

RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Local Authorities must comply with a number of legislative requirements regarding the location and accessibility of Polling Districts and Polling Places. The mandatory review process comprises a number of specified steps set out in Schedule A1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983, which include a public consultation.

The last review for Plymouth City Council was conducted in 2013. A full polling place and polling district review will now be conducted over the next 16 months.

The review will consider any representations from local residents and stakeholders in the city, including any issues regarding access to premises or facilities for persons with disabilities. Any elector can make their views known and the process for doing so will be publicised. In addition, the review will consider the impact of the next four years' worth of planned residential developments on existing electoral arrangements.

In encouraging views, it is of course the case that the availability of suitable polling places is the key determining factor in the makeup of polling districts. Therefore, in asking for comments, we will request that alternative proposals should include suggestions for polling station locations.

It is the Returning Officer's role to select the polling stations. It will be Full Council which will make the decisions on any proposed changes to polling districts or polling places. The final scheme for polling arrangements will be adopted by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Council's constitution.

The polling districts, polling places and polling stations finally decided on will be used for the May 2020 local and Police and Crime Commissioner elections.

Scope of the review

Plymouth is divided into 116 polling districts each associated with one of 114 polling stations (two of those polling stations are double). Polling districts, geographic subdivisions of each ward, as well as polling stations for each of those districts are within the scope of this review. The review is considering the continued suitability of the existing arrangements and, when necessary, will make proposals for:

- The creation or removal of districts,
- "Change" or "no change" to the boundaries between districts,
- "Change" or "no change" to the referencing of those districts,
- "Change" or "no change" to the polling stations within those districts.

Not in scope

City ward boundaries and parliamentary constituency boundaries are not in scope of this review. The legislation requires that ward boundaries are reviewed by the Electoral Commission, not by Local

Authorities themselves. We do not have a mandate to suggest alterations to the boundaries between the wards.

The review will not be able to consider comments regarding local authority boundaries, neighbouring parliamentary constituencies, the names of local authorities or other electoral areas within or bordering Plymouth City.

Glossary of terms

Polling District - A polling district is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area.

Polling Place - A polling place is the area in which the Returning Officer selects the polling station. In Plymouth, polling places represent the same area as the polling district to allow a greater degree of flexibility in deciding where a polling station should be located.

Polling Station - The polling station is the room or building where the poll takes place.

Accessing information

The report presents information for each ward of the city. These are presented in alphabetical order and are listed in a contents table on page 3.

In order to illustrate those recommendations for each ward, maps of the existing arrangements as well as maps of our proposed arrangements are available on our polling station page:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/votingandelections/pollingdistrictreview2018>

In the polling district information tables provided for each ward, the word “Electorate” refers to the total number of registered voters in the district, as of August 2018.

In the polling station information tables provided for each ward, the expression “Polling Station Electorate” refers to the total number of registered voters in the district who have opted to attend a polling station to vote, as of August 2018. This figure excludes electors from the district who may have opted to vote by other means. This figure informs us of the maximum number of electors who may attend the polling station on polling day.

HAM WARD**Existing Polling Districts**

Polling district reference	Polling Station	Electorate ¹	Proposed changes
BA	St. Philips C of E Church Hall	1,522	No change
BB	Weston Mill Oak Villa Social Club	707	No change
BC	North Prospect Library	2,706	Change of district boundaries
BD	Mobile Unit at Tewkesbury Close ³	561	Merger with BE
BE	Morice Baptist Church	1,703	Merger with BD and change of district boundaries
BF	St. Pancras Church	3,040	Change of district boundaries

Existing Polling Stations

Polling district reference	Polling Station	Polling station electorate ²	Disabled access	Proposed changes
BA	St. Philips C of E Church Hall	1,241	Yes	No change
BB	Weston Mill Oak Villa Social Club	552	Yes	No change
BC	North Prospect Library	2,227	Yes	No change
BD	Mobile Unit at Tewkesbury Close	471	Yes ³	Removal
BE	Morice Baptist Church	1,407	Yes	No change
BF	St. Pancras Church	2,422	Yes	No change

¹ Total number of registered electors in the district. ² Number of registered electors in the district who have opted to vote at a polling station. ³ Although mobile polling stations are suitably equipped to enable access for all voters (ramps and handrails for disabled access) there are still ongoing concerns due to their inherent characteristics, such as their narrow entrance and limited internal area.

Recommendations**District BC and BE - Alteration to polling district boundaries**

This review proposes alterations to the western side of this district, between the current district BE and BC.

Residents of the following streets would join district BC and would now attend the North Prospect Library to vote:

- Grassendale Avenue,
- Woodville close,
- Vixen Way,
- Foliot Road,
- Ash Grove,

- Burrator Gardens and
- Overdale Road.

District BD and BE – Merger of two districts

District BD is substantially smaller than other districts in the ward. The merger of district BD with district BE is proposed. Morice Baptist Church would become the new polling station for the now larger district. The proposed new district would grow to an estimated size of 1,878 electors.

Mobile Polling Station on Tewkesbury Close – Removal of mobile polling station.

The review investigates opportunities to remove mobile polling stations whenever circumstances allow.

The merger of districts BD and BE would lead to the decommissioning of this mobile polling unit. Residents would now vote at Morice Baptist Church which is located 0.3 miles away from the current polling station. Morice Baptist church is currently used as a polling station and offers good facilities, car parking, and good access.

District BE and BF - Alteration to polling district boundaries

In order to facilitate access to a polling station for most residents, a small alteration to the boundaries between district BE and BF is suggested.

The residents of the Conway Gardens would now vote at St Pancras Church in current district BF.

Summary of proposed new Polling Districts and Polling Stations

New Polling district	New Polling Station	Address	Estimated Electorate¹	Estimated Polling station electorate²
BA	St. Philips C of E Church Hall	Bridwell Road, PL5 IAF	1,522	1,241
BB	Weston Mill Oak Villa Social Club	Ferndale Road, PL2 2EL	707	552
BC*	North Prospect Library	North Prospect Road, PL2 2NE	3,243	2,691
BD*	St. Pancras Church	Honicknowle Lane, PL2 3QT	3,095	2,456
BE	Morice Baptist Church	Ham Drive, PL2 2NJ	1,667	1,368

* The creation of double polling stations at those venues is proposed in this district to cater for their large electorate.