

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	6 October 2010
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Executive
TITLE OF REPORT	Polling Districts and Polling Places Review
REPORT NUMBER:	OCE/10/018

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

Section 16 of The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires each Local Authority to conduct a review of polling districts and polling places for use at parliamentary elections, every four years. In doing so the Local Authority must ensure reasonable facilities for voting and that polling places are accessible to all electors, including voters with a disability, so far as is practicable.

The most recent full review of polling districts and polling places was completed in February 2009. This report details additional work required to take account of learning from recent elections, changes in circumstances and the needs of the elections to be held in 2011.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a. That the changes to three existing polling districts, as required by the proposed new Scottish Parliament constituency boundaries are noted.
- b. That subject to any changes, Council agrees the recommended changes to polling districts as outlined.
- c. That subject to any changes, Council agrees the recommended changes to polling places as outlined.
- d. That following approval of the recommended changes to polling districts and polling places, the Council proceeds to public consultation.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Strengthening local democracy is a vital strand of the Council's Community Plan. When identifying suitable polling places the aim is to put the interest of voters first and to ensure equality of access. The Returning Officer has a statutory duty to encourage electoral participation and selection of appropriate polling places is an important part of this.

Consultation will take place with Disability Groups and Community Councils.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations in this report have implications for the use of some Council buildings on Polling Day.

6. REPORT

6.1 Changes to the Polling Districts and Polling Places as a result of proposed new Scottish Parliamentary Constituency boundaries

Although they have not yet been formally ratified, Returning Officers have been asked to plan on the basis that there will be new boundaries in force for the 2011 Scottish Parliament elections. The new Scottish Parliament boundaries split three existing polling districts within the Aberdeen City area into two parts – CN0503 (Woodside), CN0504 (Kittybrewster), CN0505 (Rosehill). These 3 polling districts were previously entirely within the Aberdeen Central Scottish Parliamentary constituency. Under the new boundaries the vast majority and northern sections of these polling districts will be in the Aberdeen Donside constituency, with a small section in the south of the polling district in the new Aberdeen Central constituency.

In addition, the new boundaries allow for removing two existing very small polling districts which were created to account for the difference in Scottish Parliament and Westminster Parliament constituencies. These are DN0311 (Summerhill Endrick) which can be combined with DN0310 (Summerhill Central) and SN1004 (Fernielea) which can be combined with SN1003 (Summerhill South).

Recommendations for changes to Polling Districts:

- retain the northern parts of what were CN0503, CN0504 and CN0505 as separate polling districts within Aberdeen Donside
- take the southern parts of what were CN0503 and CN0504 and create a new district called CN0508 (Kittybrewster), in Aberdeen Central
- take the southern part of what was CN0505 and create a new polling district called CN0507 (Cornhill), in Aberdeen Central
- combine DN0311 (Summerhill Endrick) with DN0310 (Summerhill Central) and call it DN0310 (Summerhill Central)
- combine SN1004 (Fernielea) with SN1003 (Summerhill South) and call it SN1003 (Summerhill South)

Recommendations for changes to Polling Places:

Woodside Community Centre and High Church Hilton are in the Aberdeen Donside parts of the newly formed polling districts. It is appropriate that they continue to serve the northern parts of what were CN0503 and CN0504 as previously. Cairncry Community Centre is in the Aberdeen Central polling district of CN0506. Therefore it is appropriate that electors in DN0505 are allocated to a different polling place in the Aberdeen Donside constituency for which High Church Hilton is appropriate.

It is appropriate that the new polling district of CN0508 (Kittybrewster) has a new polling place allocated as there are no others nearby that are suitable. Kittybrewster Primary School is appropriate. Cairncry Community Centre is located in polling district CN0506. It is appropriate that voters in the new polling district of CN0507 be allocated there.

It is recommended that the polling place for DN0310 (Summerhill Central) is moved from The Summerhill Centre to Sheddocksley Baptist Church. This is because The Summerhill Centre is no longer available and unrelated to changes in the Scottish Parliament Boundaries. It effects other polling districts as detailed in section 6.3 of this report.

Previous Scottish Parliamentary Polling District	Polling Place	August 2010 Electorate	Constituency
CN0503 (Woodside)	Woodside Community Centre	1673	Aberdeen Central
CN0504 (Kittybrewster)	High Church Hilton	2333	Aberdeen Central
CN0505 (Rosehill)	Cairncry Community Centre	1548	Aberdeen Central
DN0311 (Summerhill Endrick)	The Summerhill Centre	18	Aberdeen Donside
DN0310 (Summerhill Central)	The Summerhill Centre	1276	Aberdeen Donside
SN1004 (Fernielea)	Fernielea Primary School	137	Aberdeen South and North Kincardine
SN1003 (Summerhill South)	Fernielea Primary School	470	Aberdeen South and North Kincardine

New Scottish Parliamentary Polling District	New Polling Place	August 2010 Electorate	Constituency
DN0503 Woodside	Woodside Community Centre	1370	Aberdeen Donside
DN0504 (Hilton South)	High Church Hilton	1595	Aberdeen Donside
DN0505 (Rosehill)	High Church Hilton	944	Aberdeen Donside
CN0507 (Cornhill)	Cairncry Community Centre	604	Aberdeen Central
CN0508 (Kittybrewster)	Kittybrewster Primary School (New Polling Place)	1041	Aberdeen Central
DN0310 (Summerhill Central)	Sheddocksley Baptist Church	1294	Aberdeen Donside
SN1003 (Summerhill South)	Fernielea Primary School	607	Aberdeen South and North Kincardine

6.2 Other Changes to Polling Districts

It is suggested that no other changes to the boundaries of polling districts are necessary at this time.

6.3 Additional Recommended Changes to Polling Places

Additional changes to current polling places are recommended as follows:

Polling District(s)	2011 Scottish Parliament Constituency	2010 Polling Place	Recommended 2011 Polling Place
Kirkhill (DG0101) Dyce South (DG0103)	Aberdeen Donside	Dyce Primary School, Games Hall	Dyce Church Hall

Comments: The games hall at the front of Dyce Primary School (Gordon Terrace Entrance) has no disabled access and therefore the games hall at the back of the school (part of the Community Wing) has been used at recent elections. This has led to justifiable complaints that the walk to the polling station is too long for some voters. Dyce Church Hall provides a suitable alternative for these two districts.

Dyce North (DG0102)	Aberdeen Donside	Dyce Primary School, Games Hall	Dyce Church – Dr Cox Room
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Comments: (see comments above) Dyce Church Hall has enough space for Kirkhill and Dyce South only. Dyce Church – Dr Cox Room is in a separate building from the Church Hall, close by and on the other side of the street. When taking into consideration the geography of the polling districts and the polling places, it is appropriate to place the polling stations for Dyce North in Dyce Church – Dr Cox Room.

Mugiemoss (DN0109)	Aberdeen Donside	Riverbank Primary School	Danestone Primary School
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Comments: Mugiemoss polling district has a small number of electors and in common with other polling districts of this size, they are assigned to an existing polling station. For the 2010 General Election it was moved from Danestone Primary to Riverbank Primary so that it would be located at a Polling Station within the same UK Parliamentary Constituency (Danestone is in the UK Parliamentary Constituency of Gordon). Mugiemoss is in the new Scottish Parliamentary constituency of Aberdeen Donside and so it is appropriate that it should move to Danestone Primary which is also in Aberdeen Donside. (Riverbank is in Aberdeen Central).

Whitemyres (DN0307) Woodend (DS0308) Denwood (DN0309) Summerhill Central (DN0310)	Aberdeen Donside	The Summerhill Centre	Sheddocksley Baptist Church
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Comments: The allocated polling place for these polling districts has previously been The Summerhill Centre which is no longer available. Sheddocksley Baptist Church provides a suitable alternative.

Don (CN0602) Seaton North (CN0603)	Aberdeen Central	St Ninian's Church	Seaton Primary School
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Comments: St Ninian's Church was used whilst Seaton Primary School was being refurbished. Seaton Primary is due to re-open in September 2010. In addition, St Ninian's is not big enough to hold the increased number of stations required for Scottish Parliament Elections and a Referendum held on the same day.

St Nicholas (CN0805)	Aberdeen Central	Seamount Court, Tenants Room	St Margaret's Church Hall
Comments: Seamount Court cannot accommodate the number of polling stations required for Scottish Parliament Elections and a Referendum held on the same day, whilst ensuring disabled access. St Margaret's Church Hall provides a suitable alternative.			

Cromwell (CS1010) Ashley (CS1011)	Aberdeen Central	Ashley Road Primary School	Holburn West Church
Comments: There have been requests from the local community to find an alternative. Holburn West Church provides a suitable alternative.			

Loirston (SS1306) Cove (SS1307)	Aberdeen South and North Kincardine	Loirston Primary School	Loirston Annexe
Comments: There have been requests from the local community to find an alternative. Loirston Annexe provides a suitable alternative.			

7 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

David Gow

Team Manager (Civic Support)

davidgow@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Telephone: 01224 (52)2505

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.