

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **District of Easington**

### **Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2007**

### **Report of the Head of Democratic Services - Proposals for Polling Districts and Polling Places**

#### **1. Introduction**

Local authorities are required to divide their area into polling districts for the purposes of parliamentary elections, to designate polling places for these polling districts, and to keep these under review.

The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty on Councils to review all polling districts and places by the end of 2007, and every four years thereafter.

The aim of this review is to ensure that:

All electors have reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances; and

As far as is reasonable and practicable, polling places are accessible to all electors, including disabled people.

#### **2. Preliminary Stage**

The review was commenced by publishing a Notice of Review at the beginning of August 2007 inviting initial comments from any elector or interested party in relation to the present location of polling places within the District and any suggestions for possible alternative polling places.

District Councillors, County Councillors, MPs, Acting Returning Officers for Easington and Sedgefield Constituencies, Parish Councils and groups who have a particular interest and/or expertise in access by disabled people were also consulted and asked for comments.

This initial consultation period ended on 12 September 2007.

Comments were received from the following:-

Castle Eden Parish Council, Dalton-le-Dale Parish Council, Horden Parish Council, Seaham Town Council, Wheatley Hill Parish Council, Manager of Wheatley Hill Community Centre, Acting Returning Officer for Sedgefield Constituency, District Councillor F Shaw, District Councillor A Napier.

### 3. **Accessibility**

To ensure that the District met its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, it has already collected basic information regarding the accessibility of the polling places it used.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 placed additional responsibilities upon public authorities and the district is actively addressing these. As part of this process the District is seeking to forge closer partnerships with the polling place owners and managers. This will allow the District to gather additional information and collate the access audits that have already been undertaken. The District will then, as a part of its duties, and where there is a short fall of relevant information, support facilities to supplement this information.

Having collated this information, the District will produce an action plan that addresses specific access issues at individual polling places. The plan will seek to reduce the possible impact that these access issues have upon the electorate.

Training will be given to Electoral Services staff and Polling Staff to ensure that the plan is fully implemented.

The actions that the District is taking will be promoted through a number of routes. The District will seek to ensure that the electorate is fully aware of the support that can be offered, and any possible limitations regarding access to specific polling places that cannot be overcome.

### 4. **Proposals**

Proposals for polling districts and polling places were prepared and are detailed below, along with reasons for any proposed changes or reasons for making no change to the existing arrangements.

The Acting Returning Officers for the two Parliamentary Constituencies within the District were required to comment in relation to probable polling stations due to the Council's proposals for polling districts and polling places, and their comments/observations in relation to each proposal are included in this report.

### 5. **Consultation Stage**

The consultation stage was for any representations and comments on the Authority's proposals for polling districts and places.

Interested persons and bodies, including electors, political parties, District Council members, County Council members, Parish Councils, local disability groups had the right to comment on the proposals.

The consultation stage commenced on 12 October and ended on 26 October 2007.

## 6. **Polling Places Working Group**

A Working Group was established to consider the proposals together with any representations received from consultees.

The Working Group's recommendations are included in this report at the end of each proposal.

## 7. **Details of Proposals for Polling Districts and Polling Places**

### 7.1 **Acre Rigg Ward**

**Polling District V – Existing Polling Place: Acre Rigg Junior School** - the polling place is centrally located within the polling district. Car parking facilities are available in the school yard. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

### 7.2 **Blackhalls Ward**

**Polling District AA – Existing Polling Place: Blackhall Resource Centre** – this polling place is in a good, central location within the polling district. There is a car parking area. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AB – Existing Polling Place: St Joseph's Primary School** – although this polling place is situated just outside the polling district, it is considered more suitable than any alternative premises within the polling district area. There are car parking facilities. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AB-1 – Existing Polling Place: Temporary Polling Station sited at Attlee Avenue, Blackhall Rocks** - as there are no suitable premises within this polling district, a site at Attlee Avenue has been agreed as a polling place where a temporary portable building can be located.

It is accepted that portacabins are not ideal, however, in the absence of any suitable premises within the area, it is felt that this is the only alternative if a polling place is to be provided within the polling district.

**PROPOSAL: THE POLLING PLACE BE ATTLEE AVENUE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.3 **Dawdon Ward**

**Polling District BH – Existing Polling Place: Parkside Community Centre** - this polling place is well located within the polling district. On-street parking is available outside the centre. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BI – Existing Polling Place: Camden Square Infants School** – the rear entrance door to the school building is used as there is only a single step, for which a temporary ramp is provided. The front entrance door has a number of steps and is not suitable. Car parking is available in yard area. Comments have been received from local members: they believe that the approach to the rear entrance of the school could be quite dark in the evening/night times in the event of elections being held during autumn/winter time, and could cause difficulties for electors. Members have suggested that Princess Road Junior School should be considered as an alternative.

An inspection has been carried out at Princess Road Junior School, however, access to the premises is not considered any more beneficial to electors than that at Camden Square. Access to the building would also have to be via a rear entrance as there are a number of steps at the main entrance.

A new school building is currently under construction with an expected completion date of September 2008.

**PROPOSAL: THAT CAMDEN SQUARE PRIMARY SCHOOL CONTINUE TO BE THE POLLING PLACE UNTIL THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING IS COMPLETED IN 2008**, rather than changing the polling place at this stage and again next year when the new school is completed, and possibly causing confusion to electors.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable but it is suggested that the polling station be relocated to the nursery part of the building and the nursery entrance be used for future elections.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED AND SUGGESTED THAT IN THE INTERIM, ARRANGEMENTS BE MADE FOR PROVISION OF TEMPORARY SUPPLEMENTARY LIGHTING IF REQUIRED FOR ELECTIONS HELD IN AUTUMN/WINTER.**

**Polling District BK – Existing Polling Place: Ropery Walk Primary School** - this is a new building, which is reasonably positioned within the polling

district. Car parking is available within the yard area. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BL – Existing Polling Place: Dawdon Community Centre** - these premises are centrally located within the polling district. Car parking facilities are available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.4 **Denehouse Ward**

**Polling District X – Existing Polling Place: Denehouse Primary School** – this polling place is in a reasonable location within the polling district. Car parking facilities are available in the school yard. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.5 **Deneside Ward**

**Polling District B – Existing Polling Place: Eastlea Community Centre:** these premises are in a good position and in very close proximity to the polling district, although not located within it. There are no suitable premises situated within the polling district itself. Car parking is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BC – Existing Polling Place: Eastlea Community Centre** - these premises are in a good central position within the polling district. Car parking is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling Districts BG and BG-1 – Existing Polling Place: All Saints Church, rear The Avenue** - there are currently two polling districts, BG and BG-1, using this polling place. Previously, electors from polling district BG used to use Lawnside Community Hall, however, since its demolition these electors have gone to All Saints Church. We have had no adverse comments from either electors or local members regarding this arrangement.

All Saints Church premises are in a central position between the two existing polling districts. Car parking facilities are available.

No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: THAT THE CURRENT POLLING DISTRICT BG-1 BE DELETED AND THIS AREA BE MERGED WITH EXISTING POLLING DISTRICT BG. THE POLLING PLACE FOR ALL ELECTORS IN THIS NEWLY MERGED POLLING DISTRICT TO BE ALL SAINTS CHURCH.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.6 **Easington Colliery Ward**

**Polling District I – Existing Polling Place: Church of the Ascension Hall** – this polling place is in a central position within the polling district. The building has a car parking area. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District J – Existing Polling Place: Easington Colliery Primary School** – this polling place is in a central position within the polling district. Car parking is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

A slight adjustment to the existing boundary line between these two polling districts will be made to bring the area of land next to Holmehill Gardens into polling district J.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.7 **Easington Village and South Hetton Ward**

**Polling District F – Existing Polling Place: Hawthorn Community Centre** – this polling place is reasonably located within the village. Street parking is available immediately to the front of the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District G – Existing Polling Place: Lee House** – this polling place is in a good, central location within the polling district. Off street parking is available to the side of the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District H – Existing Polling Place: Seaton Holme** – this polling place is in a good central location within the polling district. A car parking area is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable .*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District K – Existing Polling Place: Robin Todd Centre** – this polling place is in a good, central location. Car parking facilities are available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**7.8 Edenhill Ward**

**Polling District W – Existing Polling Place: Eden Community Primary School** – this polling place is in a central position within polling district. Parking facilities are available in the school yard. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

For information, a new school is planned on a site at the junction of Eden Lane and Ellison Road; building scheduled to commence in 2008.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**7.9 Haswell and Shotton Ward**

**Polling District L – Existing Polling Place: The Plough Inn, Haswell Plough** - this polling place is in a reasonable location within the village, and there is a large car parking area available.

Suitable premises are extremely limited in Haswell Plough and although these premises may not be ideal, as the majority of houses in the village are located on the other side of the main road, it is unlikely that alternative premises will provide any improvement in the accessibility of facilities. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable. The polling station to be located in the conservatory area of the building.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District M – Existing Polling Place: The Hazelwell Centre, Haswell** – this polling place is in a central position within the polling district. Street parking is available immediately outside centre. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

A slight adjustment to the current boundary line between polling districts L and M will be made, although this will not affect any properties.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District N – Existing Polling Place: Our Lady of Lourdes R C Primary School** – this polling place is centrally located within the polling district. Good car parking is available within the school car park. The school also make arrangements to remove bollards to allow access to the rear yard, to enable parking directly at the rear entrance, which provides for suitable access for disabled people.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District O – Existing Polling Place: Shotton Primary School, Grange Terrace** – this polling place is in a central position within the overall area of the polling district. Parking facilities are available in the school yard. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District P – Existing Polling Place: Bridge Road Community Centre** - this polling place is in a good position within the polling district. A car park is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**



*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District Q – Existing Polling Place: Alcote Grove Community Hall** – this polling place is in a reasonably central position within the polling district. Car parking is available to front or rear of building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.10 **Horden North Ward**

**Polling District R – Existing Polling Place: Our Lady Star of the Sea R C Primary School** – although this polling place is not particularly central within the polling district, the premises are the most suitable in this area. Car parking is available in school yard area. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District R-1 – Existing Polling Place: Grants Houses (Temporary Polling Station Site):** a temporary portacabin is used on a previously identified site. There is limited access for disabled people, however, there are no available premises in the Grants Houses area.

Advice has been sought from the Council's Public Buildings Officer who confirms that portacabins can cause a number of access and other difficulties. We have also had problems in the past with vandalism and complaints from residents regarding the siting of a portacabin and the problems this can cause.

There are 343 electors from 7 streets in the area who are currently allocated to this polling place. Out of these 343 electors there are 54 postal voters, leaving 289 polling station voters.

The only alternative to siting a portacabin would be for electors to go to Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School (used for polling district R) which is approximately a half-mile away.

No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: THAT POLLING DISTRICT R-1 BE DELETED AND ELECTORS FROM THE GRANTS HOUSES AREA BE INCLUDED IN CURRENT POLLING DISTRICT R, WITH THEIR POLLING PLACE BEING OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA R C PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: RECOMMENDED THAT THE POLLING PLACE AT GRANTS HOUSES BE RETAINED FOR ELECTORS IN POLLING DISTRICT R-1.**

**Polling District S – Existing Polling Place: Horden Catholic Social Club, South Terrace** – this polling place is centrally located in the polling district. Off-street car parking is available. No comments have been received.  
**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.11 Horden South Ward

**Polling District T – Existing Polling Place: Salvation Army Hall, Dene Terrace** – this polling place is in a reasonable position in the polling district. Street parking is available outside premises.

The outside area is not ideal as concreted yard area and ramped area are cracked and worn. However, it is unlikely any alternative premises in the vicinity will provide any better access facilities. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District U – Existing Polling Place: Yohden Primary School, Windsor Terrace, Horden** – this polling place is centrally positioned in the polling district. Parking is available in yard area to front of building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

A slight adjustment to the existing boundary line between polling districts T and U will be made to include all properties in Cotsford Lane in polling district U.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.12 Howletch Ward

**Polling District Z – Existing Polling Place: Howletch Lane Primary School** – this polling place is reasonably located within the polling district. Car parking is available in the school yard, to rear of the building used. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.13 **Hutton Henry Ward**

**Polling District AC – Existing Polling Place: Hesleden Community Centre, Front Street** – this building is in a central location within the village. Street parking is available on the road in front of the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling Districts AD, AD-1, AF – Existing Polling Place: Hutton Henry Church Hall** - all three polling districts use this polling place as polling districts AD and AD-1 are very small (only 44 properties/85 electors and 4/2 respectively) and there are no alternative premises in these areas.

There is limited on-street parking outside this polling place. The entrance door is at the rear of the building and there are two steps. There is also an alternative entrance door which has a permanent concrete ramp, however, access for wheelchair users via this entrance would be difficult because of the narrow doorway and the restricted space inside.

It is suggested, therefore, that Hutton Henry Primary School be used in place of the Church Hall.

The school is well located in the village, has car parking facilities within the premises, and access to the building is more suitable than at the Church Hall. The main entrance to the school building is not satisfactory, however, there is an alternative entrance to the rear of the building. This entrance has a single step for which a ramp could be provided if required. This gives direct access into main hall.

**PROPOSAL: THAT THE NEW POLLING PLACE FOR POLLING DISTRICTS AD, AD-1 AND AF BE HUTTON HENRY PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AE – Existing Polling Place: Castle Eden Village Hall** – this polling place is well located within the polling district. A car park is available.

The Parish Council have commented that they are satisfied with the current arrangements.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.14 **Murton East Ward**

**Polling District B-1 – Existing Polling Place: Dalton-le-Dale W.I. Hall** – this polling place is in a good location within the polling district. Access into the building is not satisfactory as the doorway has a step and the gravelled pathway would be difficult for wheelchair access. The only parking facility is a single off-road parking space in front of the building.

There are, however, no alternative premises within the polling district area. In previous years the Church has been used, however, it cannot always be guaranteed that the Church will be available for election use (dependent on the Church calendar), and obviously the Church is a very old building with no appropriate facilities.

Use of the W.I. Hall is more reliable/guaranteed.

The Parish Council have commented that they are satisfied with the current arrangements.

Although the premises are not ideal, in the absence of any alternative premises within the area and the fact that we have had no complaints or comments from electors using the premises or any other interested parties.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District C – Existing Polling Place: Murton Community School, Barnes Road** – this is a newly built (2006) school with car parking facilities, suitable access etc. Although the new school building is now within Murton West Ward (just over the boundary line between the two wards), it is suggested that it be used for polling district C (Murton East Ward). No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable. The polling stations to be located in the school hall.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District C-1 – Existing Polling Place: The Glebe Centre, Durham Place** – this polling place is in a good location. Car parking is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District C-2 – Existing Polling Place: MacRae House, Seaview Walk** – this polling place is reasonably positioned in the polling district. The premises are a Council owned (Warden Services) community centre. A parking area is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

A slight adjustment to the current polling district boundary line will be made, although this will not affect any properties.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.15 **Murton West Ward**

**Polling District D – Existing Polling Place Murton Community Primary School, Barnes Road** - newly built (2006) school with car parking facilities, suitable access etc.

Electors within the existing polling district D used to vote at the old Murton Primary School in Watt Street. This has now been demolished and replaced with the new Community Primary School in Barnes Road.

Although the new school building is situated within the polling district, it stands virtually on the boundary line with Murton East Ward. It is not, therefore, particularly close for electors coming from the west of the Ward.

It is felt that more suitable provision should be made for electors from the west end of Murton West Ward, and it is suggested that an alternative polling place be provided.

The only building identified as being a possible alternative polling place is New Hesledon Social Club in Wellfield Road. These premises are centrally located within the west area of the Ward. There is a car parking area at the rear of the building.

**PROPOSAL: NEW HESLEDON SOCIAL CLUB BE THE POLLING PLACE FOR ELECTORS FROM THE REVISED POLLING DISTRICT D AS INDICATED ON THE MAP ATTACHED (APPENDIX 1). THE SUGGESTED BOUNDARY LINE BETWEEN THE NEW POLLING DISTRICTS D AND D-1 IS INDICATED BY A BLUE LINE ON THE MAP. THE WARD BOUNDARY IS INDICATED BY A RED LINE.**

The remainder of the West Ward will become the revised polling district D-1 (as indicated on the map) and the polling place for D-1 will be Murton Community Primary School.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable. The polling stations to be located in the main hall.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District D-1 –Existing Polling Place: McNally House, Bevan Square** - this polling district was created around McNally House as the polling place.

McNally House used to be one of the Council's warden controlled community centres, however, the premises are now licensed to DCC (for Day Care Patients). As part of their licence they have the right to use the premises Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm. District of Easington residents share the use of these premises.

Under these current circumstances we rely on the goodwill of the day care providers to give up their centre for election days, which can cause them difficulties.

It is not clear what the position will be once this current licence expires in April 2008.

The new Murton Community School building is just a few minutes walk away from McNally House.

**PROPOSAL: IT IS PROPOSED THAT ELECTORS FROM POLLING DISTRICT D-1, WHO CURRENTLY VOTE AT MCNALLY HOUSE, NOW VOTE AT THE SCHOOL.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.16 **Passfield Ward**

**Polling District Y – Existing Polling Place: Oakerside Community Centre** – this polling place is quite well located within the polling district. Car park facilities are available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District Y-1 – Existing Polling Place: Helford Road Pavilion** – this polling place is reasonably well positioned in the polling district. Car park facilities are available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District Y-2 – Existing Polling Place: Shotton Hall Infants School, Waveney Road** – this polling place is in a good position in the polling district. Car parking is available immediately outside the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District Y-3 – Existing Polling Place: East Durham Community College Howletch Centre** – this polling place is in a reasonable location in the polling district. Car parking is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable. It is suggested that the IT Suite (Room B3) be used for the polling station at all future elections.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

#### 7.17 Seaham Harbour Ward

**Polling District BD – Existing Polling Place: Earl House Community Centre** – this polling place is in a central location within the polling district. A car parking area and street parking are available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BE – Existing Polling Place: St Mary Magdalene Parish Hall, Harbour Walk** - this polling place is well positioned within the polling district, there is a car parking area around the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BF – Existing Polling Place: Rock House Community Centre, Tempest Road** - this polling place is reasonably well located within the polling district. Car parking is available outside building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable and will*

*have adequate facilities for the required staff The polling station to be located in the main hall.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BJ – Existing Polling Place: Shakespeare Street Community Centre** - these premises are reasonably positioned within the polling district. On- street parking is available. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

7.18 **Seaham North Ward**

**Polling District A – Existing Polling Place: Seaton Community Association Hall** - this polling place is reasonably positioned within the polling district. There is street parking available immediately in front of the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BA – Existing Polling Place: Seaham Catholic Club, Mill Road** - this polling place is positioned in a reasonably central location within the polling district. There is a car parking area to the front of the building (although the car park surface is cracked/uneven and in poor condition). No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District BA-1 – Existing Polling Place: St Mary Magdalene Parish Hall, Harbour Walk:** these premises are not located in the polling district, or indeed the same District Ward as the polling district, however, there are no suitable available premises within the polling district area (i.e. East Shore Village).

Approaches have been made to the management of the The Crow's Nest pub which is situated in the polling district, however, they have confirmed that the premises could not be made available for polling station purposes. The layout within the premises is 'open plan', so there are no separate rooms that could be made available.

The Masonic Hall, which stands on North Road has also been considered, (although these premises are not located within the polling district or the same District Ward as East Shore Village). The management of the premises



have been approached, however, they have informed us that availability for election purposes cannot be guaranteed.

The only alternative therefore to using St Mary Magdalene's Church Hall is a temporary portacabin.

Advice has been sought from the Council's Public Buildings Officer who confirms that portacabins can cause a number of access and other difficulties. In addition to this, a portacabin will not provide the facilities available at the Church Hall and would be more costly to provide.

**PROPOSAL: THAT ST MARY MAGDALENE PARISH HALL CONTINUE TO BE THE POLLING PLACE FOR POLLING DISTRICT BA-1.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: RECOMMENDED THAT A POLLING PLACE FOR ELECTORS IN THIS POLLING DISTRICT (BA-1) BE CREATED ON THE EAST SHORE VILLAGE SITE.**

**Polling District BB – Existing Polling Place: Mitchells, West Grove** - this polling place is centrally located within the polling district. A car park is available to the rear of the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises are suitable.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**7.19 Thornley and Wheatley Hill Ward**

**Polling District AM – Existing Polling Place: Thornley Library** – this polling place is centrally located in the polling district. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AK – Existing Polling Place: Wheatley Hill, Patton House Community Centre** - these premises are now leased to Alzheimers Trust with a view to sale.

It is merely the goodwill of the occupiers that has allowed use of the premises for the last two elections, although they, understandably, expressed reluctance to give up the centre for election days.

As the future arrangements for these premises are uncertain, and obtaining the premises for future elections is not guaranteed, it is recommended that alternative arrangements be made.

Comments have been received from Wheatley Hill Parish Council. They are aware that an alternative to Patton House is required, and have suggested that the Methodist Church be considered as an alternative.

On visiting the Methodist Church, the premises were found to be in a poor overall condition with no interior floors. It appears that work is currently being carried out to the building, however, in its present condition it is not suitable for use.

**PROPOSAL: THAT WHEATLEY HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE BE USED. THESE PREMISES ARE CENTRALLY LOCATED WITHIN WHEATLEY HILL, PROVIDE CAR PARKING FACILITIES, LEVEL ACCESS WITH AUTOMATIC DOORS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE BUILDING, AND LEVEL ACCESS INSIDE THE BUILDING.**

During the preliminary stage, correspondence has been received from Wheatley Hill Community Centre's Manager advising of the availability of the premises for election purposes.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED WITH RECOMMENDATION THAT THE SITUATION BE REVIEWED IF AND WHEN ANY SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE PREMISES BECOME AVAILABLE.**

**Polling District AL – Existing Polling Place: Wheatley House Community Centre, Aged Miners Homes** – on-street parking is available on the road to the front of the building.

Comments have been received from Wheatley Hill Parish Council that they are satisfied with Wheatley House and suggest continued use of these premises.

Although there are no problems with Wheatley House, if the electors from polling district AK (Patton House area) use Wheatley Hill Community Centre, it is suggested that electors who currently vote at Wheatley House also use the Community Centre because of its central location in Wheatley Hill. As Wheatley House is in fairly close proximity to Wheatley Hill Community Centre, it would seem unnecessary to have two polling places so close together.

**PROPOSAL: THAT BOTH POLLING DISTRICTS AK AND AL BE MERGED AND THERE BE ONE CENTRAL POLLING PLACE AT WHEATLEY HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

## 7.20 Wingate Ward

### **Polling District AG – Existing Polling Place: Station Town Community Centre**

– this polling place is in a reasonably good position within the polling district. Street parking is available immediately outside the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

### **Polling District AH – Existing Polling Place: Wingate Community Centre –**

this polling place is in a good location within the polling district. Off-street car parking is available directly outside the front of building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AI – Existing Polling Place: Gully House, Gully Road –** This polling place is located on the edge of the polling district. On-street parking is available outside the premises. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AJ – Existing Polling Place: Trimdon Station Community Centre, Station Road –** this polling place is centrally located in the polling district. Limited parking is available to side of building. Street parking is available to front of the building. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff. The polling station to be located in the library or the meeting room which are both on the ground floor.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**Polling District AJ-1 – Existing Polling Place: Trimdon Station Residents Association, May Crescent** – this polling place is centrally located within the polling district. On-street parking is available outside the building. The rear entrance to the building is used. No comments have been received.

**PROPOSAL: NO CHANGE.**

A slight adjustment to the existing boundary line between polling districts AJ and AJ-1 will be made to bring all properties in Foundry Mews and all properties in Wingate Road into polling district AJ-1.

*Acting Returning Officer's comments: Agree with the proposal. It is considered that as far as is practicable the premises provide access for all electors including those with any disability and that there will be adequate facilities for the required staff.*

**WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATION: PROPOSAL AGREED.**

**8. Conclusion of the Review**

The Council must agree final proposals for the new polling districts and places, which will be implemented on the publication of the new Register of Electors on 1 December 2007.

**APPENDIX 1**

