

**Amendment to Polling Districts in the
Heysham Central Ward
13 January 2016**

Report of Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To agree amendments to the polling districts in the Heysham Central Ward which were affected by the polling district review in 2015.

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the polling districts in the Heysham Central Ward be amended as outlined in the report.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In England, it is the duty of the council in each district to divide its area into polling districts for the purpose of UK Parliamentary elections and to keep those districts under review. Councils must devise a polling district scheme with a view to giving all electors such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- 1.2 Section 17 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 introduced a duty on local authorities to carry out and complete a review of polling districts and polling places between 01 October 2013 and 31 January 2015. The deadline for responses to the consultation was 19 September 2014 and all Councillors received information relevant to their own ward to allow them to participate in the consultation.
- 1.3 On 17 December 2014 Council delegated consideration of the review to a specially convened meeting of the Council Business Committee, which took place on 29 January 2015. At that meeting, an issue was raised which had not been received as part of the consultation process concerning the polling districts within the Heysham Central Ward. As the outcome of the review had to be published by 31 January 2015, there was not sufficient time to consider the issue and it was resolved that officers would raise the suggested amendments with the Returning Officer. Section 17 of the 2013 Act provides that, notwithstanding the scheduled full review, a relevant authority may carry out a review of some or all of the polling districts or polling places in its area at any time. The polling districts in the Heysham Central ward have therefore

been the subject of a further review.

- 1.4 Heysham Central Ward was affected by changes made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England during its boundary review of the district in 2012/13. Parts of the ward were lost to Heysham North whilst parts of Heysham South were moved into Heysham Central. Heysham Central is made up of two polling districts – HECA and HECB.
- 1.5 For the elections that took place in May 2015, which were the first elections to be run on the new boundaries, all electors voted at Heysham Mossgate School, which was reasonably central to the ward and was sited within the HECB polling district. Prior to the boundary changes, electors in the HECA polling district would have voted at St John’s Church Hall, but this is now located within the Heysham North Ward and was not used for the May 2015 elections.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 It is proposed that the polling districts be amended to allow more even distribution of the electors, and allow them to vote at two different polling stations. Heysham Road would be used as a dividing line so that the electors on the seaward side of Heysham Road would vote at a new polling station at Heysham Library and would form HECA, whilst those on the non-seaward side would continue to vote at Mossgate Primary School forming HECB.
- 2.2 A list of streets in each proposed polling district is attached at Appendix A.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 The consultation on the review for Heysham Central started on 21 September 2015 and the deadline for responses was 30 October 2015. All Councillors were notified of the proposals, as were Members of Parliament, County Councillors and Parish Council and Meeting clerks.
- 3.2 In addition, a notice of the review was published on the Council’s Website, and displayed on the notice boards at both Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls.
- 3.3 A press release was also circulate and the consultation was reported on in the local media.

4.0 Responses to Consultation

- 4.1 Only one written response was received. A copy of the response is attached at Appendix B for members’ information.
- 4.2 The response was in favour of the changes within the ward, as the old Heysham Library was a popular polling station for residents living on the coastal side of Heysham Road. The old library building has since been demolished and replaced with a new library on one level, making it easily accessible for voters.

5.0 Returning Officers Response

- 5.1 The Returning Officer has no further comments on the proposals that have

been made in Appendix A to this report.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 Council is asked to consider and agree to the amendments to the polling districts contained within the Heysham Central Ward (as shown in Appendix A).
- 6.2 On conclusion of the review, the Council is required to publish details of the actual designations of polling districts and polling places agreed as a result of the review, together with details of where the results of the review have been published. This will be done by way of press release and details of the new polling districts will be published on the Council's website and on the notice boards at Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council may carry out a review of a polling district at any time.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report. The fees for polling stations used in elections are only paid for by the City Council in the case of City Council and Parish Council elections which generally occur on the same day – the fees for polling stations and associated costs will be built into the budget for the next election which is due in 2019. Polling station fees for Parish Council by-elections are charged to the Parish Council.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Human Resources:

None.

Information Services:

The GIS officer has been advised of the proposed changes and will amend the City Council's records once the proposals have been agreed.

Property:

None.

Open Spaces:

None.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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