

Polling District Review 2019 -Comments Received

Appendix 2

Date Received	Electoral Area	Constituency	Comments as received	ARO Comments
2 Sep 2019	Redhill Ward	Washington and Sunderland West	Do not propose any amendments	Noted
2 Sep 2019	Whole City	Whole City	No Issues - all Polling Stations seem fit for purpose	Noted
3 Sep 2019	Hendon Ward	Sunderland Central	Do not propose any amendments	Noted
4 Sep 2019	Washington East	Washington and Sunderland West	No Issues - All Pollings stations are DDA compliant.	Noted
5 Sep 2019	Redhill Ward	Washington and Sunderland West	can you look at amending boundary of Redhill to include the proposed relocation of Willow Fields Primary School. It is moving to the expanded site of old Maplewood School and St Thomas Aquinas all weather pitch (Southwick Ward). The school is currently in Redhill Ward and would like this to continue.	This is not within the scope of this review. To keep under review.
5 Sep 2019	Southwick Ward / Carley Hill area	Sunderland Central	Can Carley Hill area be made more accessible within Southwick Ward as it seems more secluded from current Polling Stations, Southwick Primary and St Andrews Church. Would there be scope to consider a polling station closer by?	No suitable polling place within the area. To keep under review.
6 Sep 2019	St Michael's Ward	Sunderland Central	all 4 locations more than adequately serve their purpose - no reason to look elsewhere	Noted
17 Sep 2019	Doxford Ward	Houghton and Sunderland South	Happy with all stations in Doxford Ward	Noted
24 Sep 2019	Copt Hill Ward	Houghton and Sunderland South	The only thing I would say in regards to Copt Hill is that the change in polling station from Nesham Place nursery to the Cherry Tree Gardens confused a lot of residents and many, I believe, did not bother to turn out last time from the Gravel walks and the market place. The nursery was already a central location to have a polling district and people from in and around cherry tree would still either be able to make it, or go up to the Community Association. I would much prefer the polling station to be relocated to the nursery as many were unhappy and unaware, despite info on polling cards, of the change.	Propose for polling station to remain at Cherry Tree Gardens. To ensure additional directional signage is in place directing electors to the polling station, to keep under review.
26 Sep 2019	St Michael's Ward	Sunderland Central	Findings are satisfactory - happy to accept them	Noted

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30 Sep 2019	Burdon & Warden Law Area	Houghton and Sunderland South	The City of Sunderland has included three parishes since 1974, Hetton, Burdon and Warden Law. Hetton was a successor parish formed from Hetton Urban District, whilst Burdon and Warden Law were parishes transferred from the former Easington Rural District. The parishes are specifically named in Schedule 1 to the Local Government Act 1972, which defines the areas of the new metropolitan districts. The three parishes are still in existence. The 2001 and 2011 censuses showed the population of Burdon parish to be 971 and 991 respectively. The 2001 census showed the population of Warden Law parish as 33, whilst the 2011 census did not disclose separately the population of Warden Law parish under data protection regulations. The Ordnance Survey election maps website shows clearly the boundaries of these two parishes. Burdon parish falls entirely within Doxford ward and forms a part of polling district D2 (but not the whole polling district). Warden Law parish falls entirely within Copt Hill ward and forms part of polling district C3 (but not the whole polling district). Thus both the Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) and Ordnance Survey are working on the basis that Burdon and Warden Law parishes are still in existence. The Electoral Commission has published Guidance on the Review of Polling Districts and Places. Paragraph 2.11 of this Guidance states	Section 18A RPA 1983 provides in England that each parish is to be a separate polling district unless there are special circumstances. In this case special circumstances are considered to apply for both Burdon and Warden Law, in that they are both externally small parish areas in size with few electors, namely 599 and 25 electors respectively for Burdon and Warden Law. In addition they have not been separate polling districts since at least the last ward boundary review in 2004. (Please Note - Section 9(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 has been repealed and is not relevant for this review)

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			“In England, each parish is to be a separate polling district and, in Wales, each community should be a separate polling district, unless there are special circumstances. This means that a parish or community must not be in a polling district which has a part of either a different parish or community within it, or any un-parished part of the local authority area within it, unless special circumstances apply. Those special circumstances could arise if, for example, the parish/community has only a small number of electors and it is not practicable for the parish/community to be its own polling district.” Polling Districts D2 and C3, as proposed in the review documentation, breach this Guidance. I suggest therefore that separate polling districts are established for these two parishes, although the parishes may retain the same polling stations. Paragraph 2.13 of the Electoral Commission Guidance states “When a parish or community is not a separate polling district or a Scottish electoral ward is not split into two or more polling districts, the special circumstances and the recommendation resulting from these should be clearly set in the review document for the council or relevant committee to consider.” If the Review determines that special circumstances apply to Warden Law parish, then these should be set out clearly for the council or relevant committee to consider. <i>There is a further issue relating to Burdon parish, which does not have a parish council. Section 9(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 states</i> “If a parish has not a parish council (whether separate or common) the district council shall by order establish a separate parish council for that parish if the population includes 200 or more local government electors.” The City Council would appear to be currently in breach of section 9(2) of the Local Government Act with respect to Burdon parish. The position could be remedied by conducting a Community Governance Review and resolving to dissolve Burdon parish. In the meantime, however, there would appear to be an inescapable case to establish a separate polling district for Burdon parish and to set out the special circumstances which give rise to including Warden Law parish within the larger C3 polling district.	

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9 Oct 2019	Barnes Ward	Sunderland Central	Make representations regarding polling station reference A5 in Barnes Ward which serves polling District A05. At every election I receive numerous complaints about this station. The parking surrounding this area is terrible and voters state this is extremely off putting when attempting to vote. The polling station also has the difficulty of being within the hospital parking management scheme so voters who travel there by car are unable to vote between 10am and 11am and 2pm to 3pm as parking spaces are few and far between in this area, meaning people are denied the chance to vote if they turn up by car at one of these times. The station is not in the ward of Barnes and causes extreme confusion with people believing they should in fact vote at Richard Avenue Primary School. Residents find locating the centre difficult as it not somewhere where residents of Barnes ward use or frequent. The centre is located on a very busy main road and so people state it is dangerous when trying to find the location and attempt to slow down on the main road when seeing how to access the centre when in a car. In my opinion the station should be moved to richard Avenue school and allow 2 polling districts which are next to each other to both vote at the same location. The school is a safe location with ample parking and easy to access.	No other complaints received about accessibility and polling arrangements for this polling station. No change proposed at this time and to keep under review.