

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Chief Executive

TO: Civic Affairs Committee

14/09/2016

WARDS: All

INTERIM REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has conducted a review of Cambridgeshire County Council electoral division boundaries across Cambridgeshire. Final recommendations will be published on 6 September 2016 (after publication of this report).
- 1.2 The movement of the county division boundaries will mean that an interim review of the polling district boundaries must be carried out to effect any changes to the register of electors. This review is outside of the normal cycle for reviewing polling arrangements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the interim review be conducted only for the necessary purpose of ensuring the proper administrative conduct of the 2017 county council elections.
- 2.2 That, due to the short timescales, any other amendments to polling district boundaries are not taken forward at this time, but be included in the next scheduled compulsory review in 2018.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It is expected that changes made by the LGBCE to the Cambridgeshire county division boundaries in the Cambridge city council area will mean that they are no longer coterminous with the city ward boundaries.

- 3.2 A review of the polling district boundaries must therefore be carried out to ensure that the register of electors and subsequent elections can be administered effectively.
- 3.3 This review of polling districts is outside of the timetable for the scheduled compulsory review of parliamentary polling districts, polling places and polling stations. The last compulsory review was concluded in 2013 and will therefore need to be started within the statutory five-year period, so by 2018.
- 3.4 The steps to be taken when conducting a review of polling districts are laid down within schedule 1A of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- 3.5 The timetable for the interim review will be as follows:

LGBCE publish final recommendations	6 September 2016
Preliminary report to Civic Affairs	14 September 2016
Publish notice of the review	31 October 2016
Consultation responses to be made by	12 December 2016
Roundtable of interested parties (if appropriate)	TBC January 2017
Final recommendations to Civic Affairs	15 February 2017
Updated Register of Electors published	1 March 2017

- 3.6 Further information and maps regarding the current and proposed boundaries will be circulated as soon as they become available on 6 September.
- 3.7 Details of the proposed changes to polling districts will be made available at the start of the consultation, so by 31 October.
- 3.8 If there has been significant response to the consultation, a roundtable discussion can be arranged to allow members and those who have responded to the review to discuss and understand any suggested changes. This would enable the final proposal to Committee to have a clear direction.
- 3.9 Changes to the polling district boundaries will be reflected in a revised version of the register of electors to be published on 1 March 2017. This will allow for the changes to be in place for the scheduled Cambridgeshire county council elections on 4 May 2017.
- 3.10 There are currently 35 polling districts within the Cambridge city area. It is expected that the movement of county division boundaries will necessitate the creation of new polling districts, so as to fall in line with existing city ward and county division boundaries.

3.11 It is possible that the move from completely coterminous boundaries between the City wards and County divisions, will result in some electors being assigned to new polling stations.

3.12 This review will not take account of any proposed changes to Parliamentary constituency boundaries, as they will be reflected in the scheduled review in 2018.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Once public notice of the review has been published, consultation will be sought from the following:

- All elected representatives.
- Electors.
- Acting Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire DC (for Queen Edith's ward only).
- Interested persons and bodies with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 This report begins the formal process of reviewing the polling districts within Cambridge City Council.

5.2 Due to the late publication of the recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, and the timing for submission of reports to this Committee, no detail can yet be provided on how the changes might look.

6. IMPLICATIONS

(a) Financial Implications

There are no financial implications if changes to the polling district boundaries are for administrative purposes only.

Changes to the location of polling stations could result in an increase or decrease in rental charges, due to the differing rates charged by organisations.

An increase in the number of polling places/stations would mean an increase in the number of polling station staff and consequently increase staff payments at an election.

(b) **Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications.

(c) **Equality and Poverty Implications**

An equality impact assessment for elections covers this report.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

This report has a NIL climate change impact.

(e) **Procurement**

No procurement is required for this project.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

As indicated above (paragraph 4) public notice of the review will be given and all relevant stakeholders will be informed of the consultation period. Notice of this review will be communicated via a news release, the council website and twitter account.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no community safety implications.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS: The following are the background papers that were used in the preparation of this report:

- Maps of current polling district boundaries.
- LGBCE Final Recommendations for Cambridgeshire County council (from 6 September)
- Electoral Commission guidance on conducting a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. (Published August 2013)
- Equality Impact Assessment for elections

To inspect these documents contact Vicky Breading on extension 7057.

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