

Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report details the consultation process on the review of polling districts and polling places and attaches the comments received by the Acting Returning Officer and his response to them at various stages of this process.
- 1.2 The key changes as a result of this review are set out in Appendix 2 and the full list of polling districts and polling places are set out in Appendix 5.
- 1.3 Ward maps outlining the final proposals for polling districts and polling places are available to view in political party group rooms and electronically at <http://www.derby.gov.uk/CouncilGovernmentDemocracy/Elections/Polling+Review.htm>

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree the Acting Returning Officer's proposals for future polling arrangements for the City for Parliamentary Elections as set out in Appendix 5.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA) to review all of its polling districts and places every four years. The deadline for the completion of the current review is 31 December 2011.
- 3.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a requirement that the Acting Returning Officer must make representations to the Council on its proposed scheme. As the review is based on current parliamentary constituencies and their boundaries, this means that for the City of Derby the Acting Returning Officer for the Derby North, Derby South and Mid Derbyshire parliamentary constituencies is consulted.
- 3.3 To comply with guidance from the Electoral Commission we are also required to

ensure that we have no polling stations with more than 2,500 electors. This will be monitored by the Electoral Commission through its Returning Officer Performance Standards. The Acting Returning Officer has also taken account of potential housing developments and the outcome of previous reports into polling venue accessibility by SCOPE, a national charity that supports disabled people and their families as well as comments from stakeholders and members of the public.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 On 13 July 2011 Full Council approved arrangements to commence its four yearly statutory review of polling districts and polling places. This was formally announced by public notice on 22 July 2011.
- 4.2 The Acting Returning Officer reported on the existing arrangements and this formed the basis for the first stage of consultation with stakeholders and members of the public between 22 July and 9 September 2011.
- 4.3 Details of the review were sent to councillors, MP's, MEP's, local political parties, Derbyshire Police, disability groups and, neighbourhood forums. Documents were also published through 'Your City - Your Say' and on the council's website.
- 4.4 Copies of the review documents and ward maps were also made available to view within each parliamentary constituency at Allestree Library, Chaddeseden Library and at Roman House Reception.
- 4.5 On 23 September 2011 the Acting Returning Officer published his proposals regarding polling districts and polling places.
- 4.6 Comments received, together with the responses of the Acting Returning Officer during the period 23 September to 3 October 2011, are shown at Appendix 3.
- 4.7 Comments received together with the responses of the Acting Returning Officer during the period 4 to 28 October 2011 are shown at Appendix 4.
- 4.8 Details of the final proposals of the Acting Returning Officer as shown for information at Appendix 5.
- 4.9 On 11 November 2011 Governance Committee, including leaders of the three main political parties, met to consider all of the comments received during the consultation period to 28 October 2011 and agreed all of the proposed polling arrangements.

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, 4 and 5.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Stuart Leslie Roger Kershaw N/A Stuart Leslie N/A
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Background papers:	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places Consultation Document published on 22 July 2011 http://www.derby.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/18D4E8C7-8735-4850-8E53-23A13D439302/0/ConsultationDocumentforwebsite.pdf Returning Officer's Representations published on 23 September 2011 http://www.derby.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E22356CF-9D6C-4F10-8AF4-5394F342F7D5/0/ReturningOfficersRepresentations.pdf
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Implications Appendix 2 - Key changes implemented as a result of the polling place review Appendix 3 - Response of the Returning Officer to comments received up to and including 3 October 2011. Appendix 4 - Response of the Returning Officer to comments received between 4 and 28 October 2011. Appendix 5 - Details of proposed polling stations and electorate figures following conclusion of the review.

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 increase from 80 to 89. As a result the increase in anticipated costs for a Local Election is estimated to be between £3 and £5k. However, as the Council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, and have regard to the needs of electors who are disabled, any additional costs incurred will be contained within existing budgets.

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.

Personnel

- 3.1 No personnel implications are identified directly by 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 Acting Returning Officer.

Risk Management

- 8.1 None directly resulting from this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

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