

# **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **Report by the Chief Executive**

**Council: 31 August 2011**

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**Subject: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places 2011**

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1** To advise of the requirement on the Council to conduct a review of polling districts and places within its area and to outline the timetable and processes for carrying out this review.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1** The previous review of Polling Districts and Polling Places by this Council was completed and published in December 2007. The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires that every local authority must complete a further review of each polling district and place in its area before the end of the period of four years starting with the completion of the previous such review.
- 2.2** In terms of the above legislation, Councils must ensure that all electors in parliamentary constituencies within their areas have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable, and that, so far as is reasonable and practicable, every polling place within the area is accessible to electors who are disabled.

### **3. Main Issues**

- 3.1** A copy of the proposed public notice and timetable for the conduct of the review is attached for approval.
- 3.2** The Council is required by law to consult the local Parliamentary Returning Officer, who must submit representations to the authority on the polling scheme. These representations must be published by the authority with relevant parties being given the opportunity to comment on them. The Returning Officer's representations will be published on the Council's website and made available in offices and libraries in accordance with the proposed timetable. A copy of the Returning Officer's representations will also be issued to all elected members and a range of local organisations, which represent disabled and elderly people, for comment.

### **4. People Implications**

- 4.1** There are no implications for employees of the Council.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1** There are potentially financial implications of adopting new polling places which require improved access as only 50% of funding is met by the Scotland Office in preparation for an election. Costs will vary depending on the number of premises used and the nature of adaptations required. At present, all of our designated polling places have disabled access.

## **6. Risk Analysis**

- 6.1** As previously stated the Council is required by statute to complete the review within the required timescales. Failure to do so could result in reputational damage to the Council.

## **7. Equalities, Health and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)**

- 7.1** As stated in paragraph 2.2. of this report, the Council must ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practicable, every polling place within the area is accessible to electors who are disabled. Furthermore, organisations representing disabled people and the elderly will be invited to comment on the Returning Officer's representations.

## **8. Strategic Assessment**

- 8.1** The Council is required by statute to carry out this review and therefore must do so. However, the purpose of the review does fit with the Council's Strategic Priorities in that it asks the Council to consider the impact of the proposed polling scheme on vulnerable groups such as the elderly and disabled with a view to making improvements to service delivery.

## **9. Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 9.1** The Council is asked:
- (a) to note the statutory requirement to conduct a review of polling districts and places within its area;
  - (b) to approve the Notice of Review as shown as the Appendix to the report; and
  - (c) to note that a report containing the final proposals and representations will be submitted for approval to the meeting Council in October 2011.

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**David McMillan**  
**Chief Executive**  
**15 August 2011**

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**Appendix:** Notice of Review

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

**Background Papers:** None

**WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL  
REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

1. Notice is hereby given that the Council is carrying out a review of polling districts and polling places for the West Dunbartonshire County Constituency.
2. The Returning Officer will make comment on the proposed polling places.
3. Electors in the West Dunbartonshire Council area may make representations on the Council's proposals or on the Returning Officer's comments.
4. The Council particularly welcomes representations from any person or organisation with expertise in access for persons with disabilities.
5. Persons or organisations making representations should, if possible, suggest alternative locations for the polling places.
6. A list of proposed polling places is available online at <http://www.wdcweb.info/home/> or for inspection at main libraries and at the Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU.
7. Any representations should be addressed in writing to Andrew Fraser, Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services, by email to [elections@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:elections@west-dunbarton.gov.uk) or by letter to the above address.
8. Proposals will be available in accordance with the following timetable:

<b>Existing arrangements available for inspection and commencement of the review.</b>	<b>9 September 2011</b>
<b>Publication of the Returning Officer's representations.</b>	<b>9 September 2011</b>
<b>Closing date for representations by electors and consultees.</b>	<b>4 October 2011</b>
<b>Proposals submitted to Council Meeting.</b>	<b>26 October 2011</b>
<b>Publication of final proposals</b>	<b>1 December 2011</b>

David McMillan  
Chief Executive