

Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places– Consultation Briefing Note

Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced the requirement for councils to review polling districts and polling places within their Parliamentary constituencies, and to review them again at least every four years.

The 2009 County of Wiltshire Order not only set up the new unitary divisions, but also established new town wards in most urban areas which are co-terminous with the divisions. This will allow us to rationalise a number of polling districts, as they will take effect for the 2013 elections. Until then, the council has had to have polling districts which recognise the boundaries of both the older town wards, and the unitary divisions, resulting in a number of small registers where they overlap.

In May 2013, there will be elections to directly elect members to the New Forest National Park Authority. The National Park affects three Wiltshire parishes, but its boundaries do not coincide completely with existing parish or polling district boundaries. This review proposes to create new polling districts in those parishes, in readiness for those elections.

The Council will need to approve a scheme of polling districts and polling places for the (Acting) Returning Officer (ARO) to then consider in order to select polling stations. The ARO is therefore obliged to be consulted during the review, and any representations must be published within 30 days of receipt.

We are seeking your views on Wiltshire Council's existing polling districts and polling places. As part of the review there is also an opportunity to comment on the polling stations.

The Council has also prepared two documents which refer to proposed changes to polling stations and polling districts. These two documents have been amalgamated and sorted into Area Boards for ease of reference and relevance. A list of existing polling stations has also been compiled which has been separated into Area Board area for ease of reference. These are attached to this briefing note and are also available on the dedicated webpage (please see link below). We would seek your views on any of the points highlighted on this document or any other issues that you feel need to be addressed.

Due to the size of the Council's area and the number of polling districts and polling stations, it is not practical to send detailed hard copy maps to all consultees. However, officers have used the Geographical Information System to plot all existing polling districts, together with the position of known polling stations which is available to use on the dedicated webpage.

For more information on the parameters to use, please go to the webpage and click on the Review of Polling Districts – Briefing Note.

Submissions must be received in writing by Friday 25 May 2012. Forms can be completed online or download from the Council's website at:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council/elections/electionsreviewpollingdistrictsplaces.htm>

Submissions will then be reviewed with a final scheme being presented to Full Council for approval in July 2012.