

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Polling Districts and Polling Places Review Sub-Committee
held on Wednesday, 9th November, 2011 at Municipal Executive Suite -
Municipal Buildings, Earle Street, Crewe CW1 2BJ

PRESENT

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

Councillors R Cartlidge, A Moran, D Topping and P Whiteley

In attendance

Councillor D Newton

Officers

Lindsey Parton, Registration Service and Business Manager
Paul Mountford, Democratic Services Officer
Rose Hignett, Senior Elections Officer
Marion Hancock, Elections Officer

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

12 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present.

13 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2011 be approved as a correct record.

14 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Sub-Committee had met on 15th September and 4th October 2011 to formulate proposals for Polling Districts and Polling Places for public consultation. These were published on 7th October 2011 for a four week period of consultation ending on 4th November 2011. Disability Groups, Local Political Parties, Members of Parliament, Parish Councils and Cheshire East Councillors have been consulted on the proposals.

Council at its meeting on 13th October 2011 had agreed that the final decision concerning the outcome of the Review be delegated to the Constitution Committee at its meeting on 17th November 2011.

All representations received had been collated and were circulated at the meeting.

The Sub-Committee considered proposals for a number of wards in light of the representations received:

BRERETON RURAL

Somerford Parish Council had expressed concern at the proposal to use Brereton Primary School, which was a long way to travel for some residents. Davenport Chapel, Holmes Chapel Road was proposed as an alternative. This was agreed.

BROKEN CROSS AND UPTON

A representation had been made by a Councillor relating to where electors voted within the ward. This may be alleviated by a proposal to split a polling district so that part would vote at Latter Day Saints Church. However, a suggestion to reduce the number voting at Macclesfield Cricket Club would have implications for the rest of the ward. Macclesfield Cricket Club would therefore be used and the Club had agreed to cordon off part of the car park at the bottom of the drive for voters, with the top area being allocated to disabled voters.

CONGLETON EAST

The Clerk to Congleton Town Council had expressed his council's concern at proposals to transfer a polling district from Mossley Village Hall to Wellspring Methodist Church. This would make it difficult for a number of elderly residents to vote. The Officers proposed as an alternative that the boundary of the polling district be aligned with the railway line. This was agreed.

CREWE SOUTH

Following representations by the Labour Party, the Officers had considered the feasibility of using Belong, the YMCA in Gresty Road and the New Life Church in Fuller Drive as polling stations. The YMCA and New Life Church were good venues and were both available for use in the future. Belong could have been used in place of Pebble Brook School but the room required for the polling station was on the first floor; whilst there was a lift, the location was not ideal. It was agreed therefore that Pebble Brook School would continue to be used.

DANE VALLEY

It was proposed that approximately 100 electors be transferred from Hermitage Primary School to Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School. Councillor L Gilbert had suggested that the electors be transferred instead to Middlewich Road Primary School. However, the Sub-Committee agreed that the Comprehensive School was a more suitable venue.

KNUTSFORD

Councillor P Raynes had supported the use of Toft Cricket Club but felt that the creation of a new polling district 3BBR to vote at St Vincent's Primary School was unnecessary. Councillor Andrew Malloy of Knutsford Town Council had enquired about the possibility of creating a additional polling station for the Shaw Heath/Longridge areas, possibly at the Shaw Heath Social Club. The Clerk to Knutsford Town Council had expressed his council's concern at the proposed changes to the polling station at St Vincent's.

The Officers explained the need to create the new polling district in order to split an electorate 3,000. It was agreed that no changes be made to the proposed arrangements.

MACCLESFIELD HURDSFIELD

Hurdsfield Primary School had been identified as a suitable venue and would be available for elections.

MACCLESFIELD TYTHERINGTON

A suitable classroom had been found at Tytherington High School. The school had been asked to cordon off a couple of parking spaces at election times.

MACCLESFIELD WEST AND IVY

St John's Primary School, Ivy Road was available as an alternative to the existing polling station which was outside the ward. Broken Cross Primary School would not be needed.

ODD RODE

Four objections had been received, including one from the parish council, to the proposal that Mow Cop Community Church be used as a polling station. Although the Church was a new building with generous parking facilities, it was situated over half a mile up a very steep hill and would be difficult for many people to get to. Having considered the representations, the Sub-Committee agreed that the existing venue, Mount Pleasant Chapel, should continue to be used for ORD3, with ORD5 voting at Mow Cop Community Church.

POYNTON EAST AND POTT SHRIGLEY

Councillor H Murray and a member of the public had expressed concerns about the travelling distance to St Martin's Church Hall. The Officers had spoken to the National Trust who were considering the possibility of a suitable venue at Lyme Park. However, this would take a few weeks to consider. It was agreed that until such time as a suitable alternative venue in Lyme Park can be found, St. Martin's Church Hall should continue to be used.

WILMSLOW WEST AND CHORLEY

At the previous meeting, Councillor P Whiteley had asked that the proposed use of the Cricket Club at Upcast Lane as an alternative venue to Ashdene Primary School be reconsidered. The Officers had investigated and had concluded that the lane leading to the Cricket Club was very narrow and could easily become blocked. The Sub-Committee agreed that Ashdene Primary School should continue to be used.

The Officers had also considered the suitability of Gorsey Bank School. However, the School did not appear to have access for people with disabilities and would probably have to close for elections. The Officers had identified an alternative suitable venue, Wilmslow Guild, which was willing to make its main hall available as a polling station. The Sub-Committee agreed that Wilmslow Guild should be used.

WILMSLOW DEAN ROW

No representations had been received in relation to the changes agreed at the previous meeting.

The schedule would now be updated for submission to the Constitution Committee. Subject to the Committee's decision, the proposed amendments would be made to the register of electors for publication on 1st December. The new arrangements would be notified in writing to the clerks to town and parish councils who would be asked to publicise the arrangements for their area. The Council's website would also be updated.

RESOLVED

That

- (1) the Sub-Committee having considered the outcome of the public consultation, and subject to the amendments and actions now agreed, the revised schedule of changes to Polling Places, Polling Districts and Polling Stations be recommended to the Constitution Committee for approval;

- (2) at the conclusion of the review, the Officers write to all those who have submitted comments on the proposals, informing them of the outcome; and
- (3) the Sub-Committee's thanks and appreciation be extended to those Officers who had worked on the review.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 10.50 am

Councillor A Martin (Chairman)