



Council – 14 July 2014

Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places

Purpose of report

This report is submitted for the Council to commence a statutory review of polling districts and polling places in East Northamptonshire.

Attachment(s)

Appendix 1; Current Polling Stations

Appendix 2: Current Polling Districts

Appendix 3: Equalities Impact Assessment

1.0 Background

1.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006) requires the council to divide its authority area into polling districts and designate a polling place for each district for UK parliamentary elections. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a statutory duty for all local authorities to undertake and implement a review of polling districts and polling places between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015. The next review would then take place no earlier than 18 months and no later than six months prior to each parliamentary election every five years.

1.2 The law requires the council to ensure that:

- all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;
- each parish is a separate polling district
- so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

1.3 A review of polling districts and polling places in East Northamptonshire was last undertaken in 2011. Since that time, the council has kept the location of polling stations under review to ensure good accessibility for all electors. This review also presents an opportunity to consider any issues arising from the European parliamentary election that was held on 22 May 2014.

2.0 Process and Timetable

2.1 The council is required to give notice that it is undertaking a review and consult the Acting Returning Officers for the parliamentary constituencies of Corby and Wellingborough, which cover the district of East Northamptonshire. There is a statutory duty on Acting Returning Officers (the Chief Executives of Corby Borough Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough) to make representations to the council.

2.2 The council must also give individuals or groups with expertise in respect of access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability the opportunity to make representations and to comment on the returning officers' representations. Any elector in East Northamptonshire is also able to make representations, and district

councillors, as well as town and parish councils, will also be consulted.

- 2.3 Any representations made by an Acting Returning Officer must be published within 30 days by posting a copy of them at East Northamptonshire House and on the council's website.
- 2.4 When the review has been completed, the council must give reasons for its decisions in respect of polling districts and places and publish:
- a) all correspondence sent to an Acting Returning Officer in connection with the review
 - b) all correspondence sent to anyone who has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability
 - c) all representations made by any person in connection with the review
 - d) the minutes of any council meeting to consider any revision to the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review
 - e) details of the designation of polling districts or polling places within our area as a result of the review
 - f) details of the places where the outcomes of the review have been published.

- 2.4 It is intended that the current polling districts and places (i.e. those used for the European parliamentary election in May 2014) will form the starting point for the review. These are shown in appendices 1 and 2. The council's website contains maps of all the polling stations, which can be viewed on www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/pollingstations.

The suitability of polling places will need to be assessed in relation to the accessibility needs of all voters and guidance on this is available from the Electoral Commission and the Association of Electoral Administrators.

- 2.5 The following timetable is proposed for the review:

Publication of Notice of Review	16 July 2014
Consultation with Acting Returning Officers and people representing persons with disabilities – notification to Clerks of Town/Parish Councils and Chairmen of Parish meetings; local constituency parties; Head of Planning Services	From 16 July 2014 until 5 September 2014
Publication of representations by Acting Returning Officers and further consultation with people representing disabled persons	8 September 2014; closing date 24 September 2014
Council meeting to consider any revisions to polling districts or places	8 October 2014

3.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 3.1 A polling district and polling place review is a statutory responsibility which includes a requirement to take account of the ease of accessibility to polling stations for any individual with a disability. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been prepared to support the approach to the review (see appendix 3)

4.0 Legal Implications

- 4.1 The council is statutorily required to undertake this review before the end of January 2015. Given that the new electoral register will be published on 1 December 2014, it is considered that the timescale set above best meets the statutory requirement and the council's decision making timetable.

5.0 Risk Management

5.1 There are no significant risks to the council in relation to the recommendation. However, failure to undertake the review could result in a legal challenge and therefore it is essential the review goes ahead, as set out earlier in the report.

6.0 Resource and Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report that fall outside of the council's agreed revenue budget. The additional work associated with undertaking the review will be accommodated within the workload of the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and officers within his team. There will be some postage costs, but these will be absorbed within the central postage budget.

7.0 Constitutional Implications

7.1 The council has previously delegated authority to the Chief Executive, Executive Director and Head of Resources and Organisational Development to agree changes to polling districts and polling places outside of a full review. It is recommended that this provision is retained and, consequently, there are no constitutional implications arising from this report.

8.0 Corporate Outcomes

8.1 The recommendation will help deliver the following corporate outcomes:

- Value for Money – ensuring that the requirement to provide access is balanced against the cost of providing a polling station and the resources to staff it
- High Quality Service Delivery – supporting electors by providing reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 The Council is recommended to

- (1) Authorise the publication of the Notice for the Polling District and Polling Place Review and endorse the process and timetable for the review.
- (2) Have due regard to the equality impact assessment, set out in appendix 3, in authorising the review.

(Reason – to comply with the requirements of legislation, which requires a review to be conducted prior to January 2015, and to aim to improve, where reasonable and practicable, accessibility for the disabled.)

Legal	Power: Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006) Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013				
	Other considerations: Electoral Commission Guidance 'Reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations'				
Background Papers:	Report to Council – Review of Polling Districts and Places – 18 July 2011 Report to Council – Review of Polling Districts and Places – 10 October 2011				
Person Originating Report:	James McLaughlin, Democratic & Electoral Services Manager ☎ 01832 742113 ✉ jmclaughlin@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk				
Date: 24 June 2014					
CFO		MO		CX	



East
Northamptonshire
Council

Appendix 1

Name of Venue	Address
Aldwincle Village Hall	58 Main Street, Aldwincle, Kettering, Northants, NN14 3EL
Barnwell Village Hall	Hemington Road, Barnwell, Peterborough, PE8 5QD
Benefield Village Hall	Main Street, Lower Benefield, Peterborough, PE8 5AF
Brigstock Village Hall	8 Bridge Street, Brigstock, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN14 3ET
Bulwick Village Centre	Main Street, Bulwick, Corby, Northants, NN17 3DY
Chelveston Village Hall	Caldecott Road, Chelveston, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 6AT
College Street Centre	College Street, Irthlingborough, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN9 5TU
Collyweston Village Hall	16 High Street, Collyweston, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 3PW
Cotterstock Village Hall	Main Street, Cotterstock, Peterborough, PE8 5HD
Crow Hill Community Centre	2 Fettleline Road, Irthlingborough, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 5XF
Deene Village Hall	Deene, Corby, Northants, NN17 3EJ
Denford Village Hall	Front Street, Denford, Kettering, Northants, NN14 4EG
Duddington Village Hall	Church Lane, Duddington, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 3QF
Easton-on-the-Hill Village Hall	New Road, Easton-on-the-Hill, Stamford, Lincs, PE9 3NN
Fotheringhay Village Hall	Main Street, Fotheringhay, Peterborough, PE8 5HZ
Full Gospel Church	60 High Street, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0QX
Garage at Westmoreland	11 Manor Farm, Apethorpe, Peterborough, PE8 5DP
Germain Rooms	Drayton Road, Lowick, Kettering, Northants, NN14 3BG
Glaphorn Village Hall	Main Street, Glaphorn, Peterborough, PE8 5BE
Great Addington Memorial Hall	Woodford Road, Great Addington, Northants, NN14 4BS
Hargrave Village Hall	Church Road, Hargrave, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 6BQ
Harringworth Village Hall	Gretton Road, Harringworth, Corby, Northants, NN17 3AD
Hemington Village Hall	Main Street, Hemington, Peterborough, PE8 5QJ
Henry Chichele Primary School	School Lane, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, NN10 8NQ
Hensman Hall	Chichele Street, Higham Ferrers, Rushden, Northants, NN10 8HT
Heritage Chapel and Halls	Park Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0RW
Independent Wesleyan Church Hall	Queen Street, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0PJ
Islip Village Hall	2 Old Farm Lane, Islip, Kettering, Northants, NN14 3LY
Joan Strong Centre	Herne Park, East Road, Oundle, Peterborough, PE8 4BZ
Kings Cliffe Village Hall	Eagle Lane, Kings Cliffe, PE8 6XD
Laxton Village Hall	Main Street, Laxton, Corby, Northants, NN17 3AT
Lutton Village Hall	Washingley Road, Lutton, Peterborough, PE8 5ND
MacQueen House	High Street, Twywell, Kettering, Northants, NN14 3AH

Mandate House	Old Weston Road, Clopton, Kettering, NN14 3DZ
Members Room	East Northamptonshire House, Cedar Drive, Thrapston, Northants, NN14 4LZ
Methodist Church Hall	Drummingwell Lane, Oundle
Nassington Village Hall	Church Street, Nassington, Peterborough, PE8 6QG
Office at The Manor House	The Manor House, Main Street, Wakerley, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 8PA
Polebrook Village Hall	Hemington Road, Polebrook, Peterborough, PE8 5LS
Ringstead Village Hall	9 High Street, Ringstead, Kettering, Northants, NN14 4DA
Room at Bakehouse Cottage	High Street, Slipton, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN14 3AS
Room At Chancel Cottage	High Street, Little Addington, Northants, NN14 4BD
Rushden and Higham United Football Club	Hayden Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0HX
Saxon Hall	Brook Street, Raunds, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 6LL
Southwick Village Hall	Main Street, Southwick, Peterborough, PE8 5BL
Stanwick Village Hall	Spencer Parade, Stanwick, Wellingborough, NN9 6QJ
St John the Baptist Church	Church Lane, Thorpe Achurch, Northamptonshire, PE8 5SL
St Peter's Church Hall	Midland Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 9UJ
St Peter's Roman Catholic Church Hall	1 Hayway, Rushden, Northants, NN10 6AG
Sudborough Village Hall	Main Street, Sudborough, Kettering, Northants, NN14 3BX
Tansor Village Hall	Main Street, Tansor, Peterborough, PE8 5HS
Tennyson Road Infant School	Highfield Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 9QE
The Albert Underwood Room	St Peters Church, Church Street, Irthlingborough, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 5SE
The Chequered Skipper	The Green, Ashton, Near Oundle, Peterborough, PE8 5LD
The Community Hall (Duchy Suite)	Higham Ferrers Junior School, Saffron Road, Higham Ferrers, Northants, NN10 8ED
The John White Golf Club	Bedford Road, Rushden, Northants, NN10 0SA
The Large Hall	Raunds Windmill School, Windmill Lane, Raunds, Northants, NN9 6LA
The Thrapston Plaza	Cosy Nook, Thrapston, Kettering, Northants, NN14 4JP
Thurning Village Hall	Clopton Road, Thurning, Peterborough, PE8 5RE
Titchmarsh Village Hall	19 High Street, Titchmarsh, Kettering, Northants, NN14 3DF
Wadenhoe Recreation Hall	Church Street, Wadenhoe, Peterborough, PE8 5ST
Warmington Village Hall	27-29 Church Street, Warmington, Peterborough, PE8 6TE
Whitefriars Church (The Bridge)	Boughton Drive, Rushden, Northants, NN10 9HX
Woodford Baptist Chapel	Rose Terrace, Woodford, Kettering, Northants, NN14 4HT
Woodnewton Village Hall	Orchard Lane, Woodnewton, Peterborough, PE8 5EE
Yarwell Village Hall	48 Main Street, Yarwell, Peterborough, PE8 6PR

Polling districts letters	Polling district
RA	Addington, Great
RB	Addington, Little
RC	Aldwinkle
RD	Apethorpe
RE	Ashton
RF	Barnwell
RG	Benefield
RH	Blatherwycke
RJ	Brigstock
RK	Bulwick
RL	Chelveston-Cum-Caldecott
RM	Clopton
RN	Collyweston
RO	Cotterstock
RP	Deene
RQ	Deenethorpe
RR	Denford
RS	Duddington with Fineshade
RT	Easton-on-the-Hill
RU	Duddington with Fineshade
RV	Fotheringhay
RW	Glaphorn
RX	Hargrave
RY	Harringworth
RZ	Hemington
SA	Higham Ferrers Chichele Ward
SB	Higham Ferrers Lancaster Ward No. 1
SC	Higham Ferrers Lancaster Ward No. 2
SD	Irthlingborough John Pyel Ward
SF	Irthlingborough Waterloo Ward No. 1
SG	Irthlingborough Waterloo Ward No. 2
SH	Islip
SI	Kings Cliffe
SJ	Laxton

SK	Lilford-Cum-Wigsthorpe
SL	Lowick (Lowick Ward)
SM	Lowick (Slipton Ward)
SN	Luddington
SO	Lutton
SP	Nassington
SQ	Newton Bromswold
SR	Oundle No. 1
SS	Oundle No. 2
ST	Pilton
SU	Polebrook
SV	Raunds Saxon Ward
SW	Raunds Windmill Ward
SZ	Ringstead
TA	Rushden Bates Ward No. 1
TB	Rushden Bates Ward No. 2
TC	Rushden Bates Ward No. 3
TD	Rushden Hayden Ward No. 1
TE	Rushden Hayden Ward No. 2
TF	Rushden Hayden Ward No. 3
TH	Rushden Pemberton Ward No. 1
TJ	Rushden Pemberton Ward No. 2
TK	Rushden Pemberton Ward No. 3
TL	Rushden Sartoris Ward No. 1
TM	Rushden Sartoris Ward No. 2
TO	Rushden Spencer Ward No. 1
TP	Rushden Spencer Ward No. 2
TQ	Rushden Spencer Ward No. 3
UA	Southwick
UB	Stanwick
UC	Stoke Doyle
UD	Sudborough
UE	Tansor
UF	Thorpe Achurch
UG	Thrapston Lakes Ward
UJ	Thrapston Market Ward
UK	Thurning
UL	Titchmarsh
UM	Twywell

UO	Wakerley
UP	Warmington
UQ	Woodford
UR	Woodnewton
US	Yarwell



EIA Initial Screening Form – Committee decision

1. Decision being taken:	To undertake a review of polling districts and places
2. Name and Job title / role of person completing Initial Screening:	James McLaughlin, Democratic & Electoral Services Manager
3. What is the main purpose of the Service or Policy under discussion?	The service is a statutory duty which includes a requirement to take account the ease of accessibility to the polling stations for anyone with a disability (see main committee report)
4. List the main activities of the Service or Policy under discussion	To review polling districts and places To consult with bodies representing disabled persons To take into account representations received in reaching decisions
5. Who are the main beneficiaries of the Service or Policy under discussion?	Electors
6. How is the success of the Service or Policy under discussion measured?	Feedback from electors, especially disabled people
7. Are equality monitoring systems for the Service or Policy under discussion in place?	When consideration is given to the allocation of new polling stations, an inspection of a proposed station is undertaken by Building Control officers to highlight any difficulties on accessibility, especially in relation to disabled people Feedback from Presiding Officers is sought on difficulties experienced at polling stations during an election, and this may include reference to accessibility questions

8. Use the following table to indicate using a ✓:

- a) Where you think that the decision being taken could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality of opportunity or improving relations within equality groups.
- b) Where you think that the decision being taken could have a negative impact on any of the equality groups i.e. it could disadvantage them.
- c) Where you think that the decision being taken could have a neutral impact on any of the equality group i.e. no impact

Equality Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Reason
Gender:				
Women/Girls			✓	
Men/Boys			✓	
Transgender people			✓	
Sexual Orientation:				
Lesbians, gay men and bisexuals			✓	
Race/Ethnicity:			✓	
White British people			✓	
White non-British people (including Irish people)			✓	
Asian or Asian British people			✓	
Black or Black British people			✓	
People of mixed heritage			✓	
Chinese people			✓	
Travellers (Gypsy/Roma/Irish heritage)			✓	
People from other ethnic groups			✓	
People who do not have English as their first language			✓	

Equality Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Reason
Disability:				
Physical impairment, e.g mobility issues which mean using a wheelchair or crutches.	✓			Carrying out a review of polling stations will alert us to any accessibility issues and we will seek to mitigate these as best we can. Any polling stations not considered accessible will be the subject of a separate EIA
Sensory impairment, e.g blind/having a serious visual impairment, deaf/having a serious hearing impairment.	✓			
Mental health condition, e.g depression or schizophrenia			✓	
Learning disability/difficulty, e.g. Down's syndrome or dyslexia, or cognitive impairment such as autistic spectrum disorder			✓	
Long-standing illness or health condition, e.g. cancer, HIV. Diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy			✓	
Other health problems or impairments (<i>please specify if appropriate</i>)			✓	
Age:				
Older People (60+)	✓			Carrying out a review of polling stations will alert us to any accessibility issues and we will seek to mitigate these as best we can. Any polling stations not considered accessible will be the subject of a separate EIA. Older people may wish to engage with others more than other age groups and postal voting will not offer this opportunity
Children and Young People (see guidance for definition)			✓	
Religion/Belief:				

Equality Group	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	Neutral Impact	Reason
Christian			✓	
Buddhist			✓	
Hindu			✓	
Jewish			✓	
Muslim			✓	
Sikh			✓	
Other religion (including holding no belief)			✓	
Other Potentially Affected Groups				
Rural Isolation - People who live in rural areas e.g isolated geographically, lack of internet access	✓			Carrying out a review of polling stations will alert us to any accessibility issues and we will seek to mitigate these as best we can. .
Socio-economic Exclusion – e.g. people who are on benefits, have low educational attainment, single parents, people living in poor quality housing, people who have poor access to services, the unemployed or any combination of these and the other protected strands			✓	
Any other potentially affected groups (<i>please specify</i>)				

9. If you have indicated that there is a negative impact on any group:		
a) Is that impact against legislation?	Yes	No
b) What is the level of impact?	High	Low
10. Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance?	How?	
11. Could you improve a positive impact of the decision?	How?	
12. If there is no evidence that the decision promotes equality of opportunity or improved relations, could it be adapted so that it does?	How?	
Head of Service signature		
Date of Initial Screening:		

NOTE

If a negative impact has been highlighted and it is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact you must complete a Full EIA.

If not, you should still consider if completing a Full EIA would be helpful in making a thorough assessment.

Full EIA Assessment Form

13. Decision being taken:	
<p>14. Looking back at the Initial Screening Form, in what area(s) are there concerns that the decision being taken could have a negative impact?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(✓ all that apply)</p>	
Gender:	
Sexual orientation:	
Race/Ethnicity	
Disability:	✓
Age	
Religion/Belief	
Rural isolation	
Socio-economic exclusion	
Any other affected groups:	
15. Summarise the likely negative impacts:	If polling stations do not have adequate arrangements for access for the disabled, it could have a negative effect but this should be countered by (a) the alternative to attending the polling station in person (ie postal vote) (b) discretion of the Presiding Officer at a polling station to arrange for voting outside the polling station
16. What consultation on this decision has already taken place with groups/individuals from equality target groups?	Consultation is a statutory requirement and will be undertaken during the review
17. What does it indicate about the negative impact of this decision?	To be done
18. What consultation will be conducted/is planned on this decision with equality target groups?	Covered above
19. Once this consultation activity has taken place, indicate the outcomes:	Final decisions to be taken by full council, after taking account of the representations received

20. What consultation on this decision has already taken place with staff - including those that have, or will have direct experience of implementing the Policy?	Elections staff are fully aware of the legal requirements and the options available
21. What does it indicate about the negative impact of this decision?	Not applicable
22. What consultation will be conducted/is planned on this decision with staff?	Not applicable
23. Once this consultation activity has taken place, indicate the outcomes:	Implementation of decisions – if it is possible to locate alternative, more suitable venues for polling stations, the alternative stations will henceforth be used
24. What relevant research/data/reports concerning the equality target groups have been used in the planning of this decision and what does it tell us about the negative impact?	Guidance from the Electoral Commission and council officers dealing with equalities will be taken into account
25. What research concerning the equality target groups needs to be conducted in relation to this decision?	None
26. Once this has been carried out, what does it tell us about the negative impact?	Not applicable
27. If there are any research gaps, are there any experts/relevant groups that can be contacted to obtain views and evidence on the issues?	Relevant groups have to be consulted
28. Once they have been contacted, what information have we found out?	This cannot be answered until the review is undertaken
29. Is it important that we conduct/commission specific research on this issue? Explain the research required:	No
30. If we need to conduct /commission research what are the likely timescales and resource implications / costs involved?	Not applicable

31. If you require further information, what will you do in the interim to address the negative impact?	Depends of the conclusions of the review
32. List the changes that have been identified which will ensure that the negative impact is addressed:	Not applicable
33. Have you introduced changes you planned, with any necessary training?	Premature question pending the review :
34. Does everyone involved in implementing the decision know and understand what you have done?	Premature question pending the review
Now complete the action planning form which will detail the changes that need to be made to this decision.	



Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Action identified	Key activity	How will we know this has been achieved? (measures, milestones and dates)	Officer responsible	Quarterly progress update

Planned date for next EIA exercise