



Portsmouth

Clinical Commissioning Group



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Equality Impact Assessment

Full assessment form 2018

www.portsmouthccg.nhs.uk

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Directorate:

Community & communication

Service, function:

Election Services

Title of policy, service, function, project or strategy (new or old):

2019 Review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations.

Type of policy, service, function, project or strategy:

☐ Existing

☐ New / proposed

☒ Changed

Lead officer

Ian Fitchett

People involved with completing the EIA:

Ian Fitchett
Marguerite Bowers

Introductory information (Optional)

The Council is required to conduct a review of polling districts and polling places every five years in accordance with the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The purpose of the review process is to ensure that polling arrangements are fit for purpose in terms of accessibility and convenience for voters.

The current review, started on 17 July 2019, must be completed by 31 January 2020.

Step 1 - Make sure you have clear aims and objectives

What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?

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.

Local authorities must comply with the following legislative requirements regarding the designation of polling districts and polling places:

- the council must designate a polling place for each polling district, unless the size or other circumstances of a polling district are such that the situation of the polling stations does not materially affect the convenience of the electors
- the polling place must be an area in the district, unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district (for example, if no accessible polling place can be identified in the district)
- the polling place must be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the district how they will be able to reach the polling station

Accessibility is key - Local authorities must also comply with the following access requirements. As part of the review, they must:

- seek to ensure that all electors in a constituency in the local authority area have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place for which it is responsible is accessible to electors who are disabled

The council must have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in any place which it is considering designating as a polling place or the designation of which as a polling place it is reviewing.

Who is the policy, service, function, project or strategy going to benefit or have a detrimental effect on and how?

The policy should benefit all electors by ensuring that they have an accessible polling station as near to their normal place of residence as possible.

There is also a legal requirement to ensure that no one polling district is disproportionately large and this will also be taken into account during the review. This is important in ensuring that queues are able to be managed.

What outcomes do you want to achieve?

A more logical, streamlined approach regarding polling districts/places, taking into account the limited buildings available to PCC in each location.

Improved access for voters, promote electoral engagement and ease any potential barriers to participation in the electoral process.

What barriers are there to achieving these outcomes?

Availability of suitable buildings
Resources / staff hours to carry out the review and implement any changes resulting from the findings.
Difficulty in persuading electors with protected characteristics to engage.

Step 2 - Collecting your information

What existing information / data do you have? (Local or national data) look at population profiles, JSNA data, surveys and patient and customer public engagement activity locally that will inform your project, national studies and public engagement.

Current statistics produced by the electoral management software
Feedback from Polling Station Staff and electors collected during the 2018 and 2019 Elections.
Polling Station Inspector feedback
Direct feedback collected from various protected groups.
Feedback from PCC staff working with protected groups, vulnerable electors.
Feedback from Elected Members collected during the 2018 and 2019 Elections.

Using your existing data, what does it tell you?

Taking into account elector numbers and available buildings, some districts may benefit by merging with others. In some cases, this could improve voter experience by providing more accessible Polling Stations and shorter distances for electors to travel.

Step 3 - Now you need to consult!

Who have you consulted with?

Portsmouth Disability Forum
PCC Equalities Officer
Age UK Portsmouth
Portsmouth Libraries
PCC Shared Lives Team
Independence and Wellbeing Team (Adult Social Care)
PCC Integrated Learning Disability Services

If you haven't consulted yet please list who you are going to consult with

Please give examples of how you have or are going to consult with specific groups or communities e.g. meetings, surveys

The formal commencement of the review requires the local authority to give notice of the holding of a review. The notice must:

- be displayed at the local authority's office and in at least one conspicuous place within the authority
- be published on the local authority website.

For the 2019 Review we have consulted as follows:

Information on PCC website.

Review Notice and Maps in PCC offices and libraries.

Visit made to Age UK Portsmouth and Review Notice and information provided.

E-mails to PCC staff/teams working directly with electors who may have protected characteristics.

It was particularly important to consult with those having specific experience of assessing access for persons with different disabilities. The review invited comment both on existing polling stations and suggested alternatives.

From the very low return of written and verbal feedback (2), electors have not raised any major concerns.

Step 4 - What's the impact?

Is there an impact on some groups in the community? (think about race, gender, disability, age, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnerships and other socially excluded communities or groups)

Generic information that covers all equality strands (Optional)

Any changes arising from this Review will only be implemented in the interests of improving our existing arrangements for electors.

In this regard, no specific community should suffer a disproportionate negative impact.

Ethnicity or race

n/a

Gender reassignment

n/a

Age

n/a

Disability

n/a

Religion or belief

n/a

Sexual orientation

n/a

Sex

n/a

Marriage or civil partnerships

n/a

Pregnancy & maternity

n/a

Other socially excluded groups or communities

Note:Other sociallyexcluded groups, examples includes,Homeless, rough sleeper and unpaid carers. Many forms of exclusion are linked to financial disadvantage. How will this change affect people on low incomes, in financial crisis or living in areas of greater deprivation?

Health Impact

Have you referred to the Joint Needs Assessment (www.jsna.portsmouth.gov.uk) to identify any associated health and well-being needs?

☐

Yes

☒

No

What are the health impacts, positive and / or negative? For example, is there a positive impact on enabling healthier lifestyles or promoting positive mental health? Could it prevent spread of infection or disease? Will it reduce any inequalities in health and well-being experienced by some localities, groups, ages etc? On the other hand, could it restrict opportunities for health and well-being?

n/a

Health inequalities are strongly associated with deprivation and income inequalities in the city. Have you referred to Portsmouth's Tackling Poverty Needs Assessment and strategy (available on the JSNA website above), which identifies those groups or geographical areas that are vulnerable to poverty? Does this have a disproportionately negative impact, on any of these groups and if so how? Are there any positive impacts?, if so what are they?

For more help on this element of tackling poverty and needs assessment contact Mark Sage: email:mark.sage@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Step 5 - What are the differences?

Are any groups affected in a different way to others as a result of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?

Please summerise any potential impacts this will have on specific protected characteristics

There should be no particular group of the community adversely affected by this Review.

Does your policy, service, function, project or strategy either directly or indirectly discriminate?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If you are either directly or indirectly discriminating, how are you going to change this or mitigate the negative impact?

Step 6 - Make a recommendation based on steps 2 - 5

If you are in a position to make a recommendation to change or introduce the policy, service, project or strategy clearly show how it was decided on and how any engagement shapes your recommendations.

The Returning Officer for the City of Portsmouth, including Portsmouth North and Portsmouth South parliamentary constituencies has examined the current polling arrangements and has identified a number of proposed changes to the scheme.

The Returning Officer's comments and proposals are included with the Review documents and in the absence of any objections, will be put forward as recommendations at the appropriate PCC meeting.

What changes or benefits have been highlighted as a result of your consultation?

There is agreement that the Hilsea ward requires attention due to the current boundaries no longer reflecting available polling places.

If you are not in a position to go ahead what actions are you going to take?

(Please complete the fields below)

Action

Timescale

Responsible officer

How are you going to review the policy, service, project or strategy, how often and who will be responsible?

Compulsory reviews must be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013. These must be carried out by the Returning Officer.

Step 7 - Now just publish your results

This EIA has been approved by:

Contact number:

Date:

29 Aug 2019

PCC staff-Please email a copy of your completed EIA to the Equality and diversity team. We will contact you with any comments or queries about your preliminary EIA.

Telephone: 023 9283 4789, Email: equalities@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

CCG staff-Please email a copy of your completed EIA to the Equality lead who will contact you with any comments or queries about your full EIA. Email: sehccg.equalityanddiversity@nhs.net