

**REPORT TO:** East Lothian Council

**MEETING DATE:** 31 October 2023

**BY:** Executive Director for Council Resources

**SUBJECT:** Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Places/  
Amendment to Polling Place Scheme/UK Boundary  
Changes

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform Members of a forthcoming statutory review of polling districts and places.
- 1.2 To seek approval to relocate a polling place from the current Wallyford Community Centre, polling district ELMN3F, to the new Wallyford Learning Campus.
- 1.3 To seek approval to relocate electors remaining within Lothian East constituency polling district ELMN1C to ELMN1D, following UK Boundary changes.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To note the formal Notice of Review of Polling Districts and Places will be published on Monday 6 November 2023 and the public consultation will begin on Monday 4 December for a period of 8 weeks. Approval of the new polling scheme will be sought on completion of the review.
- 2.2 Subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 3.8, to approve the amendment to the current polling scheme for polling district ELMN3F.
- 2.3 To approve the relocation of voters within ELMN1C to ELMN1D (Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre).

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Local authorities are required to review their polling districts and polling places for UK parliamentary constituencies every five years in accordance with Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
- 3.2 The first stage of the review is the publication of the Notice of Review along with the proposed timetable. A draft of the Notice of Review is attached as Appendix 1. Members should note that, if a UK Parliamentary Election is called in spring or early summer of 2024, the timetable may be subject to amendment. Any changes as a consequence of this review will not take effect until after the next UK Parliamentary Election.
- 3.3 The Returning Officer must submit a report on the suitability of existing and any proposed new polling places as part of the consultation documents along with her suggested changes.
- 3.4 Views will be sought from interested groups and bodies including, electors, community groups, disability groups, political parties, council members, MP, MSPs.
- 3.5 Preliminary visits to existing polling places have already taken place and findings will be considered as part of the review. The following criteria will be used to assess polling places as part of this review:
  - availability of polling places
  - accessibility of polling places
  - safety of polling place, for both voters and staff
  - current electorate
  - projected electorate
  - number of postal voters
- 3.6 A Members' briefing will be arranged in advance of the public consultation in order that the Returning Officer's proposals can be shared with Members.
- 3.7 More immediately, as a result of Wallyford Community Centre closing on Friday 3 November 2023, a new polling place must be found to serve the electorate in this polling district.
- 3.8 It is proposed that the Wallyford Learning Campus be used as the permanent polling place. The venue has excellent facilities and accessibility for electors. There is a separate access to avoid any concerns with the school. A meeting has been scheduled with the Head Teacher and Head of Education to consider any potential issues for the operation of the school and, subject to these being addressed and a risk assessment of the new polling place being carried out, it would be proposed to make this an amendment to the current polling scheme. The precise location of the polling stations within the building would be determined by the Returning Officer, in consultation with the building users.

- 3.9 Local councillors have been consulted in relation to the proposal and none expressed any objection.
- 3.10 Finally, UK constituency Boundary changes mean polling districts ELMN1A, ELMN1B and the bulk of ELMN1C will move to the Edinburgh East constituency and will become the responsibility of the City of Edinburgh Council Returning Officer. The Elections Team are liaising with colleagues in City of Edinburgh Council regarding this transition. The number of voters in that part of polling district ELMN1C that will remain as part of the Lothian East constituency amounts to just under 300 electors, from a total of over 3100. It is proposed to relocate those electors to vote at a separate polling station within ELMN1D (Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre) for the upcoming UK Parliamentary Election. A proposal to amend the polling district and permanently move those electors to ELMN1D will then be part of the Review of Polling Districts and Places.
- 3.11 Local councillors have been consulted in relation to this proposal and none expressed any objection.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The requirement to regularly review polling places is a statutory obligation to ensure that all voters have access to such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and that factors such as accessibility are fully considered.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy. A full IIA will be carried out before any changes to the Polling Scheme are made as a consequence of this Review.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial - None
- 6.2 Personnel - None
- 6.3 Other - None

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 Current Polling Scheme – Wards 1 and 3
- 7.2 Draft Notice of Review

7.3 [New Boundary Map](#)

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<b>DATE</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2023

## Appendix 1 – Draft Notice of Review

### East Lothian Council

#### Notice of Polling Districts and Places Review

Notice is hereby given that in accordance with Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983 East Lothian Council is to carry out a review of its polling districts and polling places.

The Returning Officer for the East Lothian constituency will comment on the proposals. Those representations will be published on the Council's website, [www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk), and will be available for inspection at John Muir House, Brewery Park, Haddington, EH41 3HA in accordance with the timetable set out below.

Publish Notice of Review	Monday 6 November 2023
Proposals Published	Monday 4 December 2023
Commencement of Public Consultation	Monday 4 December 2023
End of Public Consultation	Monday 29 January 2024
Final Proposals Considered by	Monday 8 April 2024
Approval Sought at East Lothian Council Meeting	Tuesday 23 April 2024

East Lothian Council would welcome the views of electors within East Lothian, particularly disabled residents, on the authority's proposals, the Returning Officer's representation, or any other matters. Any views should, if possible, give alternative places that may be used as a polling place. Comments should be sent to:

Elections Office  
East Lothian Council  
John Muir House  
Haddington  
EH41 3HA

Or email [elections@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:elections@eastlothian.gov.uk)

All responses should be submitted on or before 29 January 2024.

## **Appendix 2 – Current Polling Scheme – Wards 1 & 3**

### **Ward 1: Musselburgh**

Polling District: ELMN1A  
Polling Place: Musselburgh Rugby Football Club  
Address: 3A Stoneyhill Farm Road, Musselburgh, EH21 6RN

Polling District: ELMN1B  
Polling Place: North Esk Parish Church Hall  
Address: 16 Bridge Street, Musselburgh, EH21 6AG

Polling District: ELMN1C  
Polling Place: Our Lady of Loretto Church Hall  
Address: 17 Newbigging, Musselburgh, EH21 7AJ

Polling District: ELMN1D  
Polling Place: Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre  
Address: Haddington Road, Musselburgh, EH21 8JJ

### **Ward 3: Tranent, Wallyford and Macmerry**

Polling District: EL3A  
Polling Place: The Fraser Centre  
Address: 3a Winton Place, Tranent, EH33 1AF

Polling District: EL3B  
Polling Place: Loch Centre  
Address: off Blawearie Road, Tranent, EH33 2JX

Polling District: EL3C  
Polling Place: Elphinstone Community Centre  
Address: Main Street, Elphinstone, EH33 2LX

Polling District: EL3D  
Polling Place: Macmerry Miners' Welfare Club  
Address: Main Road, Macmerry, EH33 1QF

Polling District: ELMN3E  
Polling Place: The Village Hub, Whitecraig  
Address: 72 Whitecraig Avenue, Whitecraig, EH21 8PB

Polling District: ELMN3F  
Polling Place: Wallyford Community Centre  
Address: Albert Place, Wallyford, EH21 8LE

**Appendix 3 – Boundary Map – shaded area shows the new constituency boundary**

