

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Polling Place, Polling Districts and Polling Station alterations
Committee: City Council
Date: 27 January 2014
Cabinet Member: Councillor Peter Smith
CMT Member: Tracey Lee (Chief Executive)
Author: Nigel Spilsbury (Electoral Services Manager)
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Ref: E 3/REG
Key Decision: No
Part: I

Purpose of the report:

The City Council has a statutory duty to divide the local authority area into polling districts and to designate a polling place for each district.

This report provides a summary of the proposed changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations with a full listing at Appendix A.

The Brilliant Co-operative Council Corporate Plan 2013/14-2016/17:

This report complies with statutory obligations and requirements and supports our co-operative value of being democratic and our pioneering Plymouth objective.

Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land

There are no financial implications.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:

None directly linked to the report.

Equality and Diversity

In preparing this report and the recommendations, due regard has been given to public sector equality.

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

- I. That the Electoral Registration Officer keeps all electoral activities under constant review

Reason: In order to maintain reasonable polling facilities for voters.

2. That the alterations listed in this report are implemented from 17 February 2014: -

- A) Polling District and Polling Place BE to be merged with Polling District and Polling Place BC, with Halcyon Methodist Church allocated as the polling station

Reason: North Prospect Branch Library is due to close in 2014 and an alternative location is required.

- B) Polling District and Polling Place BG to be merged with Polling District and Polling Place BH, with St Pancras Church Hall allocated as the new polling station

Reason: This will allow a school to remain open and provide another days education. It also reduces the mobile polling unit requirement and affords a more accessible building.

Additionally by merging polling districts we are able to reduce the overall number of polling districts.

- C) The polling districts in the Ham ward will be renamed as follows with effect from 17 February 2014: -

Current Polling District Name	New Polling District Name to be allocated after 17 February 2014	Polling Station
BA	BA	Weston Mill Primary School
BB	BB	Weston Mill Oak Villa Club
BC + BE	BC	Halcyon Methodist Church
BD	BD	Mobile at Tewkesbury Close
BF	BE	Morice Baptist Church
BG + BH	BF	St Pancras Church

3. That the following is noted: -

- A) Subject to the approval of the Stoke Damerel Church Management Committee that the Stoke Damerel Centre will be used as polling station for Polling District JC instead of Stoke Damerel Primary School

Reason: To reduce the number of schools used and provide another days education.

- B) Subject to availability and approval by the Church Management Board that St Gabriel's Church replaces Peverell Methodist Church.

Reason: Current location has closed and a replacement is required.

4. That the List of Polling Places, Districts and Stations attached to this report is confirmed.

Reason: To comply with statutory requirements.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

N/A

Published work / information:

The Representation of the People Act 1983: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/2

Electoral Administration Act 2006: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/22/introduction

Background papers:

Letters and email correspondence in connection with the annual review

[illegible]

Sign off:

Fin	CDR/CorpsF DCI314 001/7.01.14	Leg	19223 /DVS	Mon Off	TH 0144	HR		Assets		IT		Strat Proc	
Originating SMT Member: Tim Howes (Assistant Director for Law, Democracy and Governance)													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the contents of the report? Yes													

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The City Council has a statutory duty to divide the local authority area into polling districts and to designate a polling place and polling station for each of the polling districts.

The City Council must also undertake a review of the polling districts and polling places within its area every four years. Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 provides that the next such review must take place in the period of 16 months from 1 October 2013.

- 1.2 This report provides a summary of proposed changes to polling districts, polling places and polling stations with a full listing for the city at Appendix A.

2.0 Timetable, Objectives and Review Definitions

- 2.1 The timetable is as follows: -

- Publication of Notice of the Review: 1 October 2013
- Consultation period: 1 October – 22 November 2013
- Publication of general reports and results: 9 December and open to inspection until 20 December
- Report to Council: 27 January 2014
- Publication of Final Report: – 3 February 2014
- Implementation of any recommendations: 17 February 2014 (Date when the Register of Electors is published)

- 2.2 General summary of Council review objectives: -

- Where practicable to have more accessible and convenient polling stations;
- Reduce the number of schools used to afford students with a further days education (in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny recommendations established in 2003);
- Use suitable buildings rather than mobile units (in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny recommendations established in 2003);
- Reduce the use of mobile polling units (or portacabins) to accord, as far as practicable, with the Disability Discrimination Acts and health and safety requirements.

- 2.3 Review definitions: -

Polling District – A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area (constituency or ward).

Polling Place – A polling place is the area in which the Returning Officer selects the polling station. In Plymouth polling places represent the same area as the polling district to allow a greater degree of flexibility in deciding where a polling station should be located.

Polling Station – The polling station is the room or building where the poll takes place.

The City Council has a statutory duty to keep polling places and polling districts under review and to authorise changes. It is the Returning Officer's role to select the polling stations.

- 2.4 A number of comments have been received outlining various suggestions for review such as suitability of permanent locations, suitability of mobile units and use of schools. A summary of the comments received is attached at Appendix B.

3.0 The Changes

3.1 Summary of the Changes requiring a Council decision

Ward / Polling Place / Polling District / Polling Station	Suggested Alterations	Ward member response
<p>Ward: Ham Polling Place/District: BC Polling Station: Halcyon Methodist Church, Dingle Road</p> <p>Polling Place/District: BE Polling Station: North Prospect Branch Library, Greatlands Crescent</p> <p>Reference: Recommendation A</p>	<p>Polling District and Polling Place BE to be merged with Polling District and Polling Place BC and Halcyon Methodist Church allocated as the polling station</p> <p>Reason: North Prospect Branch Library is due to close in 2014.</p>	<p>Agreed: 3 members</p>
<p>Ward: Ham Polling Place/District: BG Polling Station: Pennycross Primary School, Arden Grove</p> <p>Polling Place/District: BH Polling Station: Mobile unit at Polzeath Gardens</p> <p>Reference: Recommendation B</p>	<p>Polling District and Polling Place BG to be merged with Polling District and Polling Place BH and St Pancras Church Hall allocated as the polling station</p> <p>Reason: To reduce the number of schools used and to reduce the number of polling districts.</p>	<p>Agreed: 3 members</p>

As the number of polling districts in the Ham ward will be reduced polling district references will also require alteration. It is proposed that polling districts will be named as follows: -

Current Polling District Name	Polling District Name after 17 February 2014	Polling Station
BA	BA	Weston Mill Primary School
BB	BB	Weston Mill Oak Villa Club
BC + BE	BC	Halcyon Methodist Church
BD	BD	Mobile at Tewkesbury Close
BF	BE	Morice Baptist Church
BG + BH	BF	St Pancras Church

3.2 Summary of the Changes not requiring a Council decision

Ward / Polling Place / Polling District / Polling Station	Suggested Alterations	Ward member response
Ward: Stoke Polling Place/District: JB Polling Station: Stoke Damerel Primary School	Subject to the approval of the Stoke Damerel Church Management Committee; to use the Stoke Damerel Centre instead of Stoke Damerel Primary School Reason: To reduce the number of schools used.	Agreed: 2 members Not Agreed: 1 member
Ward: Peverell Polling Place/District: KA Polling Station: Peverell Methodist Church	Peverell Methodist Church is not now available. A new location has yet to be agreed. Reason: Current location has closed	Members to be consulted – report to be updated