

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND PLACES

Appendix 2

1. Polling Districts

1.1 Each ward is divided into two or more polling districts. The boundaries of each polling district and the number of electors in each district are as detailed in the Acting Returning Officer's submissions and Polling Districts maps published as part of the review.

1.2 No submissions have been received in respect of the delineation of any of the polling districts other than in 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 below.

1.3 In Weston the polling station for polling district B WN1 is located outside the district. This can be rectified by using Trafalgar Road and Penn Hill Road as the boundary between B – WN1 and B – WN2 and adjusting the districts accordingly.

1.4 The Returning Officer's published proposals for Newbridge recommended the division of polling district NB1 into two separate polling districts. No adverse comments have been received.

1.5 In Westmorland representations were received that polling districts WM3 and WM1 should be merged, rather than WM3 and WM2. This is a sensible proposal which is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION 1

That there be no change to the polling districts other than in respect of the Newbridge, Westmorland and Weston wards and that the Returning Officer be authorised to allocate properties accordingly and publicise the arrangements once complete.

2. Polling Places

2.1 As outlined in the guidance booklet for the review, the polling place is the geographical area in which a polling station (the actual room, building or area where voting takes place) is situated.

2.2 Most Councils designate as the polling place for each polling district the entirety of the area of that district. This means there is maximum flexibility for the Acting Returning Officer when it comes to the selection of suitable buildings/areas for the location of the polling station.

2.3 All comments received as part of the review related to the suitability or otherwise of particular buildings for use as a polling station, whether that be by way of proposed alternative venues or commentary on individual proposals.

2.4 It would in theory be open to the Council to adjudicate on the merits or otherwise of particular buildings for use as polling stations by making specific

designations of venues as polling places. This however would be inconsistent with the principle that the selection of the actual polling station and the allocation of voters to it is, by law, the personal responsibility of the Acting Returning Officer who is accountable for the integrity and effectiveness of all decisions that need to be made in the conduct of the whole electoral process.

2.5 It is therefore recommend that Council note the comments made and refer them to the Returning Officer to make decisions in respect of the selection of suitable locations, following consideration of any additional comments ward councillors may make.

2.6 For Council's information the issues raised during the review are outlined in brief in section 3 below.

RECOMMENDATION 2

2A That the polling place for each polling district be the whole of that district and

2B That all comments received by the Council during the review be referred to the Returning Officer for consideration and action as part of the preparation for the 2015 Parliamentary, Local and Parish Council Elections (other than those simply agreeing with the proposals).

3. Summary of Representations reviewed

WARD	NATURE OF CONCERN/ISSUE	COMMENT
Keynsham South	Proposal to move polling station from Riverside to Elim Church – alternative of Civic Centre proposed	To be considered
Bathavon South – Monkton Combe	Prefer Village Hall to St Michael's Church	To be assessed in terms of convenience and suitability
Bathavon North - Claverton	Concern about proposed change of polling station (6 respondents)	Returning Officer to reconsider proposed change
Westmorland	Concern about no longer using Twerton Village Hall	To be reconsidered
Lambridge	Suggestion of an alternative polling station	Returning Officer to visit and assess suitability
Westmorland	Concerns about (1) use of Ascension Church and (2) polling district merger	(1) To be assessed (2) See 1.5 above
Walcot	Incorrect name of premises	To be noted and records amended
Weston	Suggested variation of	Agreed – see 1.3

	polling district boundary	
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4. Information about the review

Details of polling districts, current arrangements, the proposed changes and ward and polling district maps are available in the following link;

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/consultations/review-polling-districts-and-polling-places-2014>