

Council Report

22 November 2023

Limited Scope Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Report sponsor

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Exempt / confidential / not for publication	No
Council Plan reference	Not in Council Plan
Wards affected	Danesborough & Walton

Executive summary

At its meeting in September, Full Council authorised the undertaking of a limited scope review of polling districts and polling places focusing on Wavendon Polling District. The draft recommendations proposed the creation of a new Polling District for the Glebe Farm and Eagle Farm South developments and a new Polling Station at Glebe Farm all through school.

A six week consultation on the draft proposals commenced on 14 September 2023 and ended on 26 October 2023. The consultation received 13 responses (Annex A). Submissions on the proposals were received from residents, Wavendon Parish Council, Parish Councillors, Ward Councillors, the Acting Returning Officer, Milton Keynes Labour Group and the Head Teacher of the proposed Polling Place, Glebe Farm all through school. All submissions were supportive of the proposals.

Final proposals have been drawn up after reviewing all submissions along with our desktop and field research as well as consulting with stakeholders, ward and parish councillors and city officials.

This report recommends that the council approve the unamended proposals which will allow the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) to make the necessary alterations to the electoral register. These alterations will be reflected through the publication of the revised electoral register following the conclusion of the annual canvass on the 1 December 2023.

1. Proposed Decision/s

1.1 That the Council approve the final proposals (as set out in 3.1 and 3.2).

2. Why is the Decision Needed?

2.1 The Representation of the People Act s18A requires councils to undertake compulsory reviews (including limited scope reviews) of Polling Districts and Places according to statutory requirements. The Council must then conclude the review by deciding to whether or not to implement final proposals after a public consultation.

2.2 The ERO is unable to make the required alterations to the electoral register without the approval of full Council as set out in the council's constitution.

3. Final Proposals

3.1 To split the existing Polling District of Wavendon (HC) along the boundary shown in Annex B with the effect that:

- a) a new Polling District shown in Annex C is created comprising the areas of Eagle Farm South and Glebe Farm (to the west of Newport Road / A1530); and
- b) the remainder of Wavendon Polling District (including land to the east of Newport Road / A1530) shown in Annex D will continue to vote at Wavendon Community Centre.

3.2 The new Polling District will have its polling place designated as Glebe Farm all through School and its Polling Station will be the sports hall within the school.

3.3 Although the consultation asked for feedback about the name of the new Polling District, this does not comprise a formal part of the review and is designated by the Electoral Registration Officer. The name of a Polling District does not comprise formal political geography and it is not used on any election material such a Poll Cards.

3.4 A number of alternative suggestions were made for the name of the new Polling District and the Electoral Registration Officer will make a determination in due course, primarily based on the Council's existing naming conventions for Polling Districts.

4. Implications of the decision

Financial	Y	Human rights, equalities, diversity	Y
Legal	Y	Policies or Council Plan	N
Communication	Y	Procurement	N
Energy Efficiency	N	Workforce	N

a) Financial implications

There are very small direct costs incurred by the Council in concluding a review, predominantly associated with the time taken by the ERO to make the necessary alterations to the register to include them in publication of the revised register on the 1 December 2023. These costs will be accommodated from existing budgets. Additional staffing resources will not be required.

b) Legal implications

The requirements for the timing and completion of compulsory reviews are set out in the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. Any Polling District and Polling Places Review would be undertaken in accordance with the required steps set out in schedule A1 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (RPA 1983), and the process will be guided by the Electoral Commission's guidance for [Reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations](#).

Although the compulsory period is not till October, the 2013 Act provides for a principal council to conduct a review at any time. Statutory guidance and legislation (RPA 1983) requires that principal councils keep their Polling Districts and Places under review, to ensure that the arrangements for those areas continue to be effective in light of circumstances such as a major change in the population of a community or housing development.

c) Communication

It is important that electors of Glebe Farm and Eagle Farm South are made aware of the change made to the place they must attend to vote. This change will be clearly communicated on Poll Cards for the next election they are entitled to vote at. Details of the new Polling District and Polling Place will be made available at our civic offices, on the public notice board and on MKCC's website. The publication will also be sent to the Parish Council for publication locally.

d) Human rights, equalities, diversity

The new Polling Place is a modern and accessible building, and the location is more convenient for residents. The Council's Corporate Policy and Equality Manager was consulted and confirmed verbally there were no concerns from an accessibility perspective. As with any Polling Station which shares car parking provision, there will be periods during polling day (particularly the start and end of the school day) when car parking spaces are in higher demand, but the Electoral Services Team will work with stakeholders to communicate this message.

5. Alternative(s)

- 5.1 To not authorise the Final proposals. This is not recommended as it is clear from the formal consultation that Wavendon Parish Council, councillors, and residents who responded are in all in favour of the proposal.

6. Timetable for implementation

- 6.1 An indicative timetable of events is set out below:

Item	Dates (all 2023)
Final proposals are considered by Full Council	22 November
Final proposals are published along with all submissions – concludes the review	23 November
Alterations are made to the electoral register in accordance with the final proposals	23 November – 30 November

List of annexes

Annex A – All submissions received through the consultation including the AROs comments.

Annex B – Current Polling District Map for Wavendon

Annex C – Final Proposed new Polling District Map

Annex D – Final Proposed Polling District Map for the remainder of Wavendon