

Agenda Item

Executive Board

26 September 2007

WPS



Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Summary

In accordance with the Electoral Administration Act 2006 section 16 requires each authority to carry out a review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations within one year of the Act coming into force (ie 1 December 2007) and every 4 years after that date. This review has now taken place. The consolidated results of the review are shown in the attached appendix.

Any comments on this report are to be made available to the public within 30 days of receipt from the Council. Appeals against the review must be lodged with the Electoral Commission within 6 weeks of the publication of the review.

Recommendation

1. That all Polling Districts remain unchanged.
2. That all Polling Places remain unchanged.
3. That all Polling Stations remain unchanged with the exception of the venues currently used at Monkton and Whimple for the reasons given in the report.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

1. No reason was found to recommend the alteration of any boundaries within the District of East Devon as there are no significant changes to population distribution.
2. The definition of Polling Places as laid down is sufficient to cover all requirements under the Electoral Administration Act 2006.
3. Submissions by Parish & Town Councils, Parish & Town Clerks, Presiding Officers at each station and advice tendered by disability access groups recommend changes to Polling Stations as annotated on the attached report at annex J

b) Alternative Options

Contained in the report.

c) Risk Considerations

With reference to those Polling Stations giving rise to concern, the risks have been noted. Where no change has been recommended the risks are considered to be acceptable.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

The recommendations all fall within EDDC policy guidelines. There are no budgetary considerations.

e) Date for Review of Decision

The next review will be carried out in 2011.

1 Main Body of the Report

Reference: A. Electoral Administration Act 2006
B. Electoral Commission Guidance EC28/2007 – available on request

Polling Districts. The boundaries of all polling districts are set by the Boundaries Commission and was set in 2003.

Any boundary change proposed will have to be submitted to the Electoral Commission for acceptance.

Polling Places.

The Polling Places for all Polling Districts are designated as the whole polling district. Below are listed the Polling Districts where there is no suitable polling station within the Polling District Boundary and defining the extended Polling Place to include the Polling Station to be used:-

Polling District without suitable facilities	Designated Polling place
Clyst St Lawrence	Clyst St Lawrence & Clyst Hydon
Sowton	Sowton & Clyst St Mary (Bishops Clyst)
Sheldon	Sheldon & Dunkeswell
Huxham	Huxham & Stoke Canon
Netherexe	Netherexe & Rewe
Upton Pyne (Upton Pyne)	Upton Pyne (Upton Pyne & Cowley)
Buckerell	Buckerell & Gittisham Village or Feniton
Newton Poppleford (Harpford)	Newton Poppleford (Harpford &) Newton Poppleford
Newton Poppleford (Venn Ottery)	Newton Poppleford (Venn Ottery & Newton Poppleford)
Monkton	Cotleigh & Monkton

Polling Stations

The review included analysis of the polling Stations used for each parish and town ward for elections and were graded for condition and access. Comments were sought from Parish Clerks and the Presiding Officers at those stations at the May 2007 elections. Any complaints received from members of the public and stakeholders were also noted.

Correspondence

Examples of correspondence and questionnaires sent out, completed questionnaires, maps, statistics as required and other documentation is available on request.

Polling Station availability forecast

The only Polling Stations currently in use whose future is unclear are Feniton Sports & Social Club which is up for sale and Rolle College where Plymouth University is pulling out, leaving the future unclear in both cases. These will be kept under review. The availability of all other polling stations appears assured for the foreseeable future.

Major developments forecast.

There are no significant planning considerations that would affect the population distribution within the time period of this report. As the Cranbrook Development is not expected to be populated to any great extent before 2011, this will be considered at that time.

If an interim report is required before that time it will be instigated.

The following information is available on request:

- EDDC Land Availability Survey 2006
- Population Forecast for East Devon.
- Elector numbers by Ward and Polling District
- Public & Private Buildings available for Hire in East Devon

Consultation with The Returning Officer for Tiverton & Honiton Constituency.

The Deputy Returning Officer for East Devon Constituency, having compiled this report covering all Polling Stations within East Devon, has consulted the Deputy Returning Officer for the Tiverton & Honiton Constituency on those polling Stations that fall into his constituency. His comments are at annex H

Comments on all existing Polling Stations.

A summary of comments on all existing Polling Stations is attached. Currently there is one new Polling Stations proposed in Seaton, though where alternative venues have been used in the past and have been found suitable for use, these venues will be added where necessary. Any complaints are summarised here. No complaints have been received.

Location of Polling Stations within Polling Districts.

Without exception, all Polling Stations are located as conveniently as possible for the benefit of voters. In all cases this takes into account the availability of suitable buildings, their proximity to the centres of population and their accessibility. Where a Polling Station ceases to be available, alternatives are identified, assessed for suitability and the Town or Parish Clerk consulted.

The following stations give rise to concern:

Monkton

The parking for the Village Hall is on the North side of the A30 and the hall is in the South side. There are 10 steps to be climbed before a disabled ramp is available for access into the hall itself. There is a high risk of an accident being caused by voters either having to be dropped outside the hall or parking in the lay-by opposite and having to cross one of the busiest roads in the whole district. Although it is in a 40 mph area, most traffic exceeds this speed and visibility from the lay-by is restricted to approx 150 meters.

There have not been any complaints regarding access. To date, nobody has had a problem crossing the road. The nearest alternative Village Hall is at Cotleigh but there is reluctance by the voters to go there. There is an hotel near Monkton Village Hall but costs and other factors make this option unattractive. No other alternative building within the village has been identified. Notwithstanding the reluctance of voters in Monkton, it is suggested that Cotleigh Village hall be used as the polling station for Monkton parish.

Bramford Speke

There is no parking at the hall; it is located in a narrow and fairly busy lane. The facilities in the hall are good. No alternative has been identified within the village.

Whimple

The School has no parking available for voters who have to park at the Victory Hall and walk along a busy lane with no pavement 150 yards to the school. It is suggested that the Victory Hall could be used in future.

Feniton

The Sports & Social Club has not got very good access for disabled persons but are adequate. It is currently up for sale and its future is unknown. There are alternatives, namely, the school next to the Club, and the Youth Club although this is not easy to find and access is along a very rough track. The situation will be kept under review.

Sidmouth Town

Unitarian Meeting Room

Poor parking facilities. The conditions for polling staff are poor. No other venue has been identified as being more suitable.

Honiton Town

The Red Cross Hall is run by Age Concern. Although the hall is highly suitable for the purpose, but difficulties have arisen in relation to shared use. It has been suggested that the room at the back of the Town Council Offices is available. There is parking near by, the entrance is level, the room is of a sufficient size and there are all the usual facilities available.

The Town Council and others have raised comments regarding the Mackarness Hall in that it is cold and there is no convenient parking. A possible alternative could be The Masonic Hall opposite the Cattle Market car park and this will be investigated.

Exmouth Town

Doyle Centre

Town Councillors have questioned the suitability of the Doyle Centre. In the Council's opinion it is a highly suitable site being easily accessed on the level, with ample parking and situated within the ward. As no suitable alternative has been identified it will continue to be used.

Withycombe Raleigh CP School

The school refuses to allow the use of toilet and kitchen facilities for polling staff. This will be investigated.

Rolle College

Closing down in the medium term. Facilities provided have been inadequate and restrictive. There is a possibility that some facilities might remain. The situation will be kept under review.

Review Stages

The stages of the review complied with the Electoral Commission requirements and met the following terms of reference.

Disability access and facilities.

The Electoral Commission states at paragraph 44 of reference A that we should consult local disability groups, the advice given is of a very general nature and the application of common sense is usually enough to arrive at a decision as to suitability, particularly if we err on the side of caution. Where there is still doubt, we have recourse to building control personnel who are able to carry out an accessibility audit which then guarantees the building is suitable for purpose.

The provision of disabled toilets is not considered a requirement except where the polling staff fall into the category of needing these facilities.

General Condition.

The issues considered under this heading are the general state of the building, heating, the facilities provided (for example: kitchen and toilets), pedestrian access and parking facilities, although public transport is considered, the unavailability of this does not preclude the use of a building.

Location.

The location of a particular building is carefully considered in relation to the distribution of voters and convenience of access to voters within the area. The provision of a mobile polling station is only considered as an emergency measure.

Definitions**Polling District**

A Polling District is the geographical area of a parish or unwarded town. Where a town is divided into wards each ward is a Polling District.

Polling Place

A Polling Place is defined as an area or building within a Polling District where polling is to take place. East Devon District Council defines a Polling Place as an area within a Polling District where polling takes place.

Polling Station

A Polling Station is the room or part of where polling takes place.

Legal Implications

There are no legal observations

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

There has been consultation with the presiding officers, parish clerks and parish councils.

Background Papers

- Electoral Commission Circular
- EDDC disability Equality Scheme & Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- EDDC Land Availability Survey 2006
- Population forecast
- Voter numbers by Parish & Ward as at 1 Jun 07
- Register of Community Halls
- DRO Tiverton Honiton Constituency Comments

Philip Seccombe
Electoral Services Officer

Executive Board
26 September 2007

Polling Station Review Consolidated results

Election Area	Polling Station	General Condition	Disabled Access/Facilities	Complaints	Comments
All Saints	All Saints Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Awliscombe	Awliscombe Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Axminster (Raymonds Hill)	Woodbury Community Hall, Raymonds Hill	Good	Good		Heating Poor
Axminster (Town Hall)	Axminster Town Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Axminster (Weycroft)	Weycroft Day Centre	Good	Good		Nil
Axmouh	Axmouh Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Aylesbeare	Aylesbeare Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Beer	Mariner's Hall, Beer	Good	Fair		Public car park 100 yds away
Brampford Speke	Brampford Speke Village Hall	Fair	Fair		No parking at all in the vicinity and no pavements. Steps into hall. Problem for elderly and disabled.
Branscombe	Branscombe Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Broadclyst	Broadclyst Victory Hall	Very good	Good		Nil
Broadhembury	Broadhembury Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Buckerell	Gittisham Parish Hall	Nil	Nil		Would prefer to go to Feniton
Budleigh Salterton & East Budleigh	Budleigh Salterton Public Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Chardstock	Chardstock Community Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Clyst Honiton	Clyst Honiton C of E Primary School	Good	Good		Parking in road, but OK
Clyst Hydon & Clyst St Lawrence	Clyst Hydon Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Clyst St George	Clyst St George and Ebford Parish Hall	Good	Fair		Disabled access being improved

Clyst St Mary & Sowton	Clyst St Mary Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Colaton Raleigh	Colaton Raleigh Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Colyton	Colyton Town Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Colyton (Colyford)	Colyford Memorial Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Combe Raleigh	Combe Raleigh Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Combpyne Rousdon	Rousdon Peek Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Cotleigh	Cotleigh Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Dalwood	Dalwood Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Dunkeswell & Sheldon	Dunkeswell Community Hall	Good	Good		Nil
East Budleigh & Bicton	East Budleigh Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Exmouth (Brixington)	Brixington Junior School	Good	Good		Nil
Exmouth (Brixington)	Palmer House, Exmouth	Good	Good		No car park, but adequate space in road
Exmouth (Halsdon)	Withycombe Rugby Club	Good	Good		Nil
Exmouth (Littleham)	Littleham Community Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Exmouth (Littleham)	Clayton House, Exmouth	Fair	Good		Access path is rough
Exmouth	Littlemead Methodist Churchroom	Good	Good		Restricted space within building
Exmouth (Littleham)	Rolle College, Exmouth	Fair	Fair		Parking poor, room allocated too small, disabled access poor. Future unknown.

Exmouth (Town)	All Saint's Church Hall, Exmouth	Good	Good		Nil
Exmouth (Town)	Wesley Hall, Tower Street, Exmouth	Fair	Fair		No parking adjacent
Exmouth (Withycombe)	Withycombe Raleigh Cp School	Fair	Fair		No parking available in school hours, no toilet facilities made available to public.
Exmouth (Withycombe Raleigh)	The Doyle Centre, Exmouth	Good	Good		Right on the edge of the polling district.No other suitable venue available
Farringdon	Farringdon Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Farway	Netherton Club Hall, Farway	Good	Good		No phone nor mobile reception
Feniton	Feniton Sports & Social Club	Good	Poor		Poor disabled access and narrow corridors. It is now for sale. Future unknown.
Gittisham Village	Gittisham Parish Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Hawkchurch	Hawkchurch Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Honiton (St Michaels)	Age Concern, Red Cross House, Honiton	Good	Good		Problems with joint use.
Honiton (St Michaels)	East Devon Business Centre	Good	Good		Nil
Honiton (St Pauls)	Mackarness Hall, Honiton	Good	Good		Long walk from main street and cold conditions. Parking problems
Huxham & Stoke Canon	Stoke Canon Jubilee Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Kilmington	Kilmington Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Luppitt	Luppitt Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Lympstone	Lympstone Village Hall	Good	Good		Top of steep hill, no viable alternative.

Membury	Membury Parish Hall	Good	Good		No phone nor mobile reception
Monkton	Monkton Village Hall	Fair	Very poor		The parking is the other side of the A30, disabled access is poor, there are 15 steps to get to the disabled ramp.
Musbury	Musbury Village Hall	Good	Fair		Wheel chair access poor
Netherexe & Rewe	Rewe , Stoke Canon & District Youth Club	Good	Good		Nil
Newton Poppleford (Newton Poppleford)	Newton Poppleford Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Northleigh	Northleigh Parish Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Offwell	Offwell Village Hall	Good	Good		No phone nor mobile phone signal
Otterton	Otterton Village Hall	Good	Good		Parking in adjacent road
Ottery St Mary (North)	Escot Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Ottery St Mary (Tipton St John)	Tipton St John Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Ottery St Mary (Town)	The Institute, Ottery St Mary	Good	Good		Nil
Ottery St Mary (West Hill)	West Hill Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Payhembury	Payhembury Parish Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Plymtree	Plymtree Village Hall	Good	Fair		Nil
Poltimore	Poltimore Community Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Rockbeare (Marsh Green)	Marsh Green Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Rockbeare (Rockbeare)	Rockbeare Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil

Seaton	Seaton Town Hall	Good	Good		Increase in population causing congestion in Town Hall. Suggest Methodist Church, Valley View for overflow.
Shute (Shute) & Shute (Whitford)	Whitford Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Sidmouth (Salcombe Regis)	St Theresa's Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Sidmouth (Sidbury)	Sidbury Parish Room	Good	Good		Nil
Sidmouth (East)	The Old Meeting Unitarian School Room, Sidmouth	Poor	Good		Lighting and heating poor. Parking difficult Conditions fair for voters but not good at all for Polling Station Staff.
Sidmouth (North)	St Francis Hall, Sidmouth	Good	Good		Nil
Sidmouth (Primley)	Primley United Reformed Church Hall, Sidmouth	Fair	Good		No convenient parking available
Sidmouth (Sidford)	Sidford Social Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Sidmouth (South)	New Church Hall, All Saints Church, Sidmouth	Good	Good		Nil
Sidmouth (West)	St Francis Hall, Sidmouth	Good	Good		Nil
Southleigh	Southleigh Parish Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Stockland	Stockland Victory Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Talaton	Talaton Parish Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Uplyme	Uplyme Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Upottery	Upottery Manor Room	Good	Good		Nil

Upton Pyne (Upton Pyne) & (Cowley)	Upton Pyne Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Whimble	Whimble Primary School	Fair	Good		Suggested by PO that Victory Hall might be better as no parking at school and road is busy
Widworthy / Wilmington	Wilmington Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Woodbury (Exton)	St Andrews Hall, Exton	Good	Fair		Nil
Woodbury (Woodbury Salterton)	Woodbury Salterton Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Woodbury (Woodbury)	Woodbury Village Hall	Good	Good		Nil
Yarcombe	Yarcombe Jubilee hall	Good	Good		Nil