



**POLLING DISTRICTS AND
POLLING PLACES REVIEW
COMMITTEE:
6 October 2022**

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation, Housing & Resources

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Y Gagen

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SUBJECT: INTERIM POLLING REVIEW 2022 – FINAL PROPOSALS

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To conclude an Interim Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places in line with the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended (the 1983 Act).

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Final Schedule of Proposals as set out in Appendix 1, be approved

2.2 That the required change to the timetable of the Review, for the reasons given at paragraph 5 be noted.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The 1983 Act (Section 18C (5) and Section 31) allows a local authority to conduct an Interim Review of any Polling District, Polling Place or Polling Station within its area, outside of the timescales for a compulsory review.

3.2 Following the LGBCE's publication of its Final Recommendations as part of the Electoral Review of West Lancashire, an Interim Polling Review has been conducted to ensure that the polling estate of West Lancashire is coterminous with these new boundaries.

3.3 To aid understanding of the report and appendices the following definitions will assist:

- **Polling District:** a geographical area created by the sub-division of a constituency, ward, or division into smaller parts.

- **Polling Place:** the building or area, as designated by the Local Authority, in which the Returning Officer will select polling stations.
- **Polling Station:** Chosen by the Returning Officer for the election, a polling station is the room or building within the polling place where the poll takes place.

3.4 The responsibility for finalising the Polling Stations for each election rests with the Returning Officer for that election.

4.0 INTERIM POLLING REVIEW 2022

4.1 In West Lancashire the Interim Review formally began on 25 July 2022 with the publication of the Notice of Review and the start of the Public Consultation on the Initial Proposals.

4.2 The Public Consultation ran until Monday 19 September 2022.

4.3 9 responses were received, of which 1 was invalid as an address was not supplied, and 1 made comment regarding the use of pencils in polling stations which does not form part of this review. The 7 valid responses are included within Appendix 1.

4.4 Having reviewed the comments received, no change has been made from the Initial Proposals, and the Schedule of Final Proposals in listed at Appendix 1 for determination by the Committee.

5.0 TIMETABLE

5.1 Following the passing of Her Majesty the Queen, Parliament entered a period of recess as part of national mourning, causing an unexpected delay to the passage of the Electoral Order for West Lancashire. This means that it is now highly likely that the Order will not become law before 1 December.

5.2 The recent announcement that the MP for West Lancashire, Rosie Cooper, is to resign will trigger a Parliamentary By-Election that is expected to take place before Christmas 2022.

5.3 Given the above, a change to the original timetable of the Interim Review is required.

5.4 To ensure compliant and efficient administration of the impending Parliamentary By-Election, the Electoral Register will be republished on existing boundaries on 1 November 2022.

5.5 Once the Parliamentary By-Election has taken place, and the Electoral Order for West Lancashire has been made law, the Electoral Register will be republished to implement the new Ward Boundaries on 3 January 2023.

5.6 The amended timetable of the Interim Review, reflecting this change, is attached at Appendix 3.

- 5.7 Any further delays to the passage of the Electoral Order for West Lancashire, or a 2023 date for Parliamentary By-Election, may further alter the timetable of the Interim Review. Should this happen, the Committee will be notified immediately. In any case, the implementation of the new Ward Boundaries must happen no later than 1 March 2023.

FUTURE TIMESCALES

- 6.1 Once the Committee has determined the final proposals, if agreed, the relevant documentation will be made available to the public in accordance with legislation.
- 6.2 West Lancashire will undergo another full Statutory Review in 2023/24. Legislation requires that all Polling Stations be kept under consideration and evaluation. If changes are identified as being desirable, then the review process should be initiated.

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

8.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Interim Review will be undertaken within existing budgets.

9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The review process has enabled the Council to carry out the Interim Review, although no detailed prescribed review process is identified in legislation. However, the process undertaken has been robust and provided for input from interested parties. A mechanism for an appeal exists through the Electoral Commission.

10.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders, therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal equality

impact assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report

Appendices

1. Interim Polling Review 2022 - Schedule of Polling Districts - Final Proposals
2. Maps of each Polling District outlined in the Schedule of Polling Districts - Final Proposals
3. Timetable for Interim Polling Review 2022
4. Equality Impact Assessment