
Report to Council

Date of Meeting: 19 December 2013

Subject: Polling District and Polling Place Review 2013

Report by: Director of Finance and Corporate Services

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to bring to Council the outcome of the consultation on the polling districts and polling places within the Clackmannanshire area which took place between the 1st October and 1st November 2013.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Council:
- a) approves the polling districts and places set out in Appendix I to this report and
 - b) delegates to the Chief Executive (further to consultation with elected members in the affected Ward) to approve any changes to the scheme which may become necessary before the next formal review.

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a new timetable for the formal review of all polling districts and places. It is now a requirement to conduct a review within the period of 16 months from the 1st October 2013 and then every five years afterwards.
- 3.2. This meant that the council had to conduct and complete this review between the 1st October 2013 and 31st January 2015. Taking into account the planned election events upcoming in 2014 and ensuring a settled register in time for the 2015 parliamentary election, it was considered most suitable to conduct the review before next year's events. This provides a stable situation through both the European Parliamentary election in May and the Scottish Independence Referendum in September. In addition it allows for any changes that would be required to be fully reviewed rather than have to make temporary measures during these events.
- 3.3. Although there was a review recently, the changes to the legislation required us to conduct another formal review. However due to the proximity of the last review it

was sensible to publish previous suggestions to allow any responder to have this information in advance of making any comments.

- 3.4. It was important to raise awareness of the consultation with all key stakeholders that may have an interest in responding. To achieve this, the details of the review were published on Clacksweb. It was also registered on the corporate consultation database (Citizenspace) and the details were circulated to the relevant stakeholders. Additional awareness raising was also done using the council's social media.
- 3.5. Stakeholders included all elected members, community councils, residents and tenants groups and all key council offices. In addition, contacts for the premises that we currently use were also provided with the information.
- 3.6. The legislation requires the Returning Officer to formally respond to the Council's consultation exercise, this was received on the 4th October 2013. In her submission the Returning Officer must consider the size and layout of a polling place in relation to the number of stations required for all election types. It should allow for the most effective throughput of voters, including in those instances where there is a high number of electors at the polling station(s) at any one time on polling day. She must also consider the integrity of the poll in ensuring suitable conditions for the elector to vote in private, for staff to conduct elections in an efficient and effective manner and for those entitled to observe the voting process to do so without compromising the secrecy of the ballot.
- 3.7. During the consultation period we received 18 responses, including the Returning Officer's and one petition. In preparing the report we have taken account of these.
- 3.8. For Members interest the level of postal votes in Clackmannanshire is 10.6%. This has been taken into account in determining the recommendation.

4.0 Proposed Changes to Existing Scheme

The following section outlines proposed changes to the existing scheme and the rationale for these.

4.1 Tullibody

The current scheme provides for the following four polling districts and polling places:

OC110	St Serf's Church Hall
CO115	Banchory Primary School
OC120	Tullibody Civic Centre
OC125	St Bernadette's Church Hall

The issue with the current arrangements is:

The use of Banchory Primary School disrupts the children's education as the school has to be closed to the pupils on the day of the poll. All respondents were in favour of discontinuing the use of the school as a polling place.

Representations have been received as follows regarding Tullibody: Ten submissions were made supporting the following three options.

Option 1: create one polling district for all the voters in Tullibody and have one polling place, which would be Tullibody Civic Centre. Three individual respondents were in favour of this option.

Option 2: create two polling districts, a north/south division, served by two polling places, Tullibody Civic Centre and St Serf's Church Hall. Four submissions were made in favour of this option, two from individuals and two group submissions: Tullibody, Cambus & Glenochil Community Council and Clackmannan Tenants & Residents Federation.

Option 3: create three polling districts served by three polling places, Tullibody Civic Centre, St Serf's Church Hall and St Bernadette's Church Hall/Scout Hall. Two individual and one group submission (Residents of Muirside Rise) were made in support of this option.

Option 1 provides the accommodation necessary to serve all the voters of Tullibody and maintain the integrity of the poll.

In respect of options 2 & 3, the concerns are that, with the redistribution of electors, St Serf's would be at or beyond its capacity at election events where there is a higher than average turnout and this in turn would impact on the risks associated in maintaining the integrity and secrecy of the poll.

In light of the above, the proposal for Tullibody is merge the four polling districts into one and have one polling place, Tullibody Civic Centre. This will ensure sufficient capacity for voters and consequently safeguard the integrity of the poll.

4.2 Tillicoutry

The current scheme provides for two polling districts and polling places:

OC240	Tillicoutry Community Centre
OC243	Devonvale Hall

The issue with the current arrangements is:

Tillicoutry Community Centre has closed and is no longer available as a polling place.

Representations have been received as follows regarding Tillicoutry: Four submissions were made supporting the following three options.

Option 1: create one polling district for Tillicoutry and have one polling place, Devonvale Hall. Two individual respondents were in favour of this option.

Option 2: retain the two polling districts and have two polling places, Devonvale Hall and the Ben Cleuch Centre. One individual respondent was in favour of this option. It was also supported by Tillicoutry, Coalnaughton and Devonside Community Council as part of their submission, however their preferred option is number 3 below.

Option 3: create three polling districts for Tillicoutry served by three polling places, Devonvale Hall, the Ben Cleuch Centre and the Centenary Hall.

Option 1 provides the accommodation necessary to serve all the voters of Tillicoutry and maintain the integrity of the poll.

Options 2 & 3 would involve closing the Ben Cleuch Centre to service users as this would be the only way to ensure the integrity of the poll. In addition for option 3, the use of the Centenary Hall as a polling place would not be suitable, due to difficult access to the building and the limited on-street parking.

In light of the above, the proposal for Tillicoultry is merge the two polling districts into one and have one polling place, Devonvale Hall. This will ensure sufficient capacity for voters and consequently maintain the integrity of the poll.

4.3 Sauchie

The current scheme provides for the following two polling districts and polling places:

OC355	Sauchie & Coalsnaughton Parish Church Hall
OC360	Sauchie Hall

Issues with the current arrangements are:

Some concerns were raised about the suitability of Sauchie & Coalsnaughton Parish Church Hall as a polling place. The disabled access is to the rear side of the building and there can be disruption if the church is being used on the day of the poll.

Representations have been received as follows regarding Sauchie: six submissions were made supporting three options.

Option 1: create one polling district for Sauchie and have one polling place, Sauchie Hall. Two individual respondents were in favour of this option.

Option 2: retain the current arrangements, two polling districts and two polling places. This option was favoured by both the Sauchie & Fishcross Community Council and Sauchie Community Group and one individual respondent.

Option 3: retain the current polling places, but with one minor adjustment to polling district OC360. Move the boundary of polling district OC363 (Whins Resource Centre, Alloa) to include those voters in Quarry Place, Sauchie. This option was favoured by joint respondents.

The issues raised are minor and can be managed. No representations were made by those living in Quarry Place in support of Option 3.

In light of the above, the proposal is to continue with the current arrangements, two polling districts and two polling places, Sauchie Hall and Sauchie & Coalsnaughton Parish Church Hall.

4.4 Alloa

The current scheme provides for the following three polling districts and polling places:

OC465	Alloa's Old People Welfare Club
OC470	Alloa North Church Hall
OC475 & OC477	Council Offices, Mill Street

Issues with the current arrangements are:

Alloa North Church Hall is no longer available as a polling place. The Council offices are barely adequate and the integrity of the poll would be at risk at an election event with a high turnout. The continuing availability of this building is also a concern.

Representations have been received as follows regarding Alloa: Three submissions were made from individuals.

Returning Officer's submission as follows:

Relocate electors in polling district OC470 to Alloa Baptist Church.

Relocate electors in polling district OC475 to Ludgate Church Hall.

Relocate electors in polling district OC477 to St Mungo's RC Parish Church Hall.

One submission was made by an individual in relation to creating a new polling district for the Gavins Road area (currently split between OC 465 & 470) and the siting of a temporary polling place. This had been considered previously in relation to the growing number of voters who would need to attend Alloa North Church Hall, however this has now been negated by the replacement of this hall with Alloa Baptist Church Hall. The respondent also suggested the use of St Mungo's RC Church Hall.

Another submission was made by an individual in relation to creating a new polling district and polling place for the Smithfield Loan area. Our enquiries as to the use of suitable accommodation in this area have proven fruitless.

In light of the above, the proposal is to relocate electors to Alloa Baptist Church Hall, Ludgate Church Hall and St Mungo's RC Church Hall.

4.5 Forestmill & Clackmannan

The current scheme provides for the following two polling districts and polling places:

OC 595	Forestmill
OC 597	Clackmannan Town Hall

The issue with the current arrangements is:

Loganlea Coffee Shop is under new management and we have not managed to obtain confirmation that it will be made available.

Representations have been received as follows regarding Forestmill: One submission was made by the Returning Officer.

Relocate electors in polling district OC595 (Forestmill) to Clackmannan Town Hall. This building can easily accommodate the small increase in voter numbers.

In light of the above, the proposal is to relocate the electors at Forestmill to Clackmannan Town Hall.

5.0 Sustainability Implications

5.1 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

6.0 Resource Implications

6.1 Financial Details

There are no financial implications.

6.2 Staffing

There are no staffing implications.

7.0 Exempt Reports

7.1 Is this report exempt? Yes ☐ (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No ☒

8.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box ☒)

The area has a positive image and attracts people and businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are more cohesive and inclusive	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People are better skilled, trained and ready for learning and employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our communities are safer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vulnerable people and families are supported	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance misuse and its effects are reduced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health is improving and health inequalities are reducing	<input type="checkbox"/>
The environment is protected and enhanced for all	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Council is effective, efficient and recognised for excellence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

9.0 Equalities Impact

9.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations? Yes ☐
No ☒

10.0 Legality

10.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes ☒

11.0 Appendices

- 11.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

Appendix I - Summary of proposed polling districts and polling places

12.0 Background Papers

- 12.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes ☒ (please list the documents below) No ☐

Responses to the consultation

<http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/council/pollplacereview3/>

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Approved by

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Summary of Proposed Polling Districts and Polling Places

Below is a summary of the proposals

Proposed Polling Place	Polling District	Comments
Dumyat Centre, Main St, Menstrie	OC105	No change to current arrangements
Tullibody Civic Centre, Abercromby Place, Tullibody	OC120	Polling place to serve all of the electorate at Tullibody
Cochrane Hall, West Stirling Street, Alva	OC230	No change to current arrangements
St John Vianney's Church Hall, East Stirling Street, Alva	OC235	No change to current arrangements
Devonvale Hall, Moss Road, Tillicoultry	OC240	Polling Place to serve all of the electorate at Tillicoultry
Coalsnaughton Village Hall, Main Street, Coalsnaughton	OC245	No change to current arrangements
The Ochilview, Alloa Road, Fishcross	OC350	No change to current arrangements
Sauchie & Coalsnaughton Church Hall, Main Street, Sauchie	OC355	No change to current arrangements
Sauchie Hall, Mar Place, Sauchie	OC360	No change to current arrangements
Whins Resource Centre, The Whins, Alloa	OC363	No change to current arrangements
Alloa Old Peoples Welfare Club Hall, Erskine Street, Alloa	OC465	No change to current arrangements
Alloa Baptist Church Hall, Ludgate, Alloa	OC470	Alloa North Church Hall no longer available
Ludgate Church Hall, Ludgate, Alloa	OC475	Discontinue use of the Council Offices in Mill Street
St Mungo's RC Church Hall, Mar Street, Alloa	OC477	Discontinue use of the Council Offices in Mill
Bowmar Community Centre, Scott Crescent, Alloa	OC480	No change to current arrangements

Proposed Polling Place	Polling District	Comments
Hawkhill Community Centre, Hillcrest Drive, Alloa	OC485	No change to current arrangements
Coronation Hall, Muckhart	OC590	No change to current arrangements
Dollar Civic Centre, Park Place, Dollar	OC593	No change to current arrangements
Clackmannan Town Hall, Main Street, Clackmannan	OC595 & OC597	Polling place to serve electors at Forestmill as well as Clackmannan, as Loganlea Tea/Coffee Shop no longer available