

## Report to Pennines Township Committee



Date of Meeting	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2018
Portfolio	Councillor Liam O'Rourke, Cabinet Member for Resources
Report Author	Clare Poole
Public/Private Document	Public

### Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

#### Executive Summary

- 1.1 The statutory review of Polling Districts and Polling Places is underway and the consultation period ended on 27 July 2018.
- 1.2 A final report on any recommendations arising from the review will be taken to full Council on 17 October 2018 for approval.

#### Recommendation

2. Members of the Pennines Township Committee to consider the proposed changes to polling districts and polling places within the Township arising from the review.

#### Reason for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 included a new provision altering the timing of statutory reviews of parliamentary polling districts and polling places. This meant that all local authorities were required to complete a statutory review between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015.
- 3.2 Subsequent compulsory reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013.
- 3.3 This review must be completed and implemented by the end of December 2018, so for the changes to be included in the register on 1 December this year, Full Council must consider and confirm the proposals at their meeting on 17 October 2018.

#### Key Points for Consideration

- 4.1 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 requires Electoral Registration Officers to review the borough's polling districts and places every 5 years.

- 4.2 The process required a period of public consultation which ran from 2 July 2018 to 27 July 2018.
- 4.3 Responses and comments received during the consultation period and resulting recommendations are detailed below:

<b>LITTLEBOROUGH LAKESIDE</b>	<b>COMMENT</b> - Cllr Emsley - properties on the Shopwood Way estate are incorrectly listed in polling district RA and should be in RC, voting at Stansfield Hall Primary School.
	<b>ACTION</b> - To amend this anomaly
	<b>COMMENT</b> - RB - fire station is now available again after re-furbishment - should the polling station remain at the cricket club or move back to the fire station?
	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> - to remain at the Cricket club with better parking facilities
<b>MILRNOW &amp; NEWHEY</b>	<b>COMMENT</b> - Cllr Kelly - SA - The residents on the Silver Hill Estate have too far to travel to the polling station (Cricket club on Harbour Lane in polling district SB)
	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> - To have a polling station at Crossgates Primary School, Kiln Lane in polling district SA (see map attached)
	<b>COMMENT</b> - properties on the old Coral Mill site in Newhey are in the incorrect polling district and need moving from SC to SD.
	<b>ACTION</b> - To amend this anomaly
<b>WARDLE &amp; WEST LITTLEBOROUGH</b>	<b>COMMENT</b> - TA - fire station is now available again after re-furbishment - should the polling station remain at the cricket club or move back to the fire station?
	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> - to remain at the Cricket club with better parking facilities

- 4.4 Members role in contributing to the review is the local knowledge and links they have with the local communities of their wards to develop the most appropriate alignment of polling district boundaries and polling stations with the most suitable facilities to serve the electorate.
- 4.5 To allow for efficient publication of the register of electors, including any proposed alterations to polling districts, Council will be required to consider any amendments in October so that they can be included in the annual revision of the register of electors on 1 December.
- 4.6 Any changes to polling stations will be implemented in time for the local elections in 2019.
- 4.7 Any alternative polling districts or polling stations proposed during the consultation period will be considered.

## **Costs and Budget Summary**

5. No direct financial implications.

## **Risk and Policy Implications**

- 6.1 There are risks to the electoral process if polling district boundaries are misaligned or polling places are not fit for purpose. Such issues as distance to the polling place or conditions within the premises can dissuade electors from participating in the democratic process and they may not cast their vote.
- 6.2 Legislation specifies the steps the relevant authority must take to conduct a review in Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- 6.3 It states that when designating polling districts, the authority must seek to ensure all electors have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- 6.4 It also states that when designating polling places, the relevant authority must:
  - 6.4.1 Seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
  - 6.4.2 Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.
- 6.5 In addition, the polling place for a polling district must be within the area of the district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area either wholly or partly outside of the polling district.
- 6.6 The recommendations for the Shopwood Way estate and properties on the Coral Mill site will amend anomalies on the electoral register and allow electors to vote at the correct and most convenient polling station which may result in a higher turnout by electors on election day.
- 6.7 The recommendation to retain the polling place at the Cricket club for RB and TA polling districts gives better facilities for the electors including more parking spaces which may result in a higher turnout by electors on election day.
- 6.8 The proposal for changing the polling place for polling district SA from Milnrow cricket club (situated in polling district SB) to Crossgates School (situated in SA) ensures that the electors can vote at a closer location and one in the actual polling district as required by legislation.
- 6.9 There are no workforce equality issues arising from this report.

## **Consultation**

- 7.1 Public consultation started on Monday 2 July and ran until Friday 27 July.
- 7.2 All elected members, MP's and local political party offices were contacted during the consultation period inviting them to make submissions.
- 7.3 Details of the consultation were on public deposit at Number One Riverside, Customer Service Centres in Heywood, Middleton, Milnrow and Littleborough and available to view on the Council's website.
- 7.4 Final recommendations will be made for Full Council approval on 17 October.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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8. None	N/A
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