

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Polling Arrangements Review Sub-Committee**
held on Tuesday, 7th October, 2014 at The Tatton Room - Town Hall,
Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillors R Domleo, L Jeuda, A Martin and L Smetham (for Cllr Livesley)

Officers

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

Apologies

Councillors K Hickson, W Livesley, B Silvester and P Whiteley

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor Andrew Martin be appointed Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED

That Councillor Roland Domleo be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

5 REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 had introduced a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places. The next compulsory review now had to be completed by 31st January 2015. Subsequent compulsory reviews would then have to be completed every five years thereafter.

At its meeting on 1st May 2014 the Constitution Committee had authorised the publication of the notice of the Polling Districts and Polling Places Review, and had authorised the conduct of the review by the Polling Arrangements Review Sub-Committee. Full Council had subsequently agreed to delegate the final decision for the outcome of the review to the Constitution Committee in November.

A Polling District was the area created by the division of a constituency, ward or electoral division into smaller parts within which a Polling Place could be determined which was convenient to electors. A Polling Place was the building or area in which Polling Stations would be selected by the Returning Officer. The Polling Station was the room or building where the poll took place which was chosen by the Returning Officer for the election.

The Review had four stages:

Stage 1 – Notification of the review

The first stage of the process involves giving notice of the Review. Notice had been published at the end of June 2014 and interested parties, including elected members and disability groups, had been notified of the review.

Stage 2 – Consultation

The consultation stage was for representations and comments to be made on the existing and proposed arrangements for Polling Districts and Places. There were two parts:

- A compulsory submission from the (Acting) Returning Officer of the Parliamentary Constituencies; and
- Submissions from electors and other interested persons and bodies.

Stage 3 – Concluding the Review

Following the consultation stage, the Authority had to make its final decisions on the most appropriate polling districts and polling places. The Electoral Registration Officer must then make any necessary alterations to the electoral register and publish a notice stating that the alterations had been made.

Stage 4 – Publishing the conclusions of the Review

Once the Council had agreed the proposals, details of the new polling districts and polling places had to be made available to the public, including the reasons for choosing each particular polling district and polling place.

The Sub-Committee considered a schedule of recommended changes to Polling Places (Appendix A to the report), together with a copy of the Acting Returning Officer's submission Appendix B to the report). The proposals had been drafted to incorporate a summary of representations received.

With regard to the Willaston and Rope ward, the officers reported receipt of an email from Councillor B Silvester indicating that Willaston Parish Council and he objected to a proposed change of polling station from St. John's Church Hall to Willaston Masonic Hall Acacia Suite. The change was proposed following several representations made by a pre-school group. The Parish Council were not in favour of the change because the Chapel had been used as a polling station for many years and was well known to residents; the Masonic Hall was too far out of the village; and with General, European and Local Elections St. John's Church Hall would be used only twice in four years, which would not cause excessive disruption to the pre-school group. The officers commented that the Masonic Hall was a suitable alternative building for polling purposes, with good parking provision and disability access. The Sub-Committee agreed to accept the officer recommendation.

Officers reported at the meeting that Wheelock Primary School had confirmed that Building works had been completed and that their premises could now be used for election purposes.

Confirmation had also been received that Alderley Edge Scout Hall was available for use.

The following amendments to the Acting Returning Officer's submission were agreed by Members:

Bunbury (Minshull Vernon Parish)

The proposal to move the polling station from Church Minshull Village Hall to St. Peter's Community Hall be not agreed.

Congleton East

With regard to the proposal to move the polling station from Buglawton Primary School to one or both of two alternative venues, the polling station be moved to Buglawton Scout Hall.

The proposal to move the polling station at Congleton Leisure Centre to St. Stephen's Church Centre be agreed for now, subject to officers investigating whether an alternative premises could be located around the area of the Brunswick Wharf Depot.

Dane Valley

The Sub-Committee felt that Polling District HCE3 should vote at Holmes Chapel Methodist Church and HCE4 at Holmes Chapel Library. Whilst there was capacity for both Polling Districts to vote at the Library at the current time, HCE4 was a new housing development which would continue to grow over a period of time.

Wilmslow West and Chorley

That the Cricket Pavillion, Upcast Lane should be used in place of Ashdene Primary School.

RESOLVED

The subject to the amendments above, the proposed changes to polling district and polling place arrangements as set out in the Acting Returning Officer's submission at Appendix B to the report be recommended to the Constitution Committee.

The meeting commenced at 2.15 pm and concluded at 3.00 pm

Councillor Andrew Martin (Chairman)