



| <u>Committee and date</u>     | <u>Item</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Council                       |             |
| 19 September 2019<br>10.00 am | Public      |

**Responsible Officer** Claire Porter, Returning Officer  
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## **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS 2019**

### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report details the findings of the Review of the Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations in the Parliamentary Constituencies in accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006).
- 1.2 The main purpose of the review is to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting and that all polling stations are accessible to electors who are disabled. The guidelines also state that every parish should be in its own polling district and that every polling place should, where possible, be in its own polling district.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That members of Council approve the following changes which have been agreed with Ward Members, in order for them to be implemented on or by 1 December 2019.
- 2.2 That delegated authority be given to the Returning Officer to find a suitable alternative, in conjunction with local members, should any polling station not be available for a particular election.

| <b>DIVISION</b>   | <b>PROPOSED CHANGES</b>   |
|---|---|
| LAB Claverley   | It is recommended that The Plough Inn (Function Room) replace Claverley C of E School as the polling place for LAB Claverley.   |
| LJA Cleobury Mortimer<br>LJF Milson<br>LJH Neen Sollars | It is recommended that Cleobury Oddfellows Hall (Parish Hall) replace Cleobury Mortimer Market Hall as the polling place for LJA Cleobury Mortimer, LJF Milson, and LJH Need Sollars. |

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|---|---|
| LLE Diddlebury  | It is recommended that Diddlebury Village Hall replace The Church Room, Diddlebury, as the polling place for LLE Diddlebury.  |
| NEA Market Drayton (East Ward) (part of)<br>NEB Market Drayton (East Ward) (part of)  | It is recommended that the Zone Community Building replace Longlands Primary School as the polling place for NEA and NEB Market Drayton (East Ward).  |
| SIA Shrewsbury (Copthorne Ward) (part of)<br>SPB Shrewsbury (Porthill Ward) (part of) | It is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Returning Officer to agree any polling place for SIA Shrewsbury (Copthorne Ward) (part of) and SPB Shrewsbury (Porthill Ward) (part of) in conjunction with local members. |
| SPA Shrewsbury (Porthill Ward) (part of)  | It is recommended that St George's Church, Frankwell, replace Darwin Community Centre as the polling place for SPA Shrewsbury (Porthill Ward) (part of).  |
| WCP Boscobel<br>WCQ Donington   | It is recommended that delegated authority be given to the Returning Officer to agree any polling place for WCP Bosobel and WCQ Donington in conjunction with the local member.   |

## REPORT

### 3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 The Council is obliged to conduct a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations on a regular basis.
- 3.2 There is no anticipated environmental impact associated with the recommendations in the report.
- 3.3 The recommendation is not at variance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and is unlikely to result in any adverse Human Rights Act implications. The recommendations are in line with relevant legal procedures prescribed by the Act and with guidance issued by the Home Office.
- 3.4 Any amendments to the current polling districts, polling places and polling stations will take into account the provisions of the Equalities Act, Representation of People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006), and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

- 3.5 The Council must seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- 3.6 The Council must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Appendix 1 gives either decreased or increased costs where they have occurred based on the hire charges applied for the European Parliamentary Election held in May 2019. There will be a total decrease of £41 in relation to room hire charges for Parliamentary, Unitary and Town and Parish elections if all of the proposals are accepted. There are no changes to staffing levels. It should be remembered that hire charges for many of the existing polling station venues may increase next year.

#### **5. Background**

- 5.1 Every authority must complete a review of each polling district, polling place and polling station within its area every five years. On this occasion, it was considered best to commence the review after the European Parliamentary Election in May 2019 as all polling stations were inspected on the day of the Election.
- 5.2 Council initiated the review on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018 by giving public notice of its intention to conduct it and a consultation was held between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 12<sup>th</sup> August 2019.
- 5.3 Existing polling arrangements were assessed and the views of interested groups and individuals were invited. These included electors, political parties, Members of the Council, those organisations who cater for the specific needs of people with different disabilities and the Returning Officer for Telford and Wrekin Council.
- 5.4 Any comments, suggestions and requests received were explored and those found to be achievable and in the best interests of the electors affected are outlined in the recommendations given below.
- 5.5 Guidance issued by the Electoral Commission stipulates how reviews should be conducted in four stages. The first stage requires the Council to give public notice of its intention to conduct the review. The second requires the Council to review the existing polling arrangements to determine their suitability, or otherwise. The third stage requires the Council to consult widely. This includes local electors, interested groups and bodies, including political parties, elected Members and organisations experienced in assessing the needs of people with disabilities. The final stage relates to the consideration of proposals for changes to polling district boundaries and polling places by the Council, as these can require alterations to be made to the electoral register.

5.6 It is planned that any changes resulting from the review would be incorporated into the annual register and published on 1 December 2019.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Representation of the People Act 1983: Section 18

Electoral Administration Act 2006: Part 4 Section 16

Electoral Commission Guidance on Review of Polling Districts and Places

**Cabinet Member**

Councillor David Minnery

**Local Members**

All

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Proposals