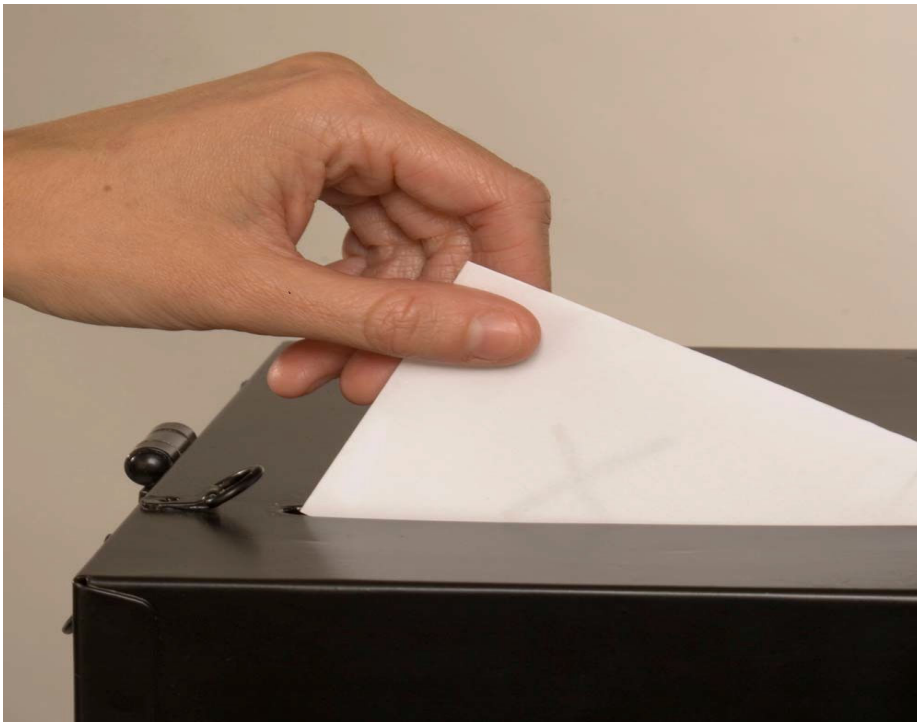


Review of Polling Districts and Places by Peterborough City Council December 2011



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty on all local authorities in Great Britain to review their Parliamentary polling districts and polling places at least once every four years. The Council's last review was undertaken in 2007.
- 1.2 Polling districts and places for local government elections are not automatically part of this review. However, reviews of local government polling arrangements should nevertheless be conducted simultaneously with a review of UK parliamentary arrangements.
- 1.3 A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts.
- 1.5 A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the (Acting) Returning Officer.
- 1.6 A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the (Acting) Returning Officer for the election.
- 1.7 Local authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts for the purpose of Parliamentary Elections, to designate polling places for these polling districts, and to keep them under review. By conducting this statutory review of polling places, local authorities must demonstrate that they have, as far as is practicable, met the following criteria set out in legislation:
 - (a) Sought to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
 - (b) Sought 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 a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled purposes.
- 1.8 Ideally Council would have a choice of a range of fully accessible buildings, conveniently located for electors in the area. However, in practice, there may be little choice available. If it is necessary to use a place where the access is not ideal then every reasonable adjustment must be undertaken to provide access for all electors.

2. PREVIOUS POLLING REVIEWS

- 2.1 A comprehensive review of the polling districts and places of the Peterborough City Council area was last undertaken in 2007 and changes were brought into effect for the Register of Electors published on 1st December 2007. This has provided a sound basis for the current review process reducing the backlog of issues that have required examination.

3. COMMENCEMENT OF REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 In early August 2011, A Polling Review Action Group was established comprising the Head of Governance, Resilience Services Manager, the Acting Electoral Services Manager and an Electoral Services Officer. Data, such as electoral figures, population statistics, planning details and current polling districts and places was collated to assist the process.
- 3.2 Notice of the review was published on 15th August 2011 and representations invited by 14th September 2011. Notice was provided on the Council's website and letters sent out to Consultees, including Politicians, neighbouring local authorities and local disability groups represented by DIAL Peterborough, Age UK, Deafblind UK and RNIB.
- 3.3 A number of factors were considered when assessing the current arrangements such as accessibility for disabled voters, location, size, transport links and suitability of venue. Good quality polling places were identified first and then used as part of the process of defining suitable

polling district arrangements that comply with the requirements set out in the legislation.

- 3.4 Peterborough City Council currently has 91 polling stations and each venue (some comprising more than one polling station) was visited by Stuart Hamilton and Mark Emson as part of the review. Officers carried out thorough checks of the facilities and documented their findings on a template, which was provided for this purpose by the Electoral Commission. The template fully addressed the needs of disabled voters focussing on, for example, designated disabled parking spaces, surface textures, dropped kerbs, door widths, door weight and lighting provisions.
- 3.5 Part of the decision-making process involved assessing if the polling place was capable of accommodating more than one polling station together with the necessary staff and equipment. Consideration was given to the most effective throughput of voters without compromising the secrecy of the ballot.
- 3.6 The majority of premises were deemed accessible to all electors, particularly those with disabilities. However, four venues were assessed as unsuitable for various reasons (set out at section 5 below).
- 3.7 Overall, it was felt that no changes were necessary to polling districts but that ongoing dialogue with Ward Councillors should be maintained in order to embrace the developing needs of the community.

4. GENERAL RESPONSES AND (ACTING) RETURNING OFFICER REPRESENTATIONS ARISING FROM INITIAL CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The consultation stage was for representations and comments on the existing and proposed arrangements. The period of consultation drew a number of recommendations, which are set out in the table below.
- 4.2 The (Acting) Returning Officer must comment on both the existing polling places and those that would likely be used as a result of the review. Her comments are also set out in the table below:

Consultee	Ward	Comments	(Acting) Returning Officer Representations
Councillor Over	Barnack	Satisfied with polling facilities within ward.	No further action required.
Sandy Burns, DIAL Peterborough	General	Requested copies of last disability access audits and to view current assessment template. Following receipt of this information, a meeting was held with Brian Tyler representative of DIAL, who was updated on progress with the review, DIAL's further involvement in the review was sought and a written update has been sent to the Group ahead of their next meeting.	No further action required.
Poll Clerk (engaged on electoral duties on Polling Day)	Bretton North	Reported no access to facilities at Eyrescroft Primary School for polling staff. Reported entrance to the school by car is difficult. Commented North Bretton has three polling stations close together and nothing	See recommended changes under paragraph 5.

		towards Bretton Centre. Requested Eyrescroft facilities be relocated to Bretton Centre.	
Councillor Serluca	Fletton and Woodston	Satisfied with the polling facilities within ward.	No further action required.
Councillor Hiller	Northborough	Suggested Newstead Farm facilities could easily be combined with Northborough Village Hall.	Existing premises inspected (Newstead Farm and Northborough Village Hall). Both considered adequate for purpose. Discussed with Councillor Hiller who has accepted the above rationale. No further action recommended at this stage.
Councillor Peach	Park	Satisfied with the polling facilities within ward. Commented in May 2011, All Saints Church Hall was divided into two [polling stations]. Suggested one area for voting at this venue, one set of electoral numbers and one set of ballot boxes to avoid confusion.	Premises inspected. Venue is large enough to accommodate two separate polling stations within one polling place without confusion (has been used for this purpose historically with no reports of errors) Other rooms within the venue can be made available if required at an additional cost. Discussed with Councillor Peach who has accepted the above rationale. No further action recommended at this stage.
Stewart Jackson MP	Paston	Suggested Paston ward should have an additional polling station provided for the benefits of new housing estate off Manor Drive in Gunthorpe. Commented that existing Polling Station at Gunthorpe Road is some distance away and across a major city arterial route (A15)	Advice sought from the Electoral Commission. It is not permissible to have two polling places serving one polling district. This is in accordance with s.16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006. On inspection, it was noted that there is a public walkway, in the form of a bridge, which allows pedestrians to cross the A15 from Manor Drive. Suggest no further action required.
D Ellis, Clerk to Glington Parish Council	Glington and Wittering	Satisfied with the polling facilities within ward.	No further action required.
B Stanojevic, Clerk to Eye Parish Council	Eye and Thorney	Commented prior to 2010, all residents of 19 and 20 and Eye Green (22) used the Manor Farm Community Centre to vote. Advised Eye Parish Council has received complaints from Eye Green residents who would	The current Polling Station at The 5 Spice Bar and Restaurant is within the Polling District whereas the Manor Farm Community Centre is not. The Electoral Commission's view is that wherever possible, a Polling Station should be located within the Polling District unless special

		prefer to vote in the Community Centre. Commented that the other consideration is the cost of two venues.	circumstances prevail. S.16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 refers. The Manor Farm Community Centre is already split into two polling stations therefore to introduce a third would not be advisable. Polling stations must be designed to allow throughput of electors without compromising the secrecy of the ballot. No further action recommended in respect of reallocating polling places at this time.
Councillor Lee	Fletton and Woodston	Satisfied with the polling facilities within ward.	No further action required.
S Smith, Clerk to Helpston Parish Council	Glinton and Wittering	Satisfied with the polling facilities within ward.	No further action required.
B Champness, Clerk to Bretton Parish Council	Bretton North and Bretton South	Satisfied with the polling facilities within ward.	No further action required.

5. VENUE CHANGES ARISING FROM THE INSPECTION OF PREMISES

5.1 Following a full review of polling places it became apparent that some venues were no longer fit for purpose. In these instances, alternative venues were identified and inspected to ensure they met the requirements of the legislation.

5.2 Details regarding new polling places are set out below:

Current Polling Place	Reference	Issues	(Acting) Returning Officer Representations
Eyrescroft Primary School	BRN2	Inadequate facilities for polling staff.	Relocate to Cresset Centre, Studio 2
St Barnabas Centre, Taverners Road	CEN2	Centre no longer available for hire as now used as school classroom.	Relocate to Gladstone Park Community Centre.
Werrington Sports Centre	NWE3	Room too small.	Relocate to Ken Stimpson School Conference Room.
Hampton College	ORH4 and ORH5	Venue no longer available.	Relocate to Hampton Vale Community Centre.

6. (ACTING) RETURNING OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Under Electoral Law, the (Acting) Returning Officer rather than the Council is responsible for the designation of polling stations. However, polling districts and polling places are fixed by the local authority and under the terms of this review, the decision regarding approving any recommendations fall to the Council.

6.2 The schedule below provides details of the polling places that are proposed as a result of this

review:

Ward	Register	Polling Place
Barnack	BAI	Bainton Reading Room
	BAR	Barnack Village Hall
	HEL	Helpston Village Hall
	SOU	Barnack Village Hall
	STM	The Spinney, First Drift, Wothorpe
	UFF	Ufford Village Hall
	WOT	The Spinney, First Drift, Wothorpe
Bretton North	BRN1	Pyramid Community Centre, Watergall, Bretton
	BRN2	The Cresset, Studio 2, Bretton Centre
	BRN3	Heltwate Special School, Heltwate
	BRN4	Tyesdale Community Centre, Tyesdale
Bretton South	BRS	Copeland Community Association, 38 Copeland, Bretton
Central	CEN1	Open Door Baptist Church, Harris Street
	CEN2	Gladstone Park Community Centre, Bourges Boulevard
	CEN3	The Beeches Primary School, Beech Avenue
	CEN4	College of Adult Education, Brook Street
Dogsthorpe	DOG1	Christ the Carpenter Church Hall, Chestnut Avenue
	DOG2	Don Bosco Centre, Our Lady of Lourdes, Cedar Grove
	DOG3	Dogsthorpe Community Centre, Poplar Avenue
	DOG4	Charteris Playcentre, Normanton Road
	DOG5	Newark Hill Primary School, Eastfield Road
East	EAS1	Saxon Community Centre, Norman Road
	EAS2	Rutland Court, Eastgate
	EAS3	Saxon Community Centre, Norman Road Parnwell
	EAS4	Parnwell Community Centre, Saltersgate
	EAS5	Parnwell Community Centre, Saltersgate

Eye & Thorney	EYE1	Manor Farm Community Centre, High Street, Eye
	THO	Community Centre, Church Street, Thorney
	EYE2	The 5 Spice Bar and Restaurant, 41 Crowland Road
Fletton & Woodston	FLE1	Queensgate Hotel, 5-7 Fletton Avenue, Fletton
	FLE2	South Grove Community Centre, Grove Street
	FLE3	Belsize Centre, Celta Road
	FLE4	Riverside Community Pavillion, Candy Street,
Glington & Wittering	AIL	Methodist Church, Ailsworth
	CAS	Castor Village Hall, Peterborough Road, Castor
	GLI	Glington Village Hall, High Street, Glington
	MAR	Marholm Village Hall
	SUT	St Michael and All Angels Church
	THH	St Andrew's Church, Thornhaugh
	UPT	St Michael and All Angels Church
	WAN	Wansford Community Hall, Peterborough Road, Wansford
	WIT	Parish Hall, Townsend Road, Wittering
Newborough	BOR	Newborough Village Hall
	NEW1	Newborough Village Hall
	NEW2	Newborough Village Hall
	PEA	Peakirk Village Hall
North	NTH1	Fulbridge School, Keeton Road
	NTH2	Bluebell Meeting Hall, Bluebell Avenue
Northborough	DEE	Newstead Farm, Deeping St James Road, Deeping Gate
	ETT	The Golden Pheasant Inn (Marquee), Main Road, Etton
	MAX	Maxey Village Hall
	NOR	Northborough Village Hall, Cromwell Close

Orton With Hampton	ORH1	Botolph Arms, 465 Oundle Road
	ORH2	Hampton Hargate Community Room, Hargate Way
	ORH3	Hampton Hargate Community Room, Hargate Way
	ORH4	Hampton Vale Community Centre, West Lake Avenue
	ORH5	Hampton Vale Community Centre, West lake Avenue
Orton Longueville	ORL1	The Great Room Orton Hall Hotel
	ORL2	Goldhay Community Centre, 105 Paynels
	ORL3	Lounge 2, Herlington Community Centre, Orton Malborne
	ORL4	Goldhay Community Centre, 105 Paynels
Orton Waterville	ORW1	Orton Waterville Village Hall, Glebe Avenue,
	ORW2	Matley Community Centre, Orton Brimbles
	ORW3	Christ Church Hall, 2 Benstead, Orton Goldhay
	ORW4	Wistow Community Centre, Napier Place
Park	PAR1	All Saints Church Hall, Park Road
	PAR2	Former St George's School, Lawn Avenue
	PAR3	Madeley House, The King's School, 201 Park Road
Paston	PAS1	Paston & Gunthorpe Community Centre, Halfields Lane
	PAS2	Family Contact Centre, 128 Gunthorpe Road
	PAS3	Newton Hall, Stowe Hill Road, Off Paston Ridings
	PAS4	Honeyhill Community and Children's Centre, Chadburn
Ravensthorpe	RAV1	St John's Hall, Mayors Walk
	RAV2	Highlees Primary School, Ashton Road
	RAV3	Stafford Hall, Hampton Court, Westwood
Stanground Central	STC1	Southfields Community Centre, Southfields Avenue
	STC2	Stanground St John's Primary School, Chapel Street
	STC3	St Michael's Church, Mace Road
	STC4	The Fleet Complex, Fleet Way

Stanground East	STE	Residents Lounge, Nelson Place, Havelock Drive
Walton	WAL1	Walton Community Centre, Mountsteven Avenue
	WAL2	Paston and Gunthorpe Community Centre, Hallfields Lane
Werrington North	NWE1	Loxley Community Centre, Loxley
	NWE2	Hodgson Community Centre, Hodgson Avenue
	NWE3	Ken Stimpson School Conference Room, Staniland Way
Werrington South	SWE1	Werrington Village Centre, Church Street
	SWE2	The Way Church, The Green
	SWE3	Sports Pavilion, Campbell Drive, Gunthorpe
West	WES1	St Andrews Urc Church Hall, Ledbury Road, Netherton
	WES2	St Botolph's Church, Thorpe Road
	WES3	West Town School, Williamson Avenue
	WES4	Ramada Hotel, Thorpe Meadows

6. FUTURE CONSIDERATION

- 6.1 Between formal reviews, all polling places and stations used should be kept under consideration, and an evaluation of their suitability carried out after each election. If any changes are identified as being desirable, the same principles behind conducting the formal review should be applied. Should any changes to polling places be required, then they could be implemented as described above.