

WIRRAL COUNCIL

LICENSING, HEALTH AND SAFETY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2014

SUBJECT:	POLLING STATIONS: FURTHER UPDATE
WARD/S AFFECTED:	MORETON WEST AND SAUGHALL MASSIE WARD WEST KIRBY AND THURSTASTON WARD
REPORT OF:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the polling station for polling district YC and to determine the polling station for polling district QC from two options: -

- (i) St Bridget's C of E Primary School, St Bridget's Lane
- (ii) St Bridget's Centre, St Bridget's Lane

1.2 Details of the two options are set out in Appendix 1.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Council has a duty under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to divide Wirral Borough into Polling Districts and to designate Polling Places for each Polling District.

2.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 then placed a duty on all Councils to undertake a review every four years of all Polling Districts and Places.

2.3 This was amended by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, which provides that there must be a review of all "polling districts" and "polling places" within each "compulsory period". "Compulsory period" is defined as:-

- a) The period of 16 months beginning with the 1st October 2013, and
- b) The period of 16 months beginning with the 1st October of every fifth year after that.

This provision is to align polling district and polling place reviews with the 5 year fixed term Parliaments and UK Parliamentary boundary reviews. Nothing in the 2013 Act prevents the Council carrying out an earlier review of some or all of it's polling districts or places.

2.4 The 2013 Polling District and Place Review formally commenced on 1st October 2013 and the result was reported to this Committee on the 22nd January 2014

2.5 Moreton West and Saughall Massie Ward

Polling District YC

The (Acting) Returning Officer advised that the current polling place for polling district YC was Foxfields School but that this may be sold for redevelopment in the future, however, this was not anticipated to happen until late 2014 if at all.

The Committee resolved that the status quo should continue for the Combined European Parliamentary and Local Government elections to be held on 22 May 2014 but that this be reviewed for future elections.

After the Combined European Parliamentary and Local Government elections in May 2014 the situation regarding the sale of Foxfields School was reviewed.

It was determined that although the school was to be sold this year, the exact date was still unclear, however, in the event of the site being sold prior to the Combined Parliamentary and Local Government elections to be held on 7 May 2015, the site would be kept available for use as a polling station.

2.6 West Kirby and Thurstaston Ward

Polling District QC

The (Acting) Returning Officer recommended that the current polling place for polling district QC should remain as St Bridget's C of E Primary School, St Bridget's Lane.

The (Acting) Returning Officer advised that a Council Member had requested to use the recently completed St Bridget's Centre as an alternative venue for polling district QC.

Members were advised that the proposed alternative venue would offer reasonable facilities for voting and would be accessible to all electors but there would be a charge which had not yet been determined.

Councillor Watt distributed a map of the location and photographs of St Bridget's Centre and informed Members that residents had requested that the polling place to be moved to the new facility.

Members discussed the cost implications regarding the proposed changes and the difficulties experienced by the school as the current polling place.

It was moved by Councillor Watt and seconded by Councillor Hornby that – “The polling place for district QC be changed to St Bridget’s Centre for the forthcoming election subject to the cost incurred being no more than £300.”

The motion was put and lost (4:5).

It was then moved by Councillor S Niblock, seconded by Councillor P Glasman and Resolved (9:0) - That the status quo should continue for the Combined European Parliamentary and Local Government elections to be held on 22 May 2014 but that this be reviewed for future elections.

After the Combined European Parliamentary and Local Government elections in May 2014 the polling station for polling district QC was reviewed.

It was determined that the proposed alternative venue remains to offer reasonable facilities for voting and would be accessible to all electors and the hire cost for use on polling day would be £272.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 In order to ensure that forthcoming elections can be run, the Council must ensure all polling districts have suitable polling places available on the day of poll.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 All options considered in relation to possible alternative polling places for polling districts YC and QC are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Details of the consultation are set out within this report. All stakeholders, interested parties and persons have been consulted.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 6.1 There are no such implications arising.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 7.1 Such implications are set out in this report.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Such implications are set out in this report.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(c) No because of another reason which is:

The Review uses the Electoral Commissions Evaluation Checklist which addresses equality and diversity issues relevant to Polling Districts, Places and Stations.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no such implications arising.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no such implications arising.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That the Committee agrees to the recommendation (detailed in Appendix 1 to this report) regarding the polling place for polling district YC.

12.2 That the Committee determines which premises (from those detailed in Appendix 1 to this report) are to be designated and used as the polling station for polling district QC.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 The Council must designate and have available for use at the forthcoming Combined Parliamentary and Local Government elections (and future elections) a suitable polling place for polling districts YC and QC.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Polling Place Options for Polling Districts YC and QC

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

None

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

None

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Licensing, Health and Safety and General Purposes Committee	22nd January 2014

