

## **NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **COUNCIL**

## **REVIEW OF UK PARLIAMENTARY POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

### **1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To report on the requirement to carry out a compulsory review of local UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places in North Lincolnshire.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a timescale for compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places. The next compulsory review must commence and be completed between 1 October 2023 by 31 January 2025 (inclusive). (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).
- 2.2 A "review" is all the steps set out in Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA1983). The review process, from the publication of a notice of a review until the publication of the documents at the end, must take place and be completed by 31 January 2025
- 2.3 The length of the review process is not prescribed within the legislation, provided that all the steps required by it can be undertaken within it. However, the time allowed for consultation should be sufficient to enable interested persons and groups to read and understand the proposals, gather comments and respond with any alternative arrangements that they may wish to submit.
- 2.4 The review is carried out in accordance with guidance received from the Electoral Commission which specifies legislative requirements, especially accessibility and indicates that local authorities will need to decide when to carry out the review within the specified period taking into account other statutory duties and processes being carried out in

that time period and how the review will fit into these. In particular, in the review period the following will need to be considered -

- The Canvass
- Publication of the Electoral Register
- Elections during the review period
- Scheduling approval of the review proposals by Council
- Changes to electoral parliamentary boundaries

2.5 The compulsory review relates specifically to the review of polling districts and polling places in relation to parliamentary elections. Polling districts and polling places for other elections are not automatically part of the compulsory review. However, as polling districts and polling places for other elections are based on UK parliamentary polling arrangements, the requirements of any other elections that are held within the local authority area will be taken into consideration as part of the review.

2.6 As a consequence of the recent Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) a review of electoral arrangements in North Lincolnshire was carried out in the summer of 2022, its recommendations approved by Council at its meeting on 18 October 2022 and applied during the local district elections in May 2023. Although statutory requirements and associated guidance will have to be completed, it is anticipated that the work carried out during the recent summer review will reduce the timescale required for this compulsory review. It is likely therefore the review will have no impact on the Police and Crime Commissioner elections in May 2023 and should be completed before forthcoming parliamentary elections.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 To carry out the statutory compulsory review of Polling District and Polling Places review within specified timescales set out in paragraph 2.1.

3.2 To not carry out the review.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 Carrying out the review will comply with the above statutory requirements and will also enable the local Returning Officer to continue providing suitable and proportionate polling districts with convenient, accessible and safe polling places (stations) for all voters and elections staff which meet the requirements of Electoral Commission guidance and standards.

4.2 To not carry out the review will be unlawful and therefore not an option.

5. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 There are no specific resources implications arising from the review of polling districts and polling places, apart from expected staffing resources carrying out the review from Democratic Services with any costs being met from existing budgets.

6. **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 The Polling District and Places Review when completed will continue to meet the required guidance and standards of the Electoral Commission ensuring that suitable and proportionate polling districts with convenient and accessible polling places (stations) provide all voters and elections staff with a safe environment to fulfil their democratic role, experience and responsibilities.

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 The review of polling districts and polling places is a compulsory statutory requirement arising out of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. Its impact has been assessed nationally and therefore at a local level it is not necessary to carry out an integrated impact assessment.

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 There are no conflicts of interest.

8.2 The review of polling districts and polling places is a compulsory statutory requirement and consultation with specified groups (including disability groups) identified within the Electoral Commission's guidance will be carried out.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the statutory requirement to carry out a compulsory review of parliamentary polling districts and polling places in North Lincolnshire within the specified period 1 October 2023 to 31 January 2025 (inclusive) be noted.

## **DIRECTOR: OUTCOMES**

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report** - The Electoral Commission - Guidance on Reviews of Polling Districts and Polling Places.