

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Polling Districts and Polling Places Review Sub-Committee
held on Tuesday, 4th October, 2011 at Fred Flint Room, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor A Martin (Chairman)
Councillor W Livesley (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors R Cartlidge, P Whiteley and B Murphy (for Cllr Moran)

Officers

Lindsey Parton, Registration Service and Business Manager
Natalie Bown, Policy Officer
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services Officer
Rose Hignett, Senior Elections Officer
Sandra Hobbs, Senior Elections Officer
Marion Hancock, Elections Officer

Apologies

Councillors A Moran and D Topping

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

7 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

8 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2011 be approved as a correct record.

9 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

At the previous meeting, the Officers had reported that the Boundary Commission for England had announced its intention to carry out a review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England. For Cheshire East, this would be based on the former ward boundaries. The Officers had sought legal advice on the possibility of postponing the review of Polling

Districts and Places. The legal advice was that the review should proceed as planned.

Members had also considered a schedule of proposed changes submitted and had agreed a number of specific changes. They had also agreed that proposed changes of a technical administrative nature should be dealt with by the Officers without the need for further consultation with Members.

The schedule of changes had now been updated to reflect Members' comments and amendments and was resubmitted for Members for further consideration. Members noted a number of additional proposals and representations.

Broken Cross and Upton – Councillors L Brown and M Hardy had objected to the proposed use of Macclesfield Cricket Club because of parking problems and had submitted counter proposals for the Sub-Committee's consideration. It was noted, however, that this would have significant implications for the rest of the ward. It was agreed that the Cricket Club be used on the basis that disabled electors would be encouraged to use the top car park and others would be encouraged to use the lower car park.

Crewe St Barnabas – Councillor R Cartlidge had proposed that a new polling station be created at Beechmere retirement village. However, the Officers had received representations from Beechmere that the building was unsuitable as it dealt with vulnerable adults and the doors had to be locked at 5.00 pm each day. It was therefore agreed that the proposal be not pursued.

Crewe West – the Labour Party had made representations that the polling station be reinstated at Edleston Primary School, having been removed at the school's request. It was agreed that electors should return to Edleston Primary School but that should there be issues in the future this would be reconsidered.

Crewe South – following representations by the Labour Party, the Officers would be considering the feasibility of using the YMCA, Gresty Road and New Life Church, Fuller Drive as polling stations.

Councillor R Fletcher had also made representations with regard to the Alsager ward and Officers had responded to him direct.

Members then considered the eight wards in the north of the Borough which had not been considered previously pending the receipt of the legal advice on the review. The Officers reported that the current Boundary Commission review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries would not have a significant impact on the polling arrangements for the north of the Borough.

Poynton East and Pott Shrigley – it was agreed that St Martin’s Church Hall should continue to be used until another suitable venue for a polling station could be found.

Wilmslow Dean Row – Councillor P Whiteley mentioned that Dean Oaks Primary School was not a good venue for parking or disabled access. He suggested that the electors be transferred to Dean Row Community Centre. This was agreed.

Wilmslow West and Chorley – Councillor P Whiteley suggested that the Cricket Club at Upcast Lane may have access problems but should be investigated and considered as an alternative venue to Ashdene Primary School. The Officers were asked to consider the suggestion in consultation with Councillor Whiteley.

Subject to the resolution of the issues mentioned, the schedule of proposed changes would now be uploaded onto the Council’s website as part of the four week consultation process which would end on 4th November. At the end of the consultation period, a further meeting of the Sub-Committee would be convened to consider the outcome with a view to making recommendations to the Constitution Committee. In this respect, the Constitution Committee would be recommending to Council that the Committee be granted delegated powers to make a final decision on the review at its meeting on 17th November.

The Officers circulated a revised list of consultees and a draft consultation letter for Members’ consideration. The proposed consultees were as follows:

Disability groups
Local political parties
Members of Parliament
National Association of Parish Councils
Cheshire Association of Parish Councils
All town and parish councils in Cheshire East
All Cheshire East Councillors

RESOLVED

That

- (1) subject to the amendments and actions agreed, the revised schedule be approved for consultation purposes and published on the Council’s website; and
- (2) the list of consultees and the draft consultation letter circulated at the meeting be approved.

10 **NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED

That the next meeting be held in week commencing 7th November 2011, the date and time to be determined in consultation with Members.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 2.55 pm

Councillor A Martin (Chairman)