

**NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

Your attendance is requested at a meeting to be held at
The Jeffrey Room, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE
on Tuesday, 29 January 2013
at 6:00 pm.

**D Kennedy
Chief Executive**

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2012 (copy herewith).
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
- 4. Deputations / Public Addresses**
- 5. Matters of Urgency which by reason of special circumstances the chair is of the opinion should be considered**
- 6. Revised Employment Policies of Council Employees**
Copy herewith
- 7. Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations**
Copy herewith
- 8. Exclusion of Public and Press**
THE CHAIR TO MOVE:
"THAT THE PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING ON THE GROUNDS THAT THERE IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSURE TO THEM OF SUCH CATEGORIES OF EXEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED BY SECTION 100(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS LISTED AGAINST SUCH ITEMS OF BUSINESS BY REFERENCE TO THE APPROPRIATE PARAGRAPH OF SCHEDULE 12A TO SUCH ACT."

Public Participation

Members of the public may address the Committee on any non-procedural matter listed on this agenda. Addresses shall not last longer than three minutes. Committee members may then ask questions of the speaker. No prior notice is required prior to the commencement of the meeting of a request to address the Committee.

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 11 September 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Patel (Chair); Councillor Parekh (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Beardsworth, I. Choudary and Oldham.

APOLOGIES: Councillor Aziz, Councillor Begum, Councillor Duncan and Councillor Golby, and the Chief Executive.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Aziz, Begum, Duncan and Golby and from the Chief Executive.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2012 were approved and signed by the Chair.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

4. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

5. REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS

The Democratic and Chief Executive Services Manager presented a report seeking amendments to polling places in eight polling districts in Northampton for all elections, referenda and polls from November 2012 onwards.

In response to Members' comments and questions she stated that:

- Changes were being recommended to polling places and polling stations largely as a result of feedback following Polling Day in May 2011 that some polling places which accommodated more than one polling station were becoming overcrowded or that some electors were having to travel more than a mile to their polling station, which was considered too far. A further change had resulted from Bective Mobile, which had previously been used in Westone Ward, no longer being available, and it was proposed that a new polling place be established at Northampton College as a replacement.
- She confirmed that all new polling places had been visited and were accessible for people with disabilities. Mobiles could have ramps provided if necessary.
- She would review the accessibility of Victoria Road Congregational Church in Castle Ward following comments by Councillor I Choudary that concerns had

been expressed in the past about the accessibility of the venue.

- Moving electors in NSMB from the polling station at Kingsthorpe Community Centre, which is a long distance for electors to walk, to the polling station at Holy Trinity Church Hall would result in three polling stations in the church hall but it was considered large enough to accommodate them as the electorate for NSMB is small, being less than four hundred in total with NSMA. This was an exception to the other proposed amendments, where the number of polling stations was being reduced in some polling places.

RESOLVED:

1. That the feedback and proposals outlined in appendix 1 of the report to the Committee be noted and that changes to the polling place that will be used by electors in the following wards and polling districts from November 2012 onwards be agreed:

Delapre & Briar Hill Ward	Polling District SDBD
East Hunsbury Ward	Polling Districts SNEHF and SNEHG
Rectory Farm Ward	Polling District NRFD
Semilong Ward	Polling District NSMA and NSMB
Talavera Ward	Polling District STVF
Westone Ward	Polling District NWT A

2. That the ability to amend the polling districts, polling places and polling stations as required for operational purposes be delegated to the Returning Officer.

6. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

There were none.

The meeting concluded at 6:10 pm.

<p>Appendices: 0</p>



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Revised Employment Policies of Council Employees
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	29 th January 2013
Directorate:	Resources

1. Purpose

This report seeks approval for the proposals to make changes to Employment Policies affecting payments and benefits for employees within the authority in order to achieve the savings target on the salaries budget.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the removal of the Essential Car User allowance payment for all employees. Employees who receive this allowance would receive 3 months' notice of its withdrawal as stated in their statement of particulars. Notice being given on the 1st February 2013.
- 2.2 Approve the removal of the payment of Professional Fees for all employees, to be introduced from 1st April 2014.
- 2.3 Note that further work will be undertaken with regard to the introduction of a car parking rate for all staff during 2013/14 with the aim of introducing this from 1st April 2014.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 Employees and Trade Unions were consulted on suggestions for savings. The Trade Unions requested that voluntary redundancy/early retirement options be explored to firstly identify those savings that could be achieved by greater efficiencies or reorganisations.
- 3.1.2 Negotiations with recognised trade unions were undertaken through November, December 2012 and January 2013. These meetings followed a process of understanding the saving requirements and discussion about allowances that could be potentially removed as this stage. Any changes that were proposed and the ramifications of the proposed changes were explored. Those options being proposed today were consulted on specifically and received a range of response from employee groups.
- Employees were offered the option of requesting their VR/ER figures in December 2012 before making a formal request for VR/ER in January 2013. These requests were then sent to service managers and Heads of Service to formally approve or reject. All agreed formal requests were taken to a VR/ER Panel held in mid-January to consider the application and make final decisions. Of the 22 approved requests only 3 could be counted towards the target the others were already counted as part of planned service cuts. The savings amount to £88,862 per annum once redundancy costs and pension strain were deducted.
- 3.1.3 The outcome of these decisions was factored into the saving requirement. Those who submitted formal applications will be made aware of the outcome towards the end of January.
- 3.1.4 The final proposals for changes to Terms and Conditions were taken to a meeting with the Trade Unions on Tuesday 22 January.

3.2 Issues

- 3.2.1 The council is required to make the savings/income target of £300,000 in the year 2013/14 and a further £250,000 for each of the two subsequent years. Requirements for formal consultations and notice periods mean that full year savings from each of the proposed changes would not be achieved in 2013/14.
- 3.2.2 The proposed changes to Terms & Conditions need to be introduced before the LGSS transfer date of 1st April 2013 for all savings/income to be realised.
- 3.2.3 It is the case that if all three proposed changes are implement then there are a number of employees who would be affected by all three resulting in benefit losses of between £1188.30 and £2207.61.

3.3 Choices (Options)

- 3.3.1 Making savings from contractual terms and conditions of service can only be achieved through a collective agreement with Trade Unions or through changes to individual contracts. The proposals put forward in this report are those which require a change to current employment policies and benefits, non-contractual terms and conditions, which can be more easily achieved and do not require a collective agreement with the Trade Unions.
- 3.3.2 Essential Car User allowance is currently paid to employees who are required to use their cars because of a service criteria, defined locally. This lump sum allowance is paid in addition to the mileage allowance. The mileage allowance is based on the Her Majesty's Revenues and Customers (HMRC) Mileage Rates. Mileage allowance only is paid to employees required to use their car but are designated as casual users. It is for the Local Authority to determine which jobs are essential or casual users. Written in to statements of particulars is a clause which states that the Council may remove the payment of the essential user allowance with three months notice. The proposal is to remove the payment of the essential user allowance during 2013/14, this will be reviewed in February 2014. This proposal raises £211,311 towards target. This figure would be adjusted for 2014/15 if it was found necessary to re-introduce the essential user designation with tighter criteria.
- 3.3.3 Payment of professional fees was introduced as part of recruitment and retention issues some years ago. These payments also encourage staff to qualify by examination through the professional bodies. It proposed that the Council give one year's notice of the removal of this benefit.

This allowance is non-contractual and would be removed as of the 31st March 2014. Staff who would have to pay this allowance may be able to mitigate all or some of this through the personal taxation system.

- 3.3.4 It is proposed that a car parking charge be introduced for all employees who use the Council's car parks. Given that targets are being achieved by one of the measures proposed there may be little advantage in pursuing this option this year as income targets may not be achieved and there are significant challenges around the option this year. This decision would find favour with most employees. It is proposed that the Council give one year's notice that the free parking benefit will be removed and undertake a further consultation on options around parking charges such as a flat rate or a lower or phased percentage fee.

4 Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

- 4.1.1 In order to meet the shortfall in the 2013/14 budget a staffing saving of £300,000 will be needed. This amount has been factored into the budget setting process. Savings of £88,862 per annum will found by the VR/ER requests that have been approved.

- 4.1.2 The proposed savings/income that will be made through the changes are as follows:
- Essential Car User removal: £211,311 per annum reduced in 2013/14 because of 3 month notice period.
 - Professional fees payment removal: £29,008 introduce from 1st April 2014.
 - Introduction of concessionary car parking charge in April 2014: Charges and Income targets to be established following further review.

4.2 Human Resources Implications

- 4.2.1 The removal of the essential car user allowance will result in a loss of a substantial benefit for 227 employees amounting to between £846 and £1239 per year for an employee.
- 4.2.2 Removal of professional fees payment may have some impact on recruitment and retention and possibly limit willingness for employees to progress to full qualified status.
- 4.2.3 The Travel and Subsistence scheme will be amended or end as a result of this action. There is no impact on policy for the charging of discretionary car parking passes or the removal of the professional fees payment.
- 4.2.4 Any changes that are proposed will have to have been conducted in parallel with the potential restructures that are scheduled and the proposed LGSS transfer.
- 4.2.5 The Trade Union where consulted on, with regard to these options and their views taken into consideration. It is not necessary to obtain a collective agreement for these changes however the Trade Unions have indicated their intention to undertake a non-statutory ballot of their members affected by the changes.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The removal of the essential car user allowance will be made after the contracted notice period of 3 months has been issued to employees who receive the allowance.
- 4.3.2 The proposed changes to essential user allowance will be part of conditions which transfer with employees moving to the LGSS.

4.4 Equality

- 4.4.1 A full EIA is attached. In summary the results of the EIA for the removal of the essential car user allowance do not suggest that there is any significant detrimental impact on a specific group. However an equality audit will be conducted as part of the casual user car mileage monitoring exercise to avoid any other equality issues being raised.

Catherine Wilson – Head of Business Change

Full Impact Assessment

Full Equality Impact Assessment – Removal of Essential Car User Allowance

Introduction

As part of the proposed changes to terms and conditions of service, Northampton Borough Council has prepared an equality impact assessment to review the impact of changes against the key diversity strands.

The proposed change is the removal of the essential car user allowance.

Background

As part of meeting the budget deficit for 2013/14 the authority looked to make a saving of £300,000 from the staffing cost budget. In order to meet this change the authority looked at a number of options with the recognised trade unions. These changes included:

- Potential voluntary/redundancies and early retirement requests
- Removal of essential car user allowance
- Introduction of a concessionary car parking allowance
- Removal of the professional fees payment
- Incremental progression freeze
- Reduction in sick payments

The decision was made to look at changes that were deemed to be non-contractual in 2013/14 with the contractual changes possibly implemented in 2014/15.

The changes to non-contractual allowances were revisited following a VR/ER process. With the removal of essential car user allowance the only change being implemented in 2013/14. The removal of the professional fees payment and the introduction of the car parking scheme are changes that are to be introduced in April 2014 and notice of such will be issued to the staff group.

EIA's will be completed for the removal of professional fees and the introduction of the car parking allowance in 2013. This will be used as part of the development of the car parking charge guidelines with regards to disability etc.

Baseline data and research

The information used as part of this assessment has been extracted from the HR Agresso module and the assessment will look at the following diversity strands:

- Age
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Gender

Information that would be reported upon only covers that which meets that recognised standard statistically significant figure of five percent of the reporting total. This information will also be compared directly to the organisation profile information on the same data strands.

Consultation

As part of the process the staff groups and trade unions were consulted with. Both parties were asked for feedback on the potential changes that were proposed. Feedback from the trade unions was taken as part of a series of meetings scheduled where proposals were considered and commented on by the management side.

The staff group were invited to comment on the changes through an electronic online forum, via their line manager or by contacting the HR Helpdesk direct. All questions and responses were published on the intranet and were taken to Management Board as part of the considerations.

Results of the consultation

As mentioned all comments made by the Trade Unions and the staff group were considered as part of the process. These considerations included a phased approach to implementations of the changes and review of the allocation of the essential car user status. Both elements are to be taken forward.

Assessment of impact on particular groups

The table attached in Appendix 1 shows the impact of the removal of the Essential Car User allowance on the differing diversity strands in comparison to the organisational results. The table illustrates that the only strands that appear to have changed in a statistically significant are the number of white, male heterosexuals that would lose the allowance.

How will this impact be addressed?

In order to mitigate an inequality in the impact of the allowance removal a equality audit will be conducted as part of the car mileage review that may lead to the

introduction of an essential car user status and allowance for those who have high car usage and need to be able to do so to carry out the duties of their post.

Performance and monitoring arrangements

As mentioned an equality audit will be conducted over the year to ascertain those who are making high mileage claims and to understand the equality impact that there may be. We will also look at any potential recruitment or retention issues that are realised as part of the allowance removal.

Conclusion

To conclude the results of the EIA for the removal of the essential car user allowance do not suggest that there is any significant detrimental impact on a specific group. However an equality audit will be conducted as part of the casual user car mileage monitoring exercise to avoid any other equality issues being raised.

Appendix 1 – Data comparison

Age Band	<u>All staff</u>		<u>Essential car user allowance</u>	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
0 - 29	123	13.46%	22	9.95%
30 - 40	192	21.01%	41	18.55%
40 - 50	260	28.45%	64	28.96%
50 - 60	284	31.07%	86	38.91%
60 Plus	55	6.02%	8	3.62%
Grand Total	914	100.00%	221	100.00%

Gender	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Female	517	56.56%	107	48.42%
Male	397	43.44%	114	51.58%
Grand Total	914	100.00%	221	100.00%

Disability	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
DNA	187	20.46%	46	20.81%
DTS	5	0.55%	0	0.00%
NO	691	75.60%	171	77.38%
YES	31	3.39%	4	1.81%
Grand Total	914	100.00%	221	100.00%

Ethnicity	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Bangladeshi	3	0.33%	0	0.00%
Black African	10	1.09%	4	1.81%
Black Caribbean	12	1.31%	1	0.45%
Chinese	3	0.33%	0	0.00%
Declined to State	23	2.52%	1	0.45%
Did not Answer	169	18.49%	28	12.67%
Eastern European	1	0.11%	0	0.00%
Indian	7	0.77%	2	0.90%
Other Asian	2	0.22%	1	0.45%
Other Black	4	0.44%	2	0.90%
Other Ethnic Group	2	0.22%	2	0.90%
Other Mixed	3	0.33%	1	0.45%
Other White Background	15	1.64%	2	0.90%
White - British	649	71.01%	175	79.19%

White - Irish	4	0.44%	1	0.45%
White & Asian	5	0.55%	0	0.00%
White & Black Caribbean	2	0.22%	1	0.45%
Grand Total	914	100.00%	221	100.00%

Sexual Orientation	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Bi-Sexual	4	0.44%	1	0.45%
Declined to State	42	4.60%	8	3.62%
Did not answer	263	28.77%	44	19.91%
Gay	3	0.33%	2	0.90%
Heterosexual	597	65.32%	164	74.21%
Lesbian	5	0.55%	2	0.90%
Grand Total	914	100.00%	221	100.00%

Appendices
2



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE REPORT

Report Title	Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

Committee Meeting Date:	29 January 2013
Directorate:	Borough Secretary's Department

1. Purpose

- 1 The report seeks General Purposes Committee's approval of proposed changes to polling districts and polling places in Northampton as shown in the map at appendix 1 and listed in appendix 2 subject to any changes that may be recommended by the Returning Officer as a result of public consultation on the proposals.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to note the outcome of the public consultation on the proposals, which will be published on 28 January 2013 and available online at www.northampton.gov.uk/pdreview and displayed in the One Stop Shop at the Guildhall and at the Northamptonshire Central Library (Level 1).
- 2.2 The General Purposes Committee is asked to agree the proposed changes to the polling districts and polling places within the Borough in order that preparations can be made for the Northamptonshire County Council election to be conducted on the new county division boundaries.
- 2.3 The General Purposes Committee is asked to delegate to the Returning Officer the ability to amend the polling districts, polling places and polling stations as required for operational purposes.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 A polling district is a geographical area created by the sub-division of a constituency, ward or division into smaller parts. A polling place is the building or area in which polling stations will be selected by the Returning Officer. A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places which are fixed by the local authority, polling stations are chosen by the Returning Officer for the election.
- 3.1.2 A number of events have taken place in the last six months that have resulted in the necessity to review the polling districts that are in place across the borough in preparation for the County Council elections in May 2013.
- 3.1.3 Firstly, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England published its Final Recommendations on the Further Electoral Review of Northamptonshire County Council on 16th October 2012. The draft Order (the legal document which brings into force their recommendations) was laid in Parliament on the 20th November 2012 and is due to come into force in time for preparations to be made for the county elections in May 2013. The Further Electoral Review fundamentally altered a significant number of county division boundaries within the Borough, reducing the total number of divisions from 23 to 17. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England also recommended new warding arrangements for the Parish Councils of Duston and Upton, which will come into force as part of the order.
- 3.1.4 Secondly, in December 2012, Council agreed to the creation of two new Parish Councils in the borough. Elections to these councils will be held in May 2013. In addition to this, Council agreed to make amendments to the boundaries of the existing Parish Councils of Upton, Wootton & East Hunsbury, Great Houghton and Collingtree. These changes will come into force on 1 April 2013 and therefore need to be reflected in changes to existing polling district boundaries.
- 3.1.5 Furthermore, it is good practice to keep polling places and polling stations under consideration and for an evaluation of their suitability to be carried out after each election. As such, the Returning Officer would like to reduce the number of polling stations that are located on school premises and in mobile units and reduce the number of Polling Districts, especially those that are very small, in order to improve the efficiency of running elections.
- 3.1.6 In line with the Electoral Commission's guidance on running such reviews, there has been a period of consultation during which members of the public and councillors have been invited to give their views on the proposed changes. Additionally, the Chairs of the Northampton Disabled People's Forum, the disability charity SCOPE, Autism Concern, Deaf Connect and Northamptonshire Association for the Blind have been contacted in order to invite comments and representations from such persons as have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for people who have different forms of disability.

- 3.1.7 Subject to any amendments following consultation, it is being proposed that the number of polling districts reduces from 135 to 95, the number of polling places reduces by 17 and the number of polling stations reduces by almost 30%.
- 3.1.8 All polling stations that are being proposed have been used previously at an election or poll in the town, with the exception of those located at Spencer Dallington Community Centre and the Old Club House at Collingtree Park Golf Club. Both premises will be inspected to ensure that they are accessible to electors with different forms of disability.
- 3.1.9 A note will be put on all poll cards to alert electors to a possible change in the location of their polling station.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Resources and Risk

- 4.1.1 The proposals would reduce the number of polling station staff that would be required by approximately 10%. It would also reduce the cost of venue hire.

4.2 Legal

- 4.2.1 Local authorities are required to divide every constituency into polling districts for the purpose of UK Parliamentary elections and to designate a polling place for each polling district. Polling places should be within the polling district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area outside the district.
- 4.2.2 The (Acting) Returning Officer must comment during any review of polling districts and polling places on both existing polling stations and the polling stations that would probably be used if any new proposal for polling places were accepted. These comments are listed in the document titled "List of current & proposed Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations" that is available to download from the website (www.northampton.gov.uk/pdreview) and is also displayed at the One Stop Shop and Northamptonshire Central Library.
- 4.2.3 The (Acting) Returning Officer is required to decide how many polling stations are required for each polling place and must allocate electors to the polling stations in such a manner as he or she thinks most convenient.

4.3 Equality

- 4.3.1 As part of the review process, local authorities must:
- Seek to ensure that all electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances
 - Seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable the polling places are accessible to those who are disabled, and
 - When considering or reviewing the designation of a polling place, have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons.

4.3.2 All representations will be considered in light of any implications they may have on the council's ability to meet the requirements outlined above.

4.4 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.4.1 A notice launching the review was published on Monday 14 January 2013 and the proposals were subsequently made available to the public via the council's website (www.northampton.gov.uk/pdreview), as well as being displayed in the One Stop Shop and at Northamptonshire Central Library.

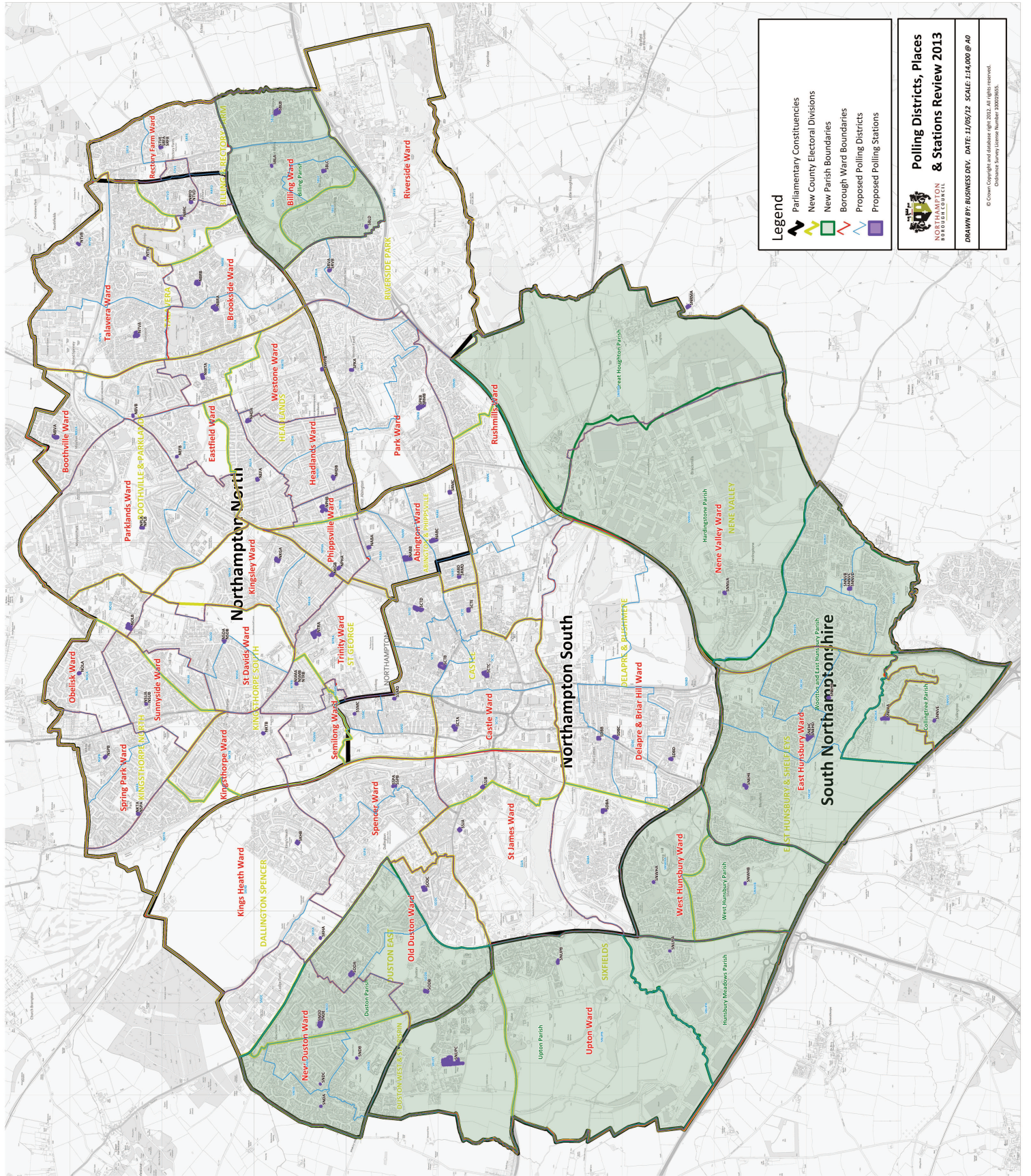
4.4.2 A copy of the notice and an invitation to respond to the review was also sent to the following individuals and groups:

- All Northampton Borough Councillors
- All Northamptonshire County Councillors representing Northampton
- The Chief Executive of Northamptonshire County Council
- The Chair of the Northampton Disabled People's Forum
- SCOPE Northamptonshire
- Autism Concern
- Deaf Connect
- Northamptonshire Association for the Blind
- Community Groups and Residents Associations across the town
- All Parish Clerks in Northampton

5. Background Papers

5.1 All background papers are available to view at www.northampton.gov.uk/pdreview and are also displayed in the One Stop Shop foyer at the Guildhall and on Level 1 of the Northamptonshire Central Library.

Cassie Triggs, Democratic & Chief Executive Services Manager, ext. 7680



List of Proposed Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

Proposed Polling Station Number	Proposed Polling District Reference	Borough Ward	Proposed Polling Place / Polling Station Name	Proposed Polling Place / Polling Station Address	School	Mobile	Number of Polling Station Voters
1	NABA	Abington	Abington Avenue Utd. Reformed Church	Abington Avenue Utd. Reformed Church, Abington Avenue, Abington, Northampton			2,167
2	NABB	Abington	Stimpson Avenue Primary School	Stimpson Avenue Primary School, Stimpson Avenue, Northampton	✓		1,508
3	NABC	Abington	Barry Primary School - Gym Annexe	Barry Primary School - Gym Annexe, Barry Road, Northampton	✓		1,776
4	NBRA	Brookside	Lumbertubs Primary School	Lumbertubs Primary School, Tonmead Road, Lumbertubs, Northampton	✓		1,055
5	NBRB	Brookside	Lings Primary School	Lings Primary School, Hayeswood Road, Lings, Northampton	✓		1,809 (approx.)
6	NBRC	Brookside	Arbury Road Community Room	Arbury Road Community Room, Arbury Road, Blackthorn, Northampton			284 (approx.)
7	NBVA	Boothville	Kings Meadow School	Kings Meadow School, Manning Road, Moulton Leys, Northampton	✓		1,819
8	NBVB	Boothville	Boothville Community Centre	Boothville Community Centre, Rear of 3 Booth Lane North, Booth Lane North, Northampton			946
9	NEFA	Eastfield	St Albans Parish Hall	St Albans Parish Hall, Mayfield Road, Northampton			2,144
10	NEFB	Eastfield	Eden Close Community Room	Eden Close Community Room, Eden Close, Lakeview, Northampton			865
11	NHDA	Headlands	Headlands United Reformed Church	Headlands United Reformed Church, Church Hall, The Headlands, Northampton			1,509

12	NHDB	Headlands	Abington Community Centre	Abington Community Centre, Wheatfield Road South, Abington, Northampton		1,477
13	NKGA	Kingsley	Kingsley Primary School	Kingsley Primary School, Wallace Road, Kingsley, Northampton	✓	1,684
14	NKGB	Kingsley	Kingsley Park Methodist Church	Kingsley Park Methodist Church, Milton Street, Kingsley, Northampton		1,644
15	NKTA	Kingsthorpe	The Pastures Community Centre	The Pastures Community Centre, Off Welford Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton		1,303
16	NKTB	Kingsthorpe	Kingsthorpe Community Centre	Kingsthorpe Community Centre, Mill Lane, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, NN2 6RQ		1,651
17	NOLA	Obelisk	Reynard Way Evangelical Church	Reynard Way Evangelical Church, Reynard Way, Kingsthorpe, Northampton		1,812
18	NOLB	Obelisk	Sunley Conference Centre	Sunley Conference Centre, Boughton Green Road, NN2 7AL		1,200
19	NPHA	Phippsville	St Matthew's Parish Centre	St Matthew's Parish Centre, 27A The Drive, Kingsley, Northampton		1,946
20	NPHB	Phippsville	Cedar Road Primary School	Cedar Road Primary School, Cedar Road East, Northampton	✓	787
21	NPLA	Parklands	Parklands Community Centre	Parklands Community Centre, Devon Way, Northampton		1,771
22	NPLB	Parklands	Parklands Community Centre	Parklands Community Centre, Devon Way, Northampton		1,154
23	NRFD	Rectory Farm	Blackthorn Community Centre	Blackthorn Community Centre, Longmead Court, Blackthorn, Northampton		450
24	NSDA	St Davids	St David's Church Room	St David's Church Room, Eastern Avenue, Northampton		1,519
25	NSDB	St Davids	St David's Church Room	St David's Church Room, Eastern Avenue, Northampton		1,362

26	NSMA	Semilong	Holy Trinity Church Hall	Holy Trinity Church Hall, Edinburgh Road, Queens Park, Northampton		466
27	NSMB	Semilong	Holy Trinity Church Hall	Holy Trinity Church Hall, Edinburgh Road, Queens Park, Northampton		171
28	NSPA	Spring Park	The Pastures Community Centre	The Pastures Community Centre, Off Welford Road, Kingsthorpe, Northampton		1,866
29	NSPB	Spring Park	St Mark's Church Hall	St Mark's Church Hall, St Mark's Crescent, Kingsthorpe, Northampton		1,174
30	NSUA	Sunnyside	Senior Citizens Community Room, Hinton Road	Senior Citizens Community Room, Hinton Road, Hinton Road, Northampton		2,083
31	NSUB	Sunnyside	Senior Citizens Community Room, Hinton Road	Senior Citizens Community Room, Hinton Road, Hinton Road, Northampton		736
32	NTRA	Trinity	Fairfields School	Fairfields School, Trinity Avenue, Northampton	✓	1,467
33	NTRB	Trinity	Holy Trinity Church Hall	Holy Trinity Church Hall, Edinburgh Road, Queens Park, Northampton		1,351
34	NTVA	Talavera	Thorplands Childrens Centre	Thorplands Childrens Centre, Farmfield Court, Thorplands, Northampton		1,638
35	NTVB	Talavera	Southfields Community Centre	Southfields Community Centre, Farmhill Road, Southfields, Northampton		1,649
36	NTVC	Talavera	Goldcrest Community Room	Goldcrest Community Room, Goldcrest Court, Northampton		2,098 (approx.)
37	NTVD	Talavera	Blackthorn Community Centre	Blackthorn Community Centre, Longmead Court, Blackthorn, Northampton		727 (approx.)

38	NWTA	Westone	Northampton College	Northampton College, Booth Lane, Northampton		614
39	NWTB	Westone	Weston Favell Parish Hall	Weston Favell Parish Hall, Booth Lane South, Northampton		1,976
40	SABD	Abington	Vernon Terrace Community Centre	Vernon Terrace Community Centre, Vernon Terrace, Northampton		687
41	SBLA	Billing	The Institute	The Institute, High Street, Great Billing, Northampton		1,224
42	SBLB	Billing	St Andrew's CEVA Primary School	St Andrew's CEVA Primary School, Ecton Brook Road, Ecton Brook, Northampton	✓	1,822
43	SBLC	Billing	Bellinge Community Centre	Bellinge Community Centre, Fieldmill Square, Bellinge, Northampton		883
44	SBLD	Billing	All Saints Church	All Saints Church, Church Lane, Little Billing, Northampton		1,180
45	SCTA	Castle	Spring Lane Primary School	Spring Lane Primary School, Spring Lane, Northampton	✓	1,486
46	SCTB	Castle	Mounts Baths	Mounts Baths, Upper Mounts, Northampton		2,142
47	SCTC	Castle	The Great Hall	The Great Hall, The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton		2,013
48	SCTD	Castle	Northamptonshire Music Trust	Northamptonshire Music Trust, Room 26, Clare Street entrance, 125 Kettering Road, Northampton		2,408
49	SCTE	Castle	Victoria Road Congregational Church	Victoria Road Congregational Church, Victoria Road (Cyril St. entrance), Northampton		1,068
50	SDBA	Delapre & Briar Hill	Briar Hill Community Centre	Briar Hill Community Centre, The Springs, Briar Hill, Northampton		2,370
51	SDBB	Delapre & Briar Hill	St Mary's Church Rooms	St Mary's Church Rooms, St Mary's Church, Abbey Road, Northampton		1,693

52	SDBC	Delapre & Briar Hill	Far Cotton Rec Centre	Far Cotton Rec Centre, Towcester Road, Far Cotton, Northampton			2,386
53	SDBD	Delapre & Briar Hill	Gloucester Nursery School	Gloucester Nursery School, Camborne Close, Northampton	✓		1,925
54	SKHA	Kings Heath	Senior Citizens Community Room, Montague Crescent	Senior Citizens Community Room, Montague Crescent, Northampton			444
55	SKHB	Kings Heath	Kings Heath Community Centre	Kings Heath Community Centre, North Oval, Kings Heath, Northampton			2,335
56	SNDA	New Duston	Mobile Unit, Local Centre Car Park	Mobile Unit 1, Local Centre Car Park, Bordeaux Close, Off Weggs Farm Road, Alsace Park, Northampton		✓	1,705
57	SNDB	New Duston	Mobile Unit, Errington Park	Mobile Unit 1, Errington Park, off Ryeland Road, Duston, Northampton		✓	1,753
58	SNDC	New Duston	Mobile Unit, Park Lane	Mobile Unit, Park Lane, Island Opposite 218/220 Park Lane, New Duston, Northampton		✓	1,086
59	SNDD,SNDE	New Duston	Duston Eldean Primary School	Duston Eldean Primary School, Main Road, New Duston, Northampton	✓		1,697
60	SNEHA	East Hunsbury	Collingtree Golf Club, Old Club House	Opposite Golf Club Collingtree Park, Northampton		☐	305
61	SNEHB	East Hunsbury	Blackymore Community Centre	Blackymore Community Centre, Butts Croft Close, East Hunsbury, Northampton			1,007
62	SNEHC	East Hunsbury	East Hunsbury Primary School	East Hunsbury Primary School, Penvale Road, East Hunsbury, Northampton	✓		1,737
63	SNEHD	East Hunsbury	East Hunsbury Primary School	East Hunsbury Primary School, Penvale Road, East Hunsbury, Northampton	✓		1,196

64	SNEHE	East Hunsbury	Grangewood Club	Grangewood Club, Barn Owl Close, East Hunsbury, Northampton		2,082
65	SNNVA	Nene Valley	Hardingstone Village Hall	Hardingstone Village Hall, High Street, Hardingstone, Northampton		1,356
66	SNNVB	Nene Valley	Wootton Community & Sports Centre	Wootton Community & Sports Centre, Curtlee Hill, Wootton, Northampton		1,166
67	SNNVC	Nene Valley	Wootton Community & Sports Centre	Wootton Community & Sports Centre, Curtlee Hill, Wootton, Northampton		1,984
68	SNNVD	Nene Valley	Wootton Community & Sports Centre	Wootton Community & Sports Centre, Curtlee Hill, Wootton, Northampton		1,676
69	SNNVE	Nene Valley	Collingtree Village Room	Collingtree Village Room, High Street, Collingtree, Northampton		414
70	SNRMA	Rushmills	Parsons Memorial Hall	Parsons Memorial Hall, Leys Lane, Great Houghton, Northampton		428
71	SNUPA	Upton	Mobile Unit, Banbury Lane	Mobile Unit, Banbury Lane, West Hunsbury, Northampton	✓	539
72	SNUPB	Upton	The Elgar Centre	The Elgar Centre, 1A High Street, Upton, Northampton		1,927
73	SNUPC	Upton	St Crispin Retirement Village	St Crispin Retirement Village, St Thomas Street, Duston, Northampton		1,449
74	SNWHA	West Hunsbury	Parsons Mead Community Room	Parsons Mead Community Room, Parsons Mead, West Hunsbury, Northampton		1,624
75	SNWHB	West Hunsbury	Mobile Unit, Ladybridge Drive	Mobile Unit, Ladybridge Drive, West Hunsbury, Northampton	✓	1,163
76	SODA	Old Duston	Duston Community Centre	Duston Community Centre, Pendle Road, Duston, Northampton		2,433

77	SODB	Old Duston	Duston United Reformed Church	Duston United Reformed Church, Main Road, Duston, Northampton			1,590
78	SODC	Old Duston	Lyncrest Primary School	Lyncrest Primary School, Lyncrest Avenue, Northampton	✓		1,182
79	SPKA	Park	St Peter's Church Hall	St Peter's Church Hall, High Street, Weston Favell, Northampton			1,296
80	SPKB	Park	Bridgewater Primary School	Bridgewater Primary School, Bridgewater Drive, Northampton	✓		1,554
81	SRFA	Rectory Farm	Rectory Farm Community Centre	Rectory Farm Community Centre, Olden Road, Rectory Farm, Northampton			1,160
82	SRFB	Rectory Farm	Rectory Farm Community Centre	Rectory Farm Community Centre, Olden Road, Rectory Farm, Northampton			1,466
83	SRMB	Rushmills	Bridgewater Primary School	Bridgewater Primary School, Bridgewater Drive, Northampton	✓		1,048
84	SRMC	Rushmills	Old Northamptonians Association	Old Northamptonians Association, The Sir Humphrey Cripps Pavilion, Billing Road, Northampton			603
85	SRMD	Rushmills	Vernon Terrace Community Centre	Vernon Terrace Community Centre, Vernon Terrace, Northampton			600
86	SRVA	Riverside	Standens Barn Community Centre	Standens Barn Community Centre, Walledwell Court, Standens Barn, Northampton			917
87	SRVB	Riverside	Standens Barn Community Centre	Standens Barn Community Centre, Walledwell Court, Standens Barn, Northampton			1,892
88	SSJA	St James	Heroes Room, Franklins Gardens	Heroes Room, Franklins Gardens, Northampton Saints, Franklins Gardens, Weedon Road, Northampton			1,990
89	SSJB	St James	Doddridge Centre	Doddridge Centre, 109 St James Road, St James, Northampton			1,172

90	SSMC	Semilong	Semilong Community Centre	Semilong Community Centre, Norfolk Terrace, Northampton			1,149
91	SSMD	Semilong	Alliston Gardens Youth & Community Centre	Alliston Gardens Youth & Community Centre, 2 Adelaide Street, Northampton			1,444
92	SSPA	Spencer	The Spencer Dallington Community Centre	The Spencer Dallington Community Centre, Tintern Avenue, Northampton NN5 7BZ			1,714
93	SSPB	Spencer	The Spencer Dallington Community Centre	The Spencer Dallington Community Centre, Tintern Avenue, Northampton NN5 7BZ			1,727
94	STVE	Talavera	Rectory Farm Community Centre	Rectory Farm Community Centre, Olden Road, Rectory Farm, Northampton			241
Total					17	6	131,196

POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS REVIEW

Responses to Public Consultation

Summary of responses received
during consultation and the Returning
Officer's responses to these

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Alex Pradere-Johnson (Resident in Rectory Farm Ward)

Rectory Farm Ward

I would like to comment on the proposal to bring the polling for the part of Rectory Farm ward East of Gt Billing Way back to a single polling station. This is a good move as it restores the polling station arrangements to how it was previous to 2011 and removes the need for parts of the ward to have to cross Gt Billing Way to vote. It will stop a repeat of occurrence where voters had to visit two locations to cast their votes in the recent PCC election and Parish Council Polls which were held in November.

I hope that the proposals for this area go through as planned.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

Rectory Farm Ward

Thank you for your comments in support of the proposals for Rectory Farm Ward.

Cllr Mike Hallam (Northampton Borough Councillor for Parklands and Northamptonshire County Councillor for Spinney Hill Division)

Parklands Ward

I disagree with the merging of both Parklands polling stations to create just one. Parklands has one of the highest demographics of elderly people in the County and we will be forcing elderly people (many of whom do not drive) to walk further to their polling station e.g. residents in Lorraine Crescent will now have to walk over a mile to get to their nearest polling station - which I feel is too far.

Kingsley Ward

I disagree with the merging of two polling stations in Kingsley and Links View to create just one and do not believe the polling station at the Pioneer pub should be removed.

Links View is a distinct community and distinct area and residents feel they should be treated as part of Links View rather than part of Kingsley. For example, Stagecoach recently removed a bus service going up to Links View causing uproar with the residents having to walk down to Kingsley - many of whom are elderly and simply cannot walk the extra distance. I believe this to be a very similar example and Links View should be treated as a separate community with a separate polling station.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

Parklands Ward

Having carefully considered the points raised by a number of respondents about the high proportion of elderly residents in this area, I am minded to keep the electoral arrangements the same as they were previously. Therefore, a polling station will remain located at Parklands Nursery School & Childrens Centre as well as at Parklands Community Centre.

Kingsley Ward

Having carefully considered the points raised by a number of respondents, even though the polling station is less than a mile's walk for all residents, given the topography of the area I have decided to keep the electoral arrangements as they were previously. Therefore, a mobile polling station will remain located in the Pioneer

Public House car park and there will be a separate polling station at Kingsley Primary School.

George Pollard (Resident in Abington Ward)

Abington Ward

I understand that you're reviewing your polling stations at the moment.

As part of the drive to reduce the number of polling places that are located on school premises, can I suggest that Stimpson Avenue School is taken off the list of stations.

It's enormously disruptive to have the whole school closed for one day. As a parent with a young child at the school, childcare has to be arranged (and last polling day, there was only one week's notice). There's also no parking for anyone visiting by car. I'm sure a much smaller venue could be used with much less disruption to so many people.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

Abington Ward

Whilst I agree that it would be preferable to reduce the number of school premises being used, in areas such as Abington this has not been possible as no suitable alternative locations have been identified. If you are able to propose alternative venues then I would certainly look into the feasibility of using these instead.

Roger Rumsey (Resident in Parklands Ward)

I have examined your proposals on line and at the "One Stop Shop" and I have had discussions with a number of electors and report the following:-

- 1) 13 days is not enough time for a proper consultation to be held.*
- 2) If you plan to go ahead have you balanced the estimated cost savings against the increased cost of postal votes which most frail and elderly will have to revert to?*
- 3) If you go ahead does your plan match your legal obligations?*

You will introduce considerably more effort and inconvenience to voting for a great number of the electorate when with "Voter Apathy" running at the highest level I can ever remember you plan make things even harder!

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

Thank you for your email regarding the polling district/station review.

In response to your questions:

- 1) I would have preferred to have longer to deal with this issue but the boundary review reported somewhat later than is ideal, and this was coupled with the need to conduct the PCC elections in November and conclude the Community Governance Review all of which meant that the polling district review, which is a major task in itself, could not be completed earlier. The review has to be completed in time to be applied to the 1st March Register on which the County Elections will be based.
- 2) Following changes a few years ago, everyone can apply for and receive a postal vote. This change was of particular benefit to people who would have difficulty accessing a polling station due to mobility concerns or due to other commitment such as work or travel. It is possible that some people will decide to take this option up if they feel that any change to polling station is too long a distance from them, but it is not possible to estimate the numbers involved. The numbers of postal voters increase every year anyway as people are more and more preferring that option. Following problems in other parts of the country in 2010 (not in Northampton) the Electoral Commission now specify staffing levels for polling stations which make the cost of smaller polling districts and stations much higher than they used to be. Clearly I have a responsibility to manage that position and I will of course review the impact of these changes after the May elections and in future years.
- 3) Yes it does.

I have had representation from Councillor Hallam, who I note you have copied into your email, regarding arrangements in his ward. I will be taking these points into

consideration and am very happy to make changes to these proposals to reflect concerns. If you have particular areas or stations that you would like to flag up to me as being in your consideration too far for elderly and frail residents, then I will of course give those the same level of further thought.

Michael Ellis MP (Northampton North)

I am writing to you regarding your consultation on Polling Stations in Northampton.

Whilst as you know I am generally supportive of the Council's efforts to reduce expenditure, I do feel that democracy is an area where the Council must be able to strongly justify any changes before implementing them. To that end I welcome your consultation and would like to take this opportunity to raise two concerns with you.

My two concerns specifically are:

1) Links View and Kingsley

I am concerned that the proposal in this ward would negatively affect the residents of Links View in two ways. Firstly, many of the residents in this area are elderly – making walking long distances difficult. This is especially the case given that many of the roads in the Links View area are both long and steep. I do think therefore that it would be in the interests of democracy to maintain a polling station in this area.

I am also aware of concerns amongst residents that this area of the town is losing its identity, as local shops and bus services are moving to Kingsley. Whilst this is not a factor that directly affects democracy it is a relevant matter for the Borough Council to consider.

2) Parklands

As you know, the proposal in the Parklands ward is to reduce the current two polling stations (the Community Centre and the Primary School) into one polling station. Parklands is a large community and again one with a high proportion of older residents. My concern is that by merging the two polling stations into one the Council would be creating long walking distances to the polls for many residents of this ward. We do not want to have people discouraged from voting by the distance to their polling station. I am also concerned that the Parklands station has a higher turnout than average and amalgamating it with another may lead to queues and delays- which could frustrate voters and reduce turnout.

In conclusion, I know that you share my concerns that we do all that we can to ensure as many people in our town exercise their right to vote. I am sure that you will also agree with me that the Council must proceed with the utmost caution in matters such as this. I welcome the consultation into this matter and I look forward to seeing the results of it.

If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me again.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

In light of the concerns expressed by local residents about the proposed changes in the wards of Parklands and Kingsley, I propose that the voting arrangements remain as they have been previously.

Liz Smorfitt (Headteacher at Kingsthorpe Village Primary School in Kingsthorpe Ward)

Kingsthorpe Ward

I am writing to contribute to the change of location for the polling station from Kingsthorpe Village Primary School to Kingsthorpe Community Centre. From my point of view as Headteacher of the school, I welcome the move. The disruption to our school has been considerable recently, with elections of some sort being held every year. I have many parents who are not happy when school closes for elections and I am in agreement with them. I believe that a community centre is a much more appropriate venue.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

Kingsthorpe Ward

Thank you for expressing your support of these proposals.

Mrs Jarvis (Parent of a child at Fairfield's School in Trinity Ward)

Trinity Ward

Mrs Jarvis is concerned that her daughter's school is used each year as a polling station. Fairfield's School is a special needs school and they are unable to remain open during the election and therefore have to close. This causes extra stress to the parents as it is not as easy to get childcare. This also forces unnecessary change on to the children which can make their condition worse.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

Trinity Ward

Given the inconvenience caused by the school closure, we will investigate alternative locations, including at the Malcolm Arnold Academy. However, if a suitable alternative cannot be found, the polling station will have to remain at Fairfield's School.

Cllr Phil Larratt (Northampton Borough Councillor for East Hunsbury Ward and County Councillor for Nene Valley Division)
East Hunsbury Ward

I have two observations regarding this review as far as they relate to my NBC Ward, East Hunsbury.

You are proposing that SNEHC votes at East Hunsbury Primary School. I think it would be preferable if this Polling District voted at Blacky More Community Centre with SNEHB as virtually all electors in SNEHC will have to go past the Community Centre in order to get to East Hunsbury Primary School. Blacky More is close to the District Centre in Butts Road, and is far more accessible to the community of SNEHC than the Primary School. This will just leave electors in Polling District SNEHD voting at East Hunsbury Primary School.

You are also proposing that SNEHD votes at the Grangewood Club. This is a small facility hidden away at the end of two residential streets – Barn Owl Close and Peregrine Place. It is not a well-known facility beyond the immediate streets / vicinity and has not been a Polling Station for that long. I would strongly suggest that this Polling District should vote at the Abbey Centre that has been a Polling Station for many years and is a well-known community building. It is larger than the Grangewood Club and has much better parking facilities, also it is less hidden away being so close to the District Centre at Mereway, especially the local library, and is far easier to find.

I hope you can accept my views on these matters.

Nene Valley County Division

I have no comment on your proposals for Nene Valley, my County Council Division, and would offer my support for them.

Rushmills Ward

My only other comment relates to a Polling Station in Rushmills. I would suggest that the electors of SRMC should vote at the Old Scouts Rugby Club in Rushmere Road, not the Old Northamptonians on Billing Road. The Old Scouts is far more relative to the Polling District than the Old Northamptonians that is outside the Polling District. The car park at the Old Northamptonians gets very congested with cars dropping off and picking up pupils from Northampton School for Boys. Also, if there is an event at the Cripps Hall in the evening or during the day, again the car park is congested. When the car park is congested there is often conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. The Old Scouts does not have the vehicle traffic or relationship with the Boys School / Cripps Hall that the Old Northamptonians has, so I would therefore suggest that the Old Scouts is a much more suitable venue for a Polling Station.

(Acting) Returning Officer's Response

East Hunsbury Ward

Given that the majority of electors in SNEHC would pass the community centre on their way to the primary school, it seems sensible that they vote at the community centre instead of the school. The proposal that electors in SNEHC vote at the Blacky More Community Centre is therefore supported.

In light of the Abbey Centre being more accessible to electors than the Grangewood Club and given that it is no more than a mile's walk for any elector in this new larger polling district the proposal to move the polling station to the Abbey Centre is supported.

Nene Valley Division

Thank you for expressing your support of these proposals.

Rushmills Ward

Enquiries are being made at the Old Scouts Rugby Club as to whether this venue would be available for use as a polling station. If the venue can be secured, the polling station will be moved to this location. If this is not possible, it will have to remain at the Old Northamptonians Association.