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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>The Inverclyde Council</b>	<b>Date:</b> 28 January 2014
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b> EP/LA/1130/14
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Elaine Paterson</b>	<b>Contact No:</b> 01475 712139
<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 (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 the draft Polling Scheme detailed in Appendix 3 hereof and the timetable in respect thereof, as detailed in Appendix 1.

## 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 elections and (ii) review those arrangements at least every four years.

2.2 The Council last reviewed its arrangements in 2010/2011 and in terms of recent legislation it must review those arrangements between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015.

2.3 It is proposed to carry out the next review in line with the timetable specified in Appendix 1 hereto with a view to it being completed and coming into force by November/December 2014.

2.4 The current Polling Scheme, which forms Appendix 2 hereof, will be deployed in the European Election and Scottish Referendum both of which are due to take place in 2014, subject to a few amendments to take account of building works and/or closures (eg. Ardgowan Primary School), which are scheduled to take place on a number of establishments in 2014.

2.5 With regard to the amendments in para 2.4 above the Chief Executive has delegated authority to make such arrangements. Members will be made aware of the finalised arrangements for the Elections due to take place in 2014, in due course.

2.6 The proposed draft Polling Scheme forms Appendix 3 hereof.

## 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Members are asked to:-

(i) note the requirements to undertake a review of the Polling Scheme between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015;

(ii) approve the timetable relating to the Statutory Review of the Polling Scheme, as outlined in Appendix 1;

- (iii) approve the draft Polling Scheme forming Appendix 3 hereof, and authorise the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to consult thereon; and
- (iv) note that a further Report will be presented to the Council at its meeting on 10 April, once the Consultation period has ended.

#### **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 and other 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 in 2011.
- 4.3 In terms of the Electoral Registration Administration Act 2013, the next review of UK Parliamentary Polling Districts and Places must take place between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015.
- 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 The timetable for the review is outlined in Appendix 1 and the initial Notification has already been published in November 2013 and contact made with interested parties, such as Members, Community Councils and organisations representing the disabled.
- 4.6 The draft Polling Scheme which forms Appendix 3 hereof, takes account of the representations received so far.
- 4.7 The draft Polling Scheme also proposes certain amendments to the current Polling Scheme as follows:-
  - (i) It is proposed that the Council now reverts to using Whinhill Primary School (formerly Overton Primary School) for those voters within Polling Districts IG16/IG10. These voters have recently been using Peat Road Community Centre during the school refurbishment works. The Community Centre is not ideal due to its arrangements for disabled access.
  - (ii) It is proposed to utilise St Andrew's Primary School for those voters within Polling District IG 27. Those voters have latterly utilised Garvel Deaf Centre during refurbishment of the school. The Garvel Deaf Centre has now closed and St Andrew's Primary School is now available, it is eminently suitable for use as a Polling Place;
  - (iii) Latterly, those voters in Polling District IG35 have voted in Ravenscraig Sports Centre. Given the present uncertainty regarding the availability of Ravenscraig Sports Centre in the future, alternative premises require to be identified. It is therefore proposed that the Council confirm that Aileymill Primary School is identified for use by voters within Polling District IG35;

(iv) Ardgowan Primary School:- This Primary School is currently scheduled for refurbishment. It has proved impossible to identify a suitable alternative, without realignment of Polling Districts. The Returning Officer has identified that the Ardgowan Bowling Club, Ardgowan Square, Greenock is the nearest suitable and available alternative. It is therefore proposed that these premises be utilised as a replacement for Ardgowan Primary School. Consequently, the Council will also require to make a small adjustment to the District Boundary line to encompass the Ardgowan Bowling Club. This will have the knock-on effect of requiring some 400 voters who currently vote in the Watt Hall to now vote in the Ardgowan Bowling Club. For those voters, the Ardgowan Bowling Club is actually closer to where they reside than is the Watt Hall. A plan indicating the suggested changes is attached (Appendix 4).

4.8 With regard to the European Elections due to take place on 22 May 2014 and the Scottish Referendum due to take place on 18 September 2014, the current polling scheme (Appendix 2) will be utilised.

4.9 A number of adjustments will need to be made to take account of scheduled building works and the Chief Executive has delegated authority to make such arrangements.

## 5. IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

5.1 There are no financial implications in regard to this report.

#### Financial Implications – One off Costs

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

#### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

### Legal

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

### Human Resources

5.3 There are no human resource implications.

### Equalities

5.4 The Council is required to ensure that, as far as reasonably practicable, polling places are accessible to all voters.

### Repopulation

5.5 There are no repopulation implications.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 Consultation will be carried out in accordance with the statutory provisions during the course of the review.

## **7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Polling Scheme

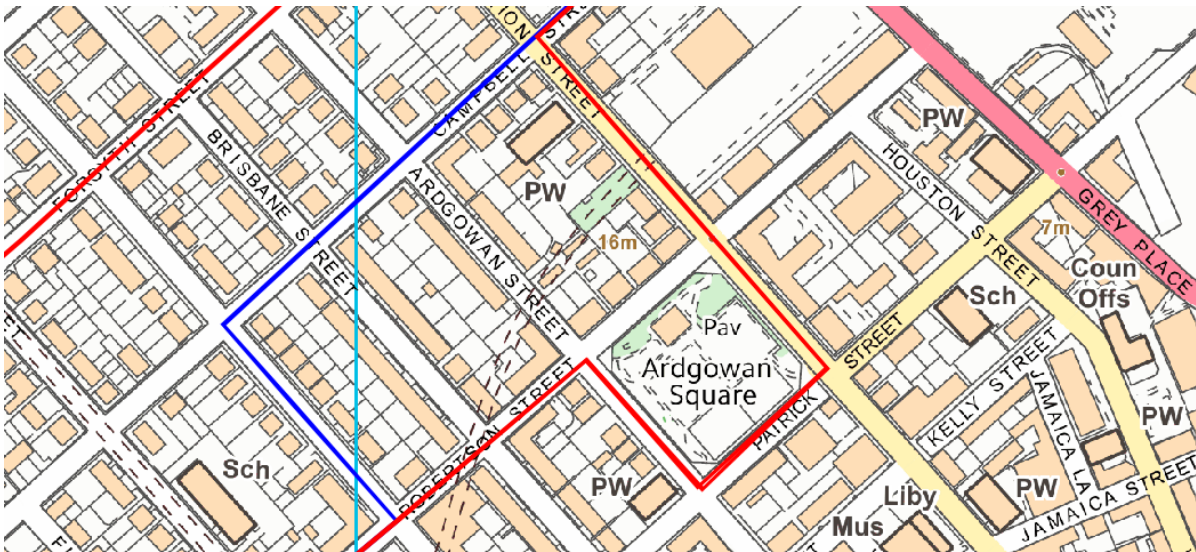
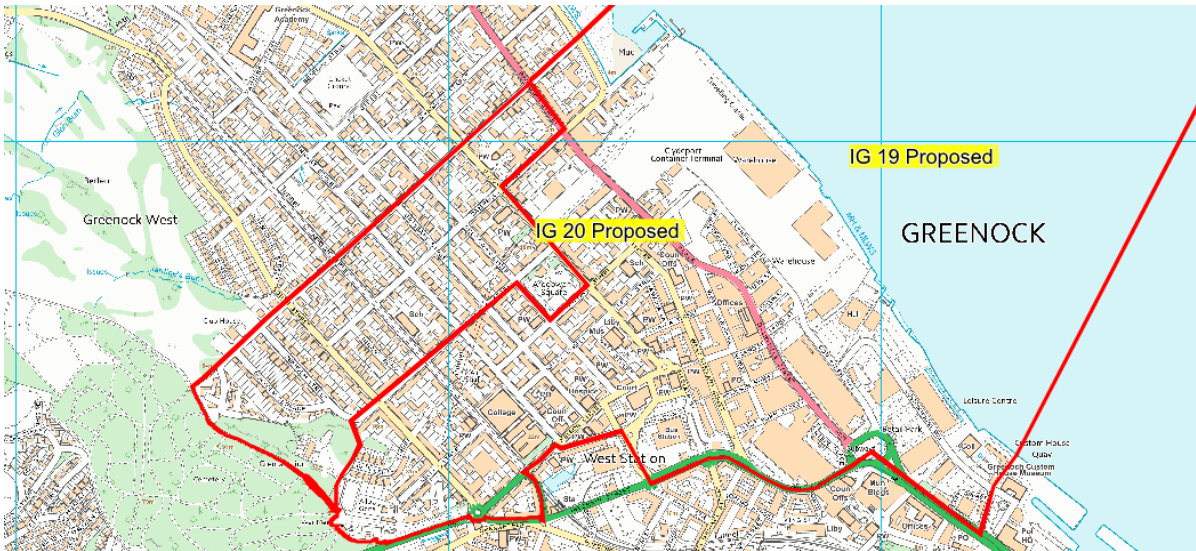
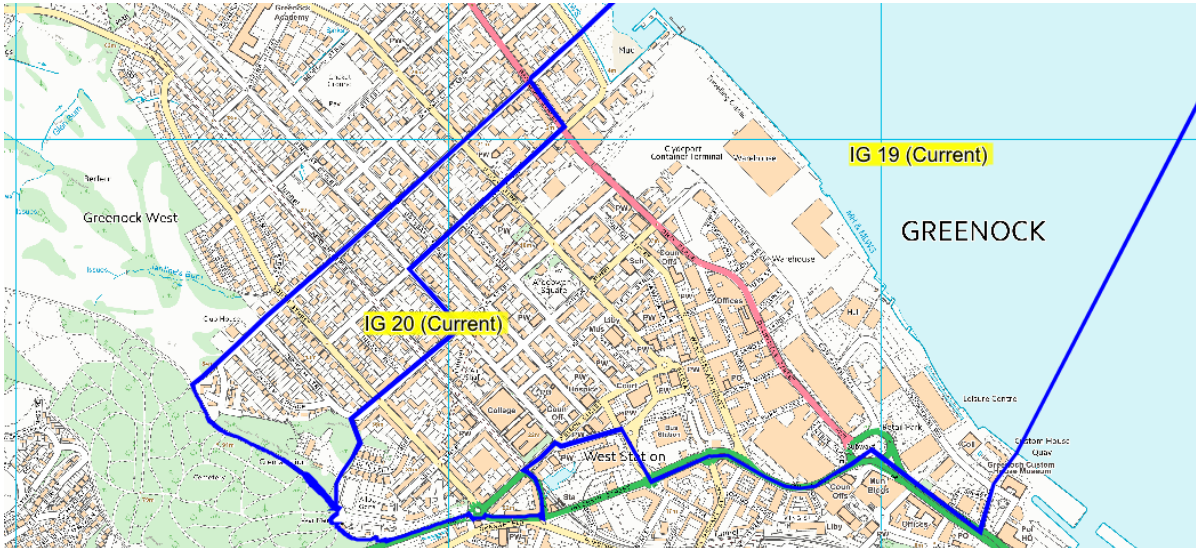
**INVERCLYDE COUNCIL**  
**STATUTORY REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS**  
**AND POLLING PLACES**

**TIMETABLE**

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

1. Representations by interested parties must be received no later than	20 December 2013
2. Council to consider a report on the initial proposals to approve Draft Polling Scheme on	20 February 2014
3. Further consultation on the draft Polling Scheme commencing on	24 February 2014
4. Final date for comments on draft Polling Scheme	17 March 2014
5. Final proposals, having regard to any comments/suggestions received will be considered by the Council on	10 April 2014

Elaine Paterson  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services



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