



Derby's Electoral Cycle

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Council determined in March 2016 to undertake a public consultation on the Electoral Cycle with a view to considering its outcome thereafter. The consultation took place between 13 May 2016 and 8 July 2016.
- 1.2 The outcome of the public consultation is now presented to members, along with various submissions that have been separately received following publication of the matter.
- 1.3 Members are asked to consider whether to move to four-yearly "all council" elections and, if resolving to change the council's electoral cycle, to determine a year to commence any new arrangements.
- 1.4 The draft motion for consideration by members includes a date of 2020 for potential commencement of any new arrangements, as this ties in with the next General Election and Police and Crime Commissioner Elections. However, it is for members to determine whether this date is appropriate or if an alternative should be considered.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To note the outcome of the public consultation on potential changes to the council's electoral cycle.
- 2.2 To determine whether members wish to pass the following resolution, subject to agreement on a date of commencement:

Council resolves to move to four-yearly 'all council' elections, where all members will be elected collectively for a period of four years commencing with local elections to be held in 2020.

Council requests that the Director of Governance, as Electoral Registration Officer, notifies the Electoral Commission and makes any such statutory arrangements as are necessary to facilitate this change.

- 2.3 To note that if members pass the resolution detailed at paragraph 2.2, the matter cannot be brought back before members for reconsideration for four years.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Consideration of the matter was required as part of the Council resolution to commence the consultation and bring to members for determination.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

- 4.1 At present, elections in Derby are undertaken 'by thirds'. All councillors are elected for a term of four years, with one third being elected for three consecutive years followed by a fourth 'fallow' year when there are no elections.
- 4.2 Under the 'whole council' elections model, all seats are up for election in the same year, with elections only taking place once every four years.
- 4.3 Councils can resolve to change their cycle subject to complying with certain conditions. These conditions include undertaking a consultation, convening a special meeting of Council to consider the matter, and a two-thirds majority of members in attendance being required to pass the resolution.
- 4.4 The Localism Act 2011 increased the flexibility afforded to councils in making such a decision by enabling the resolution to choose any year for commencement.
- 4.5 In the event that Council passes such a resolution, any councillors elected within the four years prior to commencement would nevertheless be required to re-stand to retain their seats. For example, if Council passes the draft motion prepared at paragraph 2.2 and retains the year 2020 for commencement, those councillors due to be elected under the present arrangements in 2018 and 2019 would be subject to re-election in addition to those who were elected in 2016.

Public consultation

- 4.6 A public consultation was undertaken between 13 May 2016 and 8 July 2016 on the potential to change Derby's electoral arrangements. A snapshot result of the consultation was that 68.1 per cent of participants favoured changing Derby's electoral cycle to whole council elections, while 29 per cent favoured retaining the current system of elections by thirds.
- 4.7 The final report of the consultation team is detailed at Appendix 2.

Correspondence

- 4.8 A number of letters have been received from outside organisations, partnership bodies and business leaders supporting a proposed change to four-yearly elections. These are detailed below.

- 4.9 A letter was received from the Derby Renaissance Board, dated 19 August 2016. This is attached as Appendix 3. The organisations which it represents are detailed in Appendix 4.
- 4.10 A letter was received from the East Midlands Chamber (previously the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry), dated 25 August 2016. This is attached as Appendix 5. The Chamber represents approximately 500 Derby-based businesses.
- 4.11 A letter was received from Trent Barton Buses, which is based outside the city but operates throughout Derby, dated 6 September 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 6.
- 4.12 A letter was received from D2N2, dated 30 September 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 7.
- 4.13 A letter was received from Bowmer & Kirkland, dated 10 October 2016. Bowmer & Kirland is based in Derbyshire but heavily involved with projects in the city and has previously partnered the council with various schemes. The letter is attached at Appendix 8.
- 4.14 A letter was received from Derby County Football Club, dated 13 October 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 9.
- 4.15 A letter was received from Derbyshire County Cricket Club, dated 14 October 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 10.
- 4.16 A letter was received from Arriva, which is based outside the city but operates throughout Derby, dated 18 October 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 11.
- 4.17 A letter was received from Marketing Derby, dated 18 October 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 12.
- 4.18 A letter was received from Derby College, dated 21 October 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 13.
- 4.19 A letter was received from the University of Derby, dated 4 November 2016. The letter is attached at Appendix 14.

Determination

- 4.20 In considering the draft motion at paragraph 2, normal rules of debate and voting rules will apply to any amendments that may be proposed. The Monitoring Officer will advise if any proposed amendments would cease to make the motion compliant.

- 4.21 As detailed at paragraph 4.3, a two-thirds majority of members attending the meeting is required to pass any resolution changing the Derby's electoral cycle. What this means in practical terms is detailed below.

Councillors attending meeting	Votes required to change electoral cycle
50, 51	34
49	33
47, 48	32
46	31
44, 45	30
43	29
41, 42	28

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. The matter now requires Council determination.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Janie Berry, Director of Governance and Electoral Registration Officer
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	David Walsh 01332 643655 david.walsh@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 It is anticipated that the long-term saving of moving to whole council elections would be approximately £387,000 over each four-year period. However, it is important to note that the saving would not be realised until the four-year period commencing in 2021.

Legal

- 2.1 There are set processes that the council would need to undertake should a motion to change the electoral cycle be carried. This would be undertaken by the Electoral Registration Officer.

Personnel

- 3.1 Temporary staff are employed for every election. It is inevitable that if the council moved to 'whole council' elections there would be fewer occasions when temporary appointments would be required, though more temporary appointments would be likely to be required to facilitate a larger election. No changes would be proposed in terms of permanent employees resulting from this decision.

IT

- 4.1 None directly arising.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 None directly arising.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 None directly arising.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None directly arising, save for the reduction in paperwork produced and transport costs if the more efficient 'whole council' elections model was adopted.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 None directly arising, save that the council properties outside of the Council House normally taken for short-term electoral use – such as the Derby Arena – would be used less frequently, releasing them for commercial use.

Risk Management and Safeguarding

- 9.1 No direct impact. At present, robust processes are in place across all aspects of elections work to ensure integrity and reduce risks. These would need to be adjusted to take account of any additional challenges or risks that would be posed if the electoral cycle was change. However, as all these processes are reviewed annually in any case it would not necessitate additional work.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 It is a priority of the administration that the council consider changing the electoral cycle.