

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	3 July 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/201
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Alan Thomson / Vikki Cuthbert
REPORT AUTHOR	David Gow
TERMS OF REFERENCE	9

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to gain the final approval of Council for the list of polling districts and polling places, following public consultation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council:-

- 2.1 Agrees the recommended changes to polling districts outlined in the report to Council of 7 February 2024 (COM/24/033) without alteration.
- 2.2 Agrees the recommended changes to polling places outlined in the report to Council of 7 February 2024 (COM/24/033) with two alterations as described in 3.6.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Council considered a report on the matter (COM/24/033) at its meeting on 7 February 2024. Council (i) agreed the recommended changes to polling districts as outlined;- (ii) agreed the recommended changes to polling places as outlined;- (iii) agreed to proceed to public consultation; and (iv) noted that following public consultation, a report containing the final proposals would be presented for consideration at a future Council meeting by July 2024.

Public Consultation

- 3.2 The public consultation was advertised on the Council website, within the Town House, at Central, Airyhall and Bucksburn Libraries and using Council social media channels. Consultation was also undertaken with the Electoral Registration Officer, the Returning Officer for Aberdeenshire, the Disability Equity Partnership and Community Councils.

Representations Received Regarding Polling Districts

- 3.3 There were no representations received regarding the recommended changes to polling districts.

Recommended Changes to Polling Districts

- 3.4 Following the public consultation, it is recommended that the changes to polling districts outlined in the report to Council of 7 February 2024 (COM/24/033) be approved without alteration.

Representations Received Regarding Polling Places

- 3.5 Rosemount and Mile End Community Council responded that they had no objection to Get Active @ Westburn replacing Skene Square School.

There were no other representations received regarding the recommended changes to polling places.

Recommended Changes to Polling Places

- 3.6 Following the public consultation, it is recommended that the changes to polling places outlined in the report to Council of 7 February 2024 (COM/24/033) be approved with the following alterations.

Polling District	Original Recommendation	Updated Recommendation
DN0408, Mastrick East	Holy Family Church, Mastrick	Grace Reformed Church
SS1301, Abbotswell SS1304, Craighill	South St Nicholas Church	Abbotswell School

DN0408, Mastrick East

When Holy Family Church, Mastrick was originally visited to assess its suitability as a potential polling place, the church said they would address the lack of disabled access at the building by having a ramp constructed. When contacting the church in January this year to enquire of progress in construction of the ramp, we were informed that management of the church had changed. Since then, contacting and communicating with the church has been more difficult than it was previously. Unfortunately, these difficulties mean that we no longer feel confident in establishing it as a polling place. We must be able to quickly and easily contact all polling places. This is essential where bookings must be made quickly and at very short notice in some cases.

The church have also informed us that they will not now be able to construct a ramp. Whilst this is something we could manage through provision of a temporary ramp, it is not ideal and would provide an element of risk not in place at any other polling place.

Grace Reformed Church is a suitable alternative.

SS1301, Abbotswell and SS1304, Craighill

It was noted in report COM/24/033 that South St. Nicholas Church in Kincorth was due to close in August 2024. However, the date for closure has been moved forward to 21st July. Whilst the church originally suggested that the building may be available for a period after the date of closure, this is no longer the case. Therefore, in the absence of other suitable alternatives, it is recommended that the polling place for these districts after 21st July be Abbotswell School.

We will continue to monitor the future circumstances of South St Nicholas Church and reassess the situation should it become available again for use as a polling place.

Timing of Changes

- 3.7 Changes to polling districts, approved by Council, will be implemented after the next UK Parliamentary General Election. Changes to polling places, approved by Council, will be implemented immediately.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report have no significant financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The council has a legal duty to carry out this review. Timings of statutory reviews of polling districts and polling places are specified in the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The requirements of this review are set out in Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified.			

Compliance	The review is a statutory requirement.	The Council will comply with its statutory duty by completing the review.	Low	Yes
Operational	Some voters will attend a different polling place.	A change of polling place will be highlighted on the poll card and advertised through multiple channels. All electors have the option of voting by post.	Low	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified.			
Reputational	No significant risks identified.			
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified.			

8. OUTCOMES

8.1 The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	An Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2013/6/contents/enacted>

10.2 Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/2/schedule/A1>

10.3 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places – COM/24/033

<https://committees.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=73458&PlanId=0&Opt=3#A1103865>

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A - Full list of recommended polling districts and polling places following consultation.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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