

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of Council on Wednesday 6th December 2023

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations 2023

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Performance and Governance

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Rebecca Brooks – Electoral Services Manager

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report sets out proposals to consider and approve for the provision of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations within Bolsover District Council area following a review undertaken in accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places. This review has been undertaken in line with the compulsory review which must be started and completed between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025 (inclusive).
- 1.2 The Act requires that relevant authorities must:-
 - (a) seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practical in the circumstances.
 - (b) seek to ensure that as far as is reasonable and practical the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to electors including those who are disabled and when considering the designation of a Polling Place must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The revised Register of Electors is published on 1 December 2023. The proposals in this report have no effect on polling district boundaries and are limited to minor

changes to the provision of polling places. These changes do not require the register to be republished.

- 2.2 Council is reminded that a Review was undertaken in 2018 following the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's Review of Electoral Arrangements which saw a number of changes to District Wards, Polling Districts and revised Parish/Parish Ward electoral arrangements.

The Review Process

- 2.3 The publication of the Notice of Review was published on 4 October 2023 and the initial consultation period commenced on 4 October 2023 as required by legislation.
- 2.4 The consultation period sought representations from Electors, District Councillors, Members of Parliament, Parish and Town Councils, Political Parties and existing Polling Place contacts. The consultation documents were sent to all stakeholders, including District Councillors, Parish Councils, County Councillors, MPs, MEP's and other interested parties who have particular expertise in certain fields, for example disability access issues. All comments/submissions were required to be submitted by 30 October 2023. During this period, maps showing the Polling Districts and existing Polling Places were published on the Council's website. Following the initial consultation period, the Acting Returning Officer (ARO) published proposals for Polling Districts and Polling Places after 6 December 2023.

Overview of the Review Process

- 2.5 The Council is responsible for the designation of Polling Districts and Polling Places and the Returning Officer is responsible for determining the number of Polling Stations within each Polling Place.
- 2.6 A Polling District effectively sub divides an electoral ward (where necessary) into smaller geographical areas for polling purposes.
- 2.7 A Polling Place is a building or area approved by the Council at which the electors in the relevant Polling District will be allotted to vote by the Returning Officer. The Polling Place must be an area in the District, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the District (for example, if no accessible polling place can be identified in the District.)
- 2.8 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 unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district (for example. If no accessible Polling Place can be identified in the District);

- Where possible each parish (and each parish ward) should be a separate Polling District or Polling Districts;

2.9 The Review is a function of the Council and not the Electoral Registration Officer or Acting Returning Officer and therefore this report is before the Council for consideration.

Consultation Responses

2.10 A total of 3 submissions were received during the initial consultation period.

2.11 The Acting Returning Officer's final proposals are set out below:-

Bolsover Constituency

Ward: Ault Hucknall

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
1	AHK1	Parish Church of St Leonards, Scarcliffe	Recommended for continued use
2	AHK2	Palterton Welfare	Recommended for continued use
3	AHK3	Verney Institute, Pleasley	Recommended for continued use
4	AHK4	New Houghton Community Centre	Recommended for continued use
5	AHK5	The Glapwell Centre	Recommended for continued use
6	AHK6	Doe Lea Miners Welfare	Submission received from ward councillor to use the Community Room, Bramley Vale Primary School again but on inspection the school is being re-built and the classrooms are portable unit so the recommendation is to continue with Doe Lea Miners Welfare.
7	AHK7	The Shoulder, Hardstoft	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Blackwell

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
8	BLK1	Blackwell Community Centre	Recommended for continued use
9	BLK2	Hilcote Community Centre	Recommended for continued use
10	BLK3	Newton Methodist Church	Recommended for continued use
11	BLK4	Westhouses Primary School	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Bolsover North and Shuttlewood

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
12	BNS1	Brockley Primary School, Shuttlewood	Recommended for continued use
13	BNS2	Quiet Woman Public House	Submission received from ward councillor to use the Quiet Woman Houfton Road due to the Assembly Hall being in a different polling district was too far away from the more populated area of the ward. Recommended to change polling station to the Quiet Woman.
14	BNS3	Bolsover Parish Rooms	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Bolsover East

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
15	BOE1	Assembly Hall, Bolsover	Recommended for continued use
16	BOE2	Mobile Unit, Whaley Common	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Bolsover South

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
17	BOS1	Bainbridge Hall Community Centre	Recommended for continued use
18	BOS2	Hillstown Village Hall	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Barlborough

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
19	BRB1	Village Hall, Barlborough	Recommended for continued use
20	BRB2	The Arc, Clowne	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Clowne East

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
21	CLE1	Clowne Community Centre	Recommended for continued use
22	CLE1	Clowne Community Centre	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Clowne West

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
23	CLW1	The Arc, Clowne	Recommended for continued use
24	CLW2	The Oxcroft Centre, Stanfree	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Elmton with Creswell

No.	Polling District	Polling Place /Polling Station	Submission
25, 26	ELM1	Creswell Events Centre	Recommended for continued use
27	ELM2	Hodthorpe Social Club	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Langwith

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
28	LNG1	Whaley Thorns and Langwith Village Hall	Recommended for continued use
29	LNG2	Gate Hotel, Langwith Junction	Recommended for continued use
30	LNG3	Mobile Unit, Langwith Junction Bowls Club	Recommended for continued use but will be kept under review if suitable permanent venue is found.
31	LNG4	Shirebrook Village Hall	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Pinxton

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
32, 33	PNX1	Pinxton Village Hall	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Shirebrook North

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
34	SHN1	Carter Lane Community Centre, Shirebrook	Recommended for continued use
35	SHN2	Shirebrook Village Hall	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Shirebrook South

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
36	SHS1	Shirebrook Methodist Church	Recommended for continued use
37	SHS2	Shirebrook Miners Welfare	Submission received from ward councillor due to the Victoria Inn being sold and change of use to a shop. Recommended to change polling station to the Shirebrook Miners Welfare.
38	SHS3	Shirebrook Methodist Church	Recommended for continued use

Ward: South Normanton East

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
39	SNE1	St Michael's Church	Recommended for continued use
40	SNE2	The Junction 28 Church	Recommended for continued use

Ward: South Normanton West

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
41, 42	SNW1	Post Mill Centre	Recommended for continued use
43	SNW2	The Boundary Public House	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Tibshelf

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
44	TIB1	Tibshelf Village Hall	Recommended for continued use
45	TIB2	The Pavilion	Recommended for continued use

Ward: Whitwell

No.	Polling District	Polling Place/Polling Station	Submission
46	WHT1	Whitwell Community Centre	Recommended for continued use
47	WHT2	Bakestone Moor	Recommended for continued use

3 Reasons for Recommendation

Final proposals and schedule of revised Polling Districts and Polling Places

- 3.1 The Council is required to provide Polling Stations throughout its area for use at election time and they should be convenient and accessible for use by the electorate. The Acting Returning Officer has the authority (contained within statute) to require schools to make themselves available for use as a Polling Station.
- 3.2 However, the Council has no such power in respect of private premises and can only request the use of privately owned facilities.
- 3.3 In an ideal world, electoral administrators would have the choice of a range of fully accessible buildings conveniently located for electors in the area. In the past the Council has used a mix of schools and private premises – where alternative premises exist in place of Schools, the Council has sought to move into the private premises.
- 3.4 Subject to approval of the final proposals schedule, it will be necessary to publish a revised schedule of Polling Districts and Polling Places together with the relevant maps. The schedule will be amended further to reflect any changes made by the Council before publication.

Completion of the Review

- 3.5 Once the Council has agreed the final proposal schedule, details of the Polling Districts and Polling Places must be made available to the public. This will be published on the Council's website and at the Council's Offices.

In addition, the Council must also publish:-

- All correspondence sent to the Acting Returning Officer 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.

Appeals Process

- 3.6 Following the conclusion of the local authority's review, certain persons have the right to make representations to the Electoral Commission. If, on receipt of the representations, the Electoral 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.

Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.7 In carrying out the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places, the Council has undertaken a public consultation exercise and specifically sought out the 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.
- 3.8 The Council is required to provide Polling Stations throughout its area for use at election time and they should be convenient and accessible for use by the electorate. The Acting Returning Officer has the authority (contained within statute) to require schools to make themselves available for use as a Polling Station.

Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The Council has a statutory duty to revise Polling Districts and Polling Places in order to implement the outcome of the Review.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Council approve the final proposals schedule setting out any changes to the designated Polling Places.
2. The Chief Executive be requested to formally publish the Notice of Conclusion of the Review, its findings, the responses from consultees and all other relevant documentation.
3. To note that the Electoral Registration Officer will incorporate any changes to the Polling Districts and Polling Places.

Approved by Councillor Duncan McGregor, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Performance and Governance

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: There are no financial implications arising from this report. The risk implications are contained within the report.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details: The legal implications are contained within the report.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

Staffing: Yes No

Details: The work in carrying out the Review and implementing any changes will be undertaken by the Electoral Services Team using existing resources.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

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: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	All indirectly
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

--

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title

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 Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).

None