

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Chief Executive

TO: Civic Affairs Committee

15/02/2017

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 were published on 6 September 2016.
- 1.2 The changes to the county division boundaries mean that an interim review of the polling district boundaries has been carried out to effect any changes to the register of electors. This review is outside of the normal cycle for reviewing polling arrangements (Due in 2018).
- 1.3 The three elements to this review are:
 - Polling District – the area within which electors are assigned to a particular polling station.
 - Polling Place – the area within which the polling station must be located.
 - Polling Station – the building/room allocated for voting.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the proposed polling districts be adopted from 1 March 2017 and the polling place for each be designated as the boundary for that polling district.
- 2.2 That polling districts, polling places and polling stations be kept under review.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The changes made by the LGBCE to the Cambridgeshire county division boundaries in the Cambridge city council area mean that they are no longer coterminous with the city ward boundaries.
- 3.2 A review of the polling districts was therefore carried out to ensure that the register of electors and subsequent polls can be administered effectively.
- 3.3 This review of polling districts is outside of the timetable for the scheduled compulsory review of 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 is:

LGBCE publish final recommendations	6 September 2016
Preliminary report to Civic Affairs	14 September 2016
Publish notice of the review	22 December 2016
Consultation responses to be made by	20 January 2017
Final recommendations to Civic Affairs	15 February 2017
Updated Register of Electors published	1 March 2017

- 3.6 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 polls on 4 May 2017.
- 3.7 There are currently 35 polling districts within the Cambridge city area. The movement of county division boundaries has necessitated the creation of new polling districts, so as to fall in line with existing city ward and county division boundaries. The new scheme has 45 polling districts in total, so an increase of ten from the current arrangements.
- 3.8 The creation of new polling districts means that some electors will be allocated to different polling stations. These electors will be provided with additional information, during the issue of poll cards, to alert them to the new location of their allocated station.
- 3.9 The allocation of polling stations are at the discretion of the Returning Officer. The attached list show the proposed polling stations for the

polls to be held on 4th May 2017, however these may change if venue availability changes.

3.10 The proposed polling districts, associated polling stations and a breakdown of their city wards/county divisions is shown at appendix A.

3.11 Approximately 9,000 (10%) of the electorate will have different polling stations. These electors will receive separate communication regarding the change in their polling station, although if they go to their old station on polling day they will be redirected by staff at that station. Updated statistics will be circulated at the meeting.

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

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The consultation was published on the council website and comments were 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.

4.2 The following comments were received during the consultation period.

Respondent(s)	Comments	Response
Cllr. Martin Smart	Preference to match up boundaries of City & County	This can only be achieved if a review of the City ward boundaries is undertaken by the LGBCE.
Trumpington Residents' Association	Use of Clay Farm Community Centre as a polling station from May 2018.	Agreed, it has always been the intention to move to the community centre once it is ready for use.

Respondent(s)	Comments	Response
Cllr. Richard Robertson	Various errors in the street lists provided.	These have been corrected in the final report.
Marie Ferguson-Smith		
Simon Cooper		

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Creation of the new polling districts has been difficult, due to the complexity of the now non-coterminous city and county boundaries. This has resulted in polling districts of varying size, which is not the ideal.
- 5.2 While it is not uncommon for ward and division boundaries to be completely coterminous, the current arrangements in Cambridge are not sufficiently sensible to allow more workable arrangements of the polling districts at the present time.
- 5.3 The proposed polling districts should be adopted until such time as any changes to primary boundaries are made.

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 stations would mean an increase in the number of polling station staff and consequently increase staff costs 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 was given and stakeholders informed of the consultation period.

(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.
- Maps of proposed polling district boundaries.
- LGBCE Final Recommendations for Cambridgeshire County council. (Published 6 September 2016)
- 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 Breeding on extension 7057.

The author and contact officer for queries on the report is Vicky Breeding, Electoral Services Manager on ext. 7057
vicky.breeding@cambridge.gov.uk.

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