

**Report for: Full Council**

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Date of Meeting:	29 November 2023
Subject:	Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations 2023
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Jane Lock, Cabinet member for the Working Environment
Responsible Officer:	Jackie Stoneman, Electoral Services Manager
Exempt:	Not applicable  which are Exempt from publication under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Wards Affected:	All wards
Enclosures:	Spreadsheet of polling districts, wards, polling stations with any proposed changes.

**Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)**

The Electoral Administration Act 2013 requires each authority to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations every 5 years. The current review must take place between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025. This review has now taken place. By publishing on 1 December 2023, polling districts can be brought in line with future parliamentary constituencies to prepare for a snap Parliamentary General Election.

**Polling District** - Each parish is a separate polling district (or multiple polling districts for warded parishes) and is a sub-division of the parliamentary constituency.

**Polling Place** - A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer. 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 places for all polling districts in Mid Devon are designated as the whole polling district.

**Polling Station** - Polling stations are the rooms or areas within the polling place where voting takes place.

**Following a consultation period and review, it is recommended that Full Council approve the following:**

**Recommendations for changes in polling districts:**

- a. All polling districts to have new prefixes to reflect the new parliamentary constituencies and District Wards (e.g. CD-BO for Central Devon Constituency, Boniface Ward)
- b. Town wards in Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton with more than one polling district to be amalgamated to tidy up the polling districts (e.g. for Boniface, AK, AL and AM to be replaced by CD-BO). There is no reason to keep them split out.
- c. Amalgamate Sandford and Sandford East Village, as they all vote at Sandford Parish Hall and are in the same electoral area at all levels.

**Recommendations for changes in polling stations:**

- d. All of Tiverton Castle Ward to vote at the Signpost Club (Tiverton Market). Some electors who previously voted at Moorhayes Community Centre and St George's Church extension will change polling station. This follows County and District boundary reviews in recent years and ensures that the polling station is within the polling district.
- e. Cullompton Padbrook and Cullompton Vale voters to vote at the John Tallack Centre (behind Culm Valley Leisure Centre). Padbrook Ward voters previously voted at the Community Centre, but it is not in the polling district for the new ward. There is no suitable polling station in Vale Ward. Those voters previously voted at the Town Hall, but parking is much better at the John Tallack.
- f. Some Tiverton Lowman Ward to vote at Tiverton Indoor Bowls Centre instead of Moorhayes. These voters were previously in a tiny polling district left over from the district boundary review. The new polling station is no further to travel.
- g. The part of Lowman Ward that previously voted at William Authers Hall (Adventure Playground) to vote at Moorhayes Community Centre instead, as it is a much more suitable venue and has ample parking.
- h. Uffculme voters to vote at Magelake instead of the Village Hall, due to complaints about damage to properties from cars manoeuvring around the polling station and lack of parking at the Village Hall.

## **Section 2 – Report**

- 1.1 The above changes will be implemented on 1 December 2023, when the 2024 electoral register is published. This helps prepare the electoral register for use at a Parliamentary General Election.
- 1.2 The recommendations above arise as a result of recent changes to the parliamentary constituency boundaries as undertaken by the Boundary Commission. While the majority of changes are administrative requirements, the review also seeks to take the opportunity to make other amendments as required in order to address any current or known issues with polling locations. There is a statutory process for this review, including formal consultation (see 'Risk Assessment' comments below), which has informed the recommendations.

### **Financial Implications**

None.

### **Legal Implications**

The (Acting) Returning Officer has legal responsibility for administering elections. The Electoral Registration Officer has a duty to publish electoral registers which must be organised in polling districts, which reflect all electoral areas.

### **Risk Assessment**

Town/parish Councils, Elected Members, political parties and the public were consulted on the suitability of polling premises to ascertain the risks of using buildings as polling stations. Polling staff are also consulted at each election. Comments from these were considered as part of this review and are fed into election risk assessments.

### **Impact on Climate Change**

None.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

Not applicable.

### **Relationship to Corporate Plan**

Not applicable.

## **Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks**

**Statutory Officer:** Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

**Date:** 14 November 2023

**Statutory Officer:** Maria de Leburne  
Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer  
**Date:** 14 November 2023

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Walford  
Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive  
**Date:** 13 November 2023

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr  
Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager  
**Date:** 20 November 2023

**Cabinet member notified:** Yes

#### **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Jackie Stoneman  
Email: JStoneman@middevon.gov.uk

**Background papers:** N/A