Cheshire West & Chester

ELECTIONS

2026 Interim Polling Scheme Review

Commentary from Returning Officers

(Acting) Returning Officer for the Constituencies of Chester North & Neston, Chester South and Eddisbury, Ellesmere Port & Bromborough

In accordance with Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983, I have reviewed the proposed Interim Polling Scheme for Cheshire West and Chester and considered the suitability of the polling districts, polling places and polling stations included within the review.

As Returning Officer, my primary consideration is to ensure that electors across the borough are provided with reasonable and practicable facilities for voting, and that polling arrangements are capable of being delivered efficiently, safely and in an accessible way. Having considered the scheme against operational requirements and local circumstances, I am satisfied that the proposed polling scheme provides appropriate voting facilities for electors as far as is reasonably possible.

This interim review has been undertaken readiness for the May 2027 Local Elections. Where changes to polling places or polling stations are proposed, these have been carefully assessed against a range of factors. I am satisfied that the proposed polling places represent the most suitable venues currently available within the affected areas. Where alternative venues have been considered, these have either been found to be unavailable, unsuitable, less accessible, or less convenient for the majority of electors.

The proposals seek to maintain the principle that electors should be able to access polling facilities within their polling district wherever practicable, whilst ensuring that polling stations remain accessible and capable of supporting the delivery of elections in an efficient and secure manner.

I particularly welcome the opportunity presented by this review to seek views from electors, elected representatives, neighbouring authorities, disability groups and other stakeholders.

(Acting) Returning Officer for the Constituency of Tatton

The (Acting) Returning Officer confirmed that they had no objections to the proposals for the Polling Places that were within the Parliamentary Constituency of Tatton and had no further comments.

(Acting) Returning Officer for the Constituency of Runcorn and Helsby

No comments received.

Combined Authority Returning Officer for the Combined Authority of Cheshire and Warrington

Strongly agreed with the proposal's suitability, convenience, accessibility, and overall proposals in the scheme and commented the following:

The proposed changes are all sensible and should continue to provide reasonable facilities for voting for electors within those polling districts. We are supportive of a move away from portacabin-type polling stations, given the accessibility challenges they present to some voters. We are also supportive of the rationalisation of polling districts that are no longer required following boundary changes.

Where possible the CARO would discourage use of portacabin facilities where possible. However, we also appreciate that in some circumstances the use may be warranted.

These proposals and consultation exercise have been well thought out and we appreciate the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

One final administrative point - should these proposals be implemented, we would encourage the Returning Officer to ensure voters are informed of any polling station changes for May 2027 using a range of methods, including posters at "old" polling stations, messaging on polls cards or other ways the RO see fit to make voters aware of the change.

Thank you again for the invitation to make comments.