2014.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To agree the Acting Returning Officer's proposals for new polling arrangements in the City for Parliamentary and Local Elections as outlined in Appendix 4.
- 2.2 To recommend that Council approve the final proposals agreed by this board at its meeting on 29 January 2014.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 A full review of all polling districts and polling places has taken place. The consultation process has resulted in a number of comments regarding the initial proposals. These are outlined in the appendices attached to this report and have been taken account of in the final review proposals.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to review all its polling districts and places every four years. The next review will take place from 1 October 2017.

The Derby Review

- 4.2 At its meeting on 18 September 2013, Council received a report on the proposed review process and agreed the following timetable:
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| ❖ Publication of notice and consultation document | 1 October 2013 |
| ❖ Closing date for representations (first stage) | 22 November 2013 |
| ❖ Publication of representations from the (Acting) Returning Officer | 6 December 2013 |
| ❖ Final date for comments on the representations from the (Acting) Returning Officer (second stage) | 10 January 2014 |
| ❖ Council approves final scheme | 29 January 2014 |
| ❖ 2014 Electoral Register published in accordance with the new scheme | 17 February 2014 |
- 4.3 Council also agreed that the Resources and Governance Board consider my draft proposals prior to submission of the final report to Council on 29 January 2014.
- 4.4 The consultation on the first stage of the review from 1 October to 22 November 2013 consisted of consultation with key stakeholders as outlined below.
- Ward councillors
 - MPs and MEPs
 - local political parties
 - Derbyshire Police
 - disability groups
 - Neighbourhood Forums
- Documents were also published through 'Your City Your Say' and on the council's website. Copies of the review and ward maps were also made available within each Parliamentary Constituency at Allestree Library, Chaddesden Library and at the Council House in the Main Reception area.
- 4.5 Comments received during the first stage of the review, ending on 22 November 2013, are shown at Appendix 2.
- Appendix 3 shows my initial representations relating to polling districts and polling places and also takes account of comments received from stakeholders received during the first stage of the review.
- 4.6 The second stage of the review opened for further comments until 10 January 2014. No additional comments have been received.
- 4.7 This report is primarily concerned with the comments received during this second stage of the review process and my response to them

- 4.8 Following consideration by this board the matter will go to Council for final approval on 29 January 2014.
- 4.9 Final proposals, once agreed at Council, will be published on the Council's website and be available for inspection within each Parliamentary Constituency at Allestree Library, Chaddesden Library and at the Council House Reception.
- 4.10 On 17 February 2014 the Electoral Register will be published in accordance with the approved scheme.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 All options considered in relation to redrawing of polling districts and proposals for polling stations are contained in appendices 2, 3 and 4.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	Janie Berry, Director of Legal and Democratic Services
Financial officer	N/A
Human Resources officer	N/A
Service Director(s)	Janie Berry, Director of Legal and Democratic Services and (Acting) Returning Officer
Other(s)	N/A

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Background papers:	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places Consultation Document published on 1 October 2013. Consultation document
List of appendices:	<p>Ward maps relating to current and proposed polling districts and places. Web page containing ward maps</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Implications</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Comments received from stakeholders during the initial part of the review to 22 November 2013. Comments document</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Acting Returning Officer proposals taking account of comments received in the first stage of the review Acting Returning Officer Proposals following first stage of review</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Final details of polling arrangements to be considered at Council on 29 January 2014</p>

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The number of polling stations as a result of the review and to enable compliance with the Electoral Commission's performance standards will reduce from 89 to 86. The review recommendations result in a reduction in costs relating to staffing and premises hire of approximately £2k. The Council is required to make sure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, also having regard to the needs of electors who are disabled..

Legal

- 2.1 Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 amended the Representation of the People Act 1983, introducing a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places at least once every four years. The practicalities of how the reviews must be conducted are set out in The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006. Section 17 of The Electoral Registration and Administration Act (2013) provides for this review to be carried out within the 16 month period beginning 1 October 2013.

Personnel

- 3.1 None arising directly from this report.

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 All proposals for new polling venues have been considered to ensure that, as far as is possible, polling places are accessible for all electors.

Health and Safety

- 5.1 All polling venues to be used as a result of the proposals have been assessed and meet Health and Safety requirements

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 Polling districts have been designed to ensure reasonable accessibility for voters in each polling district and to minimise, where possible, any adverse impacts on travel to these venues.

Asset Management

- 7.1 In terms of charges for buildings owned by the council, including schools, The Representation of the People Act 1983 Schedule 1 – Parliamentary Election Rules state that The Returning Officer may use, free of charge, for the purpose of taking the poll
- a room in a school to which this rule applies;
 - a room, the expense of maintaining which is payable out of any rate.

As a number of polling stations operate in facilities owned or leased by the council. any changes to the ownership and status of the council owned venues contained within this report should be subject to consultation with the Service Director for Legal and Democratic Services

Risk Management

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 9.1 The review process contributes to corporate priorities:
- enabling stronger communities and
 - providing good quality services that meet local needs