

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORE SERVICES

TITLE: STATUTORY POLLING DISTRICT AND PLACE REVIEW 2023

REPORT TO:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting	24 January 2024
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Core Services
Key Decision	No
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

To implement the outcomes of the statutory polling place review listed in appendix 1.

Council Plan priority

N/A

Recommendations

That Cabinet recommend to Full Council:-

1. That the council designates the polling districts and places listed in Appendix 1 for all Parliamentary and Local elections.
2. That the council empowers the Returning Officer to make any enforced changes to this schedule as required if buildings become unavailable in consultation with the elected members for the affected ward until the next statutory review.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council is required to undertake a review of polling districts and stations every five years under the Electoral Administration Act (EAA) 2006.
- 1.2 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act (ERAA) 2013 introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places meaning that the next review must take place between October 2023 and December 2024.
- 1.3 As part of this review the council ran a six-week public from Monday 2

October until Sunday 19 November. All elected members were also contact directly for their comments.

- 1.4 54 responses were received from members of the public and comments from elected members were received with regard to the polling stations for Darfield and Wombwell wards.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 As a result of these responses and following investigations by staff of the Returning Officer four changes from the current scheme of polling stations are recommended. These changes have already been shared with the elected members for the affected ward:

- 1) Darfield Ward Polling District CE – The Sportsman Inn. Since the closure of Darfield Valley Methodist church in 2021, there has not been a polling station in the Low Valley area of Darfield with the residents forced to travel further to other polling stations. This change will re-establish a polling station in Darfield Low Valley with the polling districts reverting to their pre 2022 boundaries.
- 2) Wombwell Ward Polling District TA – Temporary Building on Wilson Street. Due to the Covid19 pandemic we did not use High View Primary School as the polling station in 2021, instead using this temporary building. The feedback on this change has been positive so it has now been made permanent.
- 3) Wombwell Ward Polling District TC – Wombwell Community Hall. Feedback was received that this building was in a preferential position to the previous polling station at the Salvation Army. This change also means that the polling station will no longer disrupt the operation of the food bank at the Salvation Army.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

None

3.2 Legal

None

3.3 Equality

Not applicable

3.4 Sustainability

Decision-making wheel not completed – not applicable in this instance.

3.5 Employee

None

3.6 Communications

None

4. CONSULTATION

There was a six-week public from Monday 2 October until Sunday 19 November. The responses are listed in Appendix 2

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

None

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The changes recommended are consistent with feedback received both from the public and from elected members. There were some responses suggesting that we stop using some buildings but in these instances alternatives could not be found. Full commentary on this is included in Appendix 1.

7. GLOSSARY

None

8. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Polling Station Final Proposals.
Appendix 2: Summary of consultation responses.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Colette Tyrell 12/12/2023 Senior Financial Services officer consulted
Legal consultation & sign off	Sukdave Ghuman 12/11/2023 Legal Services officer consulted

Report Author: Peter Clark
Post: Head of Registration and Elections
Date: 21/11/2023