

Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations

Date: 7 February 2024

Report of: Director of Housing, Communities and Environment

Report to: General Purposes Committee

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The purpose of this report is to consider representations received during the consultation period of the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations (the review), and the recommendations made by Electoral Working Group in relation to those representations.

Recommendations

- a) That Members consider the representations and recommendations by Electoral Working Group
- b) That Members take a decision relating to each representation 1 – 66 to allow the Electoral Registration Officer to finalise the polling scheme for the elections on 2 May 2024, and republish the electoral register taking into account any changes to polling district boundaries on 1 March 2024.

What is this report about?

- 1 The Committee approved the review at its meeting of 18 October 2023, triggering a five-week consultation period on a proposed scheme which can be found at Appendix A.
- 2 A total of 20 representations were submitted during the official consultation period 19 October to 30 November 2024.
- 3 A further 46 representations were submitted late between 5 – 14 December, due to a misunderstanding of the process.
- 4 The Chair of Electoral Working Group considered the circumstance for the late submissions and agreed to consider them at the meeting on 8 January 2024.
- 5 Appendix B sets out the representations received.
- 6 Appendix C details the recommendations made by Electoral Working Group, which the Committee should now consider, and make final recommendations.
 - a) 43 representations have a recommendation with cross-party agreement
 - b) 4 representations have 2 recommendations as cross-party agreement was not achieved. (numbers 31, 47, 48 and 49).
 - c) 19 representations were for information only, as they either supported the consultation document (Appendix A), or were a repeat of another representation already submitted.
- 7 Changes proposed in the consultation document where no representations were received during the consultation period will be implemented unopposed.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 8 The Electoral Registration Officer will be able to finalise the polling scheme for the elections on 2 May 2024, and publish a revised register of electors reflecting any changes to polling district boundaries on 1 March 2024.
- 9 The revised register will include the re-lettering of some polling districts, where representations dictate.
- 10 The publication of the revised register on 1 March 2024 will conclude the review.
- 11 Another review will not commence until 1 October 2028 at the earliest.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 12 By providing the most convenient and accessible polling places to the electorate of Leeds.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 13 A five-week public consultation period took place from 19 October to 30 November 2024.
- 14 Ward Members were consulted via Electoral Working Group.
- 15 Electoral Working Group have also been consulted on the representations received, and their views are set out at Appendix C.

What are the resource implications?

- 16 Officers will make the required changes to the polling scheme and polling district boundaries prior to the publication of the revised register on 1 March 2024.
- 17 This work can be absorbed by Officers of Electoral Services with no resource implications.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 18 Not fulfilling our statutory responsibility to complete the review.
- 19 Not having an approved scheme in place for the elections on 2 May 2024, or the UK Parliamentary General Election which must take place by 28 January 2025.
- 20 Officers will implement the changes approved by the Committee and published a revised register on 1 March 2024.

What are the legal implications?

- 21 On completion of the review, the council must give reasons for its decisions and publish:
- all correspondence sent to an (A)RO in connection with the review
 - all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability
 - all representations made by any person in connection with the review
 - the minutes of any meeting held by the council 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 and polling places within the local authority area as a result of the review
 - details of the places where the results of the review have been published

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 22 The Committee considered options and approved the review at its meeting of 18 October 2023.

How will success be measured?

- 23 Effectiveness of the new scheme at both the elections on 2 May and the UK Parliamentary General Election which must take place before 28 January 2025.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 24 The timetable for the review is below.
- 25 Officers of Electoral Services will implement the approved changes in line with the timetable.

Review of polling districts and places 2023	
Preparatory work	Started September 2023
Resolution from council providing for commencement of review	Wednesday 18 October 2023
Notice of review published	Thursday 19 October 2023
Council proposals published	Thursday 19 October 2023
Commencement of formal consultation (6 weeks)	Thursday 19 October 2023
End of formal consultation	Thursday 30 November 2023
Publish electoral register (ordinary publication)	Friday 1 December 2023
Consider responses	By Tuesday 19 December 2023

Draft final proposals considered at Electoral Working Group	By Friday 12 January 2024
Final proposals published via meeting agenda papers and website	End January 2024
Committee/Cabinet/Council meeting	Wednesday 7 February 2024
Conclude review	Wednesday 7 February 2024
Republish electoral register (if any new or amended polling districts)	Friday 1 March 2024
Scheduled elections on new polling districts, places and stations scheme	Thursday 2 May 2024

Appendices

- Appendix A - Proposed scheme published for consultation
- Appendix B - Representations received during the consultation
- Appendix C - Electoral Working Group recommendations
- Appendix D - Changes to be implemented unopposed

Background papers

- [Report to General Purposes Committee 18 October 2023](#)