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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>28 September 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LS/095/23</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Iain Strachan</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712710</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Statutory Review of Polling Scheme</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to (i) advise Members of the need to carry out a statutory review of the Council's Polling Scheme and (ii) to ask Members to approve for consultation the draft Polling Scheme detailed in Appendix 3 and the statutory review timetable as detailed in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 In terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) local authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts, to designate polling places for the purposes of elections and to keep those arrangements under review.
- 1.4 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 further amended the Representation of the People Act 1983 by introducing a change to the timing of compulsory reviews of UK Parliamentary polling districts and polling places with compulsory reviews to be started and completed within the period of 16 months that starts on 1 October of every fifth year after 1 October 2013.
- 1.5 The Council last carried out a statutory review in 2018/19 and a subsequent interim review took place in 2022. In terms of the legislation, it must now carry out the compulsory statutory review between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025.
- 1.6 It is, therefore, proposed to carry out the review in line with the timetable set out in Appendix 1 with a view to it being completed and coming into force by May 2024.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council:
- 2.1.1 note the requirements to undertake a Statutory Review of the Polling Scheme between 1 October 2023 and 31 January 2025;
  - 2.1.2 approve the timetable relating to the Statutory Review of the Polling Scheme, as outlined in Appendix 1 with authority being delegated to the Chief Executive to make such changes to the timetable as they consider necessary;

- 2.1.3 approve for consultation the draft Polling Scheme forming Appendix 3 and authorise the Chief Executive to commence the consultation; and
- 2.1.4 note that a further report will be presented to the Council at its meeting on 25 April 2024, or earlier, once the consultation has ended.

**Louise Long**  
**Chief Executive**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 In terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983, local authorities are required to designate polling places for the purposes of elections, to review those arrangements within the statutory review timescale and to keep their arrangements under review.
- 3.2 The Council completed its last statutory review in 2019 and carried out an interim review in 2022. The Council's practice has also been to review polling arrangements as each scheduled election approaches. In conducting its reviews, the Council must seek to ensure that:
  - (i) all electors in the constituency have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in circumstances; and
  - (ii) so far as is reasonably practical, all polling places should be accessible to all voters including those who are disabled and when considering the designation of a polling place the Council must have regard to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- 3.3 The proposed timetable for the review is outlined in Appendix 1 commencing with the publication of the notification of the review and making contact with interested parties, such as Members, Community Councils and organisations representing the disabled.
- 3.4 The Council is committed to ongoing reviews of the Scheme and to exploring suitable options for polling place locations. The Council is committed to minimising any disruption to schools during each election process and this will be looked at continuously.
- 3.5 The Boundary Commission for Scotland began its 2023 Review of UK Parliament Constituencies in Scotland in January 2021 and the Final Recommendations were laid before the UK Parliament on 28 June 2023. The UK Government is required within a four-month period to submit to the Privy Council an Order that gives effect to the recommendations of the four UK Boundary Commissions. That date has not yet been confirmed. Once the Boundary Order has been made, the new boundaries would then take effect at the next General Election if called after the Order is made. Any UK Parliamentary by-elections will continue to use the existing boundaries until the next General Election. The next General Election is scheduled to be held no later than January 2025.
- 3.6 The proposed new Constituency boundary (Inverclyde and Renfrewshire West County Constituency) will include the addition of two significant areas which lie within Renfrewshire Council's Wards 10 and 11. In relation to the Statutory Review of the Polling Scheme, Inverclyde Council will only review the polling districts and polling places which already fall within the Inverclyde area. The polling districts and polling places within Renfrewshire Wards 10 and 11 that fall within the proposed new boundary will be reviewed by Renfrewshire Council as part of their own Statutory Review, and officers are working closely with Renfrewshire Council in connection with that.
- 3.7 The Elections Act 2022 received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022 and introduced a series of changes to how UK elections are administered. Some of these changes, including the requirement to show photographic ID to vote in person, were implemented at the local government elections in England on 4 May 2023. Other measures are due to be implemented in the coming months and will apply at the next General Election. The impact of these changes is being carefully considered by officers, together with the Electoral Registration Officer and their staff, and will form part of the detailed planning for the next General Election, including ensuring there is suitable public awareness of these changes.

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The draft Polling Scheme which forms Appendix 3, and which has followed an officer review of the current Polling Scheme, including site visits, proposes certain amendments to the current Polling Scheme as follows:

- (i) Lyle Kirk Hall, Bentinck Street, Greenock has been the established polling place for voters in Polling District IG20, however the premises are no longer available as a polling place. Taking into consideration the number of voters within the polling district, the requirements of a suitable premises including accessibility, an alternative polling place has been identified within the existing polling district boundary. It is therefore proposed to reallocate voters in Polling District IG20 to Greenock Wanderers RFC, 75 Octavia Terrace, Greenock; and
- (ii) to note a change of polling place name for Polling District IG23 – Coppermine Community Centre (formerly known as Kirn Drive Community Centre), Kirn Drive, Gourrock.

4.2 It is to be noted that, subject to the confirmation of the boundary review as referred to in paragraph 3.5 above, it is expected that once finalised, and following the upcoming consultation, the Polling Scheme for the Inverclyde and Renfrewshire West County Constituency will include polling districts that are within Renfrewshire Council's Wards 10 and 11, as noted above. However, by way of explanation, Appendix 3 does not include those districts, given that the Boundary Order has not yet been made.

4.3 The Council has previously delegated to the Chief Executive the authority to make any such amendments as may from time to time be necessary in the Polling Scheme in order to take account of any building works and/or closures in order to facilitate suitable and feasible polling arrangements.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk	x	
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		x
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

### 5.2 Finance

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

#### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

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Annually Recurring Costs/(Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

**5.3 Legal/Risk**

The Council is required to receive this report in terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (as amended) and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

**5.4 Human Resources**

There are no human resource implications directly arising from this report.

**5.5 Strategic**

There are no strategic implications arising from this report.

**5.6 Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty**

Officers have already taken equalities considerations into account in preparing the draft Scheme, and this will be further considered during the consultation process, with a further assessment accompanying the report to Council in April 2024.

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 Staff of the Electoral Registration Officer and Renfrewshire Council have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None

**INVERCLYDE COUNCIL**  
**STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING SCHEME**  
**TIMETABLE**

**The proposed timetable for the Consultation Review is as follows:**

1. Publication on Inverclyde Council website, notices in libraries, letters to interested parties, etc	2 October 2023
2. Representations by interested parties to be received no later than	2 December 2023
3. Inverclyde Council to (where necessary) consider a report on the initial proposals to approve the revised Polling Scheme on	15 February 2024
4. Further consultation on the draft Polling Scheme commencing on	19 February 2024
5. Final date for comments on draft Polling Scheme	18 March 2024
6. Final proposals, having regard to any comments/ suggestions received to be considered by the Council on	25 April 2024

**INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY  
CURRENT POLLING SCHEME**

Polling District	Polling Place
IN01	Bethesda Building, Faith Avenue, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir PA11 3TF
IN02	St Columba Church Hall, Bridge of Weir Road, Kilmacolm PA13 4AS
IG01	Holy Family Church Hall, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow PA14 6BT
IG02	Struthers Memorial Church, Arran Avenue, Port Glasgow PA14 6BJ
IG03	Boglestone Community Centre, Dubbs Road, Port Glasgow PA14 5UD
IG04	St Francis Church, Auchenbothie Road, Port Glasgow PA14 6JD
IG05	7½ John Wood Street, Port Glasgow PA14 5HU
IG06	Upper Port Glasgow Social Club, Crosshill Road, Port Glasgow PA14 5UN
IG07	St John's Church Hall, Brown Street, Port Glasgow PA14 5BP
IG08	Port Glasgow Bowling Club, Birkmyre Avenue, Port Glasgow PA14 5AR
IG09	Gibshill Community Centre, Smillie Street, Greenock PA15 2NH
IG10	Auchmountain Halls, Burnhead Street, Greenock PA15 3LG
IG11	Craigend Resource Centre, McLeod Street, Greenock PA15 2HD
IG12	Victoria Bowling Club, 2 East Crawford Street, Greenock PA15 2BT
IG13	Whinhill Primary School, Drumfrochar Road, Greenock PA15 4EQ
IG14	Grosvenor Bowling Club, 2 Dempster Street, Greenock PA15 4QE
IG15	Wellpark/Mid Kirk Church Hall, Clyde Square, Greenock PA15 1LS
IG16	Salvation Army Centre, Regent Street (enter from Roxburgh Street), Greenock PA15 4NP
IG17	St John's Episcopal Church Hall, Union Street (enter from Jamaica Street), Greenock PA16 8JJ
IG18	Ardgowan Club, Ardgowan Square, Greenock PA16 8DD
IG19	Finnart Scout Hall, 159 Finnart Street, Greenock PA16 8HZ
IG20	Lyle Kirk Hall, Bentinck Street, Greenock PA16 7RT
IG21	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club, Cove Road, Gourock PA19 1RS
IG22	Gamble Halls, 44 Shore Street (enter from Davidson Drive), Gourock PA19 1RG
IG23	Kirn Drive Community Centre, Kirn Drive, Gourock PA19 1SS
IG24	Gourock Golf Club, Cowal View, Gourock PA19 1HD
IG25	Gourock Bowling Club, Barrhill Road, Gourock PA19 1JX
IG26	Royal Gourock Yacht Club, Ashton Road, Gourock PA19 1DA
IG27	Upper Larkfield Community Hall, Lothian Road, Greenock PA16 0PG
IG28	Aileymill Nursery School, Norfolk Road, Greenock PA16 0JG
IG29	Branchton Community Centre, Branchton Road, Greenock PA16 0XX
IG30	Inverkip Community Hub, 2 Kip Park, Main Street, Inverkip PA16 0FZ
IG31	Wemyss Bay Community Centre, Ardgowan Road, Wemyss Bay PA18 6AT
IG32	Mount Kirk, 95 Dempster Street, Greenock PA15 4EB
IG33	Lady Alice Primary School, Inverkip Road, Greenock PA16 9EJ
IG34	Grieve Road Community Centre, Grieve Road, Greenock PA16 7AL
IG35	St Joseph's Primary School, Wren Road, Greenock PA16 7NH
IG36	St Andrews Primary School, Chester Road, Greenock PA19 0TT

**INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY  
PROPOSED DRAFT POLLING SCHEME**

Polling District	Polling Place
IN01	Bethesda Building, Faith Avenue, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir PA11 3TF
IN02	St Columba Church Hall, Bridge of Weir Road, Kilmacolm PA13 4AS
IG01	Holy Family Church Hall, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow PA14 6BT
IG02	Struthers Memorial Church, Arran Avenue, Port Glasgow PA14 6BJ
IG03	Boglestone Community Centre, Dubbs Road, Port Glasgow PA14 5UD
IG04	St Francis Church, Auchenbothie Road, Port Glasgow PA14 6JD
IG05	7½ John Wood Street, Port Glasgow PA14 5HU
IG06	Upper Port Glasgow Social Club, Crosshill Road, Port Glasgow PA14 5UN
IG07	St John's Church Hall, Brown Street, Port Glasgow PA14 5BP
IG08	Port Glasgow Bowling Club, Birkmyre Avenue, Port Glasgow PA14 5AR
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IG11	Craigend Resource Centre, McLeod Street, Greenock PA15 2HD
IG12	Victoria Bowling Club, 2 East Crawford Street, Greenock PA15 2BT
IG13	Whinhill Primary School, Drumfrochar Road, Greenock PA15 4EQ
IG14	Grosvenor Bowling Club, 2 Dempster Street, Greenock PA15 4QE
IG15	Wellpark/Mid Kirk Church Hall, Clyde Square, Greenock PA15 1LS
IG16	Salvation Army Centre, Regent Street (enter from Roxburgh Street), Greenock PA15 4NP
IG17	St John's Episcopal Church Hall, Union Street (enter from Jamaica Street), Greenock PA16 8JJ
IG18	Ardgowan Club, Ardgowan Square, Greenock PA16 8DD
IG19	Finnart Scout Hall, 159 Finnart Street, Greenock PA16 8HZ
IG20	Greenock Wanderers RFC, 75 Octavia Terrace, Greenock PA16 7PX
IG21	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club, Cove Road, Gourock PA19 1RS
IG22	Gamble Halls, 44 Shore Street (enter from Davidson Drive), Gourock PA19 1RG
IG23	Coppermine Community Centre, Kirn Drive, Gourock PA19 1SS
IG24	Gourock Golf Club, Cowal View, Gourock PA19 1HD
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