

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	COUNCIL	18 DECEMBER 2023	13
REVIEW OF UK PARLIAMENTARY POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES 2023			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider the Returning Officers proposals arising from the review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places within the Borough of Fylde.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To authorise the Returning Officer recommendations included in the attached schedule.
2. To authorise the Returning Officer to make amendments to polling districts and polling places, where required, prior to the next statutory review.

REPORT

1. Under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006, the Council has a duty to divide the borough into polling districts and to designate polling places for each district. It also has to keep these arrangements under review.
2. Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 requires each local authority to carry out a review of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places in its area every five years.
3. Since our last review in 2018, the Boundary Commission for England has introduced new UK Parliamentary constituencies. One notable change proposed is for the existing Fylde constituency. The goal is to align it with the prescribed electorate range, which should not be smaller than 69,724 and not larger than 77,062. As a result, this adjustment will include the Borough of Wyre wards of Breck, Hardhorn with High Cross, and Tithebarn within the Fylde constituency. These three wards encompass the town of Poulton-le-Fylde and also

mean that the Fylde constituency will no longer encompass wards from the City of Preston. This newly configured constituency is referred to as the Fylde County Constituency.

4. The Fylde County Constituency now has an electorate of just over 75,000. This constituency covers multiple polling districts, polling places, and polling stations that are situated within the jurisdiction of Wyre Council. In light of these changes, Fylde Council will oversee the review of polling places and polling stations within the Fylde Borough Council boundaries. Simultaneously, Wyre Council will conduct its own review specifically for those located within the town of Poulton-le-Fylde. The Returning Officer for Fylde will gather any feedback and comments related to the Wyre review once initiated by Wyre Council and will communicate these findings to Wyre's Returning Officer.
5. The Council has powers to change polling places and polling district boundaries but not ward boundaries. These are defined as follows:

A **Polling District** is the geographical sub division of an electoral ward. The Council is responsible for dividing its area into polling districts for UK Parliamentary elections and for keeping polling districts under review.

When designating polling districts, the Council must:

- Seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place is accessible to electors who have disabilities.

A **polling place** is the building in which a polling station is located.

A polling station is the actual area where the process of voting takes place, and must be located in the polling place designated for the particular polling district.

6. In preparing the review, officers have scrutinised areas and where necessary identified alternative polling district areas and polling places located within the new wards. In considering the suitability of polling places the following factors have been taken into account – the availability of suitable premises, accessibility, public safety and location in relation to the centers of population within the area.
7. During the consultation many comments and suggestions were made from members of the public, Parish and Town councils and local ward councillors. Officers have investigated all options and made changes where necessary. All comments together with the Returning Officers final recommendation is included in the attached schedule.
8. From time to time, due to building works being carried out, or for other reasons, designated polling places become unavailable for a particular election. In these circumstances, it is recommended that the Returning Officer be authorised, following such consultations as she considers appropriate, to make any changes necessary, therefore, to use alternative locations prior to the next statutory review.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	✓

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None
Legal	None
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
The last full review of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places in the Borough was undertaken in 2018. Followed by an interim local review in 2022. The Returning Officer recommendations were approved.

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2023	8 November 2023	www.fylde.gov.uk

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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Attached documents

Review of polling districts and polling places Returning officer schedule.