

Appendices: 1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

14 December 2015

Agenda Status: Public

Directorate: Chief Executive

Report Title	POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REVIEW
---------------------	----------------------------------------------------

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to report Council on the decision taken by General Purposes Committee on 17 November 2015 in relation to the review of Polling Districts and Polling Places and to request that these decisions now be published and implemented.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Council is asked to note the decision taken by General Purposes Committee on behalf of the Council following the recommendations from the Local Returning Officer.
- 2.2 Council is asked to authorise the publication and implementation of these revised arrangements following the decision of General Purposes Committee.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The attached report to the General Purposes Committee was approved at the General Purposes Committee on the 17th November and explains the background to the review.
- 3.1.2 The recommendations of the Local Returning Officer are attached to the Committee report and have been updated to take account of the decisions made by the Committee at its meeting.

3.1.3 Each Political Group of the Council has been provided with a large scale map showing the detailed locations of boundaries and polling places, which members may consult.

3.1.4 Following the conclusion of the local authority's review, certain persons have a right to make representations to the Electoral Commission. The Commission may direct the authority to make any alterations to the polling places that they think necessary.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 As per attached General Purposes Committee Report.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 As per attached General Purposes Committee Report.

4.3 Legal

3.1.5 As per attached General Purposes Committee Report.

4.4 Equality

3.1.6 As per attached General Purposes Committee Report.

4.5 Other Implications

3.1.7 As per attached General Purposes Committee Report.

5. Background Papers

3.1.8 As per attached General Purposes Committee Report.

David Kennedy, Chief Executive, 837726 or Extension 7726

Appendices:
1



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places
---------------------	-------------------------------------------------------

AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	17 th November 2015
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Chief Executive

1. Purpose

1.2 To present to the Committee final recommendations from the Local Returning Officer relating to the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places under The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 and seek the Committee's approval to adopt.

2. Recommendations

2.3 That the Committee approve the final representations of the Local Returning Officer.

2.4 That the Committee approves the amendments to be included in the register due to be published on 1st Dec 2015

3. Issues and Choices

3.2 Report Background

3.2.1 The introduction of The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 requires each local authority to carry out a review of polling districts and polling places every fifth year after 1st October 2013.

3.2.2 The initial review was completed but following representations made to the Electoral Commission that the review had not been completed fully, the Commission requested that a further full review be conducted as soon as possible.

- 3.2.3 The Local Returning Officer initiated a full review of Polling Districts and Polling Places immediately following the Parliamentary and Local Elections held on 7th May 2015.
- 3.2.4 The scope and methodology of the review and consultation was agreed by General Purposes committee on 7th July 2015
- 3.2.5 Since the meeting in July the draft Guidance on the holding of a Referendum on Membership of the European Union has been published. This recommends, based on experience at the Scotland Referendum in 2014, that Local Returning Officers should, for that purpose, seek to have Polling Districts with less than 1,500 voters in person as far as that is possible and practicable. This draft Guidance has been considered when drawing up the attached recommendations and has had the effect of increasing the number of Polling Stations likely to be required.
- 3.2.6 The attached proposals have also been shaped by representations made around the May 2015 elections, reports from Polling staff at the May 2015 elections, informal preparatory consultation, and inspections of existing and potential Polling Places. The process of consultation and inspection will continue during the rest of the review period.
- 3.2.7 The proposals have been subject to a full public consultation which ran from 7th October to 3rd November following approval from this committee on 6th October 2015.
- 3.2.8 Specific feedback from the consultations, which included representations from elected members, has been reviewed and any appropriate changes have been made to the original proposals. These are detailed in the attached final recommendations report, which also attaches the consultation responses received in summary.
- 3.2.9 The Committee is recommended to approve the proposals attached.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.6 Resources and Risk

- 4.6.1 Additional resources will be required to manage and run any additional Polling Stations required following proposed reductions in the size of some Polling Districts. European, National, Police, County and Parish elections, ballots and referendums are not funded by the Borough Council but costs are reclaimed from the responsible body. The Borough Council is responsible for its own elections and for specified local ballots such as Community Planning Referendums or any Mayoral Referendum.
- 4.6.2 Additional costs will be incurred by increasing the number of Polling Places. The proposals attached increase the numbers of Polling Districts and Polling Places, and also the number of mobile units which have a higher unit cost.

	May 2015	Proposed	Change
Polling Districts	100	124	+24%
Polling Places	80	96	+20%
Mobile Units	7	11	+57%
Polling Stations	106	Maximum 131	Up to +24%

4.6.3 The number of Polling Stations within each Polling Place is a matter for the discretion of the Returning Officer at each election. In the attached recommendations a number of Polling Districts are identified as potentially having two Polling Stations.

4.6.4 The costs of establishing a larger number of Polling Places, with attendant increase in Polling Stations, will depend on the nature and costs of the Polling Places used and the size of the Polling Stations. Under Electoral Commission guidance there are minimum staffing levels depending on the number of voters in person at each Polling Station. It does not therefore follow that one Polling Station becoming two is double the cost, it is usually less than double.

4.6.5 The arrangements proposed in this paper will be reviewed again in 2018/19 in preparation for the 2020 Parliamentary Constituency General Election, which will be on new boundaries.

4.7 Legal

4.7.1 Formal guidance from the Electoral Commission is being followed for the review which ensures that all parts of the legislation are adhered to.

4.8 Equality

4.8.1 Advice has been sought from specialist groups and agencies relating to access needs of protected groups, specifically those with a disability.

4.8.2 Full inspections of Polling Places have taken place which included accessibility and incorporated any initial advice given by the groups above.

4.9 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.9.1 Consultation has been carried out both informally and formally with the general public, and specifically the groups mentioned in 4.2.2 below.

4.9.2 Compulsory consultees are stated in the guidance issued by the Electoral Commission and include the following:

- Candidates and agents for the parliamentary, local and Parish elections held on May 7th, 2015
- Elected representatives (County Councillors, MEP's etc)
- (Acting) Returning Officers from neighbouring authorities (e.g. South Northamptonshire)
- Electors
- Council officers with relevant experience

4.10

Other Implications

4.10.1 None

5. Background Papers

5.1 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places files and records, held by the Borough Secretary's department.

David Kennedy
Chief Executive and Local Returning Officer
Ext 7726

**RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE LOCAL RETURNING OFFICER
TO NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

The following report outlines final proposals for Polling Districts and Polling Places in Northampton following formal consultation with the public and interested parties.

The proposals attached are presented to the Council's General Purposes Committee for the Committee to resolve upon.

Attached appendices show the recommended Polling Districts and Polling Places. The following narrative explains the reasons for these recommendations.

General Comments

The structure of Polling Districts used in any election needs to take account of the legal requirements laid down in Statute and the requirements of the Electoral Commission.

In addition, polling districts need to be set in such a way that the Electoral Register can be structured to deliver any individual election. Polling Districts are the basic building block of the Register and therefore are always the smallest division of electors in the Register.

This means that the boundaries of Polling Districts are firstly determined by the boundaries of the Borough, Parliamentary Constituencies, County Council Divisions, and then by Borough Council Wards, Parish Councils, and Parish Council Wards where applicable. It is not possible to establish a Polling District that, for example, crosses the boundary of a County Council Division as this would mean that the Register would not be, as required, capable of delivering a County Council election in those Divisions.

As a result, many Polling District boundaries are effectively determined by these higher-ranking geographies. Areas which fall between these boundaries may be subdivided into Polling Districts on the decision of the Borough Council (subject to the right to appeal to the Electoral Commission) and this should be considered with due regard to making Polling Places and Polling Stations accessible and convenient for voters in person. The exact shape or size of a Polling District can be affected by the availability of suitable Polling Places.

Polling Places are locations within which a Polling Station is to be established by the relevant Returning Officer for an election. Polling Places may, if possible, contain more than one Polling Station and serve more than one Polling District.

The Electoral Commission has guided that no Polling Station may have more than 2,500 voters in person assigned to it. This does not mean that a Polling District cannot be larger than 2,500, but if so then it will need a number of Polling Stations, which may of course be in the same Polling Place.

In recent draft guidance relating to the forthcoming referendum on the nation's membership of the European Union, the Commission has drawn on experience in Scotland in 2014. In light of the very high turnouts achieved in Scotland and in consideration of planning for such in the EU Referendum, the Commission has suggested at the Referendum Local Returning officers should try not to exceed 1,500 voters in person whilst recognising that on occasion this will be necessary and appropriate.

As mentioned above, public consultation has been carried out in preparing these draft recommendations. All comments have been considered where relevant and a summary of the comments made is attached in the appendices to this document.

In addition, a programme of inspecting actual and potential Polling Places has been undertaken in order to inform these recommendations. As far as possible, alternative proposals have been subjected to inspection.

Proposals are presented, for ease of reference, Borough Council Ward by Borough Council Ward. Details of Polling District boundaries and projected numbers of voters in person are contained within the Appendices.

Abington Ward

Abington Ward currently has 5 Polling Districts. One Polling District falls within the Northampton South Constituency and has less than 1,000 projected voters in person in 2020.

It is proposed to reshape the other four Polling Districts into five in accordance with the attached ward map. The boundary changes are significant and intended to increase accessibility and balance numbers of voters better between Polling Places.

The proposed Polling Places are: Abington Avenue Reformed Church, Stimpson Avenue Academy (for 2 Polling Districts), Old Northamptonians, Barry Primary School, and Vernon Terrace Community Centre. All of these Polling Places are currently used at elections. In the case of the Old Northamptonians this use is currently for Rushmills Ward.

Representations have been made about the arrangements for a Polling Station within Barry Road Primary School (Gym Annex). A further inspection has been undertaken and it is proposed to designate Barry Road Primary School rather than the Gym Annex on accessibility grounds.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Abington Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Billing Ward

Billing Ward contains a number of Parish Wards. As a result there is limited discretion as to the arrangements within this Ward.

There are currently four Polling Districts and four Polling Places in this Ward and it is proposed to make no changes to this. However it is noted that the projected voters in person in two Polling Districts will exceed 1,500 in 2020.

The proposed Polling Places are: the Institute in Great Billing, St. Andrew's CEVA Primary School, Bellinge Community Centre, and All Saints Church. All of these Polling Places are currently used at elections.

The Polling District served by the Institute in Great Billing is projected to reach around 1,650 voters in person in 2020. The Polling Place is not considered able to hold two Polling Stations but no suitable alternative has been located. Representations have been received that Bernard Weston Pavilion could be a suitable alternative. Having considered this location it is recommended that as it is further from the South of this District it should be discounted on accessibility grounds.

The Polling District served by St Andrew's CEVA Primary School is project to reach around 1,900 voters in person in 2020. Inspection shows that, should it be considered necessary by the Returning Officer, it possible to host two Polling Stations in this Polling Place.

The proposed arrangements are considered to be the best possible in Billing Ward and recommended on that basis.

Boothville Ward

Boothville Ward currently contains two Polling Districts with two Polling Places.

It is proposed to retain these arrangements but adjust the boundary between the two Polling Districts to improve convenience for voters. After this adjustment one Polling District is projected to have around 1,700 voters in person in 2020. The Polling Place for this Polling District could, if required, hold two polling stations serving this Polling District.

The Polling Places in this ward are: King's Meadow School and Boothville Community Centre, both currently in use at elections.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Boothville Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Brookside Ward

Brookside Ward currently contains three Polling Districts at three Polling Places.

It is proposed to retain these arrangements as they match the geography of the Ward very well. One Polling District is projected to reach just under 1,800 voters in person in 2020. The Polling Place, Lings Primary School, could accommodate two Polling Stations if considered necessary at an election, although the School would prefer not to be used. It has not been possible to identify another suitable premise to serve this area as a Polling Station.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Brookside Ward and recommended on that basis.

Castle Ward

Castle Ward currently contains five Polling Districts and five Polling Places.

Projections of numbers of voters in person in 2020 demonstrate that two of the existing Polling Stations would exceed 2,200 by then. It is proposed therefore to reshape the Polling Districts into seven in accordance with the attached ward map. The boundary changes are significant and intended to increase accessibility and balance numbers of voters better between Polling Places.

The proposed Polling Places are: Castle Community Hub (in place of Spring Lane Primary School), The Guildhall, Victoria Road Congregational Church, Mounts Baths, Northampton Music and Performing Arts Trust (for 2 Polling Districts), and Mount Pleasant Baptist Church.

Two of these Polling Places are not currently designated as Polling Places. Castle Community Hub and Mount Pleasant Baptist Church are new.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Castle Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Delapre and Briar Hill Ward

Delapre and Briar Hill Ward currently contains of four Polling Districts served by four Polling Places with a total of six Polling Stations.

Delapre and Briar Hill is a geographically dispersed and large ward. Projections of numbers of voters in person in 2020 demonstrate that two of the existing Polling Stations would exceed 2,000 by then. In order to provide more local access it is proposed to reshape the Polling Districts into eight in accordance with the attached ward map and increase the number of Polling Places. The boundary changes are significant and intended to increase accessibility and balance numbers of voters better between Polling Places.

A key change is to include the area to the west of Briar Hill as a distinct Polling District with a more local Polling Place. This can only be achieved by the use of a mobile unit, and a location has been identified at the junction of Hunsbarrow and Ironstone Road.

The area to the south of the ward has also been adjusted in order to manage the number of voters in person at Gloucester Avenue Nursery School. A new Polling District with a Polling Place at Abbey Primary School is proposed.

To the north-east of the ward is an area of planned new development at Ransome Road and the University Campus. It is proposed to establish a Polling District which serves some existing housing and these planned development sites, served by a Polling Place at a mobile unit in Asda's Car Park on London Road/Ransome Road. Should development happen faster than expected then it would be possible to accommodate a second Polling Station at Asda. At next review in 2018/19 it should be possible to consider a location at the University.

The remaining three Polling Districts are proposed to be served by a Polling Place at Far Cotton Recreation Centre, with one of these Districts projected to just reach 1,500 voters in person in 2020. Whilst the Centre could accommodate four Polling Stations it is not considered likely that this will be needed before next review.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Delapre and Briar Hill Ward and are recommended on that basis.

East Hunsbury Ward

East Hunsbury Ward contains six Polling Districts with four Polling Places.

Following representations from a local councilor, a review of the boundaries of Districts was undertaken and this have bene adjusted to better match the geography of the Ward.

Representations from the same councilor that Danes Camp Leisure Centre would have accessibility issues if used as a Polling Place, has been responded to by placing that Polling Place at Abbey Centre Baptist Church which will revert to holding two Polling Districts.

In relation to the Polling Place at the Pro-Shop, Collingtree Golf Club, we have been informed that the Pro-Shop may not be available in the future, but there are other locations within the Golf Club. Therefore the Polling Place is now stated as Collingtree Golf Club.

The other Polling Place is East Hunsbury Primary School which is currently used.

The proposed arrangements are considered to be the best possible in East Hunsbury Ward and recommended on that basis.

Eastfield Ward

Eastfield Ward has two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

One Polling District is projected to reach just over 2,000 voters in person in 2020. It is proposed to retain the existing boundary to this area but to split that Polling District into two with both new Polling Districts being served by St Albans Jubilee Hall which sits on the boundary between the two Districts, as the Polling Place.

The other Polling District is proposed to remain unaltered and served by Eden Close Community Room as the Polling Place.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in Eastfield Ward and recommended on that basis.

Headlands Ward

Headlands Ward has two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

The current arrangements in this ward work well, and it is proposed not to make any changes. One Polling District is projected to reach over 1,600 voters in person in 2020 and if this becomes significant the Polling Place is able to accommodate a second Polling Station.

The two Polling Places are Headlands United Reformed Church and Abington Community Centre.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Headlands Ward and recommended on that basis.

Kings Heath Ward

King's Heath Ward has two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places operating three Polling Stations.

One Polling District covers the King's Heath Estate and Dallington Heath. The other covers the Ryehill area. These arrangements match the topography of the area and the location of the Polling Place on the Estate is a good central location for that District, containing two Polling Stations.

The only proposed change is that the area designated in the Local Plan for new Housing on Dallington Heath be included in the Polling District that contains Ryehill. This is proposed as it will better reflect the current expected development phasing on the sustainable urban extension.

The two Polling Places are Montague Crescent Community Room and King's Heath Community Centre, both of which are currently used.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in King's Heath Ward and recommended on that basis.

Kingsley Ward

Kingsley Ward currently has three Polling Districts operating from three Polling Places.

One of these Polling Districts is projected to reach over 1,800 voters in person by 2020. Therefore it is proposed to adjust the boundaries between two Polling Districts to balance numbers more evenly between them.

In addition, this Ward contains an area that falls in a different County Division. The land involved is currently undeveloped and expected to remain so. This Polling District will therefore have no voters in person and for technical purposes only will be allocated to the Polling Place at a Mobile Unit in Fulford Drive.

The other two Polling Places are: Kingsley Primary School and Kingsley Park Methodist Church. All the Polling Places in this ward are currently used.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in Kingsley Ward and recommended on that basis.

Kingsthorpe Ward

Kingsthorpe Ward currently consists of two Polling Districts at two Polling Places. The boundary between these Polling Places is determined by a County Council Division boundary.

It is proposed to retain the current arrangements with the facility to have two Polling Stations at Kingsthorpe Community Centre if necessary at any election. The Polling District at that Polling Place is projected to have around 1,900 voters in person in 2020.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Kingsthorpe Ward and recommended on that basis.

Nene Valley Ward

This ward is geographically widely spread. It currently contains five Polling Districts with three Polling Places and six Polling Stations.

For Parish election reasons, and for accessibility, there are Polling Districts at Hardingstone and at Collingtree which will need to remain in place. Hardingstone is currently projected to have just under 1,500 voters in person in 2020. Should development of housing proceed within the Hardingstone Parish it may in time be necessary to consider a second Polling Station there.

Following representations from a local councilor that Wootton Memorial Hall is not sufficiently accessible as a location for a Polling Place, it is proposed to revert to the existing arrangement whereby four Polling Districts all vote at Wootton Community and Sports Centre. The recommendation of this review is to establish four Polling Districts, with all having Wootton Community and Sports Centre as the Polling Place.

The Polling Place at Hardingstone is the Village Hall, and at Collingtree the Village Room. Both are currently used. Representations were received from the Parish Council that Collingtree Village Room/Hall is very suitable.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Nene Valley Ward and are recommended on that basis.

New Duston Ward

New Duston Ward currently has seven Polling Districts, the boundaries of which are largely determined by Parish and County Council boundaries, served by four Polling Places.

It is proposed to retain the Polling Districts in their current configuration. This reflects the different boundary requirements and also the geography of the ward. Two Polling Districts are projected to have over 1,700 voters in person in 2020. If necessary at elections it would be possible to locate double Polling Stations at the Polling Places for these Districts.

The Polling Places proposed are: Mobile Unit on Errington Park (2 Districts), Mobile Unit at Bordeaux Close, Mobile Unit at Park Lane Island, Duston Community Centre,

and Duston Eldean Primary School (2 Districts). All these Polling Places are current although Duston Community Centre is currently only used for Old Duston Ward in which it is located. This recommendation transfers a Polling District away from the Primary School and thereby would create space for when two Polling Stations are considered necessary for one District served by the School.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in New Duston Ward and recommended on that basis.

Obelisk Ward

Obelisk Ward contains two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places. One District, covering mainly the Park Campus of the University, is determined by County Council Division boundaries.

There are no proposed changes to the arrangements for this ward. However it should be noted that, whilst Reynard Way Evangelical Church is a very well located and accessible central point in the Polling District that includes it, that District is projected to have around 1,900 voters in person in 2020. The Polling Place can take two Polling Stations and this may be necessary at some elections.

The other Polling Place is the Sunley Management and Conference Centre at the University.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Obelisk Ward and recommended on that basis.

Old Duston

Old Duston Ward currently has four Polling Districts, the boundaries of which are largely determined by Parish and County Council boundaries, served by three Polling Places.

One of the existing Polling Districts is projected to increase to nearly 2,000 voters in person by 2020. As a result the review proposes that the number of Polling Districts be increased to five.

In response to consultation proposals were made for use of the new St Luke's Community Centre as a Polling Place and it is proposed to have the Centre serve two Polling Districts. Two further Polling Districts are proposed to be served by the Duston Community Centre (which will, with New Duston, serve three Districts), then one at Chiltern Primary School which is currently not used, and finally at Lyncrest Primary School.

Representations have been made about accessibility issues at Lyncrest Primary School. This has been reinforced by comments from a local councilor in the consultation.

The Polling District it serves is defined by County Council Division and Parish boundaries, and is bounded by major roads. The only premises identified in this District are those at the Primary School. A meeting was held with the Head Teacher to discuss how a Polling Station will operate in this school, and to improve

accessibility. New arrangements for the Polling Station have been agreed and therefore it is proposed to maintain this school as the Polling Place.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Old Duston Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Park Ward

Park Ward currently has two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

It is proposed to make a minor change to the Polling District boundary to balance voters in person between them. Each is projected to have around 1,500 voters in person in 2020. Otherwise no changes are proposed and the Polling Places are proposed to remain as at present: St Peter's Church Hall, and Bridgewater Primary School.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in Park Ward and recommended on that basis.

Parklands Ward

Parklands Ward currently has two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

Representations have been made about an area off Talavera Way to the north of this Ward which is served by Parklands Community Centre as its Polling Place. This is considered by the people making the representation to not provide sufficient accessibility.

Having considered these representations it is proposed that a third Polling District is established to the north of the ward incorporating the Darnell Way area. The Polling Place is proposed as Boothville Community Centre as there are no suitable alternatives within the District.

The remainder of the Ward is proposed to be two Polling Districts as at present with a small adjustment to the boundary to assist balance between them.

The other two Polling Places are proposed to be as now: Parklands Community Centre and Parklands Nursery School and Childrens Centre.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Parklands Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Phippsville Ward

Phippsville Ward is divided into two Polling Districts with the boundary between them determined by a County Council Division. These are served by two Polling Places.

No changes are proposed to Polling Districts and Polling Places. The larger of the two Polling Districts is projected to have around 1,900 voters in person by 2020. It is proposed that this District will be served by two Polling Stations within the existing Polling Place, which has the capacity and good accessibility.

The Polling Places are: St Matthew's Parish Centre, and Cedar Road Primary School. There was representation that the school should not be used due to disruption to its operation but no alternatives have been identified.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Phippsville Ward and recommended on that basis.

Rectory Farm Ward

Rectory Farm Ward is currently made up of three Polling Districts. One is determined by Parliamentary Constituency boundaries. These are served by two Polling Places.

It is proposed to adjust the borders between the two Polling Districts served by Rectory Farm Community Centre as their Polling Place, to balance the number of voters in person projected in 2020 to around 1,400. No other changes are proposed.

The other Polling Place is Blackthorn Good Neighbours and Childrens Centre. Although concerns were expressed about this Polling Place before the last elections, problems were not experienced on the day and no better alternative location has been identified.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in Rectory Farm Ward and recommended on that basis.

Riverside Ward

Riverside Ward currently consists of two Polling Districts served from a single Polling Place, Standens Barn Community Centre.

Projections of voters in person have indicated that one of the two Polling Districts would reach over 1,900 voters in person by 2020. In light of this it is proposed to split the ward into three Polling Districts all served from the same existing Polling Place which is near the meeting point of all three Polling Districts.

It would be possible to adjust the boundaries between the two existing Polling Districts but this would have created two each with about 1,500 voters in person each in 2020. On balance a set of three Districts is preferred.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in Riverside Ward and recommended on that basis.

Rushmills Ward

Rushmills Ward is currently divided into four Polling Districts. One District is determined by the Parish of Great Houghton and a Parliamentary Constituency boundary. These are served by four Polling Places. The ward is geographically widespread.

Following comments in response to the initial consultation it is proposed to use Old Scouts as the Polling Place for one District, replacing Old Northamptonians which is now proposed to be used in Abington Ward.

It is also proposed to reallocate part of the District that vote at Old Northamptonians to the District that votes at Vernon Terrace Community Centre for convenience and accessibility reasons.

The existing Polling District served by Bridgewater Primary School is still proposed to have the School as its Polling Place but in the further consultation we would ask for further comments on potential alternative Polling Places, for accessibility and convenience reasons.

The Polling Place at Great Houghton is Parsons Memorial Hall and is not proposed to change.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Rushmills Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Semilong Ward

Semilong Ward currently contains four Polling Districts, significantly affected by Parliamentary Constituency and County Council Division boundaries. These are served by three Polling Places.

No changes are proposed to these arrangements. One Polling District is projected to have around 1,500 voters in person by 2020.

The Polling Places for Semilong Ward are Holy Trinity Church Hall (2 Districts), Semilong Community Centre and Alliston Gardens Youth and Community Centre.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Semilong Ward and recommended on that basis.

Spencer Ward

Spencer Ward currently contains two Polling Districts, each using Spencer Dallington Community Centre as the Polling Place.

In order to provide better accessibility to the north west of this Ward it is proposed to establish a Polling District there served by the Dallington Lawn Tennis Club. The remainder of the Ward is proposed to be two Polling Districts served by Spencer Dallington Community Centre.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Spencer Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Spring Park

Spring Park Ward currently contains two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

On current projections, one Polling District would have around 1,800 voters in person in 2020. This Polling District is served by Parsons Community Centre and if necessary at elections in the future will have two Polling Stations. No changes to

boundaries or Polling Places are proposed. The other Polling District is served by St Mark's Church Hall.

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Spring Park Ward and recommended on that basis.

St David's Ward

St David's Ward currently contains two Polling Districts each based at one Polling Place.

Representations were made at and after the 2015 elections that the topography of this ward requires a different arrangement with more Polling Places and by implication Polling Districts. As one of the current Polling Districts is projected to have around 1,700 voters in person in 2020, there is a case to make changes on these grounds and in response to representations.

It is therefore proposed to create three Polling Districts with three Polling Places. The Polling Places would be the Liburd Community Room, the Kingsthorpe Grove Lower School and the currently used St David's Church Room. The former two are not current Polling Places and views are sought on the suitability of these Places. It has not yet been possible to inspect Kingsthorpe Grove Lower School, but this will take place over the next few weeks.

The locations of these three Places, at the lower, middle, and upper part of the ward respond to the comments made regarding accessibility.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in St David's Ward and are recommended on that basis.

St James Ward

St James Ward currently consists of two Polling Districts at two Polling Places.

There is new development of housing planned in this Ward at Sixfields that is remote from the Polling Place for that District. It is therefore proposed to establish a new Polling District at the west end of this Ward. Initially this District will have no voters in person. However once voters register in this area, the proposed Polling Place that they will vote in is proposed to be Sixfields Stadium. This could include a mobile option for a Polling Station within the Stadium Car Park.

The remainder of the Ward is proposed to be unchanged as the arrangements work well and the Polling Places are suitable and accessible. One District is projected to have just over 1,800 voters in person by 2020 and thus there may be an additional Polling Station at Franklins Gardens, which is the Polling Place. The other Polling Place is the Doddridge Centre.

The proposed arrangements, which involve minimal change, are considered to be the best possible in St James Ward and recommended on that basis.

Sunnyside Ward

Sunnyside Ward currently consists of two Polling Districts served by one Polling Place. One Polling District is determined by the County Council Division boundary.

Representations were made that the Polling Place at Hinton Road Community Rooms was too small and inaccessible at the time of the elections. The point on accessibility is not accepted, but it is recognised that the level of use of this Polling Place with two Polling Stations is relatively high for its size. It also needs to be noted that the projected number of voters in person in one existing Polling District in 2020 is around 2,000.

It is therefore proposed to increase the number of Polling Districts to three, with three Polling Places. The proposed Polling Places are the Sunley Management and Conference Centre at the University, Hinton Road Community Rooms and a proposed mobile unit at Bective Road.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Sunnyside Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Talavera Ward

Talavera Ward currently consists of five Polling Districts served by five Polling Places. One Polling District is required to meet Parliamentary Constituency boundaries and the Ward is also affected by County Council Divisions.

Representations have been made that the current arrangements, particularly with regard to the Polling District served at Goldcrest Community Rooms are not sufficiently accessible. It is therefore proposed to move to six Polling Districts served by six Polling Places and in particular to move the Polling Place in the Goldings area. The existing Polling District is proposed to be split along Lings Way, with the western part served in the future by Lodge Farm Community Centre, and the eastern part served in the future by a mobile unit at Goldings Shopping Centre.

The other Polling Places are proposed to be unchanged as: Thorplands Primary School, Southfields Community Centre, Blackthorn Good Neighbours and Childrens Centre, and Rectory Farm Community Centre.

Two Polling Districts, served by Southfields Community Centre and Thorplands Primary School, are projected to have over 1,700 voters in person in 2020. Given the geography of the Ward this cannot be mitigated by boundary changes without compromising accessibility.

In consulting on this Ward, comments are particularly welcome with regard to potential alternatives to Thorplands Primary School where accessibility has been an issue in the past.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Talavera Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Trinity Ward

Trinity Ward currently consists of two Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

The current arrangements work well and it is not planned to make any changes.

The Polling Places are: The Newton Building at the University Avenue Campus, and Holy Trinity Church Hall

The proposed arrangements, which involve no change, are considered to be the best possible in Trinity Ward and recommended on that basis.

Upton Ward

Upton Ward currently consists of three Polling Districts served three Polling Places. This is an area of significant expected housing growth over the next few years. The boundary of one Polling District is affected by a Parish boundary.

Development is taking place at an area called Dragonfly Meadows to the south of this ward. Existing Polling Places are not accessible from this estate. Therefore an additional Polling District served by a Polling Place in the form of a mobile unit on the slip road to the Park is proposed. The projected numbers of voters in this District is very low initially and the form of mobile unit will reflect this.

To the north of Weedon Road, substantial housing growth requires consideration of an additional Polling District and one served by St Crispin Social Club is proposed, as a new Polling Place. The remainder of the area north of Weedon Road will continue to be served by St Crispin Retirement Village, and the remaining area to the south of Weedon Road will continue to be served by the Elgar Centre.

The proposed arrangements are intended to deal with growth and to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Upton Ward and are recommended on that basis.

West Hunsbury Ward

West Hunsbury Ward consists of two Polling Districts served by Parsons Mead Community Room and a mobile unit at Ladybridge Park.

Amendments to the boundary between the two Polling Districts are proposed in order to better reflect the geography of the Ward. This will create a larger Polling District to be served by Ladybridge Park, and will require two Polling Stations. Locations for a Polling Place to the north-west of this Ward have been sought, but without success. A representation was made by the Chair of the Parish Council that the ward should have only one Polling Place but this would not meet accessibility requirements. It was also suggested that the Community Centre be used but again this would reduce accessibility.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in West Hunsbury Ward and are recommended on that basis.

Westone Ward

Westone Ward currently consists of three Polling Districts served by two Polling Places.

To improve accessibility it is proposed to assign a third Polling Place at Headlands United Reformed Church, and reshape the Polling Districts accordingly.

The other Polling Places are: Weston Favell Parish Hall, and a mobile unit at Northampton College.

The proposed arrangements are intended to provide more accessible voting arrangements for electors in Westone Ward and are recommended on that basis.

List of Appendices

2015 Polling Place Review – Summary

2015 Polling District Review – Maps by Borough Ward

Summary of Responses received to consultation (7.10.15 to 3.10.15)

David Kennedy
Local Returning Officer
Borough of Northampton

November 2015