

Report of the Assistant Director of Governance and IT

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Summary

1. This report informs Members of the review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations carried out in the city council area in response to legislation introduced by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

Background

2. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty on all local authorities to carry out a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations in their area by the end of 2007 and to carry out such a review every four years.

Aim of the Review

3. Local Authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts for the purposes of parliamentary elections and to designate polling places for these polling districts and to keep them under review.

Local Authorities must:

- Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
- Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled and when considering the designation of polling places must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

The Review Process

- 6 A local authority is required to publish notice of the holding of a review and this in York has taken the form of a notice in the local press, on the council website and writing to all interested bodies. The notice stated that the review commenced on the 1st July and invited comments and representations from interested parties and bodies.
- 7 Consultation also took place with local political parties, parish councils, disability awareness groups and local community groups.
- 8 A council web page was introduced referring to the review inviting comments. This provided further information regarding current polling arrangements and maps of current polling districts showing polling stations. A period of two months consultation ended on the 30th August.

Consultation

- 9 As part of the consultation process detailed discussions have taken place between the Electoral Services Manager and the City Council's City Development Team to discuss future housing developments and likely completions within the next four years.

- 10 Whilst there are a substantial number of housing developments planned at various sites throughout the city it is felt that only one of these would warrant the creation of a separate polling district or polling place at this current time.
- 11 In other areas it is believed that the increased electorate can be comfortably absorbed by the current polling places.

Representations Received

- 12 Compared to the review undertaken in 2007 where only two representations were received, the review undertaken this year did draw more responses. In total 20 responses were received by the Electoral Services Manager, a number were supporting current arrangements while the rest did put forward requests for alterations to voting arrangements.
- 13 Details of all responses are provided in full Table 1 in the appendix.

Options

- Option One – Members may agree to alter the polling the provision of polling arrangements detailed in Table 2 in the appendix.
- Option Two – Members may decide agree some of the alterations to the polling provisions detailed in Table 2 in the appendix.
- Option Three – Members may decide not to make any alterations to the current polling arrangements.

Corporate Objectives

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- Improve the way the Council and it's partners work together to deliver better services
- Improve our focus on the needs of customers and residents in designing and providing services

Implications

- 14 There are no financial, human resource, crime and disorder, information technology, risk management or property implications associated with this report.

Equalities

- 15 The review has considered equalities issues for each current and proposed polling station, based on the guidance provided by the Electoral Commission.

Legal

- 16 The review is necessary to meet legal requirements

Recommendation

- 17 Members are recommended to agree to Option One to alter the polling arrangements as detailed in table 2.**

Reason

In order to provide consistency in polling arrangements for the electors in polling districts outlined in table 2.

Contact Details

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Report Approved

Date

Wards Affected:

All

Yes

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

Electoral Administration Act 2006

Appendix

Table 1 – Schedule of Representations received by the Deputy Returning Officer.

Ward	Representation submitted by	Details of Representation
Acomb	Cllr Horton	Agrees with current arrangements
	Holy Redeemer Church	Happy with current arrangement for future use as a polling station for AA polling district.
Clifton	None	
Dringhouses & Woodthorpe	Cllr Reid	CA & CB polling districts to share St Edward the Confessor Church Hall as polling stations. CA polling district currently uses St. Edward the Confessor Church Hall and CB currently uses Dringhouses Primary School
	Woodthorpe Primary School	Woodthorpe Primary School not be used as a polling station for future elections to minimise disruption to children
	Liberal Democrat Group	Woodthorpe Primary School not be used as a polling station for future elections to minimise disruption to children
Fishergate	Cllr Taylor	All polling stations should be centrally located within the polling district where possible.
Guildhall	Cllr Looker	National Centre for Early Music not suitable for older electors in west part of ED polling district
	Acting Returning Officer	Provision of polling stations for EC and ED are not currently providing the best arrangements for electors.
Heworth	None	
Holgate	Holgate Methodist Church	Happy with current arrangement for future use as a polling station for GB polling district.
Hull Road	Acting Returning Officer	York Environment Centre located outside of HA polling district and not currently

		providing the best arrangements for electors.
Micklegate	Cllr Merrett	Scarcroft Primary School in JB not able to provide adequate arrangements for electors, Clements Hall located opposite may be more suitable.
	Acting Returning Officer	All Saints R.C. School on Mill Lane not able to provide adequate arrangements for electors, English Martyrs Church on Dalton Terrace may be more suitable
	All Saints R.C. School	Unable to provide venue for future elections.
Westfield	York Liberal Democrat	Use of Gateway Christian Centre as a joint polling station for AB and KE polling districts considered awkward for electors Representation for merging of KA and KC to single polling district with Westfield Primary School used as double station.
	Acting Returning Officer	Use of Gateway Christian Centre as a joint polling station for AB and KE polling districts not currently providing the best arrangements for electors. This arrangement introduced as temporary measure in 2009 with the loss of Lowfields School in KE polling district due to fire damage.
	Westfield Primary Community School	Westfield Primary Community School not be used as a polling station for future elections to minimise disruption to children
Bishopthorpe	Bishopthorpe Parish Council	Return to using Bishopthorpe Village Hall as a venue rather than St. Andrew's Church Hall for YAB and YAC polling district.
	Cllr Galvin	Return to using Bishopthorpe Village Hall which is more central for electors than St. Andrew's Village Hall
	Acting Returning Officer	Request for the Electoral Registration Officer for the merging of YAC polling district with YAB polling district to create a single polling district for Bishopthorpe Parish Council. Both polling districts currently use the same polling station

	Acting Returning Officer	Return to using Bishopthorpe Village Hall as a venue rather than St. Andrew's Church Hall for YAB and YAC polling district. The move to St. Andrew's Church Hall was a temporary measure in 2009 when the Village Hall was not available due to renovation works.
Derwent	None	
Fulford	None	
Haxby & Wigginton	None	
Heslington	Cllr Levine	Provision of polling station for Heslington East Development
	Acting Returning Officer	Request to the Electoral Registration Officer for the creation of new polling district for the Heslington East Development to allow provision of polling station for future elections
	Liberal Democrat Group	Provision of polling station for Heslington East Development
Heworth Without	Liberal Democrat Group	Number of streets in the ward are split between YFA and YFB polling districts, request that entire streets are in the same polling district to ensure best provision for electors using a single polling station
Huntington & New Earswick	New Earswick Parish Council	Happy with current arrangements for New Earswick Parish (YGD polling district)
	New Earswick Community Association	Happy with current arrangements for the Folk Hall in New Earswick for future elections for YGD polling district.
Osbalwick	Cllr Warters	Same number of streets around Meadowbank has to travel considerable distance to current polling station. Request for polling station to be located closer to these streets

Rural West York	Cllr Gillies	Consideration in reducing the number of polling stations.
Skelton, Rawcliffe and Clifton Without	None	
Strensall	None	
Wheldrake	Acting Returning Officer	<p>Provision of polling station at Deighton is not providing the best arrangements for electors.</p> <p>In 2009 the Methodist Hall closed and a mobile unit was used in pass two elections, but in different locations.</p>