

PART A - Initial Equality Screening Assessment

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality and diversity.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provide a record of both the process and decision. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions.

Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- the relevance of proposals and decisions to equality and diversity
- whether or not equality and diversity is being/has already been considered, and
- whether or not it is necessary to carry out an Equality Analysis (Part B).

Further information is available in the Equality Screening and Analysis Guidance – see page 9.

1. Title	
Title: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places	
Directorate: Finance & Customer Services	Service area: Electoral Services
Lead person: Claire Wardle (Electoral Services Manager)	Contact number: ext 23521
Is this a:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service / Function
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If other, please specify	

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
<p>Under the Representation of the People Act, 1983, the Council has a duty to divide its area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district.</p> <p>The Electoral Administration Act, 2006, as amended, introduced a duty on all Local Authorities in Great Britain to review their polling districts and polling places at least once every five years. The Council undertook the last full compulsory review</p>

between November 2013 and December 2014. An interim review was undertaken in 2017, but a full review is required to be completed by December 2019.

The Local Government Boundary Commission carried out an electoral review of the Rotherham Borough between September 2016 and October 2017. The Rotherham (Electoral Changes) Order was made on 8th March, 2018, and the new ward boundaries will take effect at the elections in May 2020. The 2019 polling district and polling places review takes into account the impact of and the requirements for the new wards.

The Council gave public notice of the formal commencement of the review on 4th February, 2019. The consultation period for the review ran from 4 February to 26 April 2019. Public notice of the review was given, and information about the review made available on the council's website and in Customer Service Centres, Libraries and Neighbourhood Hubs. Any registered elector was entitled to make representations. As part of the review of locations, accessibility was a key criteria that was considered and the preferred options for each station are put forward on that basis.

The final proposals for polling districts and polling places are included in this report.

3. Relevance to equality and diversity

All the Council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – borough wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality and diversity.

The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.

When considering these questions think about age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, civil partnerships and marriage, pregnancy and maternity and other socio-economic groups e.g. parents, single parents and guardians, carers, looked after children, unemployed and people on low incomes, ex-offenders, victims of domestic violence, homeless people etc.

Questions	Yes	No
Could the proposal have implications regarding the accessibility of services to the whole or wider community? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect service users? <i>(Be mindful that this is not just about numbers. A potential to affect a small number of people in a significant way is as important)</i>	x	
Has there been or is there likely to be an impact on an individual or group with protected characteristics? <i>(Consider potential discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals with protected characteristics)</i>	x	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns regarding the proposal? <i>(It is important that the Council is transparent and consultation is carried out with members of the public to help mitigate future challenge)</i>	x	

Could the proposal affect how the Council's services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from commissioning or procurement)</i>	x	
Could the proposal affect the Council's workforce or employment practices? <i>(If the answer is yes you may wish to seek advice from your HR business partner)</i>		x
If you have answered no to all the questions above, please explain the reason		

If you have answered **no** to all the questions above please complete **sections 5 and 6**.

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above please complete **section 4**.

4. Considering the impact on equality and diversity

If you have not already done so, the impact on equality and diversity should be considered within your proposals before decisions are made.

Considering equality and diversity will help to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and take active steps to create a discrimination free society by meeting a group or individual's needs and encouraging participation.

Please provide specific details for all three areas below using the prompts for guidance and complete an Equality Analysis (Part B).

- **How have you considered equality and diversity?**

(think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected)

The review affects all eligible electors in Rotherham (all those people registered to vote who are aged 18 or over).

The element of the review which relates to equality is the location of polling stations and the accessibility of the premises designated for polling.

The primary considerations for a review of this kind are a requirement of electoral law and are:

- The council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, and
- The council must seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable every polling place is accessible to electors who are disabled

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key findings <i>(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)</i> The polling places proposed in this review are considered to be accessible to electors who are disabled. The proposals have no specific impact on other equality groups. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions <i>(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/reduce negative impact)</i> 	
Date to scope and plan your Equality Analysis:	n/a
Date to complete your Equality Analysis:	n/a
Lead person for your Equality Analysis (Include name and job title):	n/a

5. Governance, ownership and approval

Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening:		
Name	Job title	Date
Bal Nahal	Head of Legal Services	23/08/2019

6. Publishing

This screening document will act as evidence that due regard to equality and diversity has been given.

If this screening relates to a **Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision** a copy of the completed document should be attached as an appendix and published alongside the relevant report.

A copy of **all** screenings should also be sent to equality@rotherham.gov.uk For record keeping purposes it will be kept on file and also published on the Council's Equality and Diversity Internet page.

Date screening completed	10/7/19
Report title and date	Review of Polling Places 2019 - Final Proposals 16 September 2019
If relates to a Cabinet, key delegated officer decision, Council, other committee or a significant operational decision – report date and date sent for publication	
Date screening sent to Performance, Intelligence and Improvement equality@rotherham.gov.uk	10/7/19