

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Chief Executive

Council : 25 August 2010

Subject: Designation of Polling Districts and Polling Places

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow the Council to consider the designation of polling districts and polling places from 1 October 2010 to 30 September 2011.

2. Background

2.1 The Scottish Parliament Election will be held on 5 May 2011 and a UK national Referendum on Voting Systems is proposed for the same date. It is likely that the polls will be combined.

2.2 At Scottish Parliament elections, the Returning Officer for West Dunbartonshire is responsible for two constituencies – the Dumbarton Constituency which includes 3 wards of Argyll and Bute Council and the Clydebank and Milngavie Constituency which, since the boundary review, now includes 2 full wards of East Dunbartonshire Council.

2.3 Each Council is statutorily responsible for designating the polling districts and polling places within its own Council area.

2.4 Each ward is divided into polling districts. Polling districts must be wholly contained within a single electoral ward. Although the voters in polling districts can be split between polling stations in a single polling place, they cannot be split between polling places. The polling districts within West Dunbartonshire Council have been in place since 2007 and have proved satisfactory.

2.5 The Council last designated polling places at its meeting on 30 September 2009. These were the polling places used at the UK Parliamentary Election on 6 May 2010, with the exception of Goldenhill Primary and St Eunan's Church Hall, which had to be replaced because of reconstruction or repair works.

3. Main Issues

3.1 A good scheme of polling places and polling districts means that no elector should have to walk past a polling place in order to reach the polling place to which he/she has been assigned.

- 3.2** It is important, for the benefit of electors, to maintain continuity of polling places insofar as this is possible. Where polling places change, it is important that voters receive early notification of their new assigned polling places, giving them the opportunity to apply for postal votes if the new location is inconvenient.
- 3.3** The main priority in choosing a polling place is its accessibility. Preference is given to locations which allow a single access suitable for all electors. The accommodation available for polling is also important in that the premises must be large enough to accommodate the appropriate number of polling stations and polling equipment and must offer adequate facilities for polling staff who will be on duty from 6.30 a.m. until after 10 p.m. when the last polling procedures are complete.
- 3.4** The polling places are kept under review for suitability in terms of access, with the Council's policy officer who deals with access issues inspecting a proportion of premises at each election. Consultation has also taken place with the West Dunbartonshire Access Panel in the past on measures which could be implemented to improve access to existing premises.
- 3.5** Combination of polls impacts on the suitability of premises because, where the poll is more complex, the numbers of voters at each polling station are reduced, leading to a higher number of polling stations in larger polling places.
- 3.6** A wide range of accommodation is used in this area, including schools, community education premises, libraries, leisure centres, church halls and other private accommodation.
- 3.7** The presumption is not to use (and therefore close) a school on polling day if suitable alternative premises are available locally. However, alternative premises must be satisfactory in terms of accommodation and access.
- 3.8** Temporary buildings (portacabins or similar) are used only as a last resort for the following reasons – additional cost, reduced accessibility and noise nuisance to neighbours caused by the generators required to provide heating and lighting. There is only one temporary polling place proposed and that is in Milton at Colquhoun Road. There is no other possible solution in the local area. The Scotland Office will not allow the costs involved in hiring temporary buildings if other suitable accommodation exists locally.
- 3.9** The existing scheme was issued to members in advance for comment, however, only one response was received suggesting the relocation of the polling place at Lomond Rugby Club to Highdykes Primary School. No alterations to the polling districts were suggested.
- 3.10** The Electoral Registration Officer starts preparation of the new electoral register in September. It is therefore essential that the council makes a decision on the polling districts at this meeting.

3.11 The recommended list of designated polling places is attached, however, a number of issues require further consideration. These are

a) **Highdykes Primary School**
(Ward 2 – Leven: Polling District WD17)

Up until now, voters in polling district WD17 have been assigned to Loch Lomond Rugby Club. However, the policy officer responsible for access issues has expressed concerns about the suitability of the Club for voters with disabilities. While it is not preferred practice for a school to be used for polling when alternative premises exist, it is essential that accessibility is prioritised. It is therefore suggested that voting be relocated from the Rugby Club to Highdykes Primary School, subject to inspection of the premises and confirmation that all facilities are suitable for the purpose.

b) **Bonhill Primary School**
(Ward 2 – Leven: Polling District WD 18)

A new school building will be completed later this year. The new building is on Raglan Street but is close to the existing primary school, so it is not anticipated that this should cause undue problems for voters. It is recommended that all voters be transferred to the new school.

c) **Knoxland Primary School**
(Ward 3 – Dumbarton: Polling Districts 28 and 30)

Polling District WD 30 is allocated to this school while WD 28 is allocated to St Patrick's Church Hall. Complaints have been received that the School is more convenient than the church hall for voters in this area. Accordingly it is suggested that the Primary School be designated as the polling place for polling districts WD28 and 30.

d) **Goldenhill Primary School**
(Ward 4 – Kilpatrick – Polling Districts WC03 and WC06)

This polling place was unavailable because of reconstruction works and the Antonine Centre was used instead. It is recommended that for future occasions polling be carried out in the new Goldenhill Primary School, subject to inspection of the premises and confirmation that all facilities are suitable for the purpose.

e) **St Eunan's Primary School**
(Ward 5 – Clydebank Central – Polling Districts WC15, 16 and 17)

Polling Districts WC15, 16 and 17 in Ward 5, Clydebank Central, were previously served by the following polling places:

WC15 – St Eunan's Church Hall (770 electors) in 2010 these voters were re-assigned to Drumry Bowling Pavilion

WC16 – Drumry Bowling Pavilion (1141 electors)

WC 17 – St Eunan’s Primary School (1626 electors)

The location of the new St Eunan’s Primary School, on Gilmour Street, is not ideally placed for the voters in WC17 who voted in the old school. However, it has not proved possible to identify suitable alternative polling accommodation closer to the former location.

However, the new school is very close to both St Eunan’s Church Hall and Drumry Bowling Pavilion. It is recommended that polling for WC15, 16 and 17 be held in the new primary school, subject to inspection of the premises and confirmation that all facilities are suitable for the purpose.

A copy of the list of polling places, including the above recommendations, is attached as the Appendix to this Report.

- 3.12 The scheme will apply from the date of this meeting up until autumn next year when the Council will be statutorily obliged to carry out a full consultative review of all its polling places.

4. People Implications

- 4.1 There are no personnel issues arising from this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There is a cost to the Council of closing premises for use on polling day which is not met in full by the recharge made to the Scotland Office. Councils are allowed to recharge only the costs of heating, lighting and janitation.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1 It is essential that suitable polling places are identified and the list kept under review in order to be prepared not only for scheduled elections (and referendums) but also for by-elections which can occur at any time.
- 6.2 From time to time, designated polling places become unavailable for use and a contingency arrangement is essential. This is achieved by the Council delegating authority to the Chief Executive to amend the list if circumstances require.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1** Since accessibility is a major factor in the selection of polling places, all existing premises have been assessed for suitability of access for voters with disabilities.
- 7.2** New premises will be inspected prior to use to identify any problems in relation to access.
- 7.3** Where problems are identified, reasonable remedial measures will be effected to maximise accessibility.
- 7.4** Inspection and remedial plans ensure that the needs of voters with disabilities are taken into account in designating polling places. This forms a key part of the Equalities Impact Assessment carried out for the election as a whole.

8. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 8.1** The recommendations are as follows:-
- a)** that the Council confirms the current arrangements for polling districts as a basis for the new electoral register;
 - b)** that the Council approves the attached list of recommended polling places for use at any elections, by-elections or referendums occurring between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011, subject to the premises being available on the dates of the polls; and
 - c)** in the event of any matter arising about the designation of polling places which cannot be resolved at the meeting, or of any named premises being unavailable or becoming unsuitable for a poll, that it be remitted to the Chief Executive, in consultation with local members, to agree the final list of premises to be used.

David McMillan
Chief Executive
Date: 28 July 2010

Officer to Contact: Anne Laird, Manager of Administrative Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton Tel 01389 737514 or e-mail: anne.laird@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendix: Revised Scheme of Polling Places for the West Dunbartonshire Council Area.

Background Papers: Reports to Council by the Chief Executive on 26 September 2007: 31 October 2007, 25 March 2008 and 30 September 2009 and minutes thereof.

Wards Affected: All wards

POLLING PLACES FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA

WARD 1 – LOMOND

PD No	Polling Place
WD01	Millennium Hall, Gartocharn G83 8NF
WD02	Lennox Hall, Main Street, Jamestown, G83 8AZ
WD03	Lennox Hall, Main Street, Jamestown, G83 8AZ
WD04	Lennox Hall, Main Street, Jamestown, G83 8AZ
WD05	Vale of Leven Swimming Pool, North Main Street, Alexandria G83 9SJ
WD06	St Kessog's Church Hall, Balloch Road, Balloch G83 8LQ
WD07	Alexandria Parish Church Hall, Lomond Road, Balloch G83 8SJ
WD08	Vale of Leven Swimming Pool, North Main Street, Alexandria G83 9SJ
WD09	Lennox Hall, Main Street, Jamestown, G83 8AZ

POLLING PLACES FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA

WARD 2 – LEVEN

PD No	Polling Place
WD10	Alexandria Community Education Centre, Main Street, Alexandria G83 9BH
WD11	Alexandria Community Education Centre, Main Street, Alexandria G83 9BH
WD12	St Martin's Church Hall, Main Street, Renton G82 4PZ
WD13	Renton Primary School, Main Street, Renton G82 4NA
WD14	Dalmonach Community Education Centre, First Avenue, Bonhill, G82 9AU
WD15	Bonhill Community Education Centre, Ladyton, Bonhill G83 9BH
WD16	Bonhill Community Education Centre, Ladyton, Bonhill G83 9BH
WD17	Highdykes Primary School, Braehead, Bonhill, G83 9NQ Note –relocation from Loch Lomond Rugby Club
WD18	Bonhill Primary School, Raglan Street, Bonhill, G83 9JA Note – relocation from existing Bonhill Primary School on Main Street
WD19	Aitkenbar Primary School, Whiteford Avenue, Dumbarton G82 3JL
WD20	Aitkenbar Primary School, Whiteford Avenue, Dumbarton G82 3JL

POLLING PLACES FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA

WARD 3 – DUMBARTON

PD No	Polling Place
WD21	Westbridgend Community Hall, Westbridgend, Dumbarton G82 4EN
WD22	United Free Church Hall, Hawthornhill Road, Dumbarton G82 5AS
WD23	St Michael's Church Hall, Cardross Road, Dumbarton G82 4JE
WD24	West Dumbarton Activity Centre, Ardoch Crescent, Dumbarton G82 4EN
WD25	Braehead Primary School, Meadow Road, Dumbarton G82 2BL
WD26	Braehead Primary School, Meadow Road, Dumbarton G82 2BL
WD27	Concord Community Education Centre, College Way, Dumbarton G82 1LJ
WD28	Knoxland Primary School, Glasgow Road, Dumbarton G82 1QU Note – relocation from St Patrick's Church Hall
WD29	St Patrick's Primary School, Crosslet Road, Dumbarton, G82 2LQ
WD30	Knoxland Primary School, Leven Street, Dumbarton G82 1QU
WD31	The Leven Suite, Abbotsford Hotel, Stirling Road, Dumbarton G82 2PJ
WD32	Milton Mobile Polling Place, Colquhoun Road, Milton G82 2TH
WD33	Bowling Public Hall, Dumbarton Road, Bowling G60 5AG

POLLING PLACES FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA

WARD 4 – KILPATRICK

PD No	Polling Place
WC01	Glenhead Community Centre, Duntiglennan Road, Duntocher, Clydebank G81 6HF
WC02	Glenhead Community Centre, Duntiglennan Road, Duntocher, Clydebank G81 6HF
WC03	Goldenhill Primary School, Stewart Drive, Hardgate, Clydebank G81 6AH Note – return to Goldenhill Primary School after temporary relocation to Antonine Centre
WC04	Faifley Parish Church Hall, Faifley Road, Clydebank G81 5EZ
WC05	St Joseph’s Church Hall, Faifley Road, Clydebank G81 5EZ
WC06	Goldenhill Primary School, Stewart Drive, Hardgate, Clydebank G81 6AH
WD34	Bowling Public Hall, Dumbarton Road, Bowling G60 1UA

POLLING PLACES FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA

WARD 5 – CLYDEBANK CENTRAL

PD No	Polling Place
WC07	Dalmuir Barclay Parish Church Hall, Durban Avenue, Clydebank G81 4JH
WC08	Dalmuir Barclay Parish Church Hall, Durban Avenue, Clydebank G81 4JH
WC10	Parkhall Library, Hawthorn Street, Clydebank G81 3EF
WC11	St Stephen's Church Hall, Park Road, Clydebank G81 3ED
WC12	St Stephen's Church Hall, Park Road, Clydebank G81 3ED
WC13	Parkhall Library, Hawthorn Street, Clydebank G81 3EF
WC14	Kilbowie Primary School, West Thomson Street, Clydebank G81 3AE
WC15	St Eunan's Primary School, Gilmour Street, Clydebank G81 Note – relocation from Drumry Bowling Pavilion (already relocated 2010 from St Eunan's Church Hall)
WC16	St Eunan's Primary School, Gilmour Street, Clydebank G81 Note – relocation from Drumry Bowling Pavilion
WC17	St Eunan's Primary School, Gilmour Street, Clydebank G81 Note – relocation from existing St Eunan's Primary School in Melfort Avenue
WC18	Linnvale Primary School, Livingstone Street, Clydebank G81 2RL

POLLING PLACES FOR THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL AREA**WARD 6 – CLYDEBANK WATERFRONT**

PD No	Polling Place
WC19	Gavinburn Library, Dumbarton Road, Old Kilpatrick G60 5NE
WC20	Napier Hall, Dumbarton Road, Old Kilpatrick G60 5JH
WC21	Napier Hall, Dumbarton Road, Old Kilpatrick G60 5JH
WC22	Dalmuir Barclay Parish Church Hall, Durban Avenue, Clydebank G81 4JH
WC23	Dalmuir Barclay Parish Church Hall, Durban Avenue, Clydebank G81 4JH
WC24	Abbotsford Church Hall, Abbotsford Rd, Clydebank G81 1PA
WC25	St Margaret's Church Hall, Sinclair Street, Clydebank G81 1AE