

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>	
MEETING	<b>Council</b>
MEETING DATE:	<b>8 November 2018</b>
TITLE:	<b>Review of Polling Districts and Polling Stations 2018 Approval of Final Polling District Scheme</b>
WARD:	All
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b> Appendix A: New Polling District Scheme by Ward (including proposed polling stations) Appendix B: List of Submissions	

## 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 On 7 August 2018 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) published its final recommendations on the electoral review of Bath & North East Somerset Council's ward boundaries. In order to re-align the polling districts with the new scheme, the Council has conducted a review of polling districts and the Returning Officer has submitted a plan of polling stations for the local elections in May 2019.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Approve the new polling district scheme, and
- 2.2 Note the proposed polling station plan, acknowledging that work is still in progress, and that the Returning Officer will continue to liaise with Ward Councillors and Parish Councils in order to identify the most suitable venues.

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

3.1 The implementation of the review has already involved significant hours of work and will require substantial updates to the electoral register database. It is anticipated an expenditure of approximately £15,000.

## 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.
- 4.3 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 polling districts within Bath & North East Somerset Council.
- 4.4 Local authorities must also comply with specific access requirements, and in particular they must seek to ensure that all electors 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 started a review of polling districts in September 2018. The steps taken by the Council in undertaking this review are as follows:
  1. Publication of notice of holding a review
  2. Publication of new polling district scheme
  3. Publication of Returning Officer's proposed polling stations for May 2019
  4. Comments invited from any interested parties, including Bath & North East Somerset Councillors, Parish and Town Councils and local political parties
  5. Comments invited from people and organisations with particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability
  6. Analysis of all comments and representations received
  7. Completion of the review and implementation of the new scheme at the next scheduled local government elections.
- 5.2 Details of the new polling district scheme (including the proposed polling stations) are noted in Appendix A.
- 5.3 Submissions are included in Appendix B.

## 6 RATIONALE

- 6.1 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.

## 7 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 None

## 8 CONSULTATION

8.1 Suggestions were invited from members of the public and any interested parties, including Bath & North East Somerset Councillors, Parish and Town Councils, Parish Meetings, local political parties. People and organisations with particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.

## **9 RISK MANAGEMENT**

9.1 A risk assessment relating 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: aurora_loi@bathnes.gov.uk
<b>Background papers</b>	New polling district scheme (circulated to Councillors on 14 September 2018)  List of proposed polling stations for May 2019 (circulated to Councillors on 5 October 2018)
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	