

DECISION-MAKER:	Council
SUBJECT:	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
DATE OF DECISION:	27 November 2024
REPORT OF:	Returning Officer

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
Executive Director	Title	Chief Executive	
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY	
NOT APPLICABLE	
BRIEF SUMMARY	
The purpose of this report is to place before Council the results of the 2024 review of polling districts and polling places.	
The recommendations have been compiled by the Returning Officer with input from nominated members from the political groups.	
RECOMMENDATIONS:	
	(i) That the recommendations in respect of the polling districts and polling places as set out in Appendix 1 be approved.
REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.	There is a statutory duty to complete this review by the 31 January 2025.
2.	The proposed recommendations are made following the statutory consultation process, considering representations made.
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED	
3.	Not Applicable
DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)	
4.	<u>General Background</u> In accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983, a review of polling districts and polling places must be completed 31 January 2025.
5.	<u>Consultation</u> The Council is required to consult the (Acting) Returning Officer for every parliamentary constituency that is wholly or partly within its area, and to seek submissions from electors and other interested persons and bodies, including elected representatives and such persons/organisations with expertise in

	relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability.
6.	<p><u>Polling districts, polling places and polling stations</u></p> <p>A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, such as a parliamentary constituency or a ward.</p> <p>The polling place is generally defined as the building or location in which a polling station is located. As the 'relevant authority', Southampton City Council is responsible for designating polling districts and polling places within the local authority area.</p> <p>A polling station is the actual room or area where the process of voting takes place and must be located within the polling place designated for the polling district. It is the Returning Officer who is responsible for allocating polling stations.</p>
7.	<p><u>Requirements for designating polling places</u></p> <p>Relevant authorities must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. • seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled. <p>The designated polling place must be within the area of the polling district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate a location wholly or partly outside of the district.</p>
8.	<p><u>Review Timetable</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of the start of the review: 4 September 2024 • Start of consultation period: 4 September 2024 • End of consultation period: 16 October 2024 • Report to Council meeting: 27 November 2024 <p>Arrangements come into force from when the next revised register is published: 1 February 2025</p>
9.	<p><u>Comments on the Review by the Returning Officer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Returning Officer is mindful of the fact that changing polling stations can cause confusion for electors and wishes to make it as simple as possible for every eligible elector to use their vote. • Polling stations are assessed prior to each major poll and steps are taken to improve accessibility for all members of the community. Where problems or concerns are drawn to the Returning Officer's attention, every effort is made to resolve them. At each election, polling staff are asked to report back on any difficulties encountered. <p>The Returning Officer considers that the recommendations set out at Appendix 1 offer the most reasonable and practicable voting facilities.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
10.	Capital – none
11.	Revenue – based on the recommendations set out in Appendix 1, there are minimal implications (potential annual hire charge increases). However, a

	decision to peruse other options, such as increasing the number of temporary polling stations, could have significant cost implications
<u>Property/Other</u>	
12.	None
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
13.	Representation of the People Act 1983, Schedule 1A (as amended)
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	
14.	Electoral Administration and Registrations Act 2013 (as amended)
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
15.	None
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
16.	None

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	Schedule of polling districts and polling places + recommendations
2.	Summary or representations received, and considerations made
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None