

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING	Council	
MEETING DATE:	12 July 2018	
TITLE:	Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations 2018	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix A: Timetable		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 On 7 August 2018 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) will publish its final recommendations on the electoral review of Bath & North East Somerset Council's ward boundaries. In order to re-align the polling districts and polling places with the new scheme, the Council will conduct a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations between September and December 2018.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the statutory requirements of the review process
- 2.2 To approve the timetable for the implementation of the review

## **3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 3.1 The implementation of the review will involve significant work to update both the GIS database and the electoral register database. The associated costs are one-off and estimated at £15,000; this expenditure will be funded from the un-committed balance within the Council's IT reserve.

## **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL**

- 4.1 Under the *Representation of the People Act 1983* (RPA 1983), every local authority in Great Britain has the statutory responsibility to divide their area into polling districts, to designate polling places for those polling districts, and to keep the polling districts and polling places under review.

- 4.2 The *Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013* introduced an additional requirement whereby local authorities must review all polling districts and polling places within the period of 16 months starting on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013.
- 4.3 The significant ward boundary changes, which will result from the implementation of the new scheme recommended by the LGBCE, require a re-alignment of a large number of the existing polling districts and polling places.
- 4.4 Local authorities must also comply with specific access requirements, and in particular they must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as practicable in the circumstances, and that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place is accessible to electors who are disabled

## **5 THE REPORT**

- 5.1 Bath & North East Somerset Council will conduct a review of its polling districts and polling places between September and December 2018. The review has become necessary in order to re-align the Council's polling districts and polling places with the new ward boundary scheme proposed by the LGBCE. The Council is also required to commence a review in 2018 under the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.
- 5.2 The formal procedure to be followed by local authorities in undertaking the review is described in Schedule A1 of the RPA 1983. Having regard of the legal requirements the Council will:
1. Publish a notice of holding a review
  2. Consult the UK parliamentary Acting Returning Officer (Maria Lucas) for each constituency which is wholly or partly in its area
  3. Publish all representations made by the Acting Returning Officer
  4. Invite comments from any interested parties
  5. Seek representations from people and organisations with particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability
  6. Consider all comments and representations received
  7. Complete the review and implement the new scheme at the next scheduled local government elections (May 2019)
- 5.3 A draft timetable is on Appendix A. The dates are based on the assumption that the LGCBE will publish its final proposals on the ward boundary review on 7 August 2018.

## **6 RATIONALE**

- 6.1 The review is a statutory requirement and will be conducted according to legislation.

## **7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 7.1 None

## 8 CONSULTATION

8.1 The Council's Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer (Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report.

## 9 RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

<b>Contact person</b>	Aurora Loi T: 01225 477431 E: <a href="mailto:aurora_loi@bathnes.gov.uk">aurora_loi@bathnes.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers</b>	LGBCE consultation documents on ward boundary review <a href="http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-west/somerset/bath-and-north-east-somerset">http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-west/somerset/bath-and-north-east-somerset</a>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	