



**Rutland**  
County Council

**REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES  
AND POLLING STATIONS FOR RUTLAND - 2018  
INFORMATION SHEET**



Background information and the Returning Officer's Proposals

Helen Briggs, Returning Officer

Consultation Period: 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018 – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018

## **REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS FOR RUTLAND - 2018**

### **INFORMATION SHEET**

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 details the timings for the compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and the last compulsory review period commenced on 1 October 2013 and the next review period commenced 5 years from that date on 1 October 2018. The Council is allowed to conduct interim reviews where required to make changes within the 5-year cycle.

#### **What does the review involve?**

The review must be carried out to make sure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. On commencing the review a notice will be published with details of the review, including when and where comments or representations can be made. Any elector in the constituency may make a representation in relation to the size and boundaries of polling districts and the location and suitability of polling places. The council also welcomes comments or representations from any Councillors in the area, past or potential candidates, local political parties and indeed any person or body with expertise in access for persons with any type of disability. On completion of the review the council will publish all correspondence sent and received, details of the results of the review including any issues raised and indeed any changes which have been approved, giving the reasons for its decisions.

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

A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a UK Parliamentary constituency for the purposes of a UK Parliamentary election. In England, each parish is to be a separate polling district and, in Wales, each community should be a separate polling district, unless there are special circumstances. This means that a parish or community must not be in a polling district which has a part of either a different parish or community within it, or any un-parished part of the local authority area within it, unless special circumstances apply.

Those special circumstances could arise if, for example, the parish/community has only a small number of electors and it is not practicable for the parish/community to be its own polling district.

The current list of Polling Places and Polling Stations and the current potential turnout figures are enclosed and are available on the website <https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-council/electoral-registration-and-elections/review-of-polling-districts-polling-places-and-polling-stations/>.

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

A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer. A polling place within a polling district must be designated so that polling stations are within easy reach of all electors from across the polling district, however, there is no legal definition of what a polling place is. It could be as

large as the polling district or as small as a particular building. Currently in Rutland, most polling places are actual buildings

### **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 Returning Officer for the election. There can be more than one polling station in a polling place.

When deciding which buildings to use as polling stations, the Council tries to make sure that they are located as conveniently as possible for the majority of electors and that they are accessible to everyone, particularly anyone with a disability.

Thought must be given, for example, to the distance people have to travel to vote and any barriers to them getting there, such as major roads or rivers.

### **The Returning Officer's Proposals**

#### **Introduction**

The pattern of polling districts and polling places in the District of Rutland has evolved to meet the convenience of electors across the district. By and large, it ensures that electors have reasonable facilities for voting. Furthermore, in line with the Council's policies, every attempt has been made to ensure that polling stations are accessible to electors with disabilities. Therefore, as the majority of polling districts and polling places remain fit for purpose, the proposals for change have been kept to a minimum.

#### **Guidelines**

The Returning Officer has taken the following considerations into account when drawing up the proposals. Comments made during the consultation should keep these in mind. The first four are requirements laid down in the Representation of the Peoples Act; the remainder are guidelines only.

- The council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
- The council must seek to ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practicable, every polling place is accessible to electors with disabilities;
- Every parish shall be in a separate polling district;
- Ideally the polling place should be in the polling district;
- No polling station should be shared by two wards because of this risks associated with holding different elections in the same polling station;
- Ideally there should be no more than 2,500 electors per polling station, although the number of postal voters in the district (presently about 4,500 in total) is a further consideration;

- Polling district boundaries should be co-terminous with existing parish ward or district ward boundaries;
- Where existing polling districts serve no necessary function because the electors for each polling district already vote at the same polling station, the polling districts should be merged;
- A polling station costs up to £1,000 to hire, equip and staff for polling day;
- The proposals have been mindful of further development in the district as identified in the Local Development Framework.

### **Polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton.**

Electors in the polling districts of Stretton and Thistleton will no longer be able to use the polling place and vote at the station previously used as it is no longer available. The most suitable venue was considered to be the public house, the Jackson Stops which is only a short walk from the original polling place.

It is therefore recommended that with effect from 22 January 2019 the polling place for electors from Stretton and Thistleton be the Jackson Stops Inn, Stretton.

### **Changes resulting from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Review.**

Following the changes to local government ward boundaries recommended by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England Review, the following changes are recommended:

**Barleythorpe ward.** The polling place for the parish of Barleythorpe is Oakham United Football Club and it is recommended that this polling place be used by all electors in the ward in the future. It is further recommended that there be two polling districts in the ward, Barleythorpe Parish and Barleythorpe Road Parish (of Oakham Town Council). It is in exception that the polling district of Barleythorpe Road Parish will not have its own polling station as there is no suitable venue available in the polling district. Therefore both the Parish of Barleythorpe and the Barleythorpe Road Parish of Oakham Town Council will vote at Parish level elections in the same polling place, Oakham United Football Club.

**Braunston and Martinsthorpe Ward.** This will be a new ward made up of the two pre-existing wards of Braunston and Belton and Martinsthorpe. It is recommended that the individual polling districts remain the same for each parish, as will the polling place and polling stations. Electors in the newly combined wards will now be asked to vote for two councillors instead of one in the ward of Braunston and Martinsthorpe.

**Cottesmore Ward.** The parish of Teigh will move from Cottesmore Ward to become part of the Whissendine Ward. It is recommended that voters from Teigh retain their current polling district of Teigh but now use the polling place, the Memorial Hall, Whissendine as they are now part of that ward. All other electors in the Cottesmore Ward will retain their current polling places, polling

districts and vote at the existing polling stations.

**Oakham North East ward.** It is recommended that the polling place for this ward will be All Saints Church Hall and the polling district will remain Oakham North East. All electors, including those on the Ladywell estate moved from Oakham South East ward will vote at the All Saints Church Hall polling station in Church Street, Oakham.

**Oakham North West ward.** It is recommended that the polling place for this ward will be the Scout Hut, Oakham and the polling district will remain Oakham North West. All electors, including those that move in from the Oakham South West Ward will vote at the Scout Hut in Grampian Way, Oakham.

**Oakham South ward.** The County Wards of Oakham South East and West had two polling stations. With the joining of these wards to form the new County ward of Oakham South it is recommended that this ward now be a single polling district (Oakham South) with one central polling place, being the Council Buildings in Catmos Street. The polling station would be the Oakham Library, but by nominating the polling place as the Council buildings, it will give the Returning Officer flexibility to use either the council offices or the County Museum if required at a future date.

**Whissendine Ward.** The parish of Teigh will move from its current ward (Cottesmore) to become a part of Whissendine Ward. Teigh's polling district will remain as Teigh but it is recommended that its polling place and polling station will now become The Memorial Hall, Whissendine.

The boundaries changes made in the LGBCE review were open to public consultation as were the recommendations from the review.

It is further proposed that the Council will write to electors within the wards that have had changes to their polling places/polling stations to ensure that voters are given as much notice as possible of the changes to voting arrangements for next year.

**Should you wish to make representations about the review please submit them in writing to:**

**Electoral Registration Officer (Polling Places Review)  
Rutland County Council  
Catmose  
Oakham  
LE15 6HP**

**Or via email to:  
[elections@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:elections@rutland.gov.uk)**