

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Corporate Affairs Committee was held on 15 April 2009.

PRESENT: Councillor Clark (Chair), Councillors Brunton, Elder, McPartland and Purvis.

OFFICERS: C Davies, S Harker, and R Long.

**** ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillor P Thompson.

**** DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this point of the meeting.

****MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2009 were taken as read and approved as a correct record.

POLLING STATIONS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services presented a report seeking Members' agreement to proposed changes of location of several Polling Stations. The Council had a duty to keep all Polling Stations under review and ensure that all electors had reasonable facilities for voting and that Polling Stations were accessible to all.

The Polling Stations under consideration were currently located at:

- a) A former clinic on Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road Junction, University Ward.
- b) A 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.

Following a Polling Station review, a Local Government Election in 2007, and recent enquiries, it had been established that:

- a) The former clinic on Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road junction had undergone a change of use and was no longer available.
- b) Two Polling Stations within the Linthorpe Ward were in very close proximity to each other. The Friends Meeting House and the Baptist Church Hall were both located on Cambridge Road. The Baptist Church Hall was situated to the far west of that polling district (FC). It was felt that a more centrally located Polling Station would be beneficial for the electorate in that area.
- c) At the Polling Station based in Linthorpe Primary School problems gaining access to the school premises, predominantly caused by the volume of traffic and car parking around the school, had been experienced by electors.
- d) The Polling Station based in St Alphonsus School was not available for the European Election on 4 June 2009.

Alternative accommodation had been identified and inspected and Polling Station assessments had been completed. Details of the ward implications were given in the submitted report. In preparation for the European Election due to be held on 4 June 2009, the following proposals were presented for Members' consideration:

- 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, 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.

The interior of each of the proposed buildings had an ideal layout for using as Polling Stations and provided more than adequate facilities for staff and electors. Reasons for the choice of the proposed new locations were detailed in the submitted report.

The Lodge on Burlam Road had been considered as an alternative venue to the Polling Station at Linthorpe Primary School and was in a central location. However, the entrance door was operated on a buzzer mechanism and this rendered it unsuitable for use as a Polling Station. The Hebrew Prayer Room had more than adequate facilities although it was highlighted that it was located at the northern end of the ward.

A map was circulated to Members for clarification of the locations of the proposed and existing Polling Stations.

A further review of Polling Stations would be undertaken following the European Election and prior to the next Council Election.

ORDERED as follows that:

1. the Europa Building, Teesside University be approved as an alternative Polling Station within the University Ward.
2. the Hebrew Prayer Room, Ayresome Green Lane, be approved as an alternative polling station within the Linthorpe Ward.
3. St Alphonsus Church, Westbourne Grove, be approved as an alternative Polling Station within the North Ormesby and Brambles Farm Ward.

On a vote being taken, it was

ORDERED that the Baptist Church Hall continues to be used as a Polling Station within the Linthorpe Ward and that the Masonic Lodge should not be used.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

A request was made for consideration to be given to an additional Polling Station in Coulby Newham Ward for the next Council Election.

ORDERED that consideration be given to an additional Polling Station in Coulby Newham Ward in the next review of Polling Stations.