



# South Tyneside Council

Constitution Committee  
19 March 2024

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## Constitution Committee 22 November 2023

Present: Councillors: Dixon, Ford, Huntley, Kilgour, McCabe, Proudlock and Walsh

John Rumney (Corporate Lead Legal and Governance), Joanne Gelson (Elections Manager), Karen Connolly (Democracy Officer), Jonathan Lunness (Scrutiny and Democracy Support Officer)

### 1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2. Minutes of 25 October 2023

Agreed: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

### 3. Statutory Review of Polling Districts, Places and Stations

Submitted: Report of the Corporate Lead Legal and Governance

John Rumney, Corporate Lead Legal and Governance, presented the report which outlined the statutory review of polling districts, places and stations in accordance with the provisions of the Representation of the People Act 1983 and the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013.

Following the interim review of portable polling stations carried out in 2022, the number of portable polling stations was significantly reduced. At the local government elections in May 2023, there were 68 designated polling places, with six places using portable units, ten places hosting two polling stations and one place hosting three polling stations.

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A number of small issues with the new allocation of polling places were identified following the May 2023 elections. These includes new polling places for Beacon & Bents and Monkton wards to replace The Word and the Marque at the Lord Nelson Pub. An alternative polling place for Hebburn South instead of Hartleyburn and Clegwell Community Association for voters in district RB was also identified for attention.

The voter satisfaction survey about their experience at the polling station showed that 98.1% of voters agreed that the polling station was near to where they lived and that 98.3% thought the polling station was easy to get into.

During discussion the proposals, Members noted the importance of clear signage for redirection if any polling stations are moved so that voters know where to go instead.

Resolved: That the options considered be agreed as follows:

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AA	Marine Park Primary School, Hatfield Square		<b><u>Comment from a Ward Member</u></b> I don't have any particular issues/objections to these proposals.	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
AB	Nursery Unit, Hadrian Primary School, Fort Square			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
AC	Ocean Road Community Centre, Ocean Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
AD	The Word, Market Place, South Shields	The Word was not suitable due to the high level of library traffic. Consider relocating to <b>St Hilda's Church, Market Place, South Shields</b>		<u>Agreed</u> Move polling place to St Hilda's Church, Market Place, South Shields
AE	The Register Office, Ceremony Entrance, 10 Broughton Road	The Register Office is not available for 2 May 2024 only (wedding booked) Consider temporary relocation to <b>The Coroners Office, Beach Road, South Shields</b>		<u>Agreed</u> Temporarily move the polling place to The Coroners Office, Beach Road, South Shields for 2024.
BA	All Saints Community Centre, Stanley Street			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
BB	Holy Trinity C E Academy, Nursery Unit, Brockley Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
BC	Biddick Hall Junior School, Chesterton Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
BD	Chuter Ede Community Association, Galsworthy Road, South Shields	Chuter Ede is being demolished. Consider moving to <b>Biddick Hall and Whiteleas Family Hub, Galsworthy Road, South Shields</b> (next to Biddick Hall Infants School)	<u>Agreed</u> Move polling place to Biddick Hall and Whiteleas Family Hub, Galsworthy Road, South Shields	

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CA	Cleadon Park Health Centre, Prince Edward Road		<p><b><u>Comment from a Ward Member</u></b>            I am concerned that the Harton Moor area lost their portable station this year and residents were required to vote at the Cleadon Park Health centre. This led to a turnout of only 9.4%. or only 42 people voting in person. Residents voting on foot are required to cross over the road from Harton Moor to the John Reid Road, then cross the road at King George Road, in effect navigate five roads to vote and a further five to return home. During my campaign it was clear residents were reluctant to travel that distance to vote and Harton Moor has a large percentage of elderly residents who have not registered for a postal vote. I would urge you to reconsider the station for this area with the return of a portable station.</p> <p>I would also ask you to consider whether a polling station for Cleadon Vale residents may be better located at the Ridgeway Childrens Centre, again it was an extremely low turnout for this polling district and I would assume having three polling centres for Cleadon Park at the Cleadon Park Health centre places some pressure on space at this location.</p>	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
CB	Cleadon Park Health Centre, Prince Edward Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
CC	Portable Station, The Lonnen, Next To Cleadon Tower Nursery			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
CD	The Sutton Hall, 210/212 Prince Edward Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
CE	Cleadon Park Health Centre, Prince Edward Road			<p><u>Agreed</u>            Move polling place back to Portable Station, McAnany Avenue</p>

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DA	The Community Room, Sheltered Accommodation, Falstone Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
DB	St Gregory's Church Hall, Borough Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
DC	St Lawrence Church Hall, Centenary Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
DD	Cleadon & District Working Mens Club, Fulwell Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
EA	Westoe Crown Community Hub, Unit R9 Sea Winnings Way		<b><u>Comment from a Ward Member</u></b> I think the polling stations worked well this year and I see no need for changes.	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
EB	Territorial Army (TA) Centre, Entrance off Highfield Road next to Callum Drive		<b><u>Comment from a Ward Member</u></b> They seemed to work ok except for the one in Highfield Rd Cllrs complained it needed handrails for the elderly and disabled	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
EC	The Community Shop (Hospitality & Hope), 6 - 7 Horsley Hill Square		<b><u>Comment from a Ward Member</u></b> There needs to be more stable handrails and preferably two to give extra support for those people who need it. Secondly, the signage on Highfield Road needs to be clearer. When I went to the polling station,	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
ED	The Baptist Tabernacle, Marsden Road		it wasn't very clear from Highfield Road that a polling station was there and that there was parking.	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
EE	The Community Shop (Hospitality & Hope), 6 - 7 Horsley Hill Square			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place

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FA	One Trinity Green, Eldon Street		<p><b>Comments from Ward Members</b>                      The proposal FA24, FB25, FC26, FE28 and FF 29 worked reasonably well in May, whilst it was a lower turnout in May 2023, there does not appear to be big major differences in voters who voted at the polling station as opposed to 2022.</p> <p>Regarding District FD the portable hut and Whitehead Street and the proposal to move to Hospitality and Hope in Hudson Street. We would oppose this move as it seems to be moving further away from the area it is meant to serve , it will cause confusion to the voters. The portable hut was quite adequate and comfortable for what I observed and speaking to the clerks.</p>	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
FB	St Judes Church Hall, St Judes Terrace			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
FC	One Trinity Green, Eldon Street			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
FD	Portable Station, On grassed area next to block 34/50 Whitehead Street	Portable huts are no longer suitable and should only be used where no other permanent buildings are available. Consider relocating to <b>Hospitality and Hope, Hudson Street, South Shields</b>		<p><b>Agreed</b>                      Move polling place to Hospitality and Hope, Hudson Street, South Shields</p>
FE	Lord Blyton Primary School, Blyton Avenue		No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place	
FF	Simonside Outdoor Adventure Centre, St Simon Street		No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place	
GA	Hospitality and Hope, Next to Riverside Children`s Centre, Hampden Street		<p><b>Comment form a Ward Member</b>                      I have not received any complaints regarding the current placement of polling stations in West Park, and would request that they remain as listed</p>	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
GB	Mortimer Community Centre, Reading Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
GC	Mortimer Community Centre, Reading Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
GD	Talbot Road Methodist Church, Talbot Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place

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HA	St Michaels Church Hall, Westoe Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
HB	Communal Lounge, Glenthorpe House, West Stevenson Street			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
HC	South Tyneside College, Building next to 1861 Lifestyle Gym			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
HD	Portable Polling Station, Opposite 33 Harton House Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
JA	The Lake Pub, 69 Lake Avenue, South Shields			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
JB	Marsden Primary School, Mill Lane, Whitburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
JC	Our Place, 19 Wellands Lane, Whitburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
JD	Whitburn Library, Mill Lane, Whitburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
KA	Harton and Westoe Collieries Welfare, Low Lane		<b>Comment from a Candidate in May 2023</b> We need to have the portable polling station on Soane Gardens reinstated. I note that the polling stations KB, KC & KD are very close together on Whiteleas Way & Gainsborough Ave. The Soane Garden polling station was easily accessible for the residents of Moreland Road, Soane Gardens, Manet Gardens as well the whole of Holder house. I think polling station should be within easy walking distance, so no need to take a vehicle. Parking was a problem on Whiteleas Way & Gainsborough Ave as both are on a busy bus routes.	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
KB	Whiteleas Community Centre (St Mary & St Martins Church), Whiteleas Way			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
KC	St Oswalds Church Hall, Gainsborough Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
KD	St Oswalds Church Hall, Gainsborough Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place

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LA	Bilton Hall Community Trust @ Low Simonside Community Centre, Taunton Avenue			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
LB	Portable Polling Station, Peel Gardens			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
LC	Portable Polling Station, Perth Ave/Tasmania Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
LD	Simonside Primary School, Glasgow Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
LE	Portable Polling Station, Kirkstone Avenue, Opposite Shops			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
MA	St Nicholas Church, Hedworth Lane, Boldon Colliery			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
MB	Boldon Village Hall, North Road, Boldon Colliery		No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place	
MC	West Boldon Primary School, Hindmarch Drive, West Boldon		No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place	
MD	West Boldon Primary School, Hindmarch Drive, West Boldon		No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place	



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NA	Cleadon Methodist Church Hall, Sunderland Road		<p><b>Comment from an Election Agent in May 23</b>            In terms of Cleadon and East Boldon , the main issue at this year's election was the lack of knowledge by electors of the use of the Little Theatre as a Polling Station. We made officers aware of this following contact with voters on the East Boldon Road estate in Cleadon. These electors were used to,using the portable station at North Drive and we requested that a sign was put up at this location explaining the new location at the Little Theatre. We were pleased that this happened and generally felt that the Little Theatre worked well as a polling station. However it may be appropriate to improve signage at the Little Theatre site next year.</p>	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
NB	The Little Theatre, 5 Boldon Lane, Cleadon Village			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
NC	Scout Hut, Rear of Grey Horse Pub, Front Street, East Boldon			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
ND	Scout Hut, Rear of Grey Horse Pub, Front Street, East Boldon			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place

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PA	Communal Lounge, Calf Close House, Calf Close Lane, Jarrow		<u>Comment from Ward Members</u> This is same as this year, happy for it to be the same.	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
PB	The Nursery Unit, Hedworthfield Primary School, Linkway, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
PC	Hedworthfield Community Association, Cornhill, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
PD	The Nursery Unit, Hedworthfield Primary School, Linkway, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
QA	The Cabin, School Street Play Centre		<u>Comment from a Ward Member</u> I have no comments this year as I am comfortable with the locations	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
QB	Byron Avenue Hall, Entrance Via Windsor Crescent, Hebburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
QC	The Masonic Hall, Aln Street			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
QD	St Aloysius Church Hall, Access Via Car Park, Coquet Street (Off Argyle Street)			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place

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RA	St Johns Church Hall, Canning Street		<b>Comment from a Ward Member</b> The proposal for the Elmfield Social Club deserves support.	No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
RB	Hartleyburn & Clegwell Community Hub, Crawley Square, Hebburn	Some elderly voters in this polling district complained that they had to vote at Hartleyburn and Clegwell Community Association, when they lived closer to Lakeside Hall (currently the polling station for RC & RE) and regularly used that building's facilities Consider moving to <b>Lakeside Hall</b> - creating a double station with polling district RE	It is easily accessible and is well recognised in the area although I wouldn't describe it as a landmark. The local bus routes pass here and I support this rather than putting two stations in the Lakeside hall which is Not Convenient as an electoral station . Consideration should be given to Hebburn Legion Club which would easily replace the temporary polling booth which was for many elections fifty yards away outside of Mountbatten Ave shops.	<u>Agreed</u> Move polling place to Community Room, Lakeside Hall, Lilac Walk, Hebburn
RC	Community Room, Lakeside Hall, Lilac Walk, Hebburn	Voters from polling district RC reported that they found it difficult to find the station at Lakeside Hall. Consider moving to <b>Elmfield Social Club</b> .		<u>Agreed</u> Move polling place to Elmfield Social Club, Campbell Park Road
RD	Hartleyburn & Clegwell Community Hub, Crawley Square, Hebburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
RE	Community Room, Lakeside Hall, Lilac Walk, Hebburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place

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SA	The Community Room, Jubilee Court			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
SB	Communal Lounge, Fernyhough Hall, Ushaw Road, Hebburn			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
SC	The Lord Nelson Public House, Marquee in Car Park, Monkton Lane, Jarrow	The marquee was not suitable and voters were not happy with the move. Consider moving back to a <b>Portable Station on Hautmont Road / Penrith Road.</b>		<u>Agreed</u> Move polling place back to a Portable Station on Hautmont Road / Penrith Road.
SD	Monkton Park Methodist Church, Community Hall, Wood Terrace, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
SE	Lukes Lane Community Association, Marine Drive			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
TA	Millennium PHAB Club / Jarrow Focus, Grange Road, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
TB	Jarrow Cross C E Primary School, Borough Road			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
TC	Primrose Community Centre, Lambton Terrace, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place
TD	Primrose Community Centre, Lambton Terrace, Jarrow			No changes to polling district boundaries or polling place