

Item

Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

To:

Civic Affairs Committee 9 October 2019

Report by:

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Wards affected:

All wards

1. Introduction / Executive Summary

1.1. Under the Electoral Administration Act 2013 a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations must be conducted every five years. The next compulsory review must be completed by 31 January 2020.

1.2. The review is further necessary due to changes in the city ward boundaries that take effect at the next city council elections in May 2020.

1.3. Definition of terms:

- A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a parliamentary constituency. In practice, the same polling district boundaries are used at all elections.
- A polling place is the building or area in which a polling station is situated.

- A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places, which are set by the local authority, the (Acting) Returning Officer for the election selects polling stations.
- 1.4. Each local authority in Great Britain is responsible for reviewing polling districts and polling places in its area. The Civic Affairs Committee is delegated this function.
 - 1.5. Changes to the polling district boundaries will come into force at the next publication of the register of electors, scheduled for 1 December 2019. However, if any election is called before that date then the publication will be delayed to 3 February 2020 and the new polling district boundaries will come into effect on that date instead.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve the changes to polling districts in Cambridge as laid out in the attached maps at Appendix A.
- 2.2. That the polling place for each polling district is the polling district boundary, unless otherwise stated in Appendix B.

3. Background

- 3.1. The last polling district review was conducted in 2017 as an interim review following changes made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to the Cambridgeshire county division boundaries.
- 3.2. The changes made by the LGBCE to the county division areas mean that the 12 divisions are no longer coterminous with the 14 city wards.
- 3.3. A review of the current polling district arrangements commenced on 16 July 2019, with a seven-week consultation period that ended on 4 September 2019.
- 3.4. As is required the Acting Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire District Council was consulted on that part of the city that sits within the South Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Constituency, i.e. Queen Edith's city ward. They are content with the current polling station arrangements.

3.5. The consultation was published on the council website and comments were sought from the following:

- Elected representatives
- Electors
- Acting Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire DC (for Queen Edith's ward only)
- Interested persons and bodies with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people.

3.6. 11 responses were received to the consultation as follows, and summarised by ward:

Ward	Comments	Response
Abbey	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	<p>All the current polling stations will be retained under the proposed scheme.</p> <p>Polling district ADJ has been created following the inclusion of St. Matthew's Gardens into Abbey Ward after the LGBCE review. The River Lane Centre will accommodate ACA and ADJ under the proposed scheme.</p>
Arbury	Create a new polling district Garden Walk and Bateson Road. Possibly look at Chesterton Community College. Retain Good Shepherd Church Hall for BAB. Use St. Augustine's Church for CAB if Mayfield School is not an option, or Good Shepherd	A new polling district (BDF) has been created for the Garden Walk and Bateson Road area which is now in Arbury Ward and Chesterton Division. This area is near St. Luke's Church which will be designated at the polling place for BDF.

	Church if it needs to be in the Ward. - Cambridge Labour Party	CAB no longer exists as this area, formerly in Castle Ward, is now in Arbury Ward forming part of a new polling district BCB. Roseford Chapel, Perse Way will be explored as a possible new polling place to accommodate BCB.
Castle	Retain current polling stations while exploring Storey's Field Centre for Eddington. - Cambridge Labour Party Recommendation for residents in Storey's Way to be moved into CEI to allow nearby electors to vote at the Seminar Rooms in Churchill College. - Hugh Taylor	The polling scheme has been revised so that Storey's Field Centre could be used to site a polling station for the residents in Eddington (CAC). Polling district CEI falls into Castle Ward and Newnham Division. Residents in Storey's Way are in Castle Ward, but also Castle Division. A polling district cannot contain multiple electoral areas, therefore CEI cannot be expanded in this way. A new polling district has been created which will allow nearby residents to use the Seminar Rooms.
Cherry Hinton	To balance the electorate to allow St. Philip Howard Church	As Cherry Hinton Ward is no longer coterminous with the

	to be used as a polling place for nearby residents. - Cambridge Labour Party	county division, an additional polling district has been created which will allow residents near St. Philip Howard Church to vote here. St. Philip Howard Church will accommodate both DCD and DDK.
Coleridge	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	All existing polling stations in Coleridge Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.
East Chesterton	Move polling station for FAF to St. Andrew's Hall which is far more accessible and central to the polling district. - Cambridge Labour Party	St. Andrew's Hall will be explored as a possible polling place, subject to availability.
King's Hedges	Retain Arbury Community Centre and North Arbury Chapel. Continue use of Arbury Court Library for what is currently polling district NDG. - Cambridge Labour Party.	Both Arbury Community Centre and North Arbury Chapel will be retained under the proposed scheme. Polling district NDG, formerly in West Chesterton Ward, is now in King's Hedges and forms part of GCG. The proposed scheme will use Arbury Community Centre for GCG. Polling district NDG

		<p>has been deleted under the proposed scheme.</p> <p>New polling district GAB will use Arbury Court Library under the proposed scheme.</p>
Market	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	All existing polling stations in Market Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.
Newnham	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	All existing polling stations in Newnham Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.
Petersfield	St. Matthew's Gardens, New Street and the top of York Street to use the same polling station as ACA. - Cambridge Labour Party	As above, polling district ADJ which covers this area will use The River Centre as its polling place.
Queen Edith's	<p>Request to relocate from St. James Church in Queen Edith's Ward due to lack of provision for tellers. - John Beresford</p> <p>Commented that St. John the Evangelist and St. James Church are in excellent locations in Queen Edith's Ward. - Chris Rand</p>	There are a limited number of venues in Queen Edith's Ward to use as a polling place. St. James Church is in a convenient location for the local electorate. Not all polling places in Cambridge are large enough to accommodate tellers. Accessibility and convenience to electors take priority in choosing a polling

		<p>place.</p> <p>St. John the Evangelist and St. James Church will continue to be used under the proposed polling scheme.</p>
Romsey	<p>Confirmed Ross Street Community Centre is suitable as a polling station. - Allan Brigham</p> <p>Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party</p>	<p>All existing polling stations in Romsey Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.</p>
Trumpington	<p>Comments and suggestions were received for the polling arrangements in Trumpington Ward from Cambridge Labour Party, James Hems and Philippa Slatter.</p> <p>The consensus agreed that an additional polling station at the new Clay Farm Centre to accommodate the growing population of Trumpington Ward would be desirable.</p> <p>Considerations were made with regards to proximity of the Centre to the electorate in the</p>	<p>In addition to Trumpington Village Hall, the Clay Farm Centre will be used as polling station under the new polling scheme, as has always been the intent.</p> <p>The polling districts in Trumpington Ward have been revised to allow for this to happen, taking into consideration the comments received regarding accessibility and convenience to the local residents.</p> <p>Warding arrangements falls outside the scope of the polling district</p>

	<p>new Trumpington development and accessibility of the Centre by car, public transport, cycling or on foot.</p> <p>A suggestion had been received to split Trumpington Ward into two separate wards with councillors for each new ward. - Andrew Conway Morris.</p>	<p>review.</p>
West Chesterton	<p>Use St. Laurence's Catholic Church for NCF. To use Milton Road Library rather than the Polonia Club for location and accessibility. For the same reasons, use St. Luke's instead of the New Chesterton Institute. Magdalene College and Magdalene Street to use Castle Street Methodist Church. – Cambridge Labour Party</p> <p>The Parish Room, St. Laurence's Catholic Church location is very satisfactory with good accessibility. - Sasha Wilson</p>	<p>The proposed scheme will continue to use St. Laurence's Catholic church for polling district NCF. Milton Road Library will also be explored to accommodate polling district NAB.</p> <p>The New Chesterton Institute will continue to be used as a polling place to accommodate NBC as well as the Polonia Club for NDF as the proposed scheme as they are located within their suggested polling districts. Access arrangements will be reviewed, and alterations explored.</p>

		Polling district NEH has been created for Magdalene College, Magdalene Street and part of Northampton Street. Castle Street Methodist Church is the proposed location for this polling district under the scheme.
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- 3.7. There are currently 45 polling districts within the Cambridge city area. The movement of ward boundaries has necessitated the creation of new polling districts, to fall in line with existing county division and the 2020 city ward boundaries. The new scheme has 52 polling districts in total, so an increase of seven from the current arrangements.
- 3.8. The creation of new polling districts means that some electors will be allocated to different polling stations. These electors will be provided with additional information, during the issue of poll cards, to alert them to the new location of their allocated station.
- 3.9. The allocation of polling stations are at the discretion of the Returning Officer. The attached list at Appendix B shows the proposed polling station, however these may change if venue availability changes.
- 3.10. The proposed polling districts, associated polling stations and a breakdown of their city wards/county divisions are shown at appendix B. Also included are estimated property and electorate figures for the new polling districts.

4. Implications

a) Financial Implications

Due to the increase in number of polling districts there will be an impact on costs of polling stations (i.e. premise hire and staffing) at a poll.

b) Staffing Implications

No impact.

c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An EqIA for elections is in place.

d) Environmental Implications

No impact.

e) Procurement Implications

No impact.

f) Community Safety Implications

No impact.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

5.1. As indicated above (paragraph 3) public notice of the review was given and stakeholders informed of the consultation period. Information was provided on the consultation page of the city council website.

6. Background papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Electoral Commission Polling District Review Guidance (published July 2019)
- LGBCE Final Recommendations for Cambridge City Council (published 5 February 2019)

7. Appendices

- Appendix A – Maps of proposed polling districts
- Appendix B – Proposed polling district scheme, including statistics and polling stations

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Vicky Breeding, Electoral Services Manager, tel: 01223 457057, e-mail: Vicky.breeding@cambridge.gov.uk