

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.

PLYMPTON ERLE WARD**Existing Polling Districts**

Polling district	Polling Station	Electorate ¹	Recommendations
SA	St. Mary's C of E Infants School	1,379	Merger with district SB
SB	Mobile Unit at Merafield Road	1,026	Merger with district SA
SC	Rees Youth & Community Centre	851	No change
SD	Longcause Community School	1,512	No change
SE	Yealmpstone Farm Primary School	2,019	No change

Existing Polling Stations

Polling district	Polling Station	Polling station electorate ²	Disabled access	Recommendations
SA	St. Mary's C of E Infants School	1,153	Yes	Replacement
SB	Mobile Unit at Merafield Road	838	Yes ³	Removal
SC	Rees Youth & Community Centre	701	Yes	No change
SD	Longcause Community School	1,177	Yes	Replacement
SE	Yealmpstone Farm Primary School	1,652	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 inherent characteristics of mobile units, such as their narrow entrance and limited internal area.

Recommendations**St Mary's C of E Infant School in district SA – Replacement of polling station**

The last elections brought about concerns regarding the closing of the school on polling day. St Mary's Church Hall is being put forward as an alternative to this polling station. St Mary's Church Hall is located immediately next to the school. Amenities are very good, and include good car parking facilities.

District SA and SB – Merger of the districts

In order, whenever possible, to reduce the number of mobile polling stations, a merger of district SA and district SB is suggested. There is a possibility of creating a large district served by a polling station at St Mary's Church Hall, which is a well-appointed polling station.

Residents of the following streets would now join district SA and vote at St Mary's Church Hall on Market Road:

- Merafield Road,
- Grantham Close,
- Woodland Drive,
- Amados Close,
- Merafield Drive and

- Amados Drive.

The mobile unit at Merafield Road in district SA would be decommissioned as a result of the merger.

Longcause Community School in district SD – Replacement of polling station

The last elections brought about a representation from the management of the school regarding the continued suitability of the schools' main hall for use as a polling station. Concerns were raised about the impact of the poll on the running of the school and the wellbeing of its pupils.

The creation of a new polling station in alternative location within the district is proposed. Alternative locations are being investigated for this purpose and The Brook Inn has been put forward. This venue is located 0.2 miles away from the school and offers a car park with disabled spaces, and a convenient function room which would need to be ramped on polling day to enable access to disabled residents.

Summary of proposed new Polling Districts and Polling Stations

New Polling district	New Polling Station	Address	Estimated Electorate¹	Estimated Polling station electorate²
SA	St Mary's Church Hall	Market Road, PL7 IQW	2,405	1,991
SB	Rees Youth and Community Centre	Mudge Way, PL7 2PS	851	701
SC	The Brook Inn	Longbrook Street, PL7 1 NJ	1,512	1,177
SD	Yealmpstone Farm Primary School	Meadowfield Place, PL7 1XQ	2,019	1,652

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.