

**Timetable for Interim Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations**

DATES	ACTION / EVENT
<b>Thursday, 20 July 2023</b>	Report to the Ordinary Meeting of the Council requesting endorsement of the process for the Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations.
<b>Monday, 24 July 2023</b>	<p>Electoral Services Staff to undertake preparatory steps. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Start compiling statistics and information which may assist them during the review. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Electorate figures, broken down to street level within wards and existing polling districts.</li> <li>(ii) Any local authority or national statistics that estimate population change within the area.</li> <li>(iii) In England and Wales, a report from the authority's planning section detailing any proposed areas of new development and the approximate number of dwellings and expected population numbers for those areas.</li> <li>(iv) Detailed up-to-date maps of a scale that will assist in the designation of polling district boundaries.</li> <li>(v) Details of current polling places and an indication as to their overall suitability for purpose (including, for example, any surveys, diagrams or photographs completed with the assistance of Presiding Officers or polling station inspectors or as part of a previous review or post-election evaluation). Further guidance can be found under 'Assessing the current arrangements and proposals for change'.</li> <li>(vi) Any comments or complaints regarding the current arrangements from the public, elected members or other bodies.</li> <li>(vii) Up-to-date information gained from the existing and possible future polling station venue managers as to continued availability (highlighting, for example, planned renovation work or other future plans).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>(viii) Details of potential alternative buildings (public, private or temporary type constructions) that might appear suitable.</p> <p>(ix) Advice and guidance from local disability groups and disability organisations (such as, for example, DAD, SCOPE, etc.), and any expert help from officers within the council who are responsible for equality schemes.</p> <p>(x) Terms of reference and the criteria for assessing the suitability of the current/proposed arrangements.</p>
<p><b>Monday, 2 October 2023</b></p>	<p>Publication of Notice advising of commencement of Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations. The Notice will state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the local authority is conducting a Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations;</li> <li>• That the Returning Officer will make comment on existing and proposed Polling Districts and Polling Places;</li> <li>• That electors within the local authority area, or the UK Parliamentary constituencies of Darlington and Sedgefield, may make a representation;</li> <li>• That the local authority would welcome any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability to make representation or to comment on the authority's existing proposals, the Returning Officer's representation, or any other related matter;</li> <li>• That persons or bodies making representations should, if possible, suggest alternative places that may be used as Polling Places;</li> <li>• The postal address, e-mail address and website address at which documents can be inspected and representations made; and</li> <li>• An indication of the timetable of the Review, and a deadline for representations.</li> </ul> <p>The Notice will be displayed at the local authority's office, in at least one conspicuous place within the authority, and placed on the Council's website.</p>
<p><b>Monday, 2 October 2023</b></p>	<p>Commencement of Consultation period on <b>existing and pre-identified potential alternatives</b> for Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations. Consultation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Returning Officer;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MPs;</li> <li>• All Ward Councillors;</li> <li>• Parish Councils;</li> <li>• Darlington Association on Disability;</li> <li>• GOLD;</li> <li>• BME Community Groups;</li> <li>• Presiding Officers;</li> <li>• Head Teachers and School Governors; and</li> <li>• Polling Station Inspectors.</li> </ul> <p>Consultation will invite consultees and Members of the Public to suggest alternative places that may be used as Polling Places.</p>
<p><b>Within 30 calendar days of the receipt</b></p>	<p>Publish the Returning Officer’s comments on existing and pre-identified potential alternatives within 30 calendar days of receipt.</p>
<p><b>5pm, Sunday, 12 November 2023</b></p>	<p>Close of initial consultation period on existing and pre-identified potential alternatives for Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations.</p>
<p><b>Monday, 13 November 2023 to Sunday, 26 November 2023</b></p>	<p>Finalised proposals drafted taking into consideration premise inspections; consideration of any suggested alternative places submitted; the comments of the Returning Officer, etc.</p>
<p><b>Monday, 27 November 2023</b></p>	<p>Consultation period on <b>finalised proposals</b> for Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations. Consultation should again include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Returning Officer;</li> <li>• MPs;</li> <li>• All Ward Councillors;</li> <li>• Parish Councils;</li> <li>• Darlington Association on Disability;</li> <li>• GOLD;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BME Community Groups;</li><li>• Presiding Officers;</li><li>• Head Teachers and School Governors; and</li><li>• Polling Station Inspectors.</li></ul>
<b>Sunday, 7 January 2024</b>	Close of Final Consultation Period
<b>Monday, 8 January 2024 to Tuesday, 16 January 2024</b>	Finalise proposals for Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations for submission to the Ordinary Meeting of the Council.
<b>Thursday, 25 January 2024</b>	Submission of Final Proposals to the Ordinary Meeting of the Council.