

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Corporate Affairs Committee was held on 23 February 2011.

PRESENT: Councillor Clark (Chair), Councillors Brunton, Cox, McIntyre, McPartland, Mrs H Pearson, OBE, and Purvis.

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

**** DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

****MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 December 2010 were taken as read and approved as a true record.

REVIEW OF POLLING STATIONS

A report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services was presented to advise Members of the outcome of the consultation on the current Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places and seek agreement on proposed changes arising from the Review.

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. It was highlighted that any revised arrangements would come into force at the publication of the next Revised Register of Electors on 1 December 2011.

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 and ensured that Electors had reasonable facilities for voting. 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 were disabled.

In accordance with statutory requirements, public notices had been issued and extensive consultation undertaken as part of the Review. Consideration had been given to each Ward, its Polling Districts and Polling Places in line with legislation, and taking into account the responses to the consultation.

Electoral Services continuously monitored polling stations and reviewed any comments received after each election. Currently any alterations to Polling Stations had to be approved by the Corporate Affairs Committee. However, from a contingency/risk management point of view this would make it difficult to appoint an alternative Polling Station at very short notice. It was therefore recommended that the Returning Officer be granted delegated powers to authorise and agree any future alterations to Polling Stations.

It was highlighted that there were currently access problems at the City Learning Centre, (Polling Station PA), in Kader Ward. Landscaping works on the site were hindering access to the Centre, although the Returning Officer had received reassurance that the Centre would be fully accessible in time for the next elections on 5 May 2011. It was acknowledged that the Governing Body at the nearby Acklam Grange School had offered an alternative venue if needed.

Recommendations arising from the review and details of comments received, were presented in relation to Middlehaven, Ayresome, Park End, Beckfield, Brookfield, Kader and Coulby Newham Wards.

ORDERED as follows that:

1. Polling Stations AA - St Aidan's Drive Meeting Room, AB - Meeting House Elder Court and AC - Abingdon Primary School in Middlehaven Ward were retained.
2. Further investigations be undertaken to review and assess the Community Centre on Stainsby Road for use as a Polling Station in Ayresome Ward.
3. Polling districts MA1 and MA2 in Park End Ward be merged and the Polling District re-named MAM.
4. Further investigations be undertaken to explore the viability of a change to the Polling Districts in Beckfield Ward.
5. Polling Districts PC1 and PC2 be merged and renamed Polling District PC and Polling Districts PD1 and PD2 be merged and renamed Polling District PD, in Kader Ward.
6. Further investigations be undertaken to explore the viability of utilising St Augustine's RC Primary School as an additional Polling Station within the Coulby Newham Ward.
7. The Returning Officer would continue to monitor the Polling Station at the City Learning Centre and seek the Committee's approval should an alternative station be needed.
8. The Returning Officer be granted delegated powers, following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Corporate Affairs Committee, to authorise and agree any future alterations to Polling Stations, when emergency situations arose.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBERS' REMUNERATION

A report of the Director of Legal and Democratic Services was presented to seek the Committee's confirmation of an appointment to the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration.

Details of the current Panel were included in the submitted report. Alexander Porter had expressed an interest in serving a further term of office.

ORDERED as follows, that Alexander Porter be confirmed as re-appointed to the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration for a further term of office of three years.

CHANGE TO STANDING ORDERS

A report of the Director of Resources was presented to seek the Committee's approval to make a change to Standing Orders by removing the requirement to place an advertisement in a local paper when going out to Tender.

When Standing Orders were first approved, advertising via the local press and trade journals were the only ways of making businesses aware of the potential opportunities of trading with the Council. This was no longer the case as a range of media opportunities, including the internet, were now available. Members had previously approved the removal of the need to advertise in Trade Journals, leading to a saving of approximately £30k per annum.

It was now proposed to remove the requirement to place an advertisement in a local paper with the potential to make an additional saving in the region of £13.5K per annum, depending on the number of tenders placed in any one year.

ORDERED as follows that:

1. with effect from the start of the new financial year 2011, Standing Orders be amended to remove the requirement to place an advertisement in a local paper when going out to Tender.

2. the new advertising requirements set out in Appendix B to the submitted report be approved.

**** EXCLUSION – PRESS - PUBLIC**

ORDERED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that, if present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES – APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL GOVERNORS

A report of the Head of Commissioning and Resources was presented regarding vacancies for Local Authority appointed School Governors that had arisen as a result of resignations, the expiry of terms of office or the removal of Governors due to non-attendance and any vacancies deferred from previous meetings of the Corporate Affairs Committee.

It was noted that there were currently 9 vacancies out of a total of 142 Governorships for Local Authority representatives, which equated to 6.33%. The nominations received for such vacancies were outlined in Appendix 1 of the report submitted and a further update was tabled at the meeting.

ORDERED as follows, that the following appointments be approved for a four-year term of office:

<u>School</u>	<u>Governor</u>
Acklam Whin Primary School	Mr P Sharrocks (wef 23.2.11)
Berwick Hills Primary School	Councillor Lancaster (wef 23.2.11)
Kader Primary School	Mrs F Fletcher (wef 27.3.11)
Linthorpe Primary School	Councillor J Rostron (wef 27.3.11)
Park End Primary School	Mr D Loughbrough (wef 23.2.11)
The Avenue Primary School	Councillor Biswas (wef 23.2.11)
Whinney Banks Primary School	Mr S Hurlston (wef 23.2.11)
Ormesby School	Mr C McIntyre (wef 23.2.11)