

AGENDA ITEM 5

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: AMENDMENT TO POLLING SCHEME – CHANGES TO
POLLING PLACES FOR EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTION – 4 JUNE 2009
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 29 APRIL 2009
Author: RETURNING OFFICER

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983, as amended by the Electoral Administration Act 2006, requires local authorities to keep under review polling districts and polling places.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that elections staff constantly review polling places and make proposals to amend the Polling Scheme on a temporary or permanent basis as required.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to alert Members to the requirement to review three polling places to be used for the European Parliamentary Elections, which will be held on Thursday 4 June.

2. PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS

- 2.1 The proposed adjustments relate to amending three polling places as undernoted:-

Ward	Polling District	No. of electors (as at 1/4/09)	Current polling place	Proposed polling place
4 - Carse, Kinnaird and Tryst	FE415	1646	Tryst Community Centre	Larbert Library – Community Room
5 – Bonnybridge and Larbert	FW510	3920	Larbert Village Primary School – main building	Larbert Village Primary School – temporary static units
5 – Bonnybridge and Larbert	FW515	270	Torwood Primary School	Torwood Primary School site – temporary static unit

- 2.2 The use of Larbert Library will allow for the deletion of Tryst Community Centre, which closed recently. It should be noted that the Community Room is located on the first floor. Stairs and a lift are located immediately within the door to the building and provide access for both ambulatory and disabled electors. An additional Polling Clerk will be appointed to work at the Library and will be based within the entrance to the premises, where his/her primary function will be to direct and assist electors as required. The building is new and is fully compliant with Disability Discrimination legislation.
- 2.3 The use of the static units located in the playground at Larbert Village Primary School will enable electors to vote within the same grounds as previously but will not require access to the main school building, which is currently under refurbishment. There will be three polling stations located here, all of which will be within the same temporary accommodation. It is anticipated that the polling place will revert to being located within the school building for future elections, following completion of the refurbishment. Members will be notified, in advance of future elections, if any change to this arrangement is required.
- 2.4 The use of the static unit at the Torwood Primary School site will enable local electors to vote at the same location as before. As Members will be aware, there is little, if any, alternative option within Torwood and this polling place will be kept under close scrutiny in relation to future elections. Members will be notified of any further proposed changes. In addition, all electors will be notified of change, as required.
- 2.5 Members are asked to note that the changes to polling places, once confirmed, will be notified to all electors within the polling districts concerned by way of the poll card issued by the Electoral Registration Officer on behalf of myself as Returning Officer. If considered necessary, a separate letter of notification of change will be issued to each elector. In addition, the changes to polling places will be published on the Council's website. It should be noted, however, that with the exception of Larbert Library, the other two polling places continue to be sited at the existing polling place locations. Additional and enhanced signage will be provided to assist the elector on polling day.
- 2.6 Plans indicating the locations of the existing and proposed polling places is attached (Appendix 1).
- 2.7 The polling scheme, edited for ease of reference, is attached (see Appendix 2) for Members' information. Members are reminded that the first digit contained within the Polling District reference indicates the Ward number, eg LE100 indicates Ward 1, FW325 indicates Ward 3, etc.

3. FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 A payment of £290 plus VAT will be charged for the use of the unit at Torwood Primary School site. This will include the delivery and uplift of the unit, as well as a generator and separate toilet facility.
- 3.2 There will be no fee payable for the use of Larbert Library or Larbert Village Primary School.
- 3.3 All proposed premises are fully compliant with Disability Discrimination legislative requirements.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Local Members, Community Councils and persons with particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons with disabilities are currently being consulted on the proposed polling arrangements. Any representations received will be considered prior to polling places being confirmed. In addition, the Police and the Electoral Registration Officer have been notified of the proposed changes.
- 4.2 In addition, Members are asked to note that, with reference to Minute of Meeting of Falkirk Council held on 5 December 2007 (Paragraph FC53 refers), a review of all polling places requires to be undertaken by 31 December 2011. Members, and all other relevant bodies, will be consulted on existing and proposed polling places as part of that process. The current proposals contained within this report should be viewed as temporary, pending the outcome of the full review of polling places.

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Members are requested to:-

- (1) note the terms of the Report; and
- (2) approve the adjustments to the polling scheme detailed in Paragraph 2.1 of this Report and the publicising of the changes, with immediate implementation for polling purposes at the European Parliamentary Election on 4 June 2009.

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Returning Officer

Date: 8 April 2009

Contact Officer: Dale Robb, ext 6111

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 1 Report to Falkirk Council on 5 December 2007 – Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places.