North Somerset Council

Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2014

Introduction

Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 local authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts, to designate polling places for those polling districts, and to keep their electoral arrangements under review.

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty for all polling districts and polling places to be reviewed on a regular four-yearly cycle. The previous review was completed in November 2010.

With the approval in Parliament of the North Somerset (Electoral Changes) Order 2014 on 2 December 2014 there is a need to revise the existing scheme of polling districts and places to reflect changes made to North Somerset Council wards and to related parish wards as a result of the recent Electoral Review carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

Any revisions to polling districts and polling places arising from this review are intended to be implemented at the forthcoming combined Parliamentary General, North Somerset Council and parish elections scheduled to be held on 7 May 2015

Definition of terms

A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, i.e. a UK parliamentary constituency, a European parliamentary electoral region, or a district council ward.

A polling place is a geographical area in which a polling station is located.

A polling station is the room or building where the process of voting takes place, and must be located within the polling place designated for the particular polling district.
Aim of the review

In conducting this review, local authorities must seek to ensure that:

- all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;

- so far as is reasonable and practicable, all polling places are accessible to all their electors, including those with disabilities.

Responsibilities

The location of the proposed polling districts and places are the responsibility of the Council.

The location and number of the proposed polling stations are the responsibility of the Returning Officer.

The review process

- The Council will publish a notice on Thursday 11 December 2014 announcing that a review is taking place and invite comments and submissions in writing from any interested parties to be received by NOON on Wednesday 31 December 2014.

- The Acting Returning Officer for the Parliamentary Constituencies of Weston-super-Mare and North Somerset will be consulted and will make formal comments on the existing polling stations and the polling stations that would probably be used based on any newly recommended polling places. These comments will be published within 28 days of receipt.

- Representations will be invited from Councillors, local political parties, parish councils, electors and those persons with particular expertise in relation to access to premises for persons with disabilities.

- The authority considers all submissions received and makes recommendations for any new polling districts and polling places. However, there is no requirement to change any existing arrangements.

Any changes resulting from this review are intended to be reflected in the republished 2015 Register of Electors (for publication on 1 February 2015) and to be implemented at at the forthcoming combined Parliamentary General, North Somerset Council and parish elections scheduled to be held on 7 May 2015.
What is NOT being reviewed

The following are not covered by the review:

- boundaries of UK parliamentary constituencies,
- the boundaries and names of North Somerset Council wards or parish or parish ward boundaries.

Proposals for new arrangements

Amendments to polling districts

Revisions to the existing scheme of polling districts and places are required to take account of new electoral arrangements resulting from the LGBCE Electoral Review which will be implemented at the forthcoming combined parliamentary General, North Somerset Council and parish elections to be held on 7 May 2015.

Full details and maps of existing and revised arrangements can be viewed in person at: Electoral Services, Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare.

Amendments to polling stations

The Acting Returning Officer has been consulted and will make suggestions on any changes necessary to polling stations arising from the new electoral arrangements or as a result of any changes necessary since the 2010 review. These comments will be published within 28 days of receipt.

The location and number of proposed polling stations are the responsibility of the Returning Officer.
The consultation stage of the review

The consultation stage of the review commences on Thursday 11 December 2014 with the publication of a Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places at:

Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare;

Public Libraries at Clevedon, Nailsea, Portishead;

on the Council’s website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk

More Information

Full details and maps of existing and revised arrangements can be viewed in person at: Electoral Services, Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare.

Telephone: 01934 634903

E-mail: electoral.services@n-somerset.gov.uk

Representations

Representations may be submitted to arrive by no later than NOON on Wednesday 31 December 2014 as follows:

Online to: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/pollingdistricts

In writing to: Electoral Services (Review PD), Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, BS23 1UJ