

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 23rd OCTOBER 2007

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Members of a statutory review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations and to seek approval for a schedule of polling arrangements to form the starting point of a wider consultation.

2. FINANCIAL, RISK, STAFFING AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Failure to complete a review may leave the Council liable to legal challenge from either individual voters or interested groups, in particular those with disabilities or with an interest in disabled access.

3. INTRODUCTION

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires relevant councils to carry out a review of polling districts and places during 2007. Public Notice will be given of the schedule of polling districts and places approved by Council, with Town and Parish Councils, constituency parties, special interest groups and individual electors being given the opportunity to comment on the proposals prior to the next meeting of the Council, when a further report for final approval will be submitted.

4. BACKGROUND

In carrying out the review the Council is required to give consideration to the opinions of the Returning Officer and a body with expertise in relation to access matters. The Council's Building Control section were appointed, through the last round of Service Delivery Plans, as the required inspectors with a particular expertise in relation to access to premises

5. RETURNING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

In general the polling stations currently in use in the District are of a satisfactory standard. I would make the following specific comments:

- Within Marlborough, although the Leisure Centre satisfies all of the criteria for the review, I am aware that residents of East Ward would prefer to see

a separate polling station within the Ward. St Margaret's Mead Youth Centre is suggested as a suitable location.

- I have received a request to use Seend Community Centre in place of the Irene Usher Hall, and agree that it is an acceptable change.
- At the last round of elections, residents of Everleigh requested that their polling place be set in Collingbourne Ducis, rather than Collingbourne Kingston, and there is no reason not to concur.
- The polling stations currently used in both Great Cheverell and Market Lavington do not meet the required access criteria. In both of those parishes new village halls are under construction and will be available for the next round of elections. I propose that the polling place for Little Cheverell be moved to Great Cheverell from West Lavington.
- There are a number of further venues in small parishes that struggle to meet access standards. However, as they are the only available premises in those parishes I propose that they still be used as polling stations. The venues in question are listed within the inspection results.
- The existing polling district arrangements for Roundway are confusing, being based upon a historic provision of a separate polling district for Roundway hospital in the centre of the parish. I propose that the polling districts for Roundway be re-organised into a North/South arrangement, with the A342 forming the boundary between the 2 polling districts.

6. INSPECTION RESULTS

A full schedule of inspection results has been e-mailed to all members and can be supplied in hard copy on request. The schedule highlights premises that already comply (priority 1 within report), those that could be brought up to required access standards with relatively little work (priority 2) and those that fail access standards with little or no prospect of improvement (priority 3).

7. CONCLUSIONS

The accessibility of polling stations within Kennet has improved steadily since 1997, owing to: owners of buildings carrying out works to improve disabled access; a number of new village halls being built over this period and changes of venues made by the Council following its last review in 2002.

The report identifies a number of venues that fall short of either required or desirable access standards. Simple accessibility to premises has to be balanced against travelling distances and convenience for the majority of voters. It is my view that the closure of any of the remaining polling stations would result in over-long journeys for voters, unless either members or the consultation process identify suitable alternatives within those parishes.

8. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The schedule of polling places and polling stations at Appendix A be approved for consultation, along with the revision to the polling districts for Roundway.
2. the Council's grants officer contact those premises identified as requiring minimal works to meet access standards to assist any that meet the relevant criteria to apply to the Council for grants towards the cost of those works.

Background Papers: None.

APPENDIX A

SCHEDULE OF RECOMMENDED POLLING ARRANGEMENTS

Parliamentary Polling District	Polling Place
SA1 – Aldbourne	Aldbourn Methodist Church
SB1 – All Cannings	All Cannings Village Hall
SC1 – Alton	Coronation Hall, Alton Barnes
SD1 – Avebury	Avebury Social Centre, High Street, Avebury
SE1 – Baydon	Baydon Young Peoples Hall
SF1 – Beechingstoke	Parish Rooms, Woodborough
SG1 – Bishops Cannings	Bishops Cannings Village Hall
SG2 – Bishops Cannings (Cannings Hill Ward)	Bishops Cannings Village Hall
SJ1 – Broad Hinton	Broad Hinton Village Hall
SK1 – Bromham	Bromham Social Centre
SL1 – Burbage	All Saints Church Hall, Burbage
SN1 – Cheverell Magna	Great Cheverell Village Hall
SO1 – Cheverell Parva	Great Cheverell Village Hall
TA1 – Chilton Foliat	Chilton Foliat Village Hall
TB1 – Chirton	Chirton Village Hall
TD1 – Chute	Chute Standen Village Hall
TD2 – Chute Forest	Chute Standen Village Hall
TE1 – Collingbourne Ducis	Collingbourne Ducis Village Hall
TF1 – Collingbourne Kingston	Collingbourne Kingston Village Hall
UA1 – Devizes East Ward 1	The Nursteed Centre, Nursteed Road
UB1 – Devizes East Ward 2	The Nursteed Centre, Nursteed Road
UC1 – Devizes North 1	* A suitable venue within Devizes
UD1 – Devizes North 2	* A suitable venue within Devizes
UE1 – Devizes South 1	* A suitable venue within Devizes
UE2 – Devizes South 2	* A Suitable venue within Devizes
VA1 – Easterton	Easterton Village Hall
VB1 – Easton Royal	Easton Royal Village Hall
VC1 – Enford (South)	Enford Village Hall
VC2 – Enford (North)	Enford Village Hall
VD1 – Erlestoke	Erlestoke Village Hall
VE1 – Etchilhampton	Etchilhampton Village Hall
VE2 – Stert	Urchfont Village Hall
VF1 – Everleigh	Collingbourne Ducis Village Hall
VG1 – Fittleton	Phoenix Hall, Netheravon
VH1 – Froxfield	Froxfield Village Hall
VI1 – Grafton (South)	East Grafton Coronation Hall
VI2 – Grafton (North)	East Grafton Coronation Hall
VJ1 – Great Bedwyn	Bedwyn Memorial Hall
WA1 – Ham	Ham Village Hall

WA2 – Buttermere	Ham Village Hall
WH1 – Little Bedwyn	Bedwyn Memorial Hall
WI1 – Ludgershall (North Ward)	Ludgershall Memorial Hall
WI2 – Ludgershall (South Ward)	Ludgershall Memorial Hall
WJ1 – Manningford	Manningford Memorial Hall
WK1 – Marden	Marden Village Hall
WL1 – Market Lavington	Market Lavington Village Hall
WM1 – Marlborough West 1	Marlborough Leisure Centre
WN1 – Marlborough East 1	St Margarets Mead Youth Centre
WN2 – Marlborough East 2	St Margarets Mead Youth Centre
WN3 – Marlborough West 2	Marlborough Leisure Centre
WO1 – Marston	Worton & Marston Village Hall
WP1 – Mildenhall	Mildenhall Village Hall
WQ1 – Milton Lilbourne	Milton Lilbourne Village Hall
XA1 – Netheravon	Phoenix Hall, Netheravon
XB1 – North Newnton	Parish Room, Hilcot
XB2 – Patney	Chirton Village Hall
XC1 – Tidworth East Ward	Tidworth Community Centre
XC2 – Tidworth West Ward	Tidworth Community Centre
XC3 – Tidworth Perham Down Ward	Tidworth Community Centre
XD1 – Ogbourne St Andrew	Ogbourne St George Village Hall
XE1 – Ogbourne St George	Ogbourne St George Village Hall
XF1 – Pewsey (North Ward)	Bouverie Hall, Pewsey
XF2 – Pewsey (South Ward)	Bouverie Hall, Pewsey
XG1 – Potterne	Potterne Village Hall
XH1 – Poulshot	Poulshot Village Hall
XI1 – Preshute	Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge
XJ1 – Ramsbury	Ramsbury Memorial Hall
XK1 – Ramsbury (Axford)	Ramsbury Memorial Hall
XL1 – Roundway 1	Army Cadet Centre, Le Marchant Barracks
XL2 – Roundway 2	Army Cadet Centre. Le Marchant Barracks
XM1 – Rowde	Rowde Village Hall
XN1 – Rushall	Rushall Village Hall
XN2 – Charlton	Rushall Village Hall
YA1 – Savernake	St Margarets Mead Youth Centre
YB1 – Seend	Seend Community Hall
YC1 – Shalbourne (Oxenwood)	Shalbourne Village Hall
YC2 – Tidcombe & Fosbury	Shalbourne Village Hall
YD1 – Shalbourne	Shalbourne Village Hall
YG1 – Stanton St Bernard	Stanton St Bernard Village Hall
YO1 – Upavon	Upavon Village Hall
YP1 – Urchfont	Urchfont Village Hall
ZC1 – West Lavington	West Lavington Village Hall
ZD1 – West Overton	Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge
ZD2 – East Kennett	Avebury Social Centre

ZD3 – Fyfield	Kennet Valley Hall, Lockeridge
ZE1 – Wilcot (Oare)	Oare Village Hall
ZE2 – Huish	Oare Village Hall
ZF1 – Wilcot	Oare Village Hall
ZG1 – Wilsford	Rushall Village Hall
ZH1 – Winterbourne Bassett	Broad Hinton Village Hall
ZI1 – Winterbourne Monkton	Avebury Social Centre
ZI2 – Berwick Bassett	Avebury Social Centre
ZJ1 – Woodborough	Woodborough Parish Rooms
ZK1 – Wootton Rivers	Wootton Rivers Village Hall
ZL1 – Worton	Worton & Marston Village Hall