

Representations received, considerations and recommendations of the Panel for the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

The panel would like to thank those people and organisations who have made representations to the review. These together with proposals from the Returning Officers and comments collected throughout the elections in 2011 have been brought together for the purpose of informing this review. Investigations of the areas have been conducted in each affected area taking into consideration the requirements of the review and guidance issued by the Electoral Commission. In addition planning figures for the each area have been included to provide a potential electorate figure for the next four years until the next formal review process.

The panel would also like to thank all those premises who made themselves available for inspection and consideration during this review.

District AA in Bargate ward
Sembal House
Handel Terrace
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

The future of this building is uncertain and alternative options should be investigated and considered as part of the review

Recommendation

Whilst the status of this building is noted it is possible that the building may still be able to accommodate future elections and the accessibility and location remain the most appropriate for this district. The panel therefore recommend that this polling place remain for the time being. However St Marks Church Centre in Archers road has been identified as potential replacement should the need arise.

District AE in Bargate ward
St Johns Primary School And Nursery
French Street
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review, The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District BD in Basset ward
Hollybrook Infant School
Seagarth Close
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Post election comment received identifying that this school is now in a cluster which makes it more difficult to schedule inset days to accommodate elections.

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate for the district under the terms of the review. Whilst the comment has been noted, the panel is also required to consider that The Representation of the People Act 1983, Chapter 2, Schedule 1, Part III gives Returning Officers the right to select schools as venues for polling stations and places a duty on schools to provide the facilities required if asked to do so. The school has been advised to contact the education department to discuss how the need for the school to be used can be accommodated in the same way as time lost due to a strike or cold weather is dealt with.

It is the recommendation of the panel that with all the above factors in mind the current polling place should continue but be kept under review to identify any potential alternative venues.

District CB in Bevois ward
Bevois Town Primary School (Community Room)
Cedar Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

Current electorate 2754. It has been identified that the need for additional polling stations may lead to school closure

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review. The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District DA in Bitterne Ward
Thornhill Youth Centre
Upper Deacon Road/Bitterne Rd East
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

The future of this building is uncertain and alternative options should be investigated and considered as part of the review

Recommendation

Whilst the status of this building is noted it is possible that the building may still be able to accommodate future elections and the accessibility and location remain the most appropriate for this district. The panel therefore recommend that this polling place remain for the time being.

District DB
St Christopher's Church Hall
Pepys Avenue
Southampton

District DD
The Hightown Centre
Tunstall Road
Southampton

Representation raised through the panel meetings for consideration

Consideration should be given to the district boundary line between DB & DD as there are a number of local footpaths which enable better access to the alternate polling stations.

Recommendation

This is a small boundary change which will better facilitate attendance at each of the polling places. DB will go from a current electorate of 2588 to 2475 and DD will go from an electorate of 1781 to 1891 which also creates a better balance at any prospective polling stations. It is therefore recommended that the suggested changes to the boundary be made as outline in Appendix 4 to the Council report.

District EB in Bitterne Park ward
Bitterne Park School Sports Hall
Dimond Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

Current electorate 1834. It has been identified that the need for additional polling stations may lead to school closure

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review. The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District EE in Bitterne Park ward
Charlton House School
55 Midanbury Lane
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

Review this polling place following a health and safety incident recorded during the last election to ensure there are no accessibility risks or issues

Recommendation

Taking into consideration the details of the incident recorded it was felt that additional safeguards could be put in place to remove this risk in future. This polling place remains the most appropriate for the district under the terms of the review. It is therefore recommended that the polling place should remain for the time being.

District GC in Freemantle ward
Banister School
Archers Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review, The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District HB in Harefield ward
Portacabin adjacent to
Macarthur Crescent Play Area
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place is currently a portacabin which is sufficient for the purposes of a polling station but is recognised as being secondary to a permanent structure for the purposes of the review of polling places

Recommendation

At this time there are no alternative locations within the district which could accommodate a polling place. It is recommended that this polling place should continue for the time being

District HC in Harefield ward
Glenfield Infant School
Rossington Way/Glenfield Crescent
Southampton
Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review, The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District IA in Millbrook ward
Test Guide Centre
Timsbury Drive

Representation of Councillor David Furnell

This is an area of extremely low turnout. The turnout in May was 19.4%. The polling station is at one end of the polling district and there is the main road Redbridge Hill which is very busy and dangerous between Timsbury Drive and most of the polling district. The ideal resolution is that the IA is split in two with the Maybush triangle continuing to use Timsbury Drive and a new polling station on the Fire station site or a temporary building nearby. The fallback position is just one polling station on the Fire station site.

Recommendation

When undertaking the review of polling districts and polling places consideration cannot be given to the turnout as the duty of the Council is to ensure the polling place is sufficient to accommodate all electors.

The potential electorate for this district is estimated at 2434 which is below the Electoral Commission guidance for requiring 2 polling stations to be used. The electorate is reasonably even on each side of Redbridge Hill and the proposed split would create two very small districts.

Consideration was given to making the proposed split by amalgamating the electorate with adjacent districts but this would lead to two districts being in excess of the recommended electorate and create capacity issues in those polling places.

The panel felt that whilst Redbridge Hill is busy at times it did not constitute a major road for the purposes of the review and taking into consideration the above options the panel recommends that the district and polling place should remain the same for the time being.

District IB in Millbrook ward
Toronto Court (Community Room)
Brendon Green
Southampton

Representation of Councillor David Furnell

The polling station used to be the library but as this has now closed down it was moved this year to the pensioners building Toronto Court. This is not ideal as Toronto Court is behind the main road and is not easily visible from the main

road Cumbrian Way. I visited the polling station on election day and the staff had made some effort to make it more visible. I met several people when knocking up who did not know where the new polling station was situated.

I would suggest that a solution would be that a temporary building is set up on the main shopping parade in Cumbrian Way. The turnout here in May was 22%.

Recommendation

At this time the site proposed for a portacabin is under reconstruction and as such there is no available space. This redevelopment was the cause for Toronto Court being used for the first time at the last election. A portacabin is always used as a last resort as it does not fulfil the accessibility requirements of the review as well as a permanent structure. A review of Mason Moor School was undertaken as this may be better known as a location within the community but use of the school would result in its closure for safeguarding reasons. Other options were also explored but Toronto Court remains the most appropriate for the district under the terms of the review. It is the recommendation of the panel that Toronto Court should continue as the polling place within this district for the time being, however once the building works in Cumbrian Way are completed a further review should be completed to identify any new preferential site.

District ID in Millbrook ward
Tanners Brook Junior School
Elmes Drive
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review, The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District IE in Millbrook ward
Foundry Lane Primary School
(Imperial Avenue Entrance Only)
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

Current electorate 1769. It has been identified that the need for additional polling stations may lead to school closure

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review. The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District JA in Peartree ward
Bitterne Infant School
Brownlow Avenue
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Potential electorate figures have identified that there may be a requirement to provide two polling stations within this polling place. Investigation has identified that should this occur it is highly likely the school would have to close for safeguarding reasons.

The current electorate is 2031 and it is recommended by the panel that this polling place should continue for the time being. However it is noted that Wesley Chapel on the extreme edge of the boundary would be approachable should a backup location be required but they are unable to commit on an ongoing basis at this time.

District JB in Peartree ward
Portacabin opposite Ridgeway House
Junction Peartree Avenue/
Freemantle Common Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place is currently a portacabin which is sufficient for the purposes of a polling station but is recognised as being secondary to a permanent structure for the purposes of the review of polling places

Representation of Ms Mary Lloyd, Southampton Itchen Labour Party

I have lived in Athelstan Road for 10 years and, throughout that time, have found the location of this polling station very unsatisfactory.

1. There is NO parking available and so all voters who arrive by car are forced to park illegally as carefully and sensibly as possible.
2. Many voters who have to use a steep hill (eg top part of Athelstan Road) find that they need to use the car to access the portacabin site.
3. This induces voters to cast their votes as fast as possible, without 'wasting time' on reflection.
4. To access the portacabin, it is essential to walk through fairly long grass. If it has rained, the ground is muddy.
5. When extensive and long-term roadworks were being carried out on Peartree Avenue before the May 2010 elections, I noticed the day before polling day that the polling station was inaccessible. I rang Mark Heath's office, and was thanked for pointing this out (i.e. they had not noticed the problem). They managed to clear the obstructions late afternoon / early evening that day.

DOUBLE ALTERNATIVE

(A) I understand that a portacabin used to be provided on the triangle of grass towards the bottom of Athelstan Road / junction with Garfield Road.

It would be useful to re-instate this because:

1. There is an exceptionally high proportion of Non-Voters in the bottom half of Athelstan Road – as I know from having canvassed here for the Labour Party.
2. One powerful reason for this is the long uphill trek to the polling station on Peartree Avenue.
3. Residents of Garfield Road and Cross Road, as well as the lower part of Athelstan, would find it far easier to vote at the location I suggest under **(A)** above.
4. Parking would be possible in the surrounding roads.

(B) Residents of the upper part of Athelstan would find it far more convenient to use Bitterne Infants' School in Brownlow Avenue as their polling station.

If required, plentiful parking is available close by, both in Sainsbury's car park and in Brownlow Avenue itself. It would impose very little extra strain on space at the JA station to include these residents in that polling district.

Representation of Councillor Peter Baillie

I went to this polling station several times and found parking close to be difficult - especially for a person with walking problems.

Recommendation

When undertaking the review of polling districts and polling places consideration cannot be given to the turnout as the duty of the Council is to ensure the polling place is sufficient to accommodate all electors.

The junction of Athelstan Road and Garfield Road is currently outside the district boundary.

Changing the boundary to move some electors to JA district would place additional pressure on the alternative polling place in terms of capacity leading to an additional polling station being required. It has already been established as part of this review that should an additional polling station be required the school would have to close for safeguarding reasons.

The general topography of the area in this district is hilly and there are no particular groups at one end of the hill with particular accessibility issues.

Whilst the use of a portacabin is recognised as being less preferable to a permanent building. The panel recognises that this polling place remains the most appropriate for the district under the terms of the review. It is recommended that the current polling place should continue to be used but in line with Returning Officers representation this should be kept under continuing review until a more appropriate location can be identified

District JE in Peartree ward
Ludlow Infant School
Ludlow Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

The panel recognises that this polling place remains the most appropriate for the district under the terms of the review and recommends that it continues to be used for the time being. However it should remain under constant review and it is noted that the Methodist Church in Manor Road has been identified as a potential alternative but it has not, as yet, been possible to secure confirmation that the property may be used for the purposes of delivering an election on an ongoing basis.

District KB in Portswood Ward
Scouts H.Q. Brookvale Road

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review due to the approach being an unmetalled track

Representation of Councillor Vincenzo Capozzoli

I think the fact that access to the hut is via a track rather than a 'proper' road is a concern. I think and fear that this might put people off going there.

Recommendation

The content of the representations are noted but at this time there are no other venues which offer better accessibility and this polling place remains the most appropriate for the district under the terms of the review. It is therefore recommended that it should continue for the time being.

LB District in Redbridge ward
Colne Avenue Baptist Church Hall
Colne Avenue
Southampton

Representation raised through the panel meetings for consideration

Car parking for this station can cause an obstruction and requires electors with accessibility issues to use a gravelled area to the rear of the church.

Recommendation

The content of the representations are noted but at this time there are no other venues which offer better accessibility and this polling place remains the most

appropriate for the district under the terms of the review. It is therefore recommended that it should continue for the time being.

District MA
The Church of St Judes
Warren Avenue
Southampton

District MB
Shirley Warren Baptist Church
Warren Crescent
Southampton

Representation of Councillor Satvir Kaur

The current boundaries mean that some residents in MA (Thorndikes, Bindons, Coxford Close, Hardwicke Close, Arliss Rd, Ross Gardens, Brook Valley, Romsey Rd and some of Warren Crescent) actually have to walk or drive close to the MB polling station (Warren Crescent Baptist Church Hall) in order to go through to St Jude's Warren Avenue (MA polling station), whereas if they were in MB they could walk across the greenway and up the Crescent or simply walk down Warren Crescent to the Baptist church. Since residents in Arliss Rd Brook Valley The Thorndikes and Romsey Rd etc already walk this route when bringing children to school, it seems logical to plan polling districts so that they can use the greenway to walk to their polling station. This would also enable these people to save money and fuel, take exercise and leave their cars at home where possible.

1. that the following roads go from MA into MB:

Coxford Rd from Romsey Rd to Coxford Close; All of Coxford close; The whole of Warren Crescent (not just the southern part); Burns Place; the Bindons (Road and Close); The Thorndikes; Hardwicke Close; Brook Valley; Arliss Rd; Romsey Rd from Winchester Rd to Coxford Rd;

2. That the following roads go from MB to MA for similar reasons (walking away from nearby polling station to more distant one):

The whole of Warren Avenue, not just the top part; All of Sycamore and Chestnut Rds; Buckley Court; Tremona Rd from Dale Rd to Warren Avenue; Tremona Court;

Recommendation

The representation as it stands would create an imbalance in the number of electors in each district which may lead to capacity issues at a later stage. At this time no other appropriate polling places could be identified to assist the review of these areas. It was noted that 'the greenway' is prone to becoming muddy in places following rain but it was not felt that this would disadvantage any particular group of electors and that given the points raised in the representation use of 'the greenway' may encourage a better turnout at elections. Several variations were identified which support the representation outlined above but

also provide a better balance in the electorate for each district. It is therefore recommended that the boundaries for districts MA and MB be redrawn as shown in Appendix 5 of the report to Full Council.

District NA in Sholing ward
Sholing Junior School
Middle Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review, The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District NB in Sholing Ward
Southampton amateur Boxing Club
Pax Hall
North East Road

Representation of Councillor Susan Blatchford

One doorstep query this year from 2010 Election. Why is the officers table so close to the door not further in so if it's raining more people can queue in the dry or out of the heat.

Recommendation

At the time of an election it is necessary for floor covering to be laid to protect the specialist sports hall flooring. In the past this has only been partially covered directing where the equipment for the polling station can be placed during the day. A review if the district has been completed and no alternative location could be found which better fulfilled the requirements of the review. It is felt that the issue identified in the representation can be removed with additional floor covering being supplied to ensure the equipment can be more suitably placed. The recommendation of the panel is that the current location should continue to be used.

District OC in Swaythling ward
Swaythling Primary School
Mayfield Road
Southampton

Representation of the Returning Officer

This polling place is kept under constant review as the polling place currently leads to the closure of the school

Recommendation

This polling place remains the most appropriate site for the purposes of the review, The panel therefore, recommends that its use continues for the time being but should remain under review should an appropriate alternative become available.

District OD in Swaythling ward
Swaythling Baptist Church
Fleming Road

Representation of Councillor Edward Osmond

There are 6 Polling Stations in Swaythling Ward. The only one to be queried is the Baptist Church, Fleming Road. This is very small and quiet – is it justified?

The other 5 polling stations should remain unchanged.

Recommendation

The comments of the representation are acknowledged. If OD were to be merged wholly or in part with districts OB and/or OC it would create additional capacity issues in those districts. A merger with OE was considered but this would require electors to cross Thomas Lewis Way which is a major route into the city. It is therefore recommended that this polling district remain for the time being.

All other polling places identified as having potential capacity issues over the next four years have been confirmed as wither having future capacity or being within the current tolerance. It is therefore recommended that these polling places continue to be kept under review as necessary.