

	REPORT TO CABINET TO BE HELD ON 15 FEBRUARY 2011	
	Key Decision	YES
Corporate Priority: Improving the Council	Cabinet Portfolio Holder – The Leader	Insert here or put N/A Cllr Tom Fox

REPORT OF: CHIEF EXECUTIVE – 11/99

WARDS AFFECTED: Streonshalh

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES

RECOMMENDATION (S):

That Whitby Tourist and Visitor Centre Langbourne Road, Whitby be designated as the polling place for Polling District VA (Streonshalh)

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION (S):

To comply with the requirements of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

HIGHLIGHTED RISKS:

The Council fails to provide adequate polling place for the polling district referred to in this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Under the Representation of the People Act 1983, the Council has a duty to divide the borough wards into polling districts and to designate at least one polling place for each polling district. It also has to keep these arrangements under review. The boundaries of wards are not covered by any such review as the Boundary Commission for England determines them.
- 1.2 In October 2007 Cabinet considered a report which advised that Section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a number of changes to the 1983 Act in respect of the way reviews must be undertaken. The most important change was that the Council had to conduct a full review of its polling districts and places by 31 December 2007, and every four years thereafter. This requirement does not prevent changes being made at any

time before the next full review in 2011. The review will commence after the May 2011 elections.

- 1.3 Following the June 2009 elections the Council undertook a review of polling stations and agreed that the Whitby Friendship Rowing Club be designated as a polling place for Polling District VA (Streonshalh) with a request that the situation be reviewed if there were any difficulties with using the premises.

2. CORPORATE AIMS/PRIORITIES AND THE COMMUNITY PLAN

- 2.1 The proposals in this report support the corporate priority "Improving the Council".

3. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

3.1 Polling District VA - Streonshalh Whitby Friendship Rowing Club, Church Street, Whitby

- 3.1.1 Members will recall that in January 2010 Council considered provision of a polling place for this polling district (Report CE/10/48 refers) and it was agreed that the Whitby Friendship Rowing Club be used for elections and a review be carried out after the June 2010 elections.
- 3.1.2 There are very few suitable buildings in this part of the Streonshalh Ward as most of the area is residential. Various options, including the provisions of a temporary unit on the Church Street car park, use of the County Council's mobile library unit and the use of the Green Lane Centre were considered.
- 3.1.3 Prior to 2007 the polling place for this polling district was at the Council owned Whitby Visitor Centre at the other side of the river but in view of adverse comments from councillors at that time it was agreed that a unit in the Whitby Business Development Agency (Whitby BDA) should be used as a polling place. This change did not take place as the Whitby BDA subsequently let the room we had arranged to use.
- 3.1.4 Since the May 2010 elections we have had a parish poll and by-election and had to use the premises on 3 occasions. On all occasions we have received complaints about the access. Suggestions have been received as to alternative sites for a polling station, this included empty and occupied shops in Church Street, the Seamen's Hospital Pavilions adjacent to the Fleece Inn, the Board Room at the Seamen's Hospital dwellings in Church Street, the Whitby Visitor Centre . and the former Friends Meeting House, Church Street Whitby.
- 3.1.5 My Election Staff have carried out investigations and suggestions have been received as possible sites for a polling station, this included empty and occupied shops in Church Street, the Seamen's Hospital Pavilions adjacent to the Fleece Inn, the Board Room at the Seamen's Hospital dwellings in Church Street, the Whitby Visitor Centre and the former Friends Meeting House, Church Street.

Whilst some of the shops are vacant now there is no guarantee that the vacant shops would be available at election time. There are no power, toilet or kitchen facilities in the Seamen's Hospital Pavilions and there are no toilet or kitchen facilities in the Seamen's Hospital Board Room.

3.1.6. The former Friends Meeting House at 161 Church Street has now been converted into a restaurant and not available for use as a polling station.

3.1.7 The Whitby Tourist Information and Visitor Centre meets DDA requirements and can be made available for use as a polling station.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Ward councillors, Whitby Town Council and Whitby DAG together with the political parties have been contacted and the following observations have been received.

4.2. Scarborough and Whitby Conservative Association advise that "they have read the proposals and cannot see a problem with your suggestions."

4.3 Councillor Mrs. Clegg advises that she supports the proposal.

4.4 Any additional comments received will be reported at the meeting.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 Whilst a site for a polling station on the east side of the river would, theoretically, be more practical it has not been possible to identify suitable property on that side of the river and, in the past, there has been support for use of the Whitby Visitor and Tourist Information Centre.

5.2 In these circumstances it is the Returning Officer's view that the Whitby Visitor and Tourist Information Centre be designated as the polling place for polling district VA and the situation be reviewed after the next election.

5.3 The other polling stations in the Streonshalh Ward are not affected by this proposal and electors in polling district VB will still vote at the Salvation Army Centre, St. Peter's Court, Whitby and electors in polling district VC will still use St. Hilda's School Waterstead Lane, Whitby.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy

The proposals are in accordance with council policy.

6.2 Legal

The Council is required to designate polling places.

6.3 Financial

The Council is required to pay for the hire of premises for use as polling stations.

6.4 Other

Diversity – the proposals have taken into account the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act

6.5 Health and Safety

There are no health and safety issues.

6.6 Equalities

There are no equalities issues.

Planning, staffing implications, crime and disorder implications and environmental implication issues have been considered but do not materially affect this report.

6.7 Risks

Failure to approve alternative polling places

7. ACTION PLAN

Review commenced	December 2010
Publication of Returning Officers recommendations	28 January 2011
Considered by Cabinet	15 February 2011
Considered by Council	25 February 2011
Implement changes to polling places to take place for any elections held after 1 March 2011	1 March 2011



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Chief Executive

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Background Papers:

Documents referred to in this report.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THIS REPORT OR WISH TO INSPECT ANY OF THE BACKGROUND PAPERS, PLEASE CONTACT SUE BEDFORD ON 01723 232309 e-mail sue.bedford@scarborough.gov.uk

Risk Matrix

Risk Ref	Date	Risk	Consequences	Mitigation	Current Risk Score	Target Score	Service Unit Manager/ Responsible Officer	Action Plan
1	7 January 2010	Failure to approve alternative polling places	Unable to hold election	Agree alternative polling places	E5	A1	Ian Anderson	As this report
2								None
3								None
4								None
5								None
6								None
7								None
8								None

Glossary of Terms

Risk	An event which may prevent the Council achieving its objectives
Consequences	The outcome if the risk materialised
Mitigation	The processes and procedures that are in place to reduce the risk
Current Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score with the current mitigation measures in place
Corporate Objectives	An assessment of the Corporate Objectives that are affected by the risk identified.
Target Risk Score	The likelihood and impact score that the Council is aiming to achieve
Service Unit Manager	The Service Unit or Officer responsible for managing the risk
Action Plan	The proposed actions to be implemented in order to reduce the risk to the target score

Risk Scoring

Impact	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
		A	B	C	D	E
		Likelihood				

Likelihood:

A = Very Low
 B = Not Likely
 C = Likely
 D = Very Likely

Impact

1 = Low
 2 = Minor
 3 = Medium
 4 = Major