

Report of the Executive Director

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

1. Purpose of Report

To inform the Committee of the arrangements for the review of polling districts and polling places to be carried out later in the year.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to NOTE the proposed arrangements for the review of polling districts and polling places to start in October.

3. Detail

All relevant local authorities are responsible for reviewing UK Parliamentary polling districts and places for so much of any constituency as is situated in their area. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews; the next is to be started and completed between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025 (inclusive). The length of the process is not specified in legislation but should allow sufficient time for consultation to be carried out. Details of the process to be followed when carrying out a review is set out in the appendix.

The public consultation period in Broxtowe will take place between 2 and 30 October 2023. A further report will be submitted to this Committee on 27 November 2023 setting out responses received to the consultation and recommendations for any changes to be considered by Council on 13 December 2023.

If any changes are made to polling district boundaries the Electoral Registration Officer must amend the electoral register accordingly. A revised register will, if necessary, be published on 1 February 2024. The (Acting) Returning Officers for both the Broxtowe and Nottingham North and Kimberley Parliamentary Constituencies will also be required to comment on the polling stations which would be used if any proposals for new polling places are accepted. Election rules require the (Acting) Returning Officer to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling place and must allocate electors to the polling stations as they think most convenient.

While legislation does not provide a role for the Electoral Commission in the review process, specified interested parties may make representations to the Commission to reconsider any polling districts and polling places once the Council has published the results of its review. The Commission may direct the Authority to make any alterations to the polling places which it thinks necessary and, if the alterations are not made within two months, may make the alterations itself.

4. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. Legal Implications

The Representation of the People Act 1983 requires the Council to carry out a review of polling districts and polling places within each parliamentary constituency in its area.

6. Human Resources Implications

There are no Human Resources implications.

7. Union Comments

There are no comments from the Union.

8. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any [OFFICIAL (SENSITIVE)] information and there are no Data Protection issues.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

The review will seek to ensure that polling stations are accessible for all voters.

10. Background Papers

None

APPENDIXReview process

When carrying out the review, local authorities must:

- publish a notice of the holding of a review
- consult the (Acting) Returning Officer for every parliamentary constituency which is wholly or partly in its area
- publish all representations made by an (Acting) Returning Officer within 30 days of receipt by posting a copy of them at the local authority's office and in at least one conspicuous place in their area and, if the authority maintains a website, by placing a copy on the authority's website
- seek representations from such persons as it thinks have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability. Such persons must have an opportunity to make representations and to comment on the representations made by the (Acting) Returning Officer(s).
- on completion of a review, give reasons for its decisions and publish:
 - a. all correspondence sent to an (Acting) Returning Officer in connection with the review
 - b. all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability
 - c. all representations made by any person in connection with the review
 - d. the minutes of any meeting held by the Council to consider any revision to the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review
 - e. details of the designation of polling districts and polling places within the local authority area as a result of the review
 - f. details of the places where the results of the review have been published

Notice of the review will be sent to the Acting Returning Officers for the Broxtowe and the Nottingham North and Kimberley Parliamentary Constituencies, all members of Broxtowe Council, County Councillors for electoral divisions within Broxtowe, the MPs for the Broxtowe and Ashfield Parliamentary Constituencies, local political parties and stakeholders representing disabled people in the borough. It will also be advertised on the Council's website and through social media.