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| <b>COUNCIL</b>          | AGENDA ITEM No. 13(c) |
| <b>17 DECEMBER 2015</b> | <b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>  |

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## REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, PLACES AND STATIONS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council approves the changes to polling districts, places and stations as set out in Appendix 1.

#### 1. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR THE REPORT

- 1.1 For Council to consider the revised polling districts, polling places and polling stations following the recent Electoral Boundary Review

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA 2006) introduced a duty on all local authorities to review their UK polling districts and polling places at least once every four years. The Council's first review was undertaken in 2007, followed by a second in 2011, and a third in 2014.
- 2.2 Peterborough City Council recently undertook an Electoral Boundary Review. An order creating new electoral ward boundaries has now been approved. The new electoral arrangements will be implemented for the next year's elections in Peterborough in 2016. This has resulted in a further review of its polling districts, polling places and polling stations to take account of the new electoral arrangements.
- 2.3 The boundary review created 22 new wards; 18 x 3 member wards, 2 x 2 member wards and 2 single member wards. This led to a redesign of the polling districts and polling stations.
- 2.4 Work was carried out with the Electoral Boundary Review Group to review all polling station placements prior to consultation and they approved the list of polling station placements for consultation.
- 2.5 A consultation on the new polling districts and polling places began on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015. The consultation included local political parties, district ward councillors, local MP's constituencies, parish councils, disability awareness groups, neighboring authorities and voters. Notice of the consultation is given at Appendix No. 2.

#### 3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The consultation so far has provided feedback from interested parties and the proposed solutions are provided in Appendix 3.
- 3.2 All consultation issues have been responded to separately. Principal concerns were around GUN5 (Manor Drive area) and EYE2 (Eye Green area). Meetings were held to discuss the electoral process and the requirement for single polling stations within these areas, and it was agreed that mobile units would be sited within the areas of Manor Drive Car Park and Travel

Lodge Car Park, Eye Green. A representation was also submitted regarding the Stanground South polling station at Mace Road, as there is limited access from the Cardea development. A new polling district and polling station was requested to be sited within the Cardea area. To date investigations are still on going with St Michael's Church School. Further updates will follow in tabled appendices.

There were no further significant issues which were not resolved by correspondence. Details of all responses are set out in Appendix No.1.

- 3.3 The consultation closes on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and any additional comments received will be tabled at the Council meeting.
- 3.4 Once the Council has agreed the proposals, details of the new polling districts and polling places must be made available to the public at the Town Hall and in each Parliamentary Constituencies and on the Council's website, along with the reasons for the decisions on the review and the designation of polling districts and polling places as a result of the review.
- 3.5 The timetable for this review:

Notice of start of review – 10 November 2015

Council publishes the Returning Officer's Proposals – 11 November 2015

Consultation on this proposal ends on – 11 December 2015

Report to Full Council – 9 December 2015

Adoption by Full Council – 17 December 2015

Arrangements come into force at the publication of the next revised Register of Electors on 1 February 2016.

## **4. IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Legal Implications**

As part of a review the Council must seek to ensure (a) that all electors in a constituency in the city have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances and (b) that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place and polling station is accessible to electors who are disabled.

The Electoral Commission, while not having a direct responsibility for the review, can intervene where it considers that the reasonable requirements of electors or the needs of disabled electors have not been taken in account.

### **4.2 Financial Implications**

Feedback was received requesting single polling stations within the two polling districts shown below:-

GUN5 – Mobile Unit, Manor Drive Car Park

EYE2 – Mobile Unit, Travel Lodge Car Park, Eye Green

This will have a financial implication on the Council's Budget, as the Council does not receive any additional funding to support mobile polling stations.

The cost for a mobile unit, equipment to support disabled voters and staff to manage the polling station will be approximately £5,000.00, this will equate to approximately £10,000.00 for the two mobile polling stations mentioned above. This will need to be funded from the Local Government Elections Budget.

## **5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Returning Officer's Proposals.

Appendix 2 – Notice of Review

Appendix 3 – Feedback from consultee's