

REPORT TO:	COUNCIL	AGENDA ITEM: 10
DATE OF MEETING:	31st OCTOBER 2019	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	ELECTORAL SERVICES 01283 595875 elections@southderbyshire.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	POLLING PLACE REVIEW 2019	
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That Council approves the commencement of a review of polling districts and polling places within the District of South Derbyshire.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 To advise Council of the proposed review of polling districts and polling places commencing in October 2019.
- 2.2 To request that Council adopts the recommendation described in section 1 of this report.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 In accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983, local authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts, to designate polling places for those polling districts, and to keep their electoral arrangements under review.
- 3.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty for all polling districts and polling places to be reviewed. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 places a duty on the local authority to carry out a review of each polling district and polling place in its area.
- 3.3 In conducting this review, the Council must seek to ensure that:
- All electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
 - Polling places are accessible to all electors and all sections of the community; and
 - When considering or reviewing the designation of a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.
- 3.4 The Returning Officer will present the recommendations to full Council for approval.

3.5 Definitions

Polling district: this is the area created by the division of a constituency or ward. Within this area, a polling place must be determined which is convenient to electors registered in that area.

Polling place: the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the Returning Officer.

Polling station: the room or building where the poll takes place. This is chosen by the Returning Officer for the election and is published on various official notices and communicated to the electorate via a poll card.

3.6 Legislation

District Councils must comply with the requirements set out in the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, as follows:

- 3.6.1 In England, each parish is to be a separate polling district.
- 3.6.2 The Council must designate a polling place for each polling district unless the size or other circumstances of a polling district are such that the situation of the polling district are such that the situation of the polling stations does not materially affect the convenience of the electors of any body of them.
- 3.6.3 The Council must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in its area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- 3.6.4 The Council must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.
- 3.6.5 The Council must have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place or the designation of which as a polling place it is reviewing.
- 3.6.6 The polling place for a polling district must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district.

3.7 Requirements

When carrying out the review, Councils must comply with the requirements set out in the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, as follows:

- 3.7.1 The Council must publish notice of the holding of a review.
- 3.7.2 The Council must consult the Returning Officer for every Parliamentary election in a constituency which is wholly or partly in its area.
- 3.7.3 The Returning Officer must make representations to the authority. The representations must include information as to the location of polling stations (existing or proposed) within polling places (existing or proposed).

- 3.7.4 Representations made by a Returning Officer must be published within 30 days of receipt by posting a copy of them at the council'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 the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.
- 3.7.5 The Council must 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 Returning Officer's representations.
- 3.7.6 Any elector in a constituency situated in a whole or in part in the authority's area may make representations.
- 3.7.7 Representations made by any persons in connection with a review of polling places may include proposals for specified alternative polling places.
- 3.7.8 On completion of a review, the authority must give reasons for its decisions and must publish:

All correspondence sent to the Returning Officer in connection with the review.

All correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has a particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.

All representations made by any persons in connection with the review.

The minutes of any meeting held by the authority to consider any revision to the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review.

Details of the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review.

Details of the places where the results of the review have been published (Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006).

3.8 Review Principles

It is intended that the Electoral Services Team will follow a number of principles whilst conducting the review which have been determined from best practice since the previous reviews, as follows:

- 3.8.1 Continue to use as many existing polling stations as practicable for voter continuity.
- 3.8.2 Ensure polling stations are accessible for all voters with regard to facilities and location. Where possible they should be located on or near public transport routes.

- 3.8.3 Ensure disabled access facilities are fit for purpose and accessible to users.
- 3.8.4 Ensure that facilities for election staff are of a good and safe standard i.e. toilet, cooking facilities, running water, heating and lighting.
- 3.8.5 To reduce cost where possible. Any reduction of cost identified will not be to the detriment of the voting experience. However, any proposal must be affordable.
- 3.8.6 Incorporate feedback received into the decision making process during the review.
- 3.8.7 Have regard to guidance published by the Electoral Commission.

3.9 Timetable

- 3.9.1 Any proposals will be presented to full Council in January 2019.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The proposals in this report are covered within the current budget for administering elections.

5.0 Corporate Implications

- 5.1 None.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 None

7.0 Corporate Plan Implications

- 7.1 None

8.0 Risk Impact

- 8.1 None

9.0 Community Impact

- 9.1 A notice inviting representations from electors within the parliamentary constituency of South Derbyshire will be displayed at the Civic Offices and been published to the website in accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983.

10.0 Equality and Diversity Impact

- 10.1 Accessibility to polling places will be reviewed.

11.0 Social Value Impact

- 11.1 The proposed polling place review will seek to provide convenient locations for electors and may increase electoral engagement.

12.0 Environmental Sustainability

- 12.1 The review of polling places may result in provision of polling places that are located within walking distance for electors.

13.0 Background Papers

Representation of the People Act 1983

Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2006

Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006)