

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Chief Executive

TO: Civic Affairs Committee

29/01/2014

WARDS: All wards

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. For electoral purposes, the council is required to divide each parliamentary constituency in the area into polling districts for parliamentary elections and to designate polling places for each of those polling districts. The polling place may be a building or a defined area in which a polling station will be located. The Acting Returning Officer is responsible for designating the location of the polling station.
- 1.2. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a change to the timing of the review of polling arrangements and it is required that the next review must be completed by 31 January 2015. The current review was brought forward to avoid a conflict with the work required for the introduction of Individual Electoral Registration in June 2014.
- 1.3. An introductory report was placed before committee and considered on 19 September 2013, detailing the review and consultation process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the committee approve changes to the current polling district arrangements (as laid out in appendix 1) as a result of the consultation, which ended on 22 November 2013 and recommendations made by officers.

2.2. That all changes be implemented for the next publication of the revised register on 17 February 2014.

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1. Each local authority in Great Britain is responsible for reviewing polling districts and polling places in its area. The Civic Affairs Committee has been delegated this function.

3.2. Responsibility for deciding how many polling stations are required for each polling place lies with the Acting Returning Officer for Parliamentary elections, who must allocate electors to the polling stations in such a manner as they think most convenient.

3.3. The last review of polling districts, places and stations in Cambridge was completed on 1 December 2010.

3.4. Public notice of the review was given on 1 October 2013, with a timetable as follows:

Preliminary report to Civic Affairs	19 September 2013
Publish notice of the review	11 October 2013
Consultation responses to be made by	22 November 2013
Final recommendations to Civic Affairs	29 January 2014
Changes made to Register of Electors	17 February 2014

3.5. In considering any proposals to change the polling districts or polling places, two key factors must be addressed in the reasoning given for the change to or maintaining the status quo:

- The reasonable requirements of the electors in the constituency, and
- The accessibility for disabled persons to the probable polling stations within the polling place.

4. **CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

4.1 Notice of the consultation was advertised and posted on the council website and via social media. The following interested parties were also informed of the consultation: City and County Councillors, MP's local community groups, disabled groups and local political parties.

4.2 The following responses were received by the deadline of 22 November 2013:

Name	Status	Response (abridged)	Officer Comment
Jean Hunter	Acting Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Constituency (covering Queen Edith's ward)	I am happy for you to continue to use the current established polling districts and polling places.	
Cllr. Zoe Moghadas	City Councillor for Romsey ward	To raise the query of the positioning of a third polling station in Romsey as accessibility for residents on the outskirts of Romsey to the current location is not suitable.	Polling stations are the responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer and a third polling station would require the creation of a third polling district. This has been addressed in the recommendations at appendix 1.
Cllr. Lewis Herbert	City Councillor for Coleridge ward	To approach St. Stephen's church again as an alternative for some residents in Romsey who have approached me about the location of their polling station.	Polling stations are the responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer and a third polling station would require the creation of a third polling district. This has been addressed in the recommendations at appendix 1.
Cllr. Colin Rosenstiel	City Councillor for Market ward	Looking at the current set of polling districts it is clear that the generally optimal arrangement is for each ward to be split into three. Wards that are split into two districts can cause inefficiency because each can need to be	The electorate figures do not support a split of all wards into three. Taking into account the potential placement of boundaries, the equality of the electorate cannot be sufficiently equalised to provide for three

		split into two stations at General Elections at least. The exceptions are Market & Romsey which have sufficiently uneven splits, allowing three stations at all elections.	polling districts across all wards. There would still need to be four stations in many cases. Taking into account ease of access by the electorate, the location of a suitable polling station is also a barrier to adequately rearranging all wards into three. The administration of a split polling station is not complicated and common practice across many local authorities. Where it has been possible and logical to do so (and taking into account other representations received), such recommendations are included in appendix 1.
Cllr. Richard Johnson	City Councillor for Abbey ward	I would like to request that Jack Warren Green and Loughton Close from the AA polling district to the AB polling district.	This will address the proximity of the current polling station and is included in recommendations at appendix 1.
Cllr. Jean Swanson	City Councillor for Queen Edith's ward	I think that the present arrangements are probably the best available.	
Cllr. Sian Reid	City Councillor for Newnham ward	Newnham city councillors are concerned about the suitability of a polling	Polling stations are the responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer, however,

		station for IA and would like to see a more centrally located site. Those used in May 2013 and November 2012 were either too remote or too small for a combined election.	suitable alternatives have been scouted and are suggested at appendix 1.
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- 4.3 The above responses have been taken into account with the recommended boundary changes at appendix 1.
- 4.4 In my capacity as the (Acting) Returning Officer, I need to ensure we balance any proposal put forward with the convenience and accessibility for the elector. The small number of comments received in this consultation reflects that the polling districts are on the whole adequate. We do need to keep polling districts under review however, to ensure new residential development across the city is taken into account. I will also ensure that the location of polling stations is suitable, given the availability of such buildings.

5 CONCLUSION OF THE REVIEW

- 5.1 The council must agree final proposals for the polling districts and polling places, taking account of any representations received. The final proposals then have to be placed on public deposit, together with copies of all correspondence and representations relating to the review. The reasons for the choice of every polling district and polling place must be given; these do not have to be too detailed but should show how accessibility issues were considered.
- 5.2 The register must then be altered to show the changes in polling districts. If the changes have been agreed before the publication of the revised register then the alteration can wait until that time. Otherwise alterations will be made by the publication of another revised register, giving public notice of the fact.
- 5.3 Following the conclusion of the local authority's review, individuals have a right to make representations to the Electoral Commission. Representations to the Commission should be made within six weeks of the publication date of the finalised review. The Commission will only consider representations that the review process has not been conducted correctly.

- 5.4 Should the Commission's decision be to alter a polling district, the Electoral Registration Officer would need to republish its electoral register to incorporate the new changes.
- 5.5 In accordance with the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Commission may direct the local authority to consider alterations to the polling places, as the Commission deems necessary under the review. After two months, if the local authority has failed to make the alterations the Commission is empowered by the Act to make the alterations themselves as if the local authority had implemented them.

6 **IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Financial Implications**

Each year there may be changes in the total cost for polling stations depending on the chosen venues. With the recommended extra polling stations in this report there will be an increase in costs and also an increase in staff costs to run the stations on polling day.

(b) **Staffing Implications**

There are no staffing implications.

(c) **Equal Opportunities Implications**

An Equality Impact Assessment for elections is attached at appendix b.

(d) **Environmental Implications**

This report has a NIL climate change impact.

(e) **Procurement**

No procurement is required for this project.

(f) **Consultation and communication**

As indicated above (paragraph 4.1) public notice of the review was given and all relevant stakeholders informed of the consultation period.

(g) **Community Safety**

There are no community safety implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS: The following are the background papers that were used in the preparation of this report:

- Electoral Commission guidance on conducting a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations. (Published August 2013)
- Equality Impact Assessment for elections.
- Full text of all consultation responses.

To inspect these documents contact Vicky Breading on extension 7057.

The author and contact officer for queries on the report is Vicky Breading, Electoral Services Manager on extension 7057.

Report file:

Date originated: 15 January 2014

Date of last revision: 15 January 2014

Cambridge City Council
Polling Districts, Polling Stations & Electorate*

Abbey		
AA ⁺	Barnwell Baptist Church, Howard Road	3,104
AB	East Barnwell Youth Centre, Newmarket Road	1,911
AC	River Lane Community Room, River Centre	1,734

Arbury		
BA [^]	Good Shepherd Church Hall, Mansel Way	3,810
BB [^]	St. Luke's Church Centre, Victoria Road	3,013

Castle		
CA [^]	St. Augustine's Church, Richmond Road	3,899
CB	Castle End Mission, St. Peter's Street	2,637

Cherry Hinton		
DA	St. Andrew's Church Centre, Cherry Hinton	1,902
DB [^]	Cherry Hinton Village Centre, Colville Road	3,111
DC	St. Philip Howard Church Centre, Walpole Road	1,356

Coleridge		
EA	St. Martin's Church Hall, Suez Road	2,512
EB	Lichfield Hall, Lichfield Road	2,575
EC	St. Thomas' Church Hall, Ancaster Way	1,407

East Chesterton		
FA	Scout Centre, Logan's Way	1,894
FB	Chesterton Methodist Church, Green End Road	2,728
FC	Brownsfield Centre, Green End Road	2,050

King's Hedges		
GA ⁺	Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road	3,313
GB ⁺	North Arbury Chapel, Cameron Road	2,997

Market		
HA	New site TBC – St. Columba's, Downing Street	1,844
HB [^]	Wesley Church Buildings, King Street	4,586

Newnham		
IA ⁺	No fixed location	2,969
IB	St. Mark's Church Community Centre, Barton Road	2,712
IC	Fisher Hall, Guildhall Place	968

Petersfield		
JA [^]	St. Matthew's Church Hall, St. Matthew's Street	2,673
JB [^]	Salvation Army Hall, Tenison Road	3,297

Queen Edith's		
KA ^{^#}	St. John The Evangelist, Hills Road	3,394
KB ^{^#}	St. James' Church, Wulfstan Way	3,227

Romsey		
LA [^]	Ross Street Community Centre, Ross Street	4,097
LB	Romsey Mill, Hemingford Road	2,281
LC	New site to be confirmed	

Trumpington		
MA ⁺	Christian Science Church, Panton Street	3,188
MB	Trumpington Village Hall	2,897
MC	New site to be confirmed	

West Chesterton		
NA ⁺	Milton Road Library, Ascham Road	3,256
NB ⁺	St. Laurence's Catholic Church, Milton Road	2,993

**Electorate as at 1 September 2013*

^ Indicates polling station is split into two stations at all elections

+ Indicates polling station is split into two stations at Parliamentary elections

Polling district in South Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Constituency

Changes to Abbey Ward

There is no proposal to change any of the polling station locations in Abbey ward.

	Current Properties	Curent Electorate	Average electors per property	Proposed Properties	Estimated Electorate
<u>Abbey</u>					
AA	1,888	3,092	1.6	1,784	2,854
AB	1,132	1,913	1.7	1,236	2,101
AC	1,194	1,725	1.4	1,194	1,672
	4,214	6,730		4,214	6,627

Roads moving from AA to AB		No. of houses
		104
Newmarket Road	Cemetary Lodge	1
Jack Warren Green		93
Loughton Court		10

Changes to Market Ward

No boundary changes are recommended to Market ward, however since the refurbishment of Fisher Hall, it is acknowledged that the building is no longer suitable for a double polling station and it is therefore planned to relocate the HA polling station to its own site. The hall at St. Columba's in Downing Street has been used previously and is suggested as an alternative suitable site.

Changes to Newnham Ward

No boundary changes are recommended to Newnham ward, however the siting of a polling station in IA has become increasingly difficult in recent years. A station located at Trinity Old Field site in Grange Road has been agreed in principle, however, disable access must be addressed before the site can be confirmed. We are currently in discussion with Trinity regarding alterations to the building, but if this cannot be resolved, we will revert to using a portable unit on the site of the Rugby Ground in Grange Road.

Changes to Romsey Ward

The creation of a new polling district requires a third polling location to be found. The suggested site of St. Stephens Church Hall is unfortunately unavailable due to extensive building work planned over the coming months. A secondary site has been identified at a hall in Vinery Road, belonging to St. Phillip's parish and we are again awaiting a site visit to be agreed.

	Current Properties	Current Electorate	Average electors per property	Proposed Properties	Estimated Electorate
<u>Romsey</u>					
LA	2,662	4,093	1.5	1,506	2,259
LB	1,497	2,266	1.5	1,843	2,765
LC (new)	0	0	1.5	810	1,215
	4,159	6,359		4,159	6,239

LA - Romsey 1		
Proposed Streets		
Street	No's if split with other PD	No. of houses
		1,506
Alfred Court		6
Antwerp Cottages, Thoday Street		6
Bill Briggs Court		10
Brampton Road		128
Burgundy Court		4
Catharine Street	75 - 165 & 66 - 164	109
Cavendish Place		24
Cavendish Road	89 - 133 & 50 - 96	50
Coldhams Lane	93 - 157 & 150 - 222	62
Cromarty Place		7
Cromwell Road		135
Fairfax Road		41
Hampden Gardens		96
Hemingford Road	61 - 129 & 52 - 112	59
Pym Court		125
Romsey Road		37
Ross Street	61 - 249 & 64 - 250	165
St.Philips Road	3 - 95a	48
Sedgwick Street	73 - 133 & 58 - 150	68
Stourbridge Grove		69
The Terrace		16
Thoday Street	63 - 167 & 72 - 190	112
Tom Amey Court		9
Vinery Road	49 - 93	21
Wetenhall Road		15
Winstanley Court		84

LB - Romsey 2		
Proposed Streets		
Street	No's if split with other PD	No. of houses
		1,843
Alfred Court		6
Argyle Street		133
Ashtead Court		10
Belgrave Road		45
Campbell Street		16
Catharine Street	1 - 71 & 6 - 64	65
Cavendish Court		11
Cavendish Road	1 - 87 & 2 - 48	78
Charles Street		24
Cockburn Street		42
Coleridge Road		21
Cyprus Road		46
David Street		15
Denham Place		16
Fletcher's Terrace		2
Great Eastern Street		86
Greville Road		86
Hemingford Road	1 - 55 & 2 - 50	50
Hobart Road		45
Hope Street		48
Madras Road		39
Malta Road		47
Marmora Road		20
Mill Road		195
Millcroft Court		37
Montreal Road		11
Montreal Square		20
Redmond Court		6
Romsey Mews		10
Romsey Terrace		34
Rosina Court		5
Ross Street	1 - 59 & 2 - 62	60
Rustat Road		2
Ruth Bagnall Court		72
School Court		30
Sedgewick Court		4
Sedgewick Street	1 - 71 & 2 - 56	53
St. Philips Road		35
Stockwell Street		51
Suez Road		57
Swanns Terrace		7
The Broadway		8
Thoday Street	1 - 39 & 2 - 70	56
Unity Court		5
Viney Road	1 - 47 & 2 - 16	31
William Smith Close		103

LC - Romsey 3		
Proposed Streets		
Street	No's if split with other PD	No. of houses
		810
An Lac House		11
Brook House, Seymour St.		1
Brookfields		61
Brooks Road		86
Burnside		20
Coldham's Grove		18
Coldhams Lane	159 - 275 & 224 - 326	106
Danesbury Court		16
Janes Court, Seymour St.		34
Millbrook House, Seymour St.		4
Natal Road		48
Nuttings Road		41
Perne Road		3
Seymour Street		90
The Paddocks		36
Trefoil Terrace		6
Uphall Road		12
Vinery Park		10
Vinery Road	93a - 161 & 62 - 172	99
Vinery Way		6
Vinery Way		16
Waters Almshouses, Seymour St.		6
Wycliffe Road		80

Changes to Trumpington Ward

There is no proposed change to the current polling stations, however the creation of a third polling district would need a third polling location. Currently, a new site has been scouted at the Brethren's Meeting House on Shelford Road and a site visit is currently being arranged to ascertain its suitability.

	Current Properties	Current Electorate	Average electors per property	Proposed Properties	Estimated Electorate
<u>Trumpington</u>					
MA	2,459	3,200	1.3	2,264	2,943
MB	2,735	2,819	1.0	1,648	2,142
MC (new)	0	0	1.3	1,282	1,667
	5,194	6,019		5,194	6,752

Roads moving from MA to MB	If not all, list properties	No. of Houses
		195
Bentley Road		34
Diamond Close		9
Newton Road		51
Queensway		79
Rayleigh Close		9
Trumpington Road	5 - 27 & 20	13

Roads moving from MB to MC (new)	If not all, list properties	OUT
		1,282
Addenbrooks Road		119
Allen Court		6
Banner Road		9
Bishops Road		149
Brambles (The)		6
Chaplen Street		30
Consort Avenue		100
Corn Lane		10
Cornwell Road		25
Cranleigh Close		19
Craven Close		10
Ellis Road		49
Exeter Close		18
Forty Acre Road		17
Glanville Road		12
Glebe Farm Drive		56
Hauxton Road		33
Hobson Road		0
Huntsman Road		24
Kestrel Rise		25
Kingfisher Gardens		41
Lantree Crescent		51
Lapwing Avenue		0
Martin Road		6
Merryvale		3
One Tree Road		6
Osprey Drive		21
Partridge Close		10
Piper Road		11
Proctor Drive		9
Rialto Close		11
Royal Way		91
Shelford Road		151
Showground Close		14
Showground Road		0
Skylark Road		19
Spinney Road		16
Spring Drive		95
Tebbit Street		6
Whittington Road		4