

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

Report of the Assistant Director - Legal & Democratic Governance

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek the views of the Committee on the current and proposed polling arrangements within the area in order to inform the 2024 Polling District Review.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, local authorities are required to undertake compulsory reviews of polling districts and polling places at regular intervals. The next review must be completed by 31st January 2025.
- 2.2 Accordingly, a review of polling districts must be undertaken, relating to polling district boundaries within wards and the polling places that will serve these new districts. This review is separate to the previous Polling District and Polling Place review undertaken in 2022.
- 2.3 The responsibility for designating polling districts is for the Council to determine. In drawing up polling district boundaries the Council must ensure that all electors in the area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- 2.4 The Council must also designate a polling place for every polling district. This is usually within the boundary of the polling district unless there are special circumstances e.g. a lack of suitable buildings. There should be no barriers to voting for people with a disability.
- 2.5 In designating polling places, the Council must:
- a) Seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
 - b) 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. There should be no barriers to voting for people with a disability. Access issues identified by Disability Stockport will be considered as part of the review.
- 2.6 A polling district is an administrative sub-area that an electoral area (such as a ward or a constituency) is divided into for the purposes of delivering an election. A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be located. A polling place within a polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across the polling district. The polling station is the actual room or area where the voting takes place.

- 2.7 Due to the extensive work undertaken at the 2022 Polling District and Polling Place Review, all current polling arrangements are legal and deliverable. Therefore, this review is anticipated to be less extensive and is an opportunity for minor amendments, rationalisation and confirming any ad-hoc changes since the last review.
- 2.8 A web map of the current polling districts and polling places can be accessed here: <https://maps.stockport.gov.uk/elections/index.html>
- 2.9 The attached schedule sets out details of the current polling districts and places for the wards covered by this Area Committee, the total electorate for each district, the details of any proposed changes and the comments of the (Acting) Returning Officer.
- 2.10 The timetable for the review is set out below.

Activity	Date
Publish Notice of Commencement of Review	Monday 21 October
Commencement of Consultation Period	Monday 21 October
Closure of Consultation Period	Thursday 28 November
Report to all Area Committees	October - November 2024
CRMG Scrutiny	26 November 2024
Cabinet	10 December 2024
Council Meeting	16 January 2025

3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The views of the Area Committee are sought on the proposed polling arrangements. Any comments or suggestions will then be considered and incorporated into the final proposals for submission to the Cabinet and full Council.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Vicki Bates on telephone number Tel: 0161 474 3219 or alternatively email vicki.bates@stockport.gov.uk