
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	4 June 2015
Report By:	Chief Executive	Report No:	LP/091/15
Contact Officer:	Gerard Malone	Contact No:	01475 712710
Subject:	Review of Polling Places		

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 This report asks Elected Members to consider a review of the Council's Polling Scheme.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 This Council undertook, last year, its statutory review of its Polling Places and this was considered and approved by the Council at its meeting on 10th April 2014.

2.2 The current Polling Scheme, which forms **Appendix 1**, has been in force as from 1 January 2015 and has been utilised for the recent UK Parliamentary Election.

2.3 As part of the Council's initiative to review and update its Polling Scheme and to keep it under consideration between its statutory reviews, it is suggested that a consultation exercise be undertaken to amend the Scheme for three locations as follows with the alternative locations, as specified:

- (a) St Ninian's Primary School – Kirn Drive Community Centre
- (b) St Patrick's Primary School – Prospecthill Christian Fellowship Church
- (c) St Lawrence's Social Club – relocation to Auchmountain Halls and Crawfordsburn Community Centre.

2.4 If agreed by the Council, it is proposed to conduct a consultation exercise with the community groups involved at the above locations and to work forward with a timetable for the Consultation Review in terms of **Appendix 2**.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is requested to:

3.1 Consider this report and approve the commencement of the review of the Polling Scheme for the three locations as specified;

3.2 Remit it to the Head of Legal and Property Services to report further in terms of the outcome of the Consultation Review.

Gerard Malone
Head of Legal and Property Services

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983, local authorities are required to designate Polling Places for the purposes of elections and to review those arrangements at least every 4 years.
- 4.2 The Council reviewed its electoral arrangements in April 2014. Within Inverclyde, the Council's practice has 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 the 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.
- 4.3 The current Polling Scheme was reviewed in April 2014 in formal terms, has been in effect from 1st January 2015 and was utilised for the recent UK Parliamentary elections.
- 4.4 This report is brought to the Council as an interim update to ensure the Polling Scheme is current and relevant to local circumstances. The Council is committed to ongoing review of the scheme and to exploring suitable options for polling place locations. The Council seeks to minimise any disruption to schools during each election process and this will be looked at continuously.

5.0 SUGGESTED REVIEW OF POLLING SCHEME FOR THREE LOCATIONS

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Council alters the Polling Scheme to designate Kirn Drive Community Centre as the Polling Place for Polling District IG30. At present, the approved Polling Place is St Ninian's Primary School. The Council's practice is to seek to minimise any disruption to the school environment as far as is possible. Local representations have been received to suggest a relocation in order to support the Council's aim. Kirn Drive Community Centre is within the same Polling District and meets the standards required for accessibility and access and its use would eliminate school closure at elections.
- 5.2 St Patrick's Primary School is utilised for Polling District IG23. However, in terms of planned refurbishment, the school will not be available for election use. On this basis, investigations have taken place on a possible relocation to Prospecthill Christian Fellowship Church, 8 Prospecthill Street, Greenock, PA15 4DL. The Church is suitable for access and the owners of the building have confirmed their interest in providing polling place facilities for future elections. There will be a consequent minor amendment of the Polling District at Prospecthill Street to bring this location into the relevant Polling District boundary.
- 5.3 St Lawrence's Social Club has been the established Polling Place for Polling District IG15. In view of major demographic changes in this area, the number of voters has reduced substantially and it is feasible and practical to reallocate these voters to the following two Polling Places: Auchmountain Halls and Crawfordsburn Community Centre in Polling Districts IG12 and IG14 respectively.
- 5.4 The consultation arrangements for each of the above proposals involve open advertisement on the Council's website and in the Council's libraries. It is further recommended that there be contact with the relevant Community Councils and the Parent Councils and any other community groups identified and all elected representatives (Councillors, MPs, MSPs, MEPs). The outcome of the Consultation Review will be reported to the Council in terms of the timetable which forms **Appendix 2**.

- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 For example, in future the Council will explore the possible use of the planned new community facility at Inverkip and that will, potentially, replace use of school accommodation.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

As yet, there are no financial implications identified. The consolidation of the St Lawrence's Social Club into the other polling places within the Polling Scheme will result in an accommodation saving and, possibly, minor financial consequences for reduced numbers of polling staff. There is also a potential minor cost for funding 2 external locations rather than 2 schools.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

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

Annually Recurring Costs/(Savings)

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

6.2 Legal

This proposal complies with relevant electoral legislation.

6.3 Human Resources

There are no implications.

6.4 Equalities

The draft Polling Scheme is being reviewed to take account of the provision of suitable premises to facilitate ease of access for all voters throughout Inverclyde and thus to promote participation in local democracy for all its citizens.

6.5 Repopulation

There are no repopulation implications.

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 This report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 None.

**APPENDIX 1
POLLING SCHEME
INVERCLYDE COUNTY CONSTITUENCY**

Polling District	Polling Place
IN01	Carsemeadow, Craigbet Road, Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir
IN02	St Columba Church Hall, Bridge of Weir Road, Kilmacolm
IG02	Holy Family Church Hall, Parkhill Avenue, Port Glasgow
IG03	Struthers Memorial Church, Arran Avenue, Port Glasgow
IG04	Park Farm Community Hall, Oronsay Avenue, Port Glasgow
IG05	St Francis' Primary School, East Barmoss Avenue, Port Glasgow
IG06	Clune Park Resource Centre, Montgomerie Street, Port Glasgow
IG07	Boglestone Community Centre, Dubbs Place, Port Glasgow
IG08	Port Glasgow Lesser Town Hall, Port Glasgow
IG09	St John's Primary School, Mary Street, Port Glasgow
IG11	Gibshill Childrens' Centre, Smillie Street, Greenock
IG12	Auchmountain Halls, Burnhead Street, Greenock
IG13	Craigend Resource Centre, McLeod Street, Greenock
IG14	Crawfurdsburn Community Centre, Carwood Street, Greenock
IG15	St Lawrence's Social Club, Cartsburn Street, Greenock
IG16 & IG10	Whinhill Primary School, Peat Road, Overton, Greenock
IG17	Wellpark Mid Kirk Church Hall, Clyde Square, Greenock
IG18	Salvation Army Centre, Enter from Roxburgh Street, Greenock
IG19	McLean Museum & Art Gallery, Watt Hall, 15 Kelly Street, Greenock
IG20	Ardgowan Club, Ardgowan Square, Greenock
IG21	Finnart Scout Hall, 159 Finnart Street, Greenock
IG22	Lyle Kirk Hall, Bentinck Street, Greenock
IG23	St. Patrick's Primary School, Broomhill Street, Greenock
IG24	Lady Alice Primary School, Inverkip Road, Greenock
IG25	Grieve Road Community Centre, Grieve Road, Greenock
IG26	St Joseph's Primary School, Wren Road, Greenock
IG27	St Andrews Primary School, Westmorland Road, Greenock
IG28	Cardwell Bay Sailing Club, Cove Road, Gourock
IG29	Gamble Halls, Enter from Davidson Drive, Gourock
IG30	St Ninian's Primary School, Staffa Street, Gourock
IG31	Moorfoot Primary School, Moorfoot Drive, Gourock
IG32	Spinnaker Hotel, Albert Road, Gourock
IG33	Royal Gourock Yacht Club, Ashton Road, Gourock
IG34	Upper Larkfield Community Hall, Lothian Road, Greenock
IG35	Aileymill Primary School, Norfolk Road, Greenock
IG36	Branchton Community Centre, Branchton Road, Greenock
IG37	Inverkip Primary School, Station Road, Inverkip
IG38	Wemyss Bay Community Centre, Ardgowan Road, Wemyss Bay

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL
REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES
TIMETABLE

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

1. Publication on Inverclyde Council website, notices in libraries, letters to Community Councils, Parent Teacher Councils etc	18 June 2015
2. Representations by interested parties to be received no later than	18 August 2015
3. Inverclyde Council to consider a report on the initial proposals to approve the revised Polling Scheme on	8 October 2015
4. Further consultation on the draft Polling Scheme commencing on	15 October 2015
5. Final date for comments on draft Polling Scheme	16 November 2015
6. Final proposals, having regard to any comments/suggestions received to be considered by the Council on	3 December 2015