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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>7 October 2010</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LA/595/10</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Elaine Paterson</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712139</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Statutory Review of Polling Places</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask members to approve the polling districts and polling places as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report as the draft Polling Scheme for public consultation in relation to the statutory review required by the Representation of the Peoples Act 1983 (as amended).

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 In terms of the Representation of the Peoples Act 1983, as amended, local authorities are required to (i) designate polling places for the purposes of parliamentary election and (ii) review these arrangements at least every four years.
- 2.2 The current arrangements were last formally reviewed in terms of the legislation in 2007. Therefore, they require to be reviewed no later than the end of 2011. However, a number of the polling places currently utilised by the Council are likely to be unavailable for the Scottish Parliamentary Election on 5 May 2011 and it is therefore considered prudent to review arrangements now.
- 2.3 A preliminary notice was published on 2 August 2010 outlining the timetable for the proposed review and inviting comments on the current arrangements. Preliminary consultation was also undertaken with key groups, including members, community councils, Inverclyde Council on Disability, MPs and MSPs, Council Departments and the Returning Officer.
- 2.4 A note of the comments received and the consideration given to these comments in drawing up the proposals for further consultation is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 2.5 A preliminary Polling Scheme which takes account of the various factors detailed within the body of this report has been drawn up and is attached hereto (Appendix 1) for members' consideration.
- 2.6 Members will be aware that there is a possibility of a referendum on the AV voting system applicable to future Westminster Parliamentary elections also being held on 5 May 2011. Legislation in this regard has yet to be fully progressed through Westminster. Indications are that any referendum held on the same day as the Scottish Parliamentary Elections will be conducted in terms of Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Members are asked to:-

- (i) note the requirements to undertake a statutory review of polling places and the preliminary steps taken by the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to progress matters to date;

- (ii) approve the draft Polling Scheme as outlined in Appendix 1 and authorise the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to consult thereon;
- (iii) note that a further report will be presented to a future meeting of the Council once the consultation process has been completed.

Elaine Paterson  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Local Authorities are obliged, in terms of the Representation of the Peoples Act 1983 (as amended) to divide their area into polling districts, polling places and polling stations for the purposes of parliamentary elections. They are further obliged to keep their arrangements under review.
- 4.2 The practice in Inverclyde Council has been to review our polling arrangements as each scheduled election approaches. However, in addition, the legislation requires that a formal review be undertaken at least every four years. In this regard, the Council's last statutory review was completed on 7 December 2007, meaning that a review must be completed by December 2011.
- 4.3 Since Scottish Parliamentary Elections are due to take place on 5 May 2011, it is sensible to complete the statutory review in advance of this election and in this regard, preliminary consultations have been undertaken as outlined in paragraph 2 hereof.
- 4.4 In conducting the review, authorities must seek to ensure that:-
- (i) all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and
  - (ii) so far as reasonably practical, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all voters, including those who are disabled, and when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- 4.5 Generally, the Council has always avoided, as far as possible, the use of secondary schools as elections tend to fall at a time which coincides with the examination timetable. With regard to primary schools, if a suitable alternative can be identified then that will be utilised. Where primary schools are identified in Appendix 1, no suitable and/or convenient alternative is available.
- 4.6 Members will be aware that electors tend to be used to voting in particular locations and express dissatisfaction where changes are made to arrangements that affect them personally. Therefore, the changes being identified in the draft proposals are the minimum required to meet the Council's obligations and to address the fact that some premises that have been traditionally used as polling places are or will become unavailable in the period covered by the Polling Scheme.
- 4.7 Members should note that the Electoral Registration Officer is also proposing changes to the Polling District Numbering to take account of the recent Scottish Parliamentary Boundary changes. Appendix 1 highlights these changes for members' consideration. These changes have no practical effect for voters with the exception of 109 voters, as referred to in paragraph 5. Within this report, where references are made to Polling District Numbers, I have used the current numbers rather than the proposed numbers.

## 5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The following issues require to be addressed as part of this review:-

### Ward 1

- (i) Due to the new Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries, Polling District IW01 is now split, leaving 109 voters within the Greenock & Inverclyde County Constituency. The majority of the electorate within IW01 fall within the Renfrewshire North & Renfrewshire West Constituencies. Arrangements require to be made with regard to the 109 voters. It is proposed at this stage that these voters be accommodated in Boglestone Community

Centre. However, more detailed information is awaited from the Electoral Registration Officer with regard to the precise addresses of these voters and the draft proposals will be revisited during the consultation period, if required.

- (ii) Holy Family Church Hall:- this facility has been utilised for a number of years notwithstanding the fact that it is not ideal in respect of its access for disabled voters, particularly those who do not have access to transport. Generally, the topography of the surrounding area is extremely hilly and disabled voters living in the vicinity are likely to have access to transport. In addition, there are no suitable alternative venues which do not suffer from the same issues as affect Holy Family. Members will note from Appendix 2 that the access issues have been raised by a number of respondents, but none were able to suggest a suitable alternative. In all the circumstances, it is proposed to continue to utilise Holy Family Church Hall as a polling place.

#### **Ward 2**

- (i) Overton Primary School:- this facility will be unavailable as it is currently undergoing refurbishment. Investigations have identified Peat Road Tenants' Hall as a suitable alternative. This Hall is situated fairly near to the Primary School and is currently undergoing some refurbishment but will be available by 5 May 2011. Although there is a step up into the facility, it will be possible to provide a temporary ramp, if required, to ensure that the facility is DDA compliant.

#### **Ward 4**

- (i) Sacred Heart Primary School:- Although Sacred Heart Primary School will be available on 5 May, it will be closing in June 2011 and will therefore be unavailable for elections beyond 2011. It is therefore appropriate to consider a replacement now. Investigations have identified that the Garvel Deaf Centre, Chester Road would be a suitable alternative and is situated very close to the Primary School. The Corporate Director, Education & Communities, has confirmed that he is agreeable to the use of the Garvel Deaf Centre as a polling place.

#### **Ward 5**

- (i) Gourock Community Centre:- this facility will be unavailable in May 2011 as it is undergoing refurbishment. Currently, approximately 2800 voters within Polling Districts IG19 & IG22 utilise this facility. Investigations have identified that the Gamble Halls, entering from Davidson Drive, would be a suitable alternative facility for the electorate within IG19.
- (ii) Spinnaker:- At the elections in 2009 and 2010, following the demise of the Ramada Jarvis, those voters within Polling District IG23 who previously voted at the Ramada Jarvis were moved to the Spinnaker. Those who had previously voted at the Spinnaker (IG22) were moved to the Gourock Community Centre. This was not ideal, but at the time was the only option available. However, the Royal Gourock Yacht Club is now fully DDA compliant and accordingly, is available to the Council. It is therefore proposed that those voters falling within IG23 should now vote at the Royal Gourock Yacht Club, allowing the electorate comprising IG22 to return to the Spinnaker.

#### **Ward 6**

- (i) Aileymill Primary School:-this facility, which replaced Ravenscraig Primary School, was utilised as a polling place in 2010. This school is operated by facilities managers as part of the PPP Project. The arrangements for entering and leaving the premises was not ideal for voters. Ravenscraig Sports Centre is situated adjacent to the Primary School and it is proposed

that this facility be utilised in future elections as a polling place for the electorate which comprise IG25. This facility is fully DDA compliant. Utilising this facility also means that the Aileymill Primary School will not require to close on election days.

- 5.2 During an earlier review, it was suggested that Fancy Farm Tenants' Hall would be suitable for use as a polling place. The Head of Legal & Democratic Service undertook to consider this suggestion as part of this statutory review.
- 5.3 Fancy Farm Tenants' Hall lies on the edge of Ward 4. Taking into account the voters for whom it would be convenient, the only facility which it could replace is St Joseph's Primary School (IG16). However, it is situated on a fairly narrow one way street, adjacent to a bend in the road and has no off-road parking facilities. Weighing both premises against each other, St Joseph's Primary School is the more convenient and practicable solution and it is recommended that the status quo prevails.
- 5.4 The overall effect of the proposals outlined in Appendix 1 means that an additional polling place will be available within Inverclyde giving a total of 38 Polling Places.
- 5.5 The number of polling stations designated for any one election is the responsibility of the Returning Officer and is dependent on the type of election being conducted. For example, in the event that a Referendum on AV is held on the same day as the Scottish Parliamentary Election, it is likely that additional polling stations will be provided within those polling places that are traditionally busier than others.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Finance: there are no financial implications in regard to this report. Costs associated with the Scottish Parliamentary Election will be covered by the Scotland Office. Any additional costs associated with the Local Government Elections in 2012 will be minimal and will be met from ear-marked reserves. More detailed costs in relation to the Polling Scheme as it applies to local elections will be provided in the further report to be presented to Council once the consultation period has ended.

### Financial Implications – One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

### Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments

- 6.2 Personnel: None
- 6.3 Legal: The Council is required to receive this report in terms of the Representation of the Peoples Act 1983 (as amended).

## 7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation was carried out as outlined in paragraph 2.3 hereof and further consultations will be held on the approved proposals.

**POLLING SCHEME  
INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY**

<b>Current Polling Districts</b>	<b>Current Polling Place</b>	<b>New Polling Districts</b>	<b>New Polling Place</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>WARD 1</b>				
IW11	Carsemeadow Craigbet Road Quarriers Village Kilmacolm	IN01	Carsemeadow Craigbet Road Quarriers Village Kilmacolm	No change
IW01	St Columba Church Hall Bridge of Weir Road Kilmacolm	IN02	St Columba Church Hall Bridge of Weir Road Kilmacolm	No Change, however a change to the Scottish Parliamentary Boundaries affect 109 electorate who used to vote here and are now within IG01.
	St Columba Church Hall Bridge of Weir Road Kilmacolm	IG01	Boglestone Community Centre Dubbs Place Port Glasgow	See above.
IW02	Holy Family Church Hall Parkhill Avenue Port Glasgow	IG02	Holy Family Church Hall Parkhill Avenue Port Glasgow	No change
IW03	Struthers Memorial Church Arran Ave. Port Glasgow	IG03	Struthers Memorial Church Arran Ave. Port Glasgow	No change
IW04	Park Farm Community Hall Oronsay Avenue Port Glasgow	IG04	Park Farm Community Hall Oronsay Avenue Port Glasgow	No change
IW05	St. Francis' PS East Barmoss Avenue Port Glasgow	IG05	St. Francis' PS East Barmoss Avenue Port Glasgow	No change
IW06	Clune Park Resource Centre Montgomerie Street Port Glasgow	IG06	Clune Park Resource Centre Montgomerie Street Port Glasgow	No change
IW07	Boglestone Community Centre Dubbs Place Port Glasgow	IG07	Boglestone Community Centre Dubbs Place Port Glasgow	No change

**POLLING SCHEME  
INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY**

<b>Current Polling Districts</b>	<b>Current Polling Place</b>	<b>New Polling Districts</b>	<b>New Polling Place</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>WARD 2</b>				
IW08	Port Glasgow Lesser Town Hall Port Glasgow	IG08	Port Glasgow Lesser Town Hall Port Glasgow	No change
IW09	St John's PS Mary Street Port Glasgow	IG09	St John's PS Mary Street Port Glasgow	No change
IG01	Gibshill Childrens' Centre Smillie Street Greenock	IG11	Gibshill Childrens' Centre Smillie Street Greenock	No change
IG02	Auchmountain Halls Burnhead Street Greenock	IG12	Auchmountain Halls Burnhead Street Greenock	No change
IG03	Craigend Resource Centre McLeod Street Greenock	IG13	Craigend Resource Centre McLeod Street Greenock	No change
IG04	Crawfurdsburn Community Centre Carwood St Greenock	IG14	Crawfurdsburn Community Centre Carwood St Greenock	No change
IG05	St Lawrence's Social Club Cartsburn Street Greenock	IG15	St Lawrence's Social Club Cartsburn Street Greenock	No change
IG06 IW10	Overton PS Drumfrochar Road Greenock	IG16 IG10	Peat Road Tenants Hall Peat Road Greenock	Overton Primary School no longer available.
<b>WARD 3</b>				
IG07	Wellpark/Mid Kirk Church Hall Clyde Square Greenock	IG17	Wellpark/Mid Kirk Church Hall Clyde Square Greenock	No change
IG08	Salvation Army Centre Regent Street Greenock	IG18	Salvation Army Centre Regent Street Greenock	No change

**POLLING SCHEME  
INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY**

<b>Current Polling Districts</b>	<b>Current Polling Place</b>	<b>New Polling Districts</b>	<b>New Polling Place</b>	<b>Comments</b>
IG09	Watt Hall Enter from Kelly Street Greenock	IG19	Watt Hall Enter from Kelly Street Greenock	No change
IG10	Ardgowan PS Newton Street Greenock	IG20	Ardgowan PS Newton Street Greenock	No change
IG11	Finnart Scout Hall 159 Finnart Street Greenock	IG21	Finnart Scout Hall 159 Finnart Street Greenock	No change
IG12	Finnart St Paul's Church Hall Bentinck Street Greenock	IG22	Finnart St Paul's Church Hall Bentinck Street Greenock	No change
<b>WARD 4</b>				
IG13	St. Patrick's PS Broomhill Street Greenock	IG23	St. Patrick's PS Broomhill Street Greenock	No change
IG14	Lady Alice PS Inverkip Road Greenock	IG24	Lady Alice PS Inverkip Road Greenock	No change
IG15	Grieve Road Community Centre Grieve Road Greenock	IG25	Grieve Road Community Centre Grieve Road Greenock	No change
IG16	St Joseph's PS Wren Road Greenock	IG26	St Joseph's PS Wren Road Greenock	No change
IG17	Sacred Heart PS Westmorland Road Greenock	IG27	Garvel Deaf Centre Chester Road Greenock	Sacred Heart PS will be under refurbishment and not available after June 2011. Use of Garvel Deaf Centre will release a primary school
<b>WARD 5</b>				
IG18	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club Cove Road Gourock	IG28	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club Cove Road Gourock	No Change



**POLLING SCHEME  
INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY**

<b>Current Polling Districts</b>	<b>Current Polling Place</b>	<b>New Polling Districts</b>	<b>New Polling Place</b>	<b>Comments</b>
IG19	Gourock Community Centre Binnie St Gourock	IG29	Gamble Halls Enter from Davidson Drive Gourock	Gourock Community Centre no longer available
IG20	St. Ninian's PS Staffa Street Gourock	IG30	St. Ninian's PS Staffa Street Gourock	No change
IG21	Moorfoot PS Moorfoot Drive Gourock	IG31	Moorfoot PS Moorfoot Drive Gourock	No change
IG22	Gourock Community Centre Binnie St Gourock	IG32	Spinnaker Hotel Albert Road Gourock	Gourock Community Centre no longer available
IG23	Spinnaker Hotel Albert Road Gourock	IG33	Royal Gourock Yacht Ashton Road Gourock	New polling place to accommodate electorate that in former years voted at the Ramada Jarvis Hotel and latterly at the Spinnaker Hotel.
<b>WARD 6</b>				
IG24	Upper Larkfield Community Hall Lothian Road Greenock	IG34	Upper Larkfield Community Hall Lothian Road Greenock	No change
IG25	Aileymill PS Norfolk Road Greenock	IG35	Ravenscraig Sport Centre Auchmead Road Greenock	Suitable alternative accommodation releasing a primary school.
IG26	Branchton Community Centre Branchton Road Greenock	IG36	Branchton Community Centre Branchton Road Greenock	No change
IG27	Inverkip PS Station Road Inverkip	IG37	Inverkip PS Station Road Inverkip	No change
IG28	Wemyss Bay Community Centre Ardgowan Road Wemyss Bay	IG38	Wemyss Bay Community Centre Ardgowan Road Wemyss Bay	No change

Respondent	Polling Place	Suggestion/Comment
Councillor Ronnie Ahifeld	Spinnaker Hotel/Gourock Community Centre	Consideration should be given to using Royal Gourock Yacht Club/Gourock Municipal Buildings/Gamble Halls/Gourock Primary School.
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Gamble Halls: Access can be gained from Royal Street taking voters directly onto the first floor of the hall and would meet DDA requirements.</p> <p>Royal Gourock Yacht Club – Now has ramped access and conforms with DDA compliance.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That the Gamble halls, entering from Davidson Drive be utilised for the electorate within IG19 in place of Gourock Community Centre which will no longer be available.</p> <p>That the Spinnaker Hotel be utilised for the electorate within IG22 - please see body of report.</p> <p>That Royal Gourock Yacht Club be utilised for the electorate within IG23 – please see body of report</p>		

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Polling Place</b>	<b>Suggestion/Comment</b>
Stuart McMillan MSP West of Scotland	Holy Family Church Hall	Facilities that are fully DDA compliant should be used.
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>Inspection has shown that Holy Family Church Hall is well positioned for access by the electorate served. Voters are accustomed to these arrangements and although it is acknowledged that in terms of DDA requirements the premises are not ideal, having carried out a full inspection the Returning Officer has been unable to identify suitable alternative premises.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That the current arrangements remain in place.</p>		

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Polling Place</b>	<b>Suggestion/Comment</b>
Mr Tony Barrie	Ardgowan Primary School	Facilities other than Primary Schools should be used.
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>There are no other facilities within the area which are as convenient as Ardgowan Primary School for the electorate falling within IG10. With regard to access for disabled users, the Council provides a temporary ramp for use on polling day which complies with DDA requirements.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That the current arrangements remain in place.</p>		

Respondent	Polling Place	Suggestion/Comment
<p>Councillor Terry Loughran Councillor George White</p>	<p>Gourock Polling Stations</p>	<p>In addition to existing polling places in Gourock consideration should be given to including Royal Gourock Yacht Club and Clydeview Academy.</p>
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>The choice of Polling Places will often be a balance between the quality of a building and the distance between the residents and that building compared to other options for Polling Places. The suggestion to utilise Clydeview Academy, which is yet to be built, is not viable as no secondary school has been used as a polling place for a number of years due to the fact that elections are normally held during exam times.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That the Gamble halls, entering from Davidson Drive be utilised for the electorate within IG19 in place of Gourock Community Centre which will no longer be available.</p> <p>That the Spinnaker Hotel be utilised for the electorate within IG22 - please see body of report.</p> <p>That Royal Gourock Yacht Club be utilised for the electorate within IG23 – please see body of report</p>		

APPENDIX 2

Respondent	Polling Place	Suggestion/Comment
Councillor David Wilson	Ward 1	Happy with Ward 1.
Lynn Chambers Secretary Inverkip/Wemyss Bay Community Council	Ward 6	No comments at the present time.

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Polling Place</b>	<b>Suggestion/Comment</b>
Ardgowan Primary School Parent Council	Ardgowan Primary School	Children miss a day's education; high number of working parents have to make alternative childcare provision; school has no disabled access; other facilities in the area could be utilised.
<p><b>Evaluation</b></p> <p>There are no other facilities within the area which are as convenient as Ardgowan Primary School for the electorate falling within IG10. With regard to access for disabled users, the Council provides a temporary ramp for use on polling day which complies with DDA requirements.</p> <p><b>Recommendation</b></p> <p>That the current arrangements remain in place.</p>		

Respondent	Polling Place	Suggestion/Comment
Christina Boyd Election Agent Inverclyde Labour Party	Overton Primary School  Sacred Heart Primary School  Gourock Community Centre  Inverkip Primary School  Spinnaker	Replace with St Patricks Primary School or Lady Alice Primary School  St Andrews Church Hall Ravenscraig Recreation Centre  Replace with Gourock Library, Gourock Primary School or Gamble Halls  Replace with Inverkip Pavilion  Replace with Yacht Club  Additional Polling Station at Devol Golf Club or Devol Centre

**Evaluation**

Overton Primary School – the suggestion to utilise St Patricks or Lady Alice Primary in place of Overton Primary School is not viable as these Primary Schools are already used for a different Ward and this would cause confusion for the electorate. In addition, it would not be feasible to send more electors to either of these schools

Sacred Heart Primary School – it is proposed to utilise Garvel Deaf Centre which is adjacent to Sacred Heart Primary School and therefore more convenient for the electorate who currently vote at Sacred Heart Primary School.

Gourock Community Centre – please see body of report.

Inverkip Pavilion – this is not viable as the pavilion has no disabled access.

Spinnaker Hotel – please see body of report.

Additional Polling Place at Devol Golf club – this is not viable given the position of the Golf Club, in any event an additional Polling Place is not required for the electorate in IW07 who current vote in Boglestone Community Centre.  
Additional Polling Place at Devol Centre – this is not viable given that the Devol Centre is neither suitable nor convenient for use as a Polling Place.



**Recommendation**

That the Gamble halls, entering from Davidson Drive be utilised for the electorate within IG19 in place of Gourrock Community Centre which will no longer be available.

That the Spinnaker Hotel be utilised for the electorate within IG22 - please see body of report.

That Royal Gourrock Yacht Club be utilised for the electorate within IG23 – please see body of report.