

# **PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**

**27 February 2019**

## **REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES**

**Report by the Depute Chief Executive (Chief Operating Officer)  
(Report No. 19/66)**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report seeks the Council's views on the proposed temporary change to the parliamentary constituency polling place for parliamentary polling district PLI and PLJ following the closure of the Fairfield Neighbourhood Centre.

### **1. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES**

- 1.1 The Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (ERA 2013) introduced a new provision altering the timing of compulsory reviews. The compulsory review period was the period of 16 months beginning with 1 October 2013 and the period of 16 months beginning with 1 October every fifth year after that. Perth and Kinross Council conducted and completed a statutory review of polling districts and polling places in December 2013.
- 1.2 Reviews of local government polling arrangements are conducted simultaneously with a review of polling districts and polling places for UK Parliamentary elections. The aim of any review is to ensure that every elector in Perth and Kinross had such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable, and to ensure that so far as possible, the accessibility needs of persons with a disability have been considered when designating polling places.
- 1.3 The location of proposed polling districts and places is the responsibility of Perth and Kinross Council and the location of polling stations is the responsibility of the Returning Officer. However, for the purpose of this report, all aspects of the process have been undertaken jointly.
- 1.4 Fairfield Neighbourhood Centre currently allocated as a polling place for parliamentary polling districts PLI and PLJ has been closed due to structural problems and is to be demolished. No replacement centre is to be built on the site.
- 1.5 In view of the above, it was necessary to examine the options for a temporary replacement polling place.
- 1.6 There is an electorate of approximately 2,267 within the parliamentary polling districts of PLI and PLJ with about 393 of these opting to vote by post.

- 1.7 The polling place is a multi-ward polling place. PLI falls within Ward 11 – Perth City North and PLJ falls within Ward 12 – Perth City Centre. Both polling districts are within the same Scottish Parliamentary Constituency and Westminster Parliamentary Constituency.
- 1.8 A full review of all parliamentary polling districts and polling places is required to be completed by 31 January 2020.

## **2. PROPOSALS**

### **2.1 Option 1 – Railway Staff Club, Feus Road, Perth**

With this option we would continue to have both polling districts within the same polling place. The Railway Staff Club is large enough to accommodate the two polling stations and a third if ever required. There is a large car park to the side of the Railway Staff Club with allocated disabled parking and ramped access into the function room. Access from the street also meets accessibility needs. The Railway Staff Club has sufficient kitchen and welfare facilities required for polling staff.

### **2.2 Option 2 – Kinnoull Junior Football Club, Tulloch Road, Perth**

Again with this option we could continue to have both polling districts within the same polling place. In terms of location, this would be closest to Fairfield Neighbourhood Centre, however, the venue would struggle to accommodate both polling stations within the boardroom and therefore the changing rooms would require to be used to house the other polling station(s). Access to the building is not good with the car park being uneven with large potholes. The entrance into the building is up one step, which a ramp can be provided, but the doorway and corridors are narrow. There is no natural light within the changing room areas so additional lighting would be required to provide sufficient lighting for electors whilst in polling booths. There are adequate kitchen facilities for staff but we do have concern surrounding the welfare facilities as some are located within the changing rooms which could potentially be used as polling stations.

### **2.3 Option 3 – Tulloch Community Centre, Perth**

With this option it would mean splitting the polling districts to their respective wards. PLI, which falls within Ward 11, would move to Tulloch Community Centre. This polling place already accommodates 3 polling stations. There is a concern that the current polling place could not accommodate another polling station and an additional 1,000 voters.

### **2.4 Option 4 – St John's RC Church, Balhousie Street, Perth**

As above in 2.3, this would mean splitting the polling districts to their respective wards. PLJ which falls within Ward 12 could move to St John's RC Church. This polling place currently accommodates 2 polling stations and does have capacity to accommodate another 1 polling station. Although PLJ

is within Ward 12 and the Westminster constituency of Perth and North Perthshire it would be within a different Scottish Parliamentary constituency from the other polling stations within this polling place which could be difficult for staff to manage.

### 3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Option 1, Railway Staff Club, we can continue to provide the status quo within the venue.
- 3.2 Option 2, Kinnoull Junior Football Club is not fit for purpose, does not meet our accessibility needs and is therefore not suitable as a polling place.
- 3.3 Option 3, Tulloch Community Centre, although currently a suitable polling place, it does not have the capacity to accommodate another polling station and approximately an additional 1,000 voters.
- 3.4 Option 4, St John's RC Church, provides an adequate venue as a polling place but is located outwith the Scottish Parliamentary constituency of Perthshire South and Kinrossshire for parliamentary polling district PLJ.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the Council –
  - (i) agree Option 1, Railway Staff Club, Feus Road, Perth, be allocated as the temporary polling place for parliamentary polling districts PLI and PLJ.
  - (ii) agree a review of the temporary polling place as part of the full review of parliamentary constituency polling districts and polling places when it proceeds after Westminster boundary proposals have gone through Parliament.

#### Author(s)

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#### Approved

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Yes / None</b>
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	<b>None</b>
Workforce	<b>None</b>
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	<b>None</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	<b>None</b>
Strategic Environmental Assessment	<b>None</b>
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	<b>None</b>
Legal and Governance	<b>Yes</b>
Risk	<b>None</b>
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>None</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	<b>None</b>

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The proposals support the delivery of the priorities in the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement.

#### Corporate Plan

- 1.2 The proposals support the achievement of the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan.

### 2. Resource Implications

#### Financial

- 2.1 There will be no additional financial implications arising directly from this report.

#### Workforce

- 2.2 Not applicable.

### Asset Management

- 2.3 Not applicable.

## **3. Assessments**

### Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The proposals in this report have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and assessed as not relevant for the purposes of EqIA.

### Legal and Governance

- 3.3 The legal framework for this report is contained within the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (EAA 2006) and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (ERA 2013)

### Risk

- 3.4 It is still too early to identify if there are any long term risks.

## **4. Consultation**

### Internal

- 4.1 Elected members for Ward 11 and Ward 12 have been consulted in the requirement for a replacement polling place to be identified.

### External

- 4.2 There are no active Community Councils within the area affected by this polling place to consult.

## **5. Communication**

- 5.1 Additional publicity for electors within area will be made at time of election along with issue of poll cards.

## **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 2.1 The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

- Representation of the People Act 1983 Schedule A1
- The Review of Polling District and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006
- Electoral Administration Act 2006
- Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (ERA 2013)

### **3. APPENDICES**

Risk Assessments with photographs of venues are available on CHIP and from Members' Services.