

AGENDA ITEM: 4

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2011

**REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND
POLLING STATIONS**

RICHARD LONG, HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To review the Polling Districts, Polling Stations and Polling Places as required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and to advise members of the outcome of the consultation on the current review of polling districts and polling places and seek agreement to proposed changes arising from the review.

BACKGROUND

2. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty for all polling districts and polling places to be reviewed by 31 December 2007, and thereafter every four years. The remaining timetable for this review is as follows:

Corporate Affairs Committee	23 February 2011
Adoption by Council	10 March 2011
Arrangements come into force at the publication of the next Revised Register of Electors	1 December 2011

3. The Polling District is defined as the area created by the division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.
4. A Polling Place is defined as the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the Returning Officer.
5. A Polling Station is the room or part of the building where the poll takes place. These are chosen by the Returning Officer for the election. The Returning Officer is required to make a formal comment as part of this review.

6. In conducting the review the Council must demonstrate it has, as far as is practicable, met the criteria set out in legislation.
7. The aim of the review is to seek that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. The Council must seek to ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.
8. In an ideal world electoral administrators would have the choice of a range of fully accessible buildings, conveniently located for the electors in the area. The Electoral Commission recognises that, in practice, this is not the case and there may actually be little choice available. Where it is necessary to use a polling place where the access is not ideal, the Commission expects the Council to make reasonable adjustments to provide access for all electors.
9. The Commission also recognises that in reality the choice of polling place will often be a balance between the quality (access, facilities, etc.) of a building and the distances between the residents and that building compared to other options for polling places.
10. There is no fixed rule on how to decide how this should be done. The legislation provides that all electors should have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. Councils should be able to show that they followed a reasonable methodology in arriving at their choice.
11. The Electoral Commission, while not having direct responsibility for the review, can intervene where it considers that the reasonable requirements of electors or the needs of disabled electors have not been taken into account.
12. The Commission have now made it mandatory that there be a maximum of 2,500 polling station electors per polling station (excluding electors registered for a postal vote). Previously this had been guidance.
13. Further consideration should be given to the cost to the Council and properly assess the need for further polling stations. A polling station currently costs approx £800 to hire, equip and staff for polling day.
14. Consideration was given to any further development in the borough.
15. The Returning Officer has noted that the pattern of polling districts and polling places in Middlesbrough had evolved to meet successive boundary changes to borough wards and to meet the convenience of electors across the borough. By and large, he advised, it ensured that electors had reasonable facilities for voting. Furthermore, in line with the Council's policies and statutory obligations, every attempt had been made to ensure that polling stations were accessible to electors who are disabled. Therefore, his proposals for change in this review were kept to a minimum.

16. Another key issue for the Council is that when conducting the review, all decisions made must have been consulted upon, measured and practical. The whole process should be as transparent and open as possible to avoid possible conflict.

THE PROCESS

17. As required, the first stage of the review was giving notice. A public notice was published in the Evening Gazette and the Northern Echo and notices were posted in various locations in the town. A list is given in **Appendix 1**.
18. Information was provided on the council's website to inform the public about how to comment on their polling stations.
19. In line with the recommendations of the Electoral Commission, letters and questionnaires were sent to all local Members of Parliament, Middlesbrough Councillors, and Election Agents.
20. Local disability organisations and black and minority ethnic groups were also consulted. The consultee list is also contained in **Appendix 1**.
21. The Voiceover Panel, the Council's citizen panel, was sent a special questionnaire exploring the issues around elections, polling places and polling districts.
22. The Returning Officer was also written to for his comments, along with the Returning Officer of Redcar and Cleveland Council (shared Parliamentary constituency boundary)
23. Questionnaires from electors, Polling Station staff, Polling Station Inspectors and Polling Station Managers were evaluated from the Parliamentary General Election 2010
24. Planning Section were consulted in relation to known or future development that might impact on numbers of electors within a particular Polling District to ensure Polling Stations are adequate for current as well as future needs.
25. Streetscene were approached and consulted in relation to access issue to mobile Polling Stations.

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION – CONSIDERATION BY WARD

26. Consideration has been given to each Ward, its polling districts and polling places in line with the legislation requirements and taking into account the responses to the consultation.
27. A complete list of Polling Districts and Polling Stations is attached at **Appendix 2**, including details of the number of electors for each Polling District, and the number of voters and percentage turnout for the Local Government/Mayoral elections in 2007 and the Parliamentary General election in 2010.

28. Electoral Services received 20 responses from Councillors, Agents and Parish Clerks and the Returning Officer from Redcar and Cleveland Council see **Appendix 3**.

29. It should be noted that Electoral Services continuously review comments regarding Polling Stations from the public, Councillors and other elected representatives and Polling Station staff. Changes are made where necessary and/or desirable. But members are asked to note that it is increasing difficult to find suitable premises; we try to use council owned premises where possible because they are familiar to local residents and are low cost. Mobile Stations are only used when absolutely necessary (and where there is a suitable site), but these Mobile Stations cost approx £1500 each to hire, site, equip and staff. Private premises can also be very expensive.

Middlehaven Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
AA	St Aidan's Drive Meeting Room, Grange Road	397	59	17	28	Yes
AB	Meeting House, Elder Court	1116	175	17	31	Yes
AC	Abingdon Primary School, Abingdon Road	1180	153	16	29	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Meeting House, Elder Court. Comment received via Polling Station staff that 'a few electors had found it difficult to find'.

Comments received from Mark Keenan, Election Agent.
Residents of the Gem/Jewel Streets Area prior to 2007 voted in a small hall on Woodlands Road. For 2007 Election this was changed to Abingdon Road School. Twice distance away and in wrong direction for town amenities. Making voting more difficult. Residents also passed another Polling Station, Elder Court, en route. One must query, as I did, why this was done?

For residents of Gem/Jewel streets area, Stephenson House is directly en route to town centre, and at most a 200 yard walk as opposed to nearly half a mile.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Meeting House, Elder Court. To review the address and message that appears on poll cards. To provide additional signs where required.

In response to comments received from Mark Keenan. A decision was agreed upon previously by Members to alter the polling arrangements. However, Stephenson House will be reviewed and assessed for use as a Polling Station for that area.

Recommendations to Council:

That further investigations be undertaken to review and assess Stephenson House for use as a Polling Station.

Ayresome Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
BA	Teesside & District Society for the Blind, Social Centre, Stockton Road	701	119	27	41	Yes
BB	Mobile Station, West Lane, Junction of Maldon Road	1534	214	15	39	Yes
BC	Whinney Banks Primary School, Fakenham Avenue	2217	322	21	42	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Teesside & District Society for the Blind, comments received from Polling Station Staff that the entrance was not located on Stockton Road.

Whinney Banks Primary School, comments received from Polling Station Staff and the Polling Station Inspector that the disabled car parking facilities were inadequate and that elector complaints had been received.

Comments received from Cllr Bill Hawthorne.

The existing three Polling Stations in Ayresome Ward are in fact better now than previous, the mobile one gives better coverage of this area, as you know it is a very long ward. However we do not fully cater for the area which was added to Ayresome Ward from Kader eight years ago, the triangle between the odd numbers of Croft Avenue, Acklam Road, and Mandale Road, and including Cranford Gardens, Preen Drive, Stoneleigh, and Lexden, apart from the postal votes very few take the trouble to cast a vote, I have discovered several reasons for this. The nearest Polling Station is too far away and some people do not have transport, also some people from this area are reluctant to venture into the Whinney Banks area, also there are still people who are bitter that they were moved out of Kader Ward Acklam and included into Ayresome Ward. This seems to be a culture problem.

Comments received from Cllr Bernie Taylor.

Suggestion to relocate the Polling Station from Whinney Banks Primary School to the new Community Centre on Stainsby Road. This would afford improved access and visibility.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Teesside & District Society for the Blind. To review the address and message that appeared on poll cards. To provide additional signs at entrance.

In response to Cllr Bill Hawthorne. An extensive investigation has recently been carried out in the area, however no appropriate venues were identified.

In response to comments received from Cllr Bernie Taylor. To investigate the viability of replacing Whinney Banks Primary School with the New Community Centre.

Mobile Station, West lane. This replaced Whinney Banks Youth & Community Centre, which is no longer available. Permanent alternative accommodation could not be identified within the Polling District. A mobile station is sited on West lane and is close to where the majority of the electors live. West lane has suitable on road parking for electors and does not interfere with the flow of traffic.

Mobile Stations are not ideal, but are the only option in some areas of town. It is recognised that Mobile Stations do have limitations, especially in respect of access by users of electric wheelchairs that have a larger wheelbase and turning circle than manual wheelchairs.

Mobile Stations are sited to ensure optimum position for access. Mobile Stations are all equipped with a ramp to aid disabled access.

Recommendations to Council:

That further investigations be undertaken to review and assess the Community Centre on Stainsby Road for use as a Polling Station.

Gresham Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
CA	Newport Neighbourhood Centre, 2 St Paul's Road	1140	130	21	30	Yes
CB	WMNT Resource Centre, Meath Street	1755	199	20	34	Yes
CC	The Nursery, Ayresome Primary School, Worcester Street	987	118	22	36	Yes
CD	St Aidan's Community Church, Clifton Street	1507	193	27	31	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

No comments received.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

WMNT, previously the building could only be accessed via a key coded security door. The entry doors are now left open at all times.

Recommendations to Council:

No Change.

University Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
DA	Europa Building, University of Teesside, Woodlands Road	2140	459	10	24	Yes
DB	Breckon Hill Community Centre, Breckon Hill Road	1720	381	20	34	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Europa Building, comments received from Polling Station staff that locating the Polling Station in the entrance foyer of a busy university building is less than ideal and potentially compromises voter privacy.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

To review the Polling Station layout for this building to maximise security and privacy.

This Polling Station had replaced the Former Clinic on the junction of Woodlands Road/Clarendon Road, which was located outside of the polling district. 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.

Recommendations to Council:

No Change

North Ormesby & Brambles Farm Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
EA	North Ormesby Youth & Community Centre, Derwent Street	1241	143	18	33	Yes
EB	St Alphonsus Church Hall, Westbourne Grove, North Ormesby	974	88	16	31	Yes
EC	Mobile Station, Corner of Cargo Fleet Lane & Merlin Road	304	26	27	50	Yes
ED	Brambles Farm Community Centre, Marshall Avenue	1860	192	13	29	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments received from Cllr Len Junier.
Confirmed satisfaction of all polling stations.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Linthorpe Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
FA	Hebrew Prayer Room, Linthorpe Cemetery, Ayresome Green Lane	2601	504	25	45	Yes
FB	Friends Meeting House, 131 Cambridge Road	2173	342	32	56	Yes
FC	Baptist Church Hall, Cambridge Road	2250	403	31	52	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Hebrew Prayer Room, comments received via Polling Station staff that 'a few electors had found it difficult to find the Polling Station'.

Comments received from Election Agents

Friends Meeting House - Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

Suggested that more people needed in the Polling Stations to check register and give you your polling card.

Hebrew Prayer Room - Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Hebrew Prayer Room replaced the previous Polling Station at Linthorpe Primary School. The school had problems with access to the school, volume of traffic, car parking and facilities in general.

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.

The comments received from electors regarding the location of the Polling Station may have been caused by road works being carried out directly outside the Polling Station and also that most electors may be unfamiliar with this new Polling Station.

To review the address and message that appears on poll cards. To provide additional signs if required.

In response to comments received regarding the Friends Meeting House, The Electoral Commission have recently issued mandatory direction on staffing levels.

Recommendations to Council:

No Change.

Park Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
GA	St Barnabas Church Hall, 1A St Barnabas Road	1290	134	29	46	Yes
GB	Linthorpe Community Centre, 468 Linthorpe Road	2049	217	35	52	Yes
GC	Mobile Station, Junction of Phillida Terrace & Cumberland Road	955	117	30	52	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No Change

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Linthorpe Community Centre, comments received from Polling Station staff regarding the number of electors visiting the Polling Station and the fact it was 'busy throughout the day'.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Linthorpe Community Centre. To review the turnout figures and to appoint an additional Poll Clerk if required in line with Electoral Commission recommendations.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Clairville Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
HA	Grove Hill Library, Eastbourne Road	756	110	22	41	Yes
HB	Grove Hill Youth & Community Centre, Bishopton Road	1235	127	13	30	Yes
HC	Mobile Station, Kildare Road (between 52 & 54 Roseberry Road)	1861	260	15	44	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No Change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Election Agent

Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station. Pleased that we have moved from St Edmunds to Library.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Pallister Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
IA	Berwick Hills Primary School, Westerdale Road, Berwick Hills	2420	305	14	36	Yes
IB	Residents' Lounge, Bellamy Court (off Addington Drive)	536	80	18	35	Yes
IC	Charlbury Road Community Centre, Charlbury Road	1366	129	12	28	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

No comments received.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Thorntree Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
JA	Thorntree Community Centre, Birkhall Road	1076	83	15	33	Yes
JB	Thorntree Primary School, The Greenway	1941	212	16	31	Yes
JC	Middlesbrough Teaching & Learning Centre, Cargo Fleet Lane	1264	165	12	28	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Election Agent
Thorntree Community Centre/Thorntree Primary School/MTLC. Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling stations.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Acklam Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
KA	Acklam Branch Library, Acklam Road	2008	305	31	56	Yes
KB	Acklam Further Education Centre, Reception Area, Acklam Base, Hall Drive	1406	217	35	56	Yes
KC	Middlesbrough District Scout Headquarters, Tollesby Road	1389	197	33	54	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Election Agents
Scout HQ - Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

M Warman

Acklam Library - Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

Margaret Warman

Acklam Library - Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Beechwood Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
LA	The Sutton Centre, 24 Collin Avenue	913	133	22	34	Yes
LB	Grove Hill Methodist Church, Marton Road	1423	182	15	32	Yes
LC	Community Centre, 15 Gleneagles Court	635	83	23	30	Yes
LD	Beechwood Youth & Community Centre, Kirkham Row	876	101	33	44	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Community Centre, 15 Gleneagles Court, comments received from Polling Station staff that 'a few' electors had found it difficult to locate the building.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

To review the address and message that appears on poll cards. To provide additional signs if required.

An investigation was undertaken to explore the viability of merging Polling Districts LC and LD. It was found that pedestrian access between these Polling Districts is not suitable.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Park End Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
MA1, MA2	St Pius X R.C. Primary School, Amersham Road	1711	222	15	33	Yes
MBM	Park End Community Centre, Overdale Road	2847	304	18	36	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

No comments received.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Polling districts MA1 and MA2 had previously been split because of the placement of the parliamentary boundary. As changes to that boundary came into force at the Parliamentary election in 2010, this split is no longer necessary.

Recommendations to Council:

To merge MA1 and MA2 and rename the polling district MAM

Beckfield Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
NA	Southlands Leisure Centre, Ormesby Road	733	110	29	40	Yes
NB	Ormesby Methodist Church Hall, Pritchett Road	1317	167	32	48	Yes
NC	Netherfields Community Centre, Fulbeck Road	1715	162	23	38	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Election Agent

If you look at the map, it would be easier for residents who live on Ravendale Road, Revesby Road, Sandwell Avenue, Sawtry Road, Thetford Avenue, Trentham Avenue and

Woburn Grove, to all be able to vote at the Southlands Centre venue, rather than having to go to Ormesby Methodist Church.

The rear entrance at the Southlands Centre (Dunmow Avenue side) closes its doors at 7.00pm. Only the intervention of the Polling Manger prevented this from happening at the General Election.

Could the Manager of the Southlands Centre be instructed to keep this door open on polling day until 10.00pm?

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Southlands Centre. It had previously been reported that the rooms used as the Polling Station were a long way from the entrance. The room is approx 15ft from the entrance. This does not seem an unreasonable distance.

To approach the Manager of the Southlands Centre to discuss the possibility of full access to the building up to 10.00pm on polling day.

Consideration should be given to exploring the possibility of changing the polling arrangements and polling districts and to make reasonable adjustments to provide access for all electors. However, this would be dependent on whether there is easy pedestrian access between the polling districts.

Recommendations to Council:

That further investigation is undertaken to explore the viability of a change to the polling districts.

Brookfield Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
OA	The Nursery, St Clare's R.C. Primary School, Trimdon Avenue	1975	270	26	54	Yes
OB	Acklam Whin Primary School, Carlbury Avenue	1221	123	30	58	Yes
OC1,OC2	St Margaret's Church Hall, The Oval	1544	180	42	65	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Election Agent

Acklam Whin Primary, St Claire's Primary and St Mary's tend to cover the area well. The Church at The Oval however could be helped with a portable system to cover the wider Brookfield east.

Venues have been utilised in Brookfield well. But one area to consider is the Earisdon, Sedgefield Road area for temporary stations.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

The current polling arrangements are more than adequate at this time.

Polling districts OC1 and OC2 had previously been split because of the placement of the parliamentary boundary. As changes to that boundary came into force at the Parliamentary election in 2010, this split is no long necessary.

Recommendations to Council:

To merge OC1 and OC2 and rename the polling district OC.

Kader Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
PA	City Learning Centre, Acklam Grange School, Lodore Grove	1763	262	29	55	Yes
PB	Kader Primary School, Staindrop Drive	1240	176	36	61	Yes
PC1,PC2	Mobile Station, Junction of Thinford Gardens & Shoreswood Walk	771	146	28	54	Yes
PD1, PD2	Exhibition Hall, Nature's World, The Botanic Centre, Sandy Flatts Farm	301	58	49	60	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

No comments received.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

It had previously been reported that although the premises provided disability access, the Polling Station itself was not fully accessible. A site visit and Polling Station assessment was carried out. The Polling Station is now located in the sports hall on the ground floor.

Polling districts PC1 and PC2 and PD1 and PD2 had previously been split because of the placement of the parliamentary boundary. As changes to that boundary came into force at the Parliamentary election in 2010, this split is no longer necessary.

Recommendations to Council:

To merge PC1 and PC2 and rename the polling district PC.

To merge PD1 and PD2 and rename the polling district PD.

Ladgate Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
QAM	Residents' Association Meeting Room, 46 Broughton Avenue	2267	290	19	42	Yes
QBM	Marton Manor Primary School, The Derby	1640	289	26	58	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

No comments received.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Marton Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
RAM	Captain Cook Primary School, Stokesley Road	1600	322	26	53	Yes
RBM	Marton Community Centre, Cypress Road	2234	301	28	57	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments received from Cllr Tom Mawston.
Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling stations.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Stainton & Thornton Ward

Existing Arrangements

Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
SAM	Memorial Hall, Meldyke Lane	1079	157	43	61	Yes
SBM	Hemlington Hall Primary School, Briscoe Way	1274	170	16	43	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Election Agent
Hemlington Hall School - Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

Comments Received from Cllr Maelor Williams
Stainton Memorial Hall & Hemlington Hall Primary School – Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling stations.

Comments Received from Parish Clerk
Stainton Memorial Hall – Confirmed satisfaction with the location of the polling station.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Hemlington Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
TAM	Community Centre, Otterhill Court	1138	133	26	51	Yes
TBM	Hemlington Library, Crosscliff, Viewley Centre	786	98	31	52	Yes
TCM	Hemlington Recreation Centre, Cass House Road	879	131	18	37	Yes
TDM	Viewley Hill Primary School, Andover Way	1483	185	20	41	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Cllr Maelor Williams

In Hemlington Ward, access to the Polling Station at Viewley Hill Primary School was confusing. Neither of the two normal access routes to the school were used and the Polling Station could only be accessed from Cass House Road near the Children's Centre. This needs to be resolved and/or identified on the Polling Card.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Viewley Hill Primary School. To review the address and message that appears on poll cards. To provide additional signs if required.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

Coulby Newham Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
UAM	Sunnyside Centre, Sunnyside Hall, Manor Farm Way	1522	257	22	49	Yes
UBM	Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham	1906	316	22	48	Yes
UCM	Lingfield Ash Meeting Hall, 95 Lingfield Ash	2157	404	17	48	Yes
UDM	Rose Wood Primary School, The Garth, Coulby Farm Way	1453	272	17	47	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No Change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Cllr J Cole

Require an extra Polling Station in Polling District UBM. At present the Polling Station Langdon Square.

There are many elderly people living at Longhirst and Ash Hill who will find it difficult to walk down to Langdon Square. We suggest extra Polling Station at St Augustine School, a mobile if needed.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

Consideration should be given to exploring the possibility of changing the polling arrangements and polling districts and to make reasonable adjustments to provide access for all electors. However, this would be dependent on whether there is easy pedestrian access between the polling districts.

Recommendations to Council:

That further investigation is undertaken to explore the viability of a change to the polling districts.

Marton West Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
VAM	Mobile Station, Near Woodrow Avenue Shops	1199	188	36	63	Yes
VBM	Lingfield Primary School, Buxton Avenue	1019	248	42	57	Yes
VCM	Mobile Station, Fulford Way	2058	352	25	55	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

Comments Received from Redcar & Cleveland Council

Sue Bridges, Principal Ethical & Information Governance Officer

I received comments from a Middlesbrough Councillor regarding the safety and security of the mobile at Fulford Way prior to polling day; there were concerns that the mobile would be vandalised. I had arranged for the police to undertake additional 'drive by' activity but in the end this was not required as I made arrangements for the mobile to be removed and returned closer to polling day.

In terms of my own feedback, after visiting the location of the mobile at Fulford Way, I do not think this is an appropriate location for a polling station. It is on grass near a roundabout, with no parking facilities other than on the grass verge around that roundabout. It has no disabled parking or facilities. I appreciate that there are extremely limited facilities in that area but I would ask that alternatives are investigated and adjacent polling districts considered.

The Returning Officer's Comments were:

An extensive investigation has recently been carried out in the area, however no appropriate venues were identified at this time.

Recommendations to Council:

No Change.

Nunthorpe Ward

Existing Arrangements						
Polling District	Polling Station	No. of Electors	No. of Postal Voters	2007 Turnout %	2010 Turnout %	Disabled Access
WAM	The Avenue Primary School, The Avenue	777	155	32	56	Yes
WBM	The Brunton Suite, Nunthorpe Institute, The Avenue Primary School	1495	284	33	54	Yes
WCM	Chandlers Ridge Primary School, Chandlers Ridge	1802	378	35	60	Yes

The Returning Officer's Proposals were:

No change.

The following comments were received during the consultation period:

No comments received.

Recommendations to Council:

No change.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

30. The Voiceover Panel has been consulted in respect of various matters concerning elections, including questions about Polling Stations. The findings of the Voiceover Panel did not identify any problem areas, in fact it showed that the vast majority of the panel were very satisfied or satisfied with the location of the Polling Stations.
31. The Polling Stations currently in place have confirmed their availability for the upcoming Local Government and Mayoral elections in May 2011.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

32. Electoral Services is required to undertake similar reviews of polling districts and places at least every 4 years. Electoral Services also continuously monitor polling stations and review any comments received after each election. They also respond in the instances when a polling station becomes unavailable at short notice prior to an election. Currently any alterations to polling stations must be agreed by Corporate Affairs Committee. From a contingency/risk management point of view and in the run up to an election, this would make it very difficult to appoint an alternative Polling Station at short notice. It is therefore recommended that the Returning Officer be granted delegated powers to authorise and agree any future alterations to Polling Stations.

33. Middlehaven Ward – That further investigations be undertaken to review and assess Stephenson House for use as a polling station.
34. Ayresome Ward – That further investigations be undertaken to review and assess the Community Centre on Stainsby Road for use as a polling station.
35. Park End Ward – To merge polling districts MA1 and MA2 and rename the polling district MAM.
36. Beckfield Ward – That further investigation is undertaken to explore the viability of a change to the polling districts.
37. Brookfield Ward – To merge polling districts OC1 and OC2 and rename the polling district OC.
38. Kader Ward – To merge polling districts PC1 and PC2 and rename the polling district PC. To merge polling districts PD1 and PD2 and rename the polling district PD.
39. Coulby Newham Ward – That further investigation is undertaken to explore the viability of a change to the polling districts.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Electoral Administration Act 2006

The Electoral Commission Circular EC19/2010