

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**26 June 2019****Report by Deputy Chief Executive****Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places****PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To advise the Council of the current review of polling districts and polling places in East Renfrewshire and to seek approval for a draft polling scheme.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That the Council:-
- (a) Notes the timetable for conducting the statutory review of polling district and polling places;
 - (b) Notes the comments that have been received in response to the preliminary consultation exercise;
 - (c) Notes the analysis of the suggested alternatives;
 - (d) Approves the minor amendments to the boundaries and the proposed amended polling places as outlined;
 - (e) Notes that the new draft scheme will be used as the basis for further consultation; and
 - (f) Notes that a final version of the scheme will be brought before the Council in September for consideration.

BACKGROUND

3. In terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) local authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts (sub-divisions of electoral wards) for the purposes of UK parliamentary elections and to designate polling places for these polling districts and keep them under review.

4. The last full review took place in East Renfrewshire in 2013/14 at which time there were no changes made to the scheme previously approved in 2010. A number of minor polling district boundary changes were made in advance of the local elections in 2017, to take account of the reduction in the number of Council wards from 6 to 5.

5. The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced provisions which require councils to conduct a review of their polling scheme (that is the current polling districts and polling places) at any time in the period of 16 months beginning 1 October 2013 and within the 16 month period every 5 years thereafter.

REPORT

6. The current review period began on 1 October 2018 and the Council has until April 2020 to conduct and conclude the review.

7. In conducting their reviews, authorities must:-

- (a) seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
- (b) seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practical, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.

8. In short, although recognising the implications for other Council services **the voter must be the primary consideration in any review that is conducted.**

9. It should be noted that the Renfrewshire South Scottish Parliamentary constituency takes in Barrhead, Neilston and Uplawmoor and the Scottish Parliamentary election in these areas is conducted by the Returning Officer for the Renfrewshire Council area who is the Returning Officer for the 3 Paisley Scottish Parliamentary constituencies. However, polling scheme reviews are based on UK parliamentary constituencies. Consequently, the areas of Barrhead, Neilston and Uplawmoor have been included in the review.

10. Furthermore, the review is being conducted on the basis of the current East Renfrewshire Constituency, which is coterminous with the East Renfrewshire Council boundary. However Members will be aware of the proposed changes to UK Parliamentary constituencies which if approved by the UK Parliament will see the Barrhead, Neilston and Uplawmoor area become part of the Renfrewshire West and Garnock Valley Constituency. Although these matters are still to be decided, it is anticipated that the Returning Officer for that constituency would be the Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive, whilst the Council's Chief Executive would be the Returning Officer for the new Eastwood and Loudon Constituency, which takes in a large part of the East Ayrshire Council area. If the changes go ahead, discussions will take place with officers in both councils in relation to the new polling schemes.

Current position

11. The current polling scheme comprises the 5 electoral wards with each of the wards being split into polling districts as follows

- | | | |
|----------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Ward 1 | Barrhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor | 6 polling districts |
| • Ward 2 | Newton Mearns North & Neilston | 3 polling districts |
| • Ward 3 | Giffnock & Thornliebank | 5 polling districts |
| • Ward 4 | Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood | 5 polling districts |
| • Ward 5 | Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham | 5 polling districts |

12. The initial part of the review related to reviewing existing polling district boundaries, taking account of future housing developments across East Renfrewshire over the next 5 years. The increased number of voters arising from these developments obviously has potential implications for the capacity of existing polling stations and polling districts. This initial review has confirmed that the number of polling places and polling stations currently in place will be able to cope with increased elector numbers. Other than in a small number of cases which will be explained in Appendix 2 to the report, it is not proposed to make major alterations to existing polling district boundaries.

13. The timetable for the conduct of the review is as follows

Public notice given and initial comments invited	26 October 2018
Closing date for representations on current arrangements	21 December 2018
Report on representations received and initial proposals for consideration by the Council	26 June 2019
Publication of draft proposals as approved by the Council for public consultation	1 July 2019
Conclusion of public consultation	23 August 2019
Final proposals considered by Council for adoption	12 September 2019

14. In taking forward the review, notice was published on the Council's website, at the Council Headquarters, Giffnock, the Council Offices, Barrhead, libraries and community halls. Notice was also given to all councillors, council departments, community councils, school parent councils, the local Member of Parliament; the local and West of Scotland region MSPs; and political parties. The notice indicated that copies of maps showing the current polling districts, and a copy of the current polling scheme could be inspected at the Council Headquarters, Giffnock, Council offices, Barrhead, and online. A copy of the existing scheme is attached (Appendix 1) To satisfy the requirement to take into account the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities, East Renfrewshire Access Panel were also notified of the review and invited to comment. At the end of the consultation period, 28 responses had been received. These can be summarised as follows:-

- Do not use schools and identify alternatives 26
- Happy with current arrangements 1
- Do not use Barrhead Foundry 1

15. It is clear from the responses to the consultation that the issue of greatest concern is the use of schools as polling stations, the main issue being the need for parents/carers to make alternative care arrangements for children on the day the schools are closed.

Using schools as polling stations

16. The current polling scheme comprises 24 polling districts, with a polling place identified for each one. Legislation requires that the polling place for each polling district should lie within the polling district unless there are exceptional circumstances. This is the position in respect of 3 of the current polling places (Auchenback Resource Centre, Crookfur Pavilion and Fairweather Hall) which are located outwith the polling districts that they serve. This is due to a lack of any suitable alternative premises within the polling districts in question.

17. Of the 24 polling places on the current scheme 14 are schools. This demonstrates that where there is a suitable alternative venue available, non-school premises will be used. However, the challenge in East Renfrewshire is the identification of alternative premises that are suitable as polling places.

18. There are certain criteria that need to be satisfied in order for a property to be identified as suitable to be used as a polling place. These relate to issues including access (including disabled access); guaranteed availability; adequate separation of polling stations to minimise voter confusion ballot papers being placed in the wrong ballot box; availability of adequate parking; security; and adequate facilities for polling staff. Schools by their very nature satisfy these requirements and so are considered to be suitable for use as a polling place. Whilst a member of the public may think that suggested alternative premises may be suitable for use as a polling station, further inspection will often show that this is either not the case, or that whilst it may be a suitable alternative, it is not as suitable as the school currently in use. In these circumstances the Council needs to decide whether or not it is prepared to compromise and use a facility that whilst suitable, is less suitable than the school that is being used.

Council's capital works

19. The Council has agreed 2 capital projects that will have implications for the polling scheme. The first of these relates to the demolition of Crookfur Pavilion to be replaced with a nursery, whilst the second relates to the longer-term creation in Neilston of a joint education and leisure hub in the village to co-locate the existing schools and community facilities. Both Crookfur Pavilion and Neilston Primary School are identified as polling places in the existing scheme and so alternatives will require to be identified.

Suggested alternatives

20. Respondents to the consultation exercise identified a number of possible alternatives to the schools currently used. These were

Ward 1 – Barrhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor

The Foundry instead of Cross Arthurlie and Carlibar Primary Schools.

United Services Club or Shanks Bowling Club instead of Cross Arthurlie Primary School

Dunterlie Resource Centre instead of Carlibar Primary School

Ward 2 – Newton Mearns North and Neilston

Eastwood High School Sports Hall instead of Crookfur Primary School

Glen Halls or other community venues instead of Neilston Primary School

Ward 3 – Giffnock & Thornliebank

Thorntree Hall instead of Thornliebank Primary School

Various local venues instead of Our Lady of the Missions Primary School

Ward 4 – Clarkston, Netherlee and Williamwood

Netherlee Pavilion or church halls in the area instead of Netherlee Primary School

Carolside Nursery instead of Carolside Primary School

Greenbank Parish Church instead of Carolside Primary School

Ward 5 – Newton Mearns South and Eaglesham

Broom Parish Church instead of Kirkhill Primary School.

Montgomerie Hall or other local community venues instead of Eaglesham Primary School

21. An analysis of the suggested alternatives is contained in Appendix 2. This identifies those premises that it would be possible to use as polling places and how they compare to those already in use. It also looks at other premises in the area not suggested as part of the consultation exercise.

22. Following approval of the draft proposals, a further public consultation exercise will be carried out. The draft proposals will be published and further detailed comments invited from all those who were contacted at the preliminary stage.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

23. The cost of carrying out the review relates to officer time and some costs associated with postage and are being met from existing resources.

CONSULTATION

24. In terms of the statutory review process, the Returning Officer is required to comment on the proposals. Although the location of polling districts and polling places are the responsibility of the local authority, the number and location of polling stations within polling places is the responsibility of the Returning Officer. Guidance from the Electoral Commission recommends that the review process be undertaken in a joint manner in recognition of the fact that although the Returning Officer is an officer of the local authority, it is a distinct role and the responsibility for conducting the review rests with the local authority. The Returning Officer was invited to comment on the current scheme and indicated that she was satisfied with the current polling places and polling districts. In the event the draft scheme approved by the Council varies from the existing scheme, further comment will be sought from the Returning Officer.

25. As part of the exercise, consultation has taken place as detailed in Paragraph 14 above. In addition, recognising the concerns of parents, consultation has taken place with the Director of Education on the possibility of synchronising polling days with in-service days in those schools where it is recommended that polling continues to take place. The Director has confirmed that she would be happy with this approach. There would be some logistical issues about this with teaching staff still being in the school on polling day but these are not considered to be insurmountable. Whilst this would resolve the associated childcare issues for parents/carers in respect of programmed elections on the electoral calendar, it cannot account for any snap elections that are called such as the General Election called in June 2017. However it should be borne in mind that such elections are very infrequent, with the last snap election prior to the 2017 election being in 1979. The Director has also commented on the possibility of using nurseries as an alternative to schools. It has been explained that regardless of their suitability, any such moves would require the department to put processes in place to reimburse any wraparound payments that had been made and for this reason such a proposal would not be supported.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

26. There is a legal requirement to conduct a review by April 2020 and failure to do so would mean the Council was in breach of its legal obligations. There are staffing implications associated with the conduct of the review, but it is being carried out using existing staff resources. There are implications for the scheme depending on the continuing availability of the Council premises currently in use as polling places. There are no implications in terms of equalities or IT.

CONCLUSIONS

27. The Council is required to conduct a review of polling places and polling districts by 2020. The review that has been conducted takes into account future population growth, the Council's own development plans and the concerns of parents and carers about needing to arrange alternative childcare on polling day. Although polling scheme reviews are conducted from the point of view of what is best for the voter, and from a voter perspective the current polling places in use are considered to be the best available, every effort has been made to move to non-school premises where it is considered possible. Where this has not been considered appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place to minimise the need for parents/carers to arrange alternative childcare on polling days. This has seen the reduction in the use of school premises by 3. In most cases the alternative premises that have been recommended are not as suitable as the schools they replace but overall will still be able to operate satisfactorily as a polling station.

28. As a result of the review the following changes to the current polling scheme are proposed:-

Ward 1 – Alter the polling district boundary between ES05 and ES06 so that Auchenback Resource Centre and the houses in Aursbridge Crescent lie in ES06. This will address the issue of the centre lying outwith the polling district it serves and will be more convenient for the voters in Aursbridge Crescent.

Ward 2 – Move the polling place for polling district ES07 from Neilston Primary School to Glen Halls.

Ward 3 – Alter the boundary between polling districts EE03 and EE06 so that the playing fields and wooded area surrounded by Crosslees Drive, Woodside Avenue, Woodside Crescent and Spiersbridge Road sit within EE06 instead of EE03.

Ward 4 – Move the polling place for polling district EE08 from Netherlee Primary School to Netherlee Pavilion.

Ward 5 – Move the polling place for polling district EE14 from Crookfur Pavilion to Broom Parish Church.

Move the polling place for polling district EE17 from Eaglesham Primary School to Montgomerie Hall.

RECOMMENDATION

29. That the Council:-

- (a) Notes the timetable for conducting the statutory review of polling district and polling places;

- (b) Notes the comments that have been received in response to the preliminary consultation exercise;
- (c) Notes the analysis of the suggested alternatives;
- (d) Approves the minor amendments to the boundaries and the proposed amended polling places as outlined above;
- (e) Notes that the new draft scheme will be used as the basis for further consultation; and
- (f) Notes that a final version of the scheme will be brought before the Council in September for consideration.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act

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Background papers

None

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Appendix 1 – Current Polling Scheme

Polling District Ref.No.	Ward	Polling Place	No. of Stations
ES01	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Mure Hall Uplawmoor G78 4AD	1
ES02	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Cross Arthurlie P.S. Fern Drive Barrhead G78 1JF	4
ES03	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Dalmeny Community Centre Barnes Street Barrhead G78 1EH	2
ES04	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	St Andrew's Parish Church Ralston Road Barrhead G78 2QQ	3
ES05	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Carlibar P.S. Carlibar Road Barrhead G78 1BD	3
ES06	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Auchenback Resource Centre 64 Aurs Drive Barrhead G78 2LW	3
ES07	Newton Mearns North & Neilston	Neilston P.S. 43 High Street Neilston G78 3HJ	5
EE01	Newton Mearns North & Neilston	St. Cadoc's P.S. Crookfur Road Newton Mearns G77 6TT	4
EE02	Newton Mearns North & Neilston	Crookfur P.S. Capelrig Road Newton Mearns G77 6LF	4
EE03	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Thornliebank P.S. Main Street Thornliebank G46 7RW	2
EE04	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Giffnock P.S. Academy Road Giffnock G46 6JL	5
EE05	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Braidbar P.S. Kyle Drive Giffnock G46 6ES	3
EE06	Giffnock & Thornliebank	OLM P.S. Robslee Road Thornliebank G46 7DD	2
EE07	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Carmichael Hall Eastwood Park Giffnock G46 7JS	2

EE08	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Netherlee P.S. Clarkston Road Netherlee G44 3SF	4
EE09	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Clarkston Hall Clarkston Toll Clarkston G76 8NE	4
EE10	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Williamwood Parish Church Seres Road Clarkston G76 7QP	3
EE11	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Carolside P.S. Ashfield Road Clarkston G76 7TX	4
EE12	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Busby P.S. Church Road Busby G76 8EB	4
EE13	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Fairweather Hall Barrhead Road Newton Mearns G77 6BB	2
EE14	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Crookfur Pavilion Ayr Road Newton Mearns G77 6DR	4
EE15	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Kirkhill P.S. Kirkhill Road Newton Mearns G77 5RJ	4
EE16	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Mearns Kirk Church Hall Eglesham Road Newton Mearns G77 5DE	3
EE17	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Eglesham P.S. Strathaven Road Eglesham G76 0LF	4

Appendix 2 - Comments on current Scheme and responses

Ward 1 – Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor

The Foundry

The Foundry was suggested as an alternative to all polling places in Barrhead. However this does not satisfy the legal requirement for wards to be divided into smaller polling districts.

United Services Club

United Services Club was suggested as an alternative to Cross Arthurlie Primary School. Initial examination indicated that the club would not be suitable as a polling place.

Shanks Bowling Club

Shanks Bowling Club was suggested as an alternative to Cross Arthurlie Primary School. Initial examination confirmed that the bowling club could be a possible alternative. Contact was made with the club. However they have indicated they could not make the clubhouse available at the time of elections (May) as this was within the bowling season and the club was heavily used at that time

Dunterlie Resource Centre

Dunterlie Resource Centre was suggested as an alternative to Carlibar Primary School.

Dunterlie Resource Centre is located in Stewart Street, Barrhead. It is a relatively modern single storey building with a large car park. It is located on a level piece of ground. It has disabled access and is of a size capable of housing 3 polling stations. It has suitable facilities for staff working in the polling station. As it is operated by the Trust, access to the property for polling purposes would be guaranteed.

Like Carlibar Primary School it lies within the polling district (ES05). However it is not as centrally located, lying to the northern end. As such any move from the school would disadvantage a large proportion of those voters who live in the southern section of the polling district, particularly those voters living to the south of Main Street (Heys Street, St Mary's Crescent, Lyoncross Avenue etc). The estimated percentage of postal voters in the polling district is relatively low at 18.6% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 1,236.

In terms of the building itself and its immediate surrounds, the centre is suitable for use as a polling place. The main issue relates to its location within the polling district, the relatively low number of postal voters, and the impact on those voters living in the southern part of the polling district. From the point of view of the voter, Carlibar Primary School remains a better option.

Recommendation – That the Council continue to use Carlibar Primary School.

Proposed polling district boundary alteration

The current polling district boundary between polling districts ES05 and ES06 runs behind the properties on the eastern side of Aursbridge Crescent, along Woodside Crescent and on to Aurs Drive. As a consequence of this, Auchenback Resource Centre, the polling place for ES06 actually lies in ES05, and voters in Aursbridge Crescent need to go to Carlibar Primary

School to vote in person. To address both issues it is proposed to redraw the polling district boundary by following the Aurs Burn from Aurs Road in the north east corner of the polling district to Arthurlie Street in the south west corner. This will have the effect of placing the polling place in the polling district that it serves and making it more convenient for those voters in Aursbridge Crescent who presently vote at Carlibar Primary School.

Ward 2 – Newton Mearns North and Neilston

Eastwood High School Sports Hall

Eastwood High School Sports Hall was suggested as an alternative to Crookfur Primary School. The Education Department has confirmed that the hall is used for examination purposes at election time and is therefore unavailable.

Community Venues instead of Neilston Primary School

Community venues in the village were suggested as an alternative to Neilston Primary School.

Initial examination of the alternatives has identified that only 1 merits consideration – Glen Halls. The remaining alternatives in the village are not suitable.

Glen Halls

Glen Halls is a traditional 2 storey community facility building located on the north side of Neilston Road. The surrounding area is flat. Pedestrian access is directly off the pavement via a number of stone steps. There is disabled access into the side of the property. Polling would take place on the ground floor of the property and there are 2 separate areas available for use, these being the main hall and a committee room. There are facilities for polling staff. There is no dedicated car park for Glen Halls. Parking is on street with the nearest car park being the car park for Neilston Leisure Centre located across Neilston Road. As it is operated by the Trust, access to the property for polling purposes would be guaranteed.

Like the school Glen Halls lies within the polling district. It does lie slightly to the north of the existing polling place and as such people in the southern part of the polling district would have further to travel. However the increased distance that voters would need to travel is not considered to be significant. The percentage of postal voters in the polling district is relatively low at 18.1% with the estimated number of “in person” voters being 2,129. Neither access nor parking at Glen Halls are as good as that available at the school. The space available for the polling stations within the polling place is limited compared to that available in the school. There may be the possibility to reduce the number of polling stations required to mitigate the reduction in available space.

From the point of view of the voter, Neilston Primary School remains a better option. However Members will be aware of the proposals to create a joint campus within Neilston. As such this is an opportune time to look at alternatives.

Conclusion - In terms of the building itself Glen Halls could be used as a polling place. Overall it has adequate facilities, but on balance these are not considered to be as good as those available at Neilston Primary School, particularly in relation to parking and available space per polling station. It is not too far away from the current site so additional distance to be travelled is not considered to be a factor. However as Neilston Primary School will no longer be available in the medium-term Glen Halls becomes the only suitable alternative in the area. Moving to Glen Halls will also address the comments received during the consultation about the need for additional childcare to be arranged on polling day.

Recommendation – In view of the proposals for the establishment of a joint campus in the village, the Council agree to move the polling place for ES07 from Neilston Primary School to Glen Halls.

Ward 3 – Giffnock & Thornliebank

Thorntree Hall

Thorntree Hall was suggested as an alternative to Thornliebank Primary School.

Thorntree Hall is located on Main Street, Thornliebank. It is a two storey community building. It has a small car park to the side with a steep slope up from the car park to the door of the property which is directly off Main Street. On the day of the visit there appeared to be drainage problems in the car park with 2 of the spaces flooded. There is on street parking but there are Traffic Orders in place restricting parking towards the village centre. The surrounding area with the exception of the car park is relatively flat. The lower level of the building contains a main hall which is of an adequate size to comfortably contain 2 polling stations. It also contains facilities for polling staff. It is more centrally located in the polling district than Thornliebank Primary School and so would be more convenient for those voters to the south and west of the polling district but less so for those voters in the eastern part of the polling district which is nearer to the school. As it is operated by the Trust, access to the property for polling purposes would be guaranteed.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 20.2% with the estimated number of “in person” voters being 903.

Conclusion – In terms of the building itself it would be suitable for use as a polling station. It could comfortably accommodate the number of stations and voters and is more central than the school. However, the parking is not as good as that at the school. There is more parking available at the school and parking for disabled is better as disabled drivers can get much closer to the access and it is on the level, whilst there is a steep slope up from the car park at Thorntree Hall.

Taking all this into account, whilst Thorntree Hall could be used, from the point of view of the voter, Thornliebank Primary School remains the better option.

Recommendation – That Council continue to use Thornliebank Primary School.

Various venues in place of Our Lady of the Missions Primary School

Various local venues were suggested as an alternative to Our Lady of the Missions (OLM) Primary School. The locations suggested were **Glenwood Family Centre, Woodfarm Pavilion, Eastwood House and Eastwood Theatre**. None of these sites lie within the polling district and there are no extraordinary circumstances that would support locating the polling place outwith the polling district.

Consideration was given to the possibility of redrafting the polling district boundary to incorporate Glenwood Family Centre and so the building was inspected for suitability. Whilst the building has adequate space for the 2 polling stations required albeit that significant amounts for furniture would need to be moved the main issue relates to access. As a matter of course, for pupil security reasons schools do not remain open on polling day. Voters would need to take access through the school car park to the nursery and so the security considerations that apply normally would still apply to the school. Therefore it would not be appropriate for the nursery to be used.

The only suitable alternative to OLM Primary School within the polling district is Woodfarm Education Centre.

Woodfarm Education Centre

Woodfarm Education Centre is located on Inglestone Drive, Thornliebank. It lies just to the west of the existing polling station, OLM Primary School. It is a large community facility operated by the Woodfarm Educational Trust. It has a large car park which sits below the level of the centre with access to the centre from the car park being either by stairs or up a relatively steep path. There is also ample on-street parking on Burns Grove. Access to the car park itself is via the same access that is used for OLM. The centre does have disabled access and there are adequate facilities for staff.

The 2 polling places required would need to be co-located in the main hall but the hall is of such a size that it would comfortably accommodate both stations.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 18.4% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 1,144.

Conclusion In terms of the building itself Woodfarm Education Centre could be used as a polling place. Overall it has adequate facilities, but on balance these are not considered to be as good as those available at OLM Primary School particularly in relation to parking and available space per polling station. It is not too far away from the current site so additional distance to be travelled is not considered to be a factor. Moving to Woodfarm Education Centre will also address the comments received during the consultation about the need for additional childcare to be arranged on polling day. However during the inspection visit representatives of the centre indicated that they held classes in the evenings and would want the classes to go ahead on polling day. We have written to the centre to explain that it would not be possible for the classes to go ahead on polling day and asking them to reconsider. At the time of writing the report a reply had not been received.

Recommendation – That the Council continue to use OLM Primary School, but in the event that the centre are happy to cancel classes on polling day that polling transfer to Woodfarm Educational Centre.

Proposed polling district boundary alteration

The current polling district boundary between polling districts EE03 and EE06 runs along the western and northern boundary of the playing field and wooded area surrounded by Crosslees Drive, Woodside Avenue, Woodside Crescent and Spiersbridge Road. As a result the playing field and wooded area sit within polling district EE06.

It is proposed to move the boundary eastwards so that the playing field and wooded area will sit within polling district EE03. Whilst there are no development proposals in place, were this to happen Thornliebank Primary School could better accommodate the increase in numbers.

Ward 4, Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood

Netherlee Pavilion and local church halls at Netherlee and Stamperland were suggested as alternatives to Netherlee Primary School

Initial examination of the options identified that Stamperland Parish church lies outwith the polling district and there are no exceptional circumstances which would enable it to be considered for use.

Initial examination of Netherlee Parish Church Hall suggests that due to topography, location within the polling district and the parking difficulties in the immediate surrounding area, the hall would be unsuitable. This leaves Netherlee Pavilion as the remaining potential option.

Netherlee Pavilion

Netherlee Pavilion is located on Linn Park Avenue, Netherlee, adjacent to Netherlee Primary School the current polling place. As such it is equally suitable in terms of location. The land around the pavilion is flat. The car park adjacent to the pavilion has about 10 fewer parking spaces than the school car park but is considered to be adequate. The car park becomes heavily used at school opening and closing times with parents dropping off and picking up children from school. This would pose some difficulties for voters attending to vote at these times. As it is operated by the Trust, access to the property for polling purposes would be guaranteed.

There are 4 polling stations at Netherlee Primary School. Using schools has the advantage that polling stations can be separated and helps to remove any confusion in the mind of the voter as to which polling station they should use. If the pavilion were to be used, 3 of the 4 polling stations would be located in the main hall. This would provide adequate separation. The fourth polling station would be located in the community library which would require to be closed.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 20.6% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 2,344.

Conclusion - In terms of the building itself, although overall not as suitable as the school, it could nonetheless be used as a polling station. It could accommodate the number of stations and is located adjacent to the existing polling place so there is no question of voters needing to travel any further to get there. The main concerns as outlined above relate to possible parking congestion but this would only be at particular times of the day. Using the pavilion would address the concerns expressed in the consultation about the need for additional childcare.

Recommendation - Taking account of the above it is recommended that Netherlee Pavilion replace Netherlee Primary School as the polling station for polling district EE08.

Greenbank Parish Church Hall was suggested as an alternative to Carolside Primary School

Greenbank Parish Church lies on Eaglesham Road, Clarkston. The church hall sits adjacent to the church itself. It is located on the eastern boundary of the polling district and is less centrally located than Carolside Primary School.

Pedestrian access to the hall is via a steep path off the pavement on Eaglesham Road. There is limited parking at the church/hall with the entrance being a steep single track road

up off Eaglesham Road itself. There is on street parking in the immediate vicinity of the church. However Eaglesham Road is a busy route and there is already heavy parking in the area.

The hall itself has disabled access. It is sub-divided into a number of smaller halls. There is adequate space for the number of polling stations required but this would require 2 stations in each of the 2 ground floor halls. There are adequate facilities for staff.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 19.8% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 1,983.

Conclusion - In terms of the building itself, although overall not as suitable as the school, it could nonetheless be used as a polling station. It is located further east than the current polling place. However, although those voters to the west of the polling district would have further to travel this distance is not considered to be significant. The main issues relate to the access to the hall and the lack of parking.

Recommendation – Taking account of the above it is not recommended that Greenbank Parish Church Hall be used instead of the school.

Carolside Nursery was also suggested as an alternative to Carolside Primary School

Carolside Nursery is located on Ashfield Road, Clarkston. It has off street parking as well as on-street parking being available. Although associated with Carolside Primary School it is separate from the school and is fenced off.

It is a relatively small building that only contains 2 areas that if clear would be appropriate for locating polling stations. However each of these areas contains a large amount of furniture and equipment with there being no space available for this to be stored. The net effect of this is that the space available in the nursery is inadequate.

Conclusion – Whilst the building may appear on the face of it to be of a sufficient size to be used as a polling place, investigation has shown that this is not the case.

Recommendation - It is not recommended that the nursery be used instead of the school.

Ward 5 – Newton Mearns South and Eaglesham

Newton Mearns

As a result of the decision taken by the Council an alternative polling place to Crookfur Pavilion is required. An examination of the area identified 4 possible alternative premises: Parklands Sports Hall, Glasgow Reform Synagogue, Newton Mearns Hebrew Congregational Synagogue and Broom Parish Church Hall.

Parklands Sports Hall

An initial examination of Parklands Sports Hall indicated that outdoor shoes are not permitted to be worn in the hall. This in effect ruled out the sports hall as a potential alternative.

Glasgow Reform Synagogue

Glasgow Reform Synagogue indicated that they were concerned around the security of the building and so were reluctant to permit its use as a polling place.

Newton Mearns Hebrew Congregational Synagogue

Newton Mearns Hebrew Congregational Synagogue were more amenable to the use of their premises and an initial visit identified that the building was suitable albeit that the access road along Larchfield Avenue narrowed into a single lane (Larchfield Court) which could result in traffic bottlenecks. However in further conversations with the synagogue some restrictions on use were identified which meant that using the synagogue was not a practical option.

Broom Parish Church

Broom Parish Church (including the halls) is located on the corner of Mearns Road and Broom Road East. Like Crookfur Pavilion, it would not actually lie within the polling district that it would serve (EE14), lying just outwith the eastern boundary of the polling district. However in this case, due to the absence of any other suitable premises in the polling district, it is considered that the exceptional circumstances referred to in the legislation apply. It would be further away for a large number of voters in the south and south-west corner of the polling district. It is not owned by the Council and this introduces an element of risk in that access cannot be guaranteed in the way that it can for Council premises. There is a specific car park for the church. Disabled access is good with all halls being wheelchair accessible.

The Church has 3 halls and a classroom. Whilst the layout may require polling stations to be co-located in the halls, they are large enough to accommodate this satisfactorily. There are adequate facilities for staff.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 27.1% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 2,169.

Conclusion - The church has all the facilities that are required for it to be used as a polling station. In fact the facilities available are arguably better than those at Crookfur Pavilion. It does lie outwith the polling district but as Crookfur Pavilion also lies outwith the polling district this is not considered to be an issue. The main issue relating to the use of the hall is that it is privately owned and so access is not guaranteed. However, assurances have been given by the church that everything would be done to accommodate any electoral contests taking place.

Recommendation - Taking account of the above it is recommended that Broom Parish Church be used as the alternative polling place for polling district EE14.

The use of Broom Parish Church had also been suggested as an alternative for Kirkhill Primary School. Had it been possible to identify an alternative to Crookfur Pavilion other than the church, this could have been considered. However, as it is proposed to use the church to serve polling district EE14 using the church to serve 2 polling districts (EE14 and EE15) cannot be considered.

Eaglesham

Comments were received that non-school premises should be used in Eaglesham instead of Eaglesham Primary School. Initial investigations indicated 2 potential alternative venues – Montgomerie Hall and Carswell Centre

Montgomerie Hall

Comments - Montgomerie Hall is located on Gilmour Street, Eaglesham. It is more centrally located than the current polling place, Eaglesham Primary School. Disabled access is good. There is off street parking to the rear of the building, although the access and egress are not as good as that at the school, and is directly on to the main road. The car park is shared with Eaglesham library which is annexed to the hall. Car parking is not as good as that at Eaglesham Primary School. Eaglesham Garage is directly across from the Halls and on the opposite side of the road and slightly to the north lies Eaglesham Clinic (dentist). On the day of the visit the car park to the rear of the building was full although staff indicated that Eaglesham Garage used the car park for parking their vehicles. There are adequate facilities for staff. There is also on street parking in the area although due to the garage and the clinic the area is busy.

There are 4 polling stations at Eaglesham Primary School, the current polling place for the polling district. The polling stations are all located in the gym hall. Whilst separate rooms reduce the likelihood of voter confusion, the hall is large enough to accommodate all 4 polling stations comfortably.

If Montgomerie Hall were to be used, the polling stations could be accommodated across the main hall (2) the lesser hall and the committee room.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 18.7% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 2,014.

Moving to Montgomerie Hall will also address the comments received during the consultation about the need for additional childcare to be arranged on polling day.

Carswell Centre

The Carswell Centre lies on Montgomery Street just above its junction with Mid Road. Montgomery Street is a relatively steep road rising up from Gilmour Street to the east.

There is no on-site parking with all parking being on street. This is all relatively close by with no parking restrictions.

Whilst less convenient for those voters who live in the vicinity of the current polling place, it is more centrally located for voters in the north west of the polling district and is equidistant for those in the north east of the polling district.

The centre itself is a former church that has been converted into a community facility.

It has disabled access from the pavement into the ground floor of the property.

There are adequate facilities for staff

There is insufficient space on the ground floor for all polling stations to be located there. 1 could be located in the large foyer area with the remaining 3 stations being located on the upper floor of the building. Access to this upper area is via stairs although there is also a lift.

The estimated percentage of postal voters is approximately 18.7% with the estimated number of "in person" voters being 2,014.

Moving to the Carswell Centre would also address the comments received during the consultation about the need for childcare additional childcare to be arranged on polling day.

Conclusion – Whilst neither of the alternative polling places is from the point of view of the voter as suitable as Eaglesham Primary School, both could be used. Both could accommodate the 4 polling stations required although whilst all polling stations in Montgomerie Hall could be located on the ground floor, 3 of the 4 polling stations would need to be located on the upper floor of the Carswell Centre. Although there is a lift on the premises, this introduces an element of risk were the lift to break down around polling day or on polling day itself. A further issue is the fact that although assurances have been given about availability as a non-Council/trust premises, this cannot be guaranteed. Montgomerie Hall is also more centrally located than both the Carswell Centre and Eaglesham primary School.

Recommendation – Taking account of the above it is recommended that Montgomerie Hall replace Eaglesham Primary School as the polling place for polling district EE17

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Appendix 3 – Proposed Draft Polling Scheme

Polling District Ref.No.	Ward	Polling Place	No. of Stations
ES01	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Mure Hall Uplawmoor G78 4AD	1
ES02	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Cross Arthurlie P.S. Fern Drive Barrhead G78 1JF	4
ES03	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Dalmeny Community Centre Barnes Street Barrhead G78 1EH	2
ES04	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	St Andrew's Parish Church Ralston Road Barrhead G78 2QQ	3
ES05	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Carlibar P.S. Carlibar Road Barrhead G78 1BD	3
ES06	Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor	Auchenback Resource Centre 64 Aurs Drive Barrhead G78 2LW	3
ES07	Newton Mearns North & Neilston	Glen Halls Main Street Neilston G78 3NL	4
EE01	Newton Mearns North & Neilston	St. Cadoc's P.S. Crookfur Road Newton Mearns G77 6TT	4
EE02	Newton Mearns North & Neilston	Crookfur P.S. Capelrig Road Newton Mearns G77 6LF	4
EE03	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Thornliebank P.S. Main Street Thornliebank G46 7RW	2
EE04	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Giffnock P.S. Academy Road Giffnock G46 6JL	5
EE05	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Braidbar P.S. Kyle Drive Giffnock G46 6ES	3
EE06	Giffnock & Thornliebank	OLM P.S. Robslee Road Thornliebank G46 7DD	2
EE07	Giffnock & Thornliebank	Carmichael Hall Eastwood Park Giffnock G46 7JS	2

EE08	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Netherlee Pavillion. Linn Park Avenue Netherlee G44 3PL	4
EE09	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Clarkston Hall Clarkston Toll Clarkston G76 8NE	4
EE10	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Williamwood Parish Church 4 Vardar Avenue Clarkston G76 7QP	3
EE11	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Carolside P.S. Ashfield Road Clarkston G76 7TX	4
EE12	Clarkston, Netherlee & Williamwood	Busby P.S. Church Road Busby G76 8EB	4
EE13	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Fairweather Hall Barrhead Road Newton Mearns G77 6BB	2
EE14	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Broom Parish Church Mearns Road Newton Mearns G77 5HN	4
EE15	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Kirkhill P.S. Kirkhill Road Newton Mearns G77 5RJ	4
EE16	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Mearns Kirk Church Hall Eglesham Road Newton Mearns G77 5DE	3
EE17	Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham	Montgomerie Hall Gilmour Street Eglesham G76 0LH	4