

Cheltenham Borough Council
Council – 10 October, 2011
Review of Polling Districts, Places and Stations
Report of the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO)

Accountable member	Cabinet Member Corporate Services, Councillor Colin Hay
Accountable officer	Chief Executive, Andrew North
Accountable scrutiny committee	Economy and Business Improvement
Ward(s) affected	All with specific impact on College and Up Hatherley Wards
Key Decision	Yes
Executive summary	<p>The council has a statutory duty to review its polling stations, polling districts and polling places every four years.</p> <p>A consultation exercise has been completed and consideration has been given to the views put forward.</p>
Recommendations	<p>That the following changes to polling districts, places and stations be approved:</p> <p>College Ward, Polling District FB – change from Naunton Park Primary School, Naunton Lane to Emmanuel Church, Fairfield Parade</p> <p>Up Hatherley Ward, West Ward of the Parish of Up Hatherley – move Broad Oak Way and Caernarvon Close from Polling District SA to Polling District SB</p> <p>Up Hatherley Ward, West Ward of the Parish of Up Hatherley – move 2-8 Coombe Glen Lane, Hollis Road and Hollis Gardens from Polling District SA to Polling District SC</p> <p>Up Hatherley Ward, West Ward of the Parish of Up Hatherley – move 315 to 365 Hatherley Road from Polling District SA to Polling District SC</p> <p>Up Hatherley Ward, West Ward of the Parish of Up Hatherley – move 15-25 and 22-36 Montgomery Road from Polling District SA to Polling District SC</p> <p>Up Hatherley Ward, West Ward of the Parish of Up Hatherley – move 4-8 Greatfield Lane from Polling District SB to Polling District SC</p> <p>That the full list of polling districts, polling places and polling stations as set out in appendix 6 and 7 is published for a further period of six weeks, during which time individuals have the right to make representations to the Electoral Commission.</p>

Financial implications	<p>There are no financial implications. All changes can be met from existing election budgets.</p> <p>Contact officer: Andrew Sherbourne, andrew.sherbourne@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264337</p>
Legal implications	<p>The statutory process to be followed as referred to in the report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Peter Lewis, peter.lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272012</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>There are no HR implications.</p> <p>Contact officer: Julie McCarthy, E-mail: julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk, Tel no: 01242 264355</p>
Key risks	<p>There is a risk that individuals who have been used to voting in one area are unable to locate the polling station or go to the incorrect polling place. The council issues poll cards which will give the new location on the card.</p>
Corporate and community plan Implications	<p>There are no community and corporate plan implications</p>
Environmental and climate change implications	

1. Background

- 1.1 The Parliamentary Elections Regulations 2006 requires each local authority to carry out a review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations every four years. The reason for the review is to ensure that all electors in the Cheltenham Borough Council area have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable and to ensure that polling stations are accessible to all electors, including those with special needs. The Acting Returning Officers for Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Parliamentary Constituencies (for the areas within the Borough of Cheltenham) have made formal comment as part of this review, both into the existing polling stations and the polling stations that would probably be used based on the newly recommended polling places.
- 1.2 **What is not being reviewed** – The Cheltenham or Tewkesbury Parliamentary Constituency, Gloucestershire County Council Electoral Division, Cheltenham Borough Council Ward, Parish Ward boundaries.

2. Responses from interested parties

- 2.1 Following the closing date for the review, as well as the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Parliamentary Acting Returning Officer's formal comments (see paragraph 3 below), correspondence was received from two other sources.
- 2.2 The first correspondence was from a registered elector in Polling District JC. He was concerned about some community safety issues and the general environment around St. Michaels Cornerstone Centre and has suggested that the Electoral Registration Officer changes the Polling Station from St. Michaels Cornerstone Centre, 1 Severn Road to either Berkhamstead School or Cheltenham Town Football Club. See plan 'A' attached. Berkhamstead School is situated outside of the polling district JC and at present have not confirmed availability. Cheltenham Town Football Club (CTFC) would not be able to accommodate a polling station. The CTFC fixture list is not under their control and games can be played on Thursday nights.
- 2.3 St. Michaels Cornerstone Centre is located in the centre of the Polling District. Therefore, as the Elections Office has not received any previous complaints from electors in this polling district or have any records of any incidents either in or surrounding the polling station, the existing polling station will remain.
- 2.4 The second correspondence was from Councillor Roger Whyborn and Councillor Andrew McKinlay, with regard to Up Hatherley Ward, West Ward of the Parish of Up Hatherley, Polling Districts SA, SB and SC, with the following suggestions:-
 - Broad Oak Way and Caernarvon Close are nearer to Hillview Community Centre (SB) than Lakeside Primary School (SA), move from SA to SB.
 - 2 – 8 Coombe Glen Lane, Hollis Road and Hollis Gardens are nearer to Up Hatherley Village Hall, Cold Pool Lane (SC) than Lakeside Primary School (SA), move from SA to SC.
 - More of Hatherley Road should go from SA to SC with suggested break point at Coombe Glen Lane, move 315 – 365 Hatherley Road from SA to SC.

- Remove arbitrary split in SA/SC in Montgomery Road, move 15 – 25 and 22 – 36 Montgomery Road from SA to SC
 - 4 – 8 Greatfield Lane nearer to Up Hatherley Village Hall (SC) than Hillview Community Centre (SB), move from SB to SC.
- 2.5** Plan B attached shows the locations of the polling stations and suggested roads and streets. Following the implementation of the new Parliamentary Constituency boundaries in 2010 there is no reason why these changes cannot be made.

3. Responses from the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Acting Returning Officers (ARO)

- 3.1** A full list of the Cheltenham Constituency polling stations is set out at appendix C and the Tewkesbury Constituency polling stations at appendix D along with the AROs' comments. There is one proposed change as set out below.
- 3.2 College Ward, Polling District FB** – Over the past ten years the school has requested moving the polling station to a new venue. The venue is suitable as a polling station and there have not been any complaints about its use but it does cause disruption to the school. Until now there has not been a suitable alternative but Emmanuel Church in Fairfield Parade now has seating which can be removed. The building is more than adequate to house a polling station and has very good disabled access through the main entrance and has its own parking which can be utilised. It is proposed that the polling station will change from Naunton Park Primary School, Naunton Lane to Emmanuel Church, Fairfield Parade.

4. Consultation and feedback

- 4.1** An extensive consultation exercise was carried out and proposals and comments on the proposed review were requested. Comments were requested from the following:
- Local MPs
 - Cheltenham Borough Councillors
 - Gloucestershire County Councillors
 - Party Election Agents
 - Parish Councils
 - Various Disabled/Neighbourhood Projects etc.

A copy of this report was sent to the respective ward councillors and also to the clerk of Up Hatherley parish council so that they are aware of the proposals and any comments will be fed back at the meeting.

5. Performance management –monitoring and review

- 5.1** The electoral team always undertake an informal review of polling stations after each election to identify any issues which may arise from time to time.

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Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Risk Assessment2. Plan A map for Polling District JC3. Plan B map for Polling Districts SA,SB,SC4. ARO comments Cheltenham5. ARO comments Tewkesbury6. Cheltenham list for publication7. Tewkesbury list for publication

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	I	L	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	Any risks associated with equality impact										
	Any environmental risks										
	Elector unsure of location of Polling Station	Director of Commissioning	19 September	1	1	2	A	Poll Card with note highlighting change of Polling Station. Helpline number on poll card.	from next election	Electoral registration manager	Divisional risk register