

## **Report to Council**

**Subject:** Review Of Polling Places, Polling Districts and Polling Stations

**Date:** 12 November 2014

**Author:** Service Manager, Elections and Members' Services.

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To approve a new scheme of polling places, polling districts and polling stations for Gedling Borough.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Council will be aware that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) conducted a review of the wards of Gedling Borough Council. The order to create the new wards was made on 8 January 2014 to apply for elections held in 2015. The new wards made it necessary to create new polling districts and in turn re-examine polling places and stations.
- 2.2 Separate to this, the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places. All Councils were therefore required to carry out a compulsory review between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015.
- 2.3 For the two reasons outlined above the Council's LGBCE Members Steering Group comprising Councillors John Clarke, Barnfather, Hughes, Payne, Brooks, Gillam and Parr was re-convened to put together a new polling scheme for Gedling. The group met at various intervals before the summer to assist officers in formulating proposals.
- 2.4 A draft scheme of Polling Places, Polling Districts and Polling Stations was made available for consultation over the summer of 2014 with the intention of gathering feedback from as many interested parties as possible. Following this, formal consultation took place for nearly six weeks between 1 September and 8 October 2014. Further detail of the consultation carried out is available in the review document appended to this report.

2.5 The report seeks Council's approval to adopt a new scheme of Polling Places, Polling Districts and Polling Stations to be used for elections held from May 2015. In practice the arrangements will apply from 1 December 2014 when the 2015 electoral register is published.

2.6 In the event that a polling place becomes unavailable at short notice, the Chief Executive has the delegated authority to designate an alternative polling place.

### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1 Proposals for the new polling arrangements, including proposals for each new ward and polling district along with their respective polling stations, are appended to this report. In formulating the new polling scheme the steering group had regard to the following principles:
- Where voting had worked well at previous elections no alterations to voting arrangements would be made unless ward boundary changes made this necessary.
  - Unsuitable venues in terms of access and convenience for voters would be critically reviewed and alternatives found where possible.
  - In order to minimise disruption to education, school sites would only be proposed if there were no suitable alternatives in the area.
  - Access for voters with disabilities was of paramount importance. Venues that did not offer suitable access would be discounted.

### **4. Resource Implications**

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the review. The costs of hiring and equipping venues for voting are met from within existing budgets. Costs incurred in relation to European, General, Parish or Police and Crime Commissioner elections are recouped from the relevant funding body; where elections are running concurrently the costs are apportioned as appropriate.

4.2 The costs associated with conducting the review were met from existing budgets.

### **5. Recommendations**

Council is RECOMMENDED to:

- 1) Adopt the new polling districts, polling places and polling stations set out in the attached review document to be used for elections from May 2015;

- 2) Request that the Chief Executive formally publishes the notice of the conclusion of the review and its findings; and
- 3) Note that the Chief Executive is authorised to designate an alternative polling place should one become unavailable at short notice before an election.