

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting: 19th November 2014
Report of: Head of Governance and Democratic Services
Subject/Title: Review of Polling Places and Polling Districts

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 Attached to this report is the report submitted to the Polling Arrangements Sub-Committee on 7 October 2014 (**Appendix 1**), and the minutes of that meeting (**Appendix 2**).
- 1.2 The Constitution Committee has been given delegated powers by Council to agree the final outcome for the Polling Places and Polling Districts Review. The need for the Review has arisen from the provisions of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and must be completed by 31 January 2015.
- 1.3 The Sub-Committee, at its meeting on 7 October 2014 considered representations received from the public, together with a submission from the Acting Returning Officer. Having considered the representations received, the Sub-Committee has made recommendations for the Committee to consider (**Appendix 3**).
- 1.4 This report provides an update of matters which have arisen since the Sub-Committee meeting, which require consideration by the Committee, in addition to the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1
- a) That the recommendations of the Polling Arrangements Review Sub-Committee in respect of proposed changes to polling places, be agreed and implemented as set out in Appendix 3 of the report submitted, including the proposed change from Congleton Leisure Centre to St Stephen's Church Centre;
 - b) That Rood Hill Methodist Church, Derby Street, Congleton be designated as a Polling Place to replace St Mary's Pre School, Belgrave Avenue (Polling District Ref CNW2); and
 - c) That that Polling District CON4 to be amalgamated with Polling District COS2 in the Congleton East Ward.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Sub-Committee has considered all representations received, and the Acting Returning Officer's submission, and has now made recommendations to the Committee for approval (**Appendix 3**).

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 None.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Costs incurred will be met from existing budgets.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 None.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 Undertaking this Review is a statutory duty which must be completed by the deadline of 31 January 2015.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The attached report submitted to the Polling Arrangements Review Sub-Committee sets out the background and required stages of the Review.

- 10.2 The matters which have arisen since the Sub-Committee meeting, which require consideration by the Committee, in addition to the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee are set out below:

- a) In considering the Acting Returning Officer's recommendation in respect of moving from Congleton Leisure Centre to St Stephens Church Centre, the Sub-Committee asked officers to explore the area of Brunswick Wharf Deport to see whether there were any alternative options for a suitable polling place within this area. Officers have since investigated this request and report that this area is a working site, which has no suitable premises, and which would not be suitable for polling purposes for health and safety reasons. The Committee is therefore asked to consider the recommendation for the future use of St Stephens Church Centre;

- b) The Elections Office has recently been informed that St Mary's Pre-School, Belgrave Avenue, Congleton is unavailable for future use (Polling District CNW2). It is therefore recommended to move the polling Place to Rood Hill Methodist Church, Derby Street, Congleton, which is deemed to be a good alternative venue.
- c) The Committee is asked to agree a technical change to a Polling District Code. There is currently a Register of Electors (Polling District CON4) which has only five properties listed. This has arisen due to uncertainty about where these properties would wish to vote. The road on which the properties are located has access to two polling stations. The residents previously voted at Buglawton School, but this was quite a distance away. For the last few elections they have voted at Mossley Village Hall, where electors in Polling District COS2 vote, and this arrangement has proved to be satisfactory. The Committee is therefore asked to agree that Polling District CON4 be amalgamated with Polling District COS2, in the Congleton East Ward. This is an administrative change, which would have no impact upon electors.

10.3 Once the Committee has made its final decision on the most appropriate polling districts and polling places, any necessary alterations will be made to the electoral register and arrangements will be made to publish the conclusions of the Review.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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