

ELECTORAL CYCLE CONSULTATION PRESS RELEASE (DRAFT)

Audit and Governance Committee 23 July 2024: Appendix B



Have your say on how often we should hold local elections

A consultation has launched inviting people to have their say on whether the current local electoral cycle in Plymouth should be overhauled.

Last year members agreed that the council would undertake a consultation asking the public for their views on whether we should continue using the current cycle of local elections or move to 'whole council' elections once every four years.

The council currently elects a third of its councillors in three out of every four years, with no elections taking place on the fourth year. Residents have the opportunity to express their view to retain this electoral cycle or to move to a 'whole council' cycle which would mean that all councillors in the city would be elected at once every four years, with no elections happening in the three years between elections, apart from potential by-elections.

The consultation provides additional information including arguments in support of both options. The deadline for feedback is: 22 September 2024.

Have your say ([Link to the consultation page](#))

Councillor Sarah Allen, Chair of Audit and Governance Committee, said: "This is a really important decision that the Council needs to take, and it is vital that we gather the views from a range of people from across the city.

"It is important that people look at the pros and cons of the two options and give us their honest views. Democracy must work in everybody's best interest. The process has to be thorough and fair so that we end up with the right system for Plymouth.

"I would encourage everyone to take part in the consultation using the online feedback form and paper copies in libraries so that councillors can understand the views of residents before making their decision."

The timing of the consultation links to a review of electoral boundaries taking place in Plymouth later this year, led by the independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

An electoral review is an examination of a Council's electoral arrangements focussed on the total number of councillors elected to the Council, the number of wards and their boundaries, the number of councillors for each ward and the name of each ward. The LGBCE will undertake their own consultation on these matters in due course, when you will have an opportunity to provide your views.

After the Council's consultation period on the electoral cycle has finished, all councillors will meet in November to consider all the feedback received and decide on whether or not to change the cycle. No other elections would be affected by any potential change to Plymouth City Council's electoral cycle. Parliamentary and Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner elections would continue with their normal electoral cycle.