

Bolsover District Council

Council

6th December 2017

New Electoral Arrangements and Polling District and Polling Place Review

Report of Chief Executive Officer

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To inform Members of proposals to implement the new electoral arrangements determined by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- To seek approval of the proposed timetable for the polling district and polling place review.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has published its final recommendations following a review of the Council's electoral arrangements.
- 1.2 In summary, the final recommendations propose that Bolsover District Council should retain 37 Councillors representing four three-councillor wards, twelve two-councillor wards and one one-councillor ward across the district. In total 17 wards, three fewer than now. The boundaries of 6 wards will remain the same.
- 1.3 As a result of the proposed new ward boundaries, the Commission has also exercised its powers to provide revised parish electoral arrangements for Clowne, Old Bolsover, Scarcliffe and Shirebrook parishes.
- 1.4 Appendix "A" shows the proposed new wards and electorate projections for 2022. The full report can be seen on the Commission's website www.lgbce.org.uk
- 1.5 **Formal Review Process**
In order to implement the new electoral arrangements it will be necessary for the Council to undertake a review of its polling districts and polling places and include the changes in the new electoral register to be published on 1st December 2018.
- 1.6 The polling district review will need to have regard to statutory guidance published by the Electoral Commission.
- 1.7 The length of the review is not prescribed. However, it must allow sufficient time for public consultation on the existing and proposed polling places and polling districts, usually a minimum period of 4 weeks. It should also provide sufficient time

for the Council to consider any representations received and determine the new arrangements. During the consultation period the Acting Returning Officer's proposals on the existing and proposed arrangements must also be published.

1.8 In order to administer the review efficiently and effectively and having regard to the statutory guidance the following timetable is proposed for the review:-

<p>Preliminary work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS supply of detailed ward and polling district maps • Preparation of new polling district maps • Assessment of existing polling places and identification of new polling places as necessary • Draft ARO proposals on existing and proposed arrangements • Need to identify consultees, interested bodies such as disability groups etc 	Up to and including publication of notice of review
<p>Publish Notice of Review (Commencement)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARO to publish proposals • Write to consultees, interested bodies, MP's and other Parliamentary AROs etc 	Friday, 9 th March 2018
End of public consultation period	Friday 20 th April 2018
Report to Full Council	July/September, 2018
Publication of review result	Within 14 days of Full Council approval
Publication of the revised register	1 December 2018 register (published Monday 3 rd December)

1.9 Representations

The Council is required to seek views or comments from electors and any persons or bodies with expertise in access to premises or facilities for persons with any type of disability. Representations will also be sought from the Acting Returning Officer for the Parliamentary constituencies covering the area of the local authority. Local political parties, councillors and parish councils will also be consulted. Comments may relate to existing polling districts and polling places or any proposed polling districts or polling places.

1.20 Overview of Legislative Requirements

When undertaking a review the Council is required to give due regard to the following considerations:-

- It must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- It 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
- Where possible the polling place should be in its own polling district. Special circumstances apply which allow for the polling place to be outside the district where there is no suitable polling place in the district and in these circumstances regard should be had to the convenience of electors
- Where possible each parish (and each parish ward) should be a separate polling district
- Where boundaries for different elections are no longer co-terminous the areas no longer co-terminous must be made into separate polling districts. Eg the new District Council wards may no longer be the same as the existing County Divisions.

1.21 Completion of the Review

Once the Council has agreed the proposals, details of the new polling districts and places must be made available to the public. This will be published on the website and at the Council's Offices. The reasons for choosing each polling place and districts must be given.

In addition, the Council must also publish:-

- All correspondence sent to the ARO in connection with the review or sent by the ARO to persons with particular expertise on access issues
- All representations made by any person in connection with the review
- The minutes of any meeting held by the Council.
- Details of where the results of the review have been published.

1.22 Appeals Process

Following the conclusion of the review, specified persons have the right to make representations to the Electoral Commission. If, on receipt of the representations, the Commission find that the review did not:-

- meet the reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency or a body of them; or
- take sufficient account of the accessibility for disabled persons of a polling station/polling stations with a designated polling place

then the Commission may direct the Council to make any alterations to the polling places as they think necessary and if the alterations are not made within two months, make the alterations themselves.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The recommendations must be approved by Parliament and it is expected that the Statutory Order implementing them will be approved sometime in November, 2017.
- 2.2 The new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2019.
- 2.3 To comply with the legal requirement to implement the new electoral arrangements.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 The report sets out the legal requirements for consultation when undertaking a review of polling districts and polling places. The review will have regard to equality of access and the needs of voters at polling places

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 When the Statutory Order is made and confirmed the Council has no option but to implement the final recommendations of the review of electoral arrangements for the District and Parish elections in 2019. In order to implement the new arrangements, the Council must carry out a review of its polling places and polling districts.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 Implementing the boundary review and carrying out the polling district review is usually undertaken within existing budgets.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 The legal implications are contained within the report.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 This is a role usually picked up by the Elections Team. As members are aware the Council is currently out to recruitment for the Elections Manager and the Elections Officer. It is likely that the successful candidates will not be in place till part way through the timetable above.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Council notes the outcome of the new electoral arrangements as determined by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- 6.2 The Council approves the review of polling places and polling districts as outlined in the report.

7 Decision Information

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><i>BDC:</i> <i>Revenue - £75,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £150,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>NEDDC:</i> <i>Revenue - £100,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £250,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
<p>District Wards Affected</p>	All affected indirectly
<p>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</p>	All

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix A	Proposed new wards and electorate projections for 2022.
<p>Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)</p>	
Report Author	Contact Number
Peter Smith, External Support	