

AGENDA ITEM: 4

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 15 April 2009

POLLING STATIONS

RICHARD LONG, DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To seek members' agreement to the proposed changes of location of polling stations currently based at:
 - a) Former Clinic on Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road Junction, University Ward.
 - b) Baptist Church Hall on Cambridge Road, Linthorpe Ward.
 - c) Linthorpe Primary School, Roman Road, Linthorpe Ward.
 - d) St Alphonsus School, Cadogan Street, North Ormesby and Brambles Farm Ward

BACKGROUND

- 2 Following a polling station review, a local government election in 2007 and recent enquiries it was established that:
 - a) The polling station based in the Former Clinic on Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road Junction has undergone a change of use and is no longer available for use as a polling station.
 - b) Two polling stations within the Linthorpe ward are in very close proximity to each other. The Friends Meeting House and the Baptist Church Hall are both located on Cambridge Road. The Baptist Church Hall is situated to the far west of that particular polling district (FC). It was recognised that a

more centrally located polling station would have a beneficial affect on the electorate for that area.

- c) The polling station based in Linthorpe Primary School left electors facing problems gaining access to the school premises predominantly caused by volume of traffic and car parking around the school.
- d) The polling station based in St Alphonsus School is not available for the European election on 4 June 2009.

3 Alternative accommodation was identified, inspected and polling station assessments completed.

Ward Implications

- 4 a) If the polling station located in the Former Clinic on Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road Junction was relocated to a polling station within the polling district boundary (DA), the distance electors would need to travel would be decreased.
- b) If the polling station located in the Baptist Church Hall was relocated to a more central position within the polling district (FC), the distance the majority of electors would need to travel would be decreased.
- c) If the polling station located in Linthorpe Primary School was relocated to a more easily accessible and central position within the polling district (FA), the distance the majority of electors would need to travel would be decreased.
- d) Alternative, appropriate accommodation could not be identified within the polling district (EB). However accommodation was located just outside of the polling district boundary. This does mean that electors would need to travel slightly further.

PROPOSALS

5 In preparation for the European Election due to be held on 4 June 2009, it is proposed:

- a) To replace the polling station based within the Former Clinic on Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road Junction to a polling station based within the Europa Building, Teesside University located on Woodlands Road.
- b) To replace the polling station based within the Baptist Church Hall, Cambridge Road to a polling station based within the Masonic Lodge located on Roman Road.

- c) To replace the polling station based within Linthorpe Primary School, Roman Road to a polling station based within the Hebrew Prayer Room, Linthorpe Cemetery (The Lodge), located on Ayresome Green Lane
- d) To replace the polling station based within St Alphonsus School, Cadogan Street to a polling station based within St Alphonsus Church located on Westbourne Grove.

Reasons

- 6 a) The Europa Building is located within the polling district and within easy reach of most electors. The premises have pedestrian access and have good off site parking facilities. The building has ideal access for wheelchair users or people with disabilities (level access and double entrance doors). The exterior of the building can be floodlit.
- b) The Masonic Lodge is located centrally within the polling district and close to where most of the electors live. The premises have both vehicle and pedestrian access and have good parking facilities on site. The building has ideal access for wheelchair users or people with disabilities (both a permanent ramp and handrails by the steps are in situ). The exterior of the building can be floodlit.
- c) The Hebrew Prayer Room is located centrally within the polling district and close to where most of the electors live. The premises have both vehicle and pedestrian access and have good parking facilities on site. The building has ideal access for wheelchair users or people with disabilities (level access and double entrance doors). The exterior of the building can be floodlit.
- d) St Alphonsus Church located just outside of the polling station but still within reach of the electors. The premises have both vehicle and pedestrian access and have good parking facilities on site. The building has ideal access for wheelchair users or people with disabilities (level access and double entrance doors). Street lighting lights the exterior of the building.

The interior of each of the above buildings has an ideal layout for use as a polling station, providing more than adequate facilities for both polling station staff and electors.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7 a) There are no fees involved for hiring accommodation at the Europa Building, Teesside University,
- b) The fee involved for hiring accommodation at the Masonic Lodge would be £250

- c) There are no fees involved for hiring accommodation at the Hebrew Prayer Room.
- d) The fee involved for hiring accommodation at St Alphonsus Church would be £100

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8 a) That the Europa Building, Teesside University be approved as an alternative polling station within the University ward.
- b) That the Masonic Lodge, Roman Road be approved as an alternative polling station within the Linthorpe Ward.
- c) That the Hebrew Payer Room, Ayresome Green Lane be approved as an alternative polling station within the Linthorpe ward.
- d) That St Alphonsus Church, Westbourne Grove be approved as an alternative polling station within the North Ormesby and Brambles Farm ward.

AUTHOR

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Background Papers:

Polling Station Report of Director of Legal and Democratic Services to Corporate Affairs
19 December 2007.

Minutes of Corporate Affairs 19 December 2007

