

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee



held on Wednesday 13 November 2024 at 6.00 pm
in the Meeting Room 1, Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon, OX14 3JE

Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Robert Maddison (Chair), Max Thompson (Vice-Chair), Ron Batstone and Sarah James

Officers: Susan Baker, Electoral Services Team Leader, and Steven Corrigan, Democratic Services Manager

Remote attendance: Jordan Kennedy, Electoral Services Officer and Bertram Smith, Broadcasting Officer

28. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Diana Lugova.

29. Minutes

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2024 as a correct record and agree that the chair sign them as such.

30. Declarations of interest

None.

31. Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

32. Public participation

No speakers had registered to address the committee.

33. Review of polling districts and polling places

The committee considered the report of the head of legal and democratic on proposals for polling districts and polling places following a periodic review required by the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

The committee was advised of a missing representation from Councillor Sarah James, Hendreds ward member. Councillor James reported that she was in full support of the proposal to designate Milton Hill Bowls Club as the polling place for polling district SJD – Milton (Heights).

The committee noted and welcomed that interim reviews of polling districts and particularly polling places had been proactively undertaken since the previous compulsory review completed in October 2019, including prior to the district and parish elections in May 2023 and prior to the Police and Crime Commissioner and Parliamentary elections in 2024. For the majority of arrangements no issues had been raised as part of this review as detailed in the report and appendices.

The committee noted that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) Electoral Review of Oxfordshire and the LGBCE Vale of White Horse Electoral Review might require further changes to the designation of polling districts and polling places.

In response to questions and comments, officers confirmed that the use of Stonewater as a potential polling place for Fitzharris Ock and Louie Memorial Pavilion, once rebuilt, as a potential polling place for Botley and North Hinksey would be kept under review, that officers had undertaken site visits to the proposed polling places and considered the parking arrangements at Wantage Methodist Church satisfactory and that the sharing of polling places for two or more district ward/county division elections was best avoided.

Committee members were supportive of the schedule of polling districts and polling places set out in paragraph 23 of the report. They thanked officers for a comprehensive and diligent report.

RESOLVED:

1. To designate Milton Hill Bowls Club as the polling place for polling district SJD.
2. To continue with the designation of Shellingford Community Hall as the polling place for polling district SOC.
3. To designate Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall as the polling place for polling district SOF.
4. To designate Wantage Methodist Church as the polling place for polling district SSC1.
5. To divide the current polling district TGA into three polling districts - TGA, TGB and TGC as shown in appendix C to the report of the head of legal and democratic to the Community Governance and Electoral Issues Committee meeting of 13 November 2024 and designate the polling places as below:

- TGA - Faringdon Leisure Centre;

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- TGB – Faringdon United Church;
 - TGC – The Corn Exchange.
6. To continue with the designation of The Mobile Unit at the White Hart public house as the polling place for polling district TRB.
 7. To designate St Mary the Virgin Community Hub as the polling place for polling district TTG.
 8. To designate St Mary the Virgin Community Hub as the polling place for polling district TTJ.
 9. To designate Abingdon Carousel Family Centre as the polling place for polling district XAA2.
 10. To designate Preston Road Community Centre as the polling place for polling district XAB1.
 11. To divide the current polling district XBA into two polling districts one to the west of the A34 (XBA1) and the other to the east of the A34 (XBA2) and designate the polling places as below:
 - XBA1 – the building containing Seacourt Hall (first preference) and Botley Baptist Church;
 - XBA2 – Botley Women’s Institute Hall.
 12. To designate Radley Church Room as the polling place for polling district XDB.

The meeting closed at 6:25pm