
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2012

EX.167/12 **REVIEW OF POLLING ARRANGEMENTS
(Key Decision – KD.043/12)

(In accordance with Paragraph 15(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Mayor had agreed that call-in procedures should not be applied to this item)

Portfolio Finance, Governance and Resources

Relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel Resources

Subject Matter

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder submitted report GD.70/12 presenting the results of a review of polling arrangements as required by the Representation of the People Act 1983. The Directorate Plan provided for an annual polling review to be carried out and it had been the practice in previous years to review the arrangements in those Wards having local elections in the following May. Due to the work undertaken in administering the election of a Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria, it had not been possible to carry out a full review this year. However, the opportunity had been taken to review polling arrangements in the City and local Ward Councillors had been invited to comment on the polling arrangements in their Ward following the election on 15 November 2012.

Details of the statutory provisions and the criteria which had been used in carrying out the review were provided.

As Members were also aware, a number of separate and unconnected reviews of electoral arrangements were currently ongoing, including the Review of the Cumbria County Council, which was being carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and Review of Parliamentary Boundaries being carried out by the Boundary Commission for England. The current polling places and electorate were listed at Appendix 1, together with a note of polling places used in the recent Police and Crime Commissioner election, and those locations had been reviewed in the light of any representations and comments received.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder drew Members' attention to the use of mobile polling stations and the use of houses / schools as polling places, commenting that Riverside Carlisle was no longer able to let their properties be used for election purposes due to the need to minimise the length of time properties were vacant between lettings.

He added that, in response to requests from School Governing Bodies and representations from the Local Education Authority, the number of schools used as polling places had been reduced in recent years, and now only eleven Schools within the Council's area were used as polling venues.

The large majority of polling places were satisfactory and had remained unchanged for many years. The choice of suitable buildings was limited and, in most cases, there was no alternative to the present arrangements.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder then reported in more detail on suggested changes in voting arrangements for the Belle Vue, Belah, Castle, Botcherby and Denton Holme Wards. He further recommended that the Returning Officer be given authority, after consultation with the relevant Ward Councillors and himself, to change polling place locations at the County Council elections or any other elections if the usual premises proved to be unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances.

The Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder wished to place on record his thanks to the Electoral Services Officer and his team for what was a very clear and well written report. He then moved the recommendations contained within the report, which were duly seconded.

Summary of options rejected A number of options set out in Report GD.70/12 with regard to polling arrangements

DECISION

That Report GD.70/12 and the recommendations therein be referred to Council for consideration, the recommendations being :

1. That no changes be made to the City Council's current polling district boundaries.
2. It is recommended that the polling arrangements in the following wards remain unchanged:

**Brampton
Burgh
Currock
Dalston
Great Corby & Geltsdale
Hayton**

**Harraby
Irthing
Longtown & Rockcliffe
Lyne
Morton
Stanwix Rural**

**Stanwix Urban
St Aidan's
Upperby
Wetheral
Yewdale**

3. Belle Vue Primary School continues to be the polling place for districts MA and MB.
4. That 1 Etterby Close be designated as the polling place for polling district AD

5. That the West End Temperance Hall be designated as the polling place for polling district JB.
6. That the Botcherby Family Centre continues to be designated as the polling place for polling district DB.
7. That the portable cabin sited opposite the entrance to the Cemetery on Richardson Street continue to be designated as the polling place for polling district HE.
8. Officers continue to monitor the use of portable cabins as polling stations and continue to investigate potential alternatives. It be further recommended that Officers discuss with the supplier the use of a number of self contained units and improved units with a wider door as detailed in paragraph 19 at a number of polling station locations where portable cabins are currently used.
9. The Returning Officer be given authority, after consultation with relevant Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder, to change polling place locations at the County Council elections or any other elections if the usual premises prove to be unavailable due to unforeseen circumstances.

Reasons for Decision

To carry out a review of the Council's polling arrangements