

## **Interim Polling District and Polling Places Review 2022 Supporting Information**

Following the LGBCE's review of Wigan's electoral arrangements, the Council must conduct an interim review of polling districts and polling places.

Details of the LGBCE's final recommendations can be found here: [Wigan | LGBCE Site](#)

The new electoral arrangements/ electoral wards will come into effect for the May 2023 whole council elections whereby all 75 council seats are up for election.

In preparation for the new ward boundaries coming into effect it has been necessary to undertake an interim review of the boroughs polling districts, the sub-areas into which each ward is divided, and also the polling places, the buildings in which polling stations are located.

Please note, ward boundaries are the responsibility of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

Parliamentary constituency boundaries are the responsibility of the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) and are subject to a separate review process and timetable which is currently taking place.

### **What is a Polling District?**

A 'polling district' is a geographical area. Legislation requires that each community must be a separate polling district. If the community is large, and in order to provide easy access, the community can be divided into smaller polling districts.

### **What is a Polling Place?**

A 'polling place' is the geographical area, in which a polling station is located. There is no legal definition of a polling place. The geographical area could be defined as tightly as a particular building or as widely as the entire polling district. Wigan Council has defined each polling district as the polling place rather than a particular building for practical purposes.

### **What is a Polling Station?**

A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the relevant (Acting) Returning Officer for the election.

### **How the Review is conducted**

The (Acting) Returning Officer will be consulted on the current arrangements and will make representations on the existing polling stations used.

### **Aim of the review**

In conducting this review, the Council must seek to ensure that:-

- all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
- polling places are accessible to all electors and all sections of the community; and
- when considering or reviewing the designation of a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

### **What is being reviewed?**

- The polling district boundaries within each ward of each constituency
- The location of the polling place in each polling district
- The accessibility of each polling place
- Buildings that might be considered for use as polling stations

### **What CANNOT be reviewed at this time?**

- The ward boundaries
- The parish boundaries
- The parliamentary constituency boundaries

### **Who will be consulted?**

- Residents of Wigan Council
- Local Councillor's
- Members of Parliament for the Constituencies of Leigh, Makerfield, Wigan and Bolton West.
- Political parties
- Parish Councils
- Voluntary Groups
- Community Groups
- Individuals and organisations with expertise on access issues
- Service Delivery Footprint Managers

### **What makes a suitable polling place?**

It is important to consider what factors define a good polling place when submitting any suggestions. It is important that alternative premises are identified when suggesting a change in polling place.

Polling places should have, as a minimum, the following characteristics:

- 1) Be central relative to the location of electors in the polling district, where possible.
- 2) Accessibility for all electors, including those with disabilities, where possible.
- 3) Adequate, safe parking for the size of the electorate. Areas around polling stations, including car parks (if any), should be well lit, as the polling station is open until 10:00pm.
- 4) Facilities for polling staff, e.g. toilets, kitchen or coffee & tea making facilities, heating/cooling systems, comfortable adult sized chairs and tables.

5) The size of the room/building used as the polling station must be adequate for the size of the electorate.

### **Guidance on Submission of Representations and Suggestions**

The Council welcomes the views of all residents, particularly disabled residents, any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability on its proposals and the (Acting) Returning Officer's representation or any other matter relating to the electoral process.

Persons or bodies making representations should, if possible, give alternative places that may be considered for use as a polling station.

Information is provided to help the electorate in making informed representations and suggestions to the (Acting) Returning Officer about the allocation of polling districts/ polling places in the Borough of Wigan.

### **Timetable for the Review**

Publication of Notice and Commencement of the review	Monday 11 July 2022
Closing Date for Representations	Sunday 31 July 2022
Consideration of all Representations	Monday 1 August – Friday 26 August 2022
Final proposals considered at Full Council Meeting	Wednesday 21 September 2022

