

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ELECTORAL REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE ON 16 July 2019

PART A: REPORT

SUBJECT: Review of Polling Stations in the Arun District 2019 – Stage 1

REPORT AUTHOR: Nigel Lynn, Electoral Registration Officer

DATE: 20 June 2019

EXTN: 37600

PORTFOLIO AREA: Corporate Support

Contact: Jackie Follis, Group Head of Policy 37580

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report advises the Electoral Review Sub-committee (ERSC) of the approach to be taken to the 2019 review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. It confirms the first stage of the formal review process and seeks approval for the timetable to be followed so that the review can be concluded within the statutory period.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Committee agrees to the timetable and process for the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations set out in this report.

1. BACKGROUND:

- a) The Council is legally required to conduct a formal review of its polling districts, polling places (building within which polling stations are located, there may be more than one polling station at a polling place) and polling stations, every five years. The review covers the location of the polling station within the polling District and convenience for voters in that polling district, rather than a review of polling district boundaries. The last review was approved at Full Council on 5 November 2014, in time to be incorporated into the Electoral Register on 1 December 2014, prior to the deadline of 31 January 2015. The current review should be completed in time to be incorporated into the Electoral Register on 1 December 2019 and before the deadline of 31 January 2020.
- b) Following the formal review in 2014 the Returning Officer has undertaken informal reviews whenever required based on feedback from polls held in the intervening period. We regularly explore options for new premises, particularly in areas where new housing developments have resulted in new community facilities.

2. CRITERIA FOR THE REVIEW

- a) The Review must focus on polling districts which are areas comprising a number of roads and houses allocated to a polling place/polling station within a ward, and locations and venues used for polling stations. It will not consider ward boundaries.
- b) The aim is to locate polling stations within a convenient distance from the majority of electors homes, with the premises being easy to find and accessible to all.
- c) Appendix 1 sets out the polling stations used for the District and Town/Parish elections held on 2 May 2019 and the European Election held on 23 May 2019. These are the polling stations which will be subject to review. Polling stations which have been subject to change for the May elections in 2019 are highlighted in yellow with an explanation. These may or may not be permanent changes depending on the outcome of the review.

3. TIMETABLE AND PROCESS FOR THE REVIEW:

- a) The length of the review is not prescribed, provided that all the required steps are undertaken. However the time allocated for the consultation must be sufficient to enable interested persons and groups to read and understand the proposals and allow for information gathering. Appendix 2 sets out the proposed timetable for the review which will take a total of 17 weeks from the start of the consultation to approval at Full Council. This includes a consultation period of 6 weeks.
- b) Information will be collected in a number of ways:
 - The Notice of Review, appendix 3, is open to all members of the public will be published on 18 July on the ADC Website and in a number of locations throughout the District including Parish noticeboards, the Notice will include a questionnaire a draft of which is attached as Appendix 4.
 - The Notice of Review will be sent to MPs, Councillors, Electoral Registration Officers of Adur and Worthing and Horsham Councils and disability groups.
 - The Notice of Review will also be sent to all candidates and agents for the May elections.
 - Polling station feedback forms are used by Presiding Officers and Polling Inspectors at elections and we collate and review this information after each election. We therefore have very recent feedback from the major elections held in May 2019.
 - Where necessary we will visit polling stations during and just after the consultation period using our standard evaluation form which is attached as Appendix 5.
- c) Consultation responses will be reviewed during September and a final report produced for the ERSC on 16 October 2019. ERSC will make recommendations to Full Council on 13 November 2019.

4. CONCLUSION

This timetable will allow the Council to meet its statutory obligations and complete the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations within the required timescale and by 31 January 2020. Although the team has been aware of the timing it is a considerable additional workload on top of the unexpected European Election in May, the normal canvass activity and the preparation for the canvass reform next year. The Elections Team will highlight any particular resource issues to the Returning Officer and Chief Executive as they arise.

3. OPTIONS:

N/A

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		X
Relevant District Ward Councillors		X
Other groups/persons (please specify) Staff teams involved in canvass, Electoral Registration Officer Members of ERSC at this meeting	X	
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal		X
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		X
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X
Sustainability		X
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		X

6. IMPLICATIONS:

To gain approval for consultation process

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

Review of key democratic process

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

N/A