

Report from the Assistant Director – Governance and ICT

## **Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations**

### **Summary**

1. This report informs members of the duty on all local authorities to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations in UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places as laid down in the Electoral Registration Administration Act 2013. The first reviews must be completed between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015, with future reviews every fifth year following 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

### **Background**

2. The Local Government Boundary Commission has recently completed a review of the ward structure for City of York Council and their recommendations are expected to be passed in the Houses of Parliament in October 2014. This review will reflect the new ward boundaries.

### **Aim of the Review**

3. Local Authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts for the purposes of parliamentary elections and to designate polling places for these polling districts and to keep them under review.
4. Local Authorities must:
  - Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
  - Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled and when considering

the designation of polling places must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

### **The Review Process**

5. A Local Authority is required to publish notice of the holding of a review. Accordingly a notice is to be published in the local press and on the Council's website and will invite comments and representations from interested parties and bodies.
6. Consultation has also begun with local political parties, parish council's, disability awareness groups and local community groups.
7. A period of six weeks consultation will now take place which ends on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2014.
8. At the end of the consultation period, any representations received will be brought before Members. Members may then decide to make recommendations for amendments to polling districts, polling places and/or places.
9. Accepted changes and newly created polling districts will be implemented by the Electoral Registration Officer in the next scheduled Register of Electors, due to be published on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014. In order to meet that timescale, the outcome of the consultation and proposals will be reported to Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee in November.

### **Consultation**

10. There will be a process of consultation as part of the review as outlined above.

### **Options**

11. This is a statutory requirement and this report is for information only.

### **Council Priorities**

12. The review will improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services and will improve our focus on the needs of customers and residents in designing and providing services.

## Implications

13. The implications arising from this report are:

- **Financial:** There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.
- **Human Resources:** There are no Human Resources implications associated with this report.
- **Equalities:** The review will consider equalities issues and ensure in particular that recommendations reflect the Council's duty to have regard to the need eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people. In this regard ease of access to polling stations will be a key issue.
- **Legal:** As the report indicates there is a statutory requirement to undertake this review. Under the Council's Constitution this Committee may make recommendations in respect of the review, but the decision making responsibility rests with full Council or Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee where a decision is required without delay.
- **Crime and Disorder:** There are no crime and disorder implications.
- **Information Technology (IT):** There are no IT implications associated with this report.
- **Other:** There are no other implications associated with this report.

## Risk Management

14. Failure to meet statutory requirements would represent unacceptable risk to the authority.

## Recommendations

15. The Committee is asked to:

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and make any comments.

**Reason:** To reflect the result of the consultation and meet legislative requirements.

## Contact Details

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**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 20<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**Specialist Officer Implications: None**

**Wards Affected:**

**All**

### Background Papers:

None

### Annexes

Annex 1 – Review of Polling Districts, Places and Stations 2014 – Terms of Reference.