

Equality Impact Assessment Polling District/Polling Places Review

**Produced by Law and Governance Services
September 2019**

Title of proposal (include forward plan reference if available)	Polling District and Polling Places Review 2019
Directorate and Service Area	Law and Governance Services Electoral Services
Name and title of Lead Officer completing this EIA	Zoe Armstrong and Rameez Akhtar
Contact Details	569 3215 and 569 3048
Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	
Date EIA completed	04 September 2019
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	19 September 2019
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	Surjit Tour
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	

See [Equality Impact Assessment Guidance](#) for key prompts that must be addressed for all questions

1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required (Please provide as much information as possible)

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires the Local Authority to review all polling districts and polling places every 5 years. The last review was carried out in 2014. The review looks at the boundaries of polling districts and the location of polling stations. The review is to ensure all electors are given the same opportunity to cast their vote.

Any changes to the current setup is not intended or likely to have any significant impact on any particular group. The main area for any potential negative impact is assessed as being on the grounds of disability, but there are alternative ways of voting which can mitigate against this.

2. Evidence used/considered

We have used evidence about accessibility of existing and any proposed polling stations in making this assessment. This has come from:

- Polling Station Inspector surveys carried out annually on existing stations
- Feedback from Presiding Officers and polling station staff
- Contact with and inspection of polling stations

We have also taken into consideration feedback from consultation.

3. Consultation

The notice of review was published on 28th June 2019 on the Council's website and at the Council House Oldbury.

All Acting Returning Officers, Elected Members, MPs, local Political Parties and local disability charities received notification of the review. Submissions were invited by 30th August 2019.

We have received feedback from members of the public but none from the disability groups. The main feedback and submissions have been from Elected Members mainly regarding looking at alternative polling stations. The concerns expressed have been around minimising change to polling stations as many residents have become familiar with their polling stations.

4. Assess likely impact

Having considered the evidence and made an assessment of the likely potential impact, it is felt that there will be no change or any adverse impact on any group from the protected characteristics, as a result of the proposals arising from the review.

The only potential impact we are currently aware of would be on disabled people. This is due to polling stations which are currently situated at temporary huts. These have been used for a number of years, because currently there are not alternative premises available but this situation is kept under review.

4a. Use the table to show:

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Age			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Disability		✓		All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.

Gender reassignment			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Marriage and civil partnership			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Pregnancy and maternity			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Race			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Religion or belief			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.

Sex			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Sexual orientation			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.
Other			✓	All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? Yes ☐ No ☒

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.

5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?

All staff are trained on how to deal with persons wishing to vote but cannot gain access to the polling station. There is a system for people to be allowed to vote who cannot enter the polling station. Alternatively, all persons can apply for a postal vote or proxy vote.

6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?

No Actions have been identified that need to be taken.

7. Monitoring arrangements

All polling stations are monitored annually for accessibility.

Also monitored through complaints, comments, feedback from candidates/agents and presiding officers.

There is an independent appeals system with the Electoral Commission for anyone who feels they are disadvantaged by the outcome of the review.

8. Action planning

There are no actions arising from the Equality Impact Assessment.

9. Publish the EIA

The EIA will be published on CMIS.

Where can I get additional information, advice and guidance?

In the first instance, please consult the accompanying guide “Equality Impact Assessment Guidance”

Practical advice, guidance and support

Help and advice on undertaking an EIA, using the electronic EIA toolkit or receiving training related to equalities legislation and EIAs is available to **all managers** across the council from officers within Improvement and Efficiency. The officers within in Improvement and Efficiency will also provide overview quality assurance checks on completed EIA documents.

Please contact:

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