



The Returning Officer's Final Proposals

Oadby St Peters

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|---|-----------------|
| A | 1810 | Oadby Community Centre, Sandhurst Street | Yes |
| B | 1582 | United Reformed Church Hall, Rosemead Drive | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

Polling District A:

A letter of support for the Returning Officer's proposal to designate Trinity Methodist Church as the polling place for polling district A was received from Councillor Miss A R Bond (Ward Member for Oadby St Peters) and it was requested that this be the final change to the polling arrangements for the polling district.

Returning Officer Comments:

The support for the proposal is noted. It is intended that Trinity Church will provide a long-term solution to the polling requirements of this polling district so that further moves will not be necessary. It is worth noting however that the use of any building is of course subject to its availability. For scheduled elections this is rarely a problem because the venue can be booked well in advance, but in the event of an unscheduled election this can never be certain.

Polling District B:

No comments received

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling District A – That Trinity Methodist Church, Harborough Road, be designated as the polling place for this polling district.

Polling District B – Retain this polling station.

Oadby Grange

| Existing Arrangements | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|---|-----------------|
| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
| C | 1906 | Immaculate Conception Church Hall, New Street | Yes |
| D | 1957 | John Foster Hall, Manor Road, Facilities Building | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling District C – Retain this polling station.

Polling District D – Retain this polling station.

Oadby Uplands

| Existing Arrangements | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
| E | 3388 | The Barnabas Centre, St. Paul's Close | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Retain this polling station.

Oadby Woodlands

| Existing Arrangements | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|---|-----------------|
| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
| F | 3492 | Woodland Grange C.P. School, Beaufort Way | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Retain this polling station.

Oadby Brocks Hill

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|--|-----------------|
| G | 3116 | The Pavilion, Coombe Park, Coombe Rise | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

A letter of objection to the proposal to split polling district G into two districts (G1 & G2) was received from Councillors M L Darr and J Kaufman (Ward Members for Oadby Brocks Hill), on the grounds that the use of Parklands Leisure Centre would increase the walking distance to the polling place for some voters within the proposed G1 polling district. The objection proposed that the internal layout of the Pavilion could be reconfigured to enable it to remain in use as a double polling station within one room, or alternatively the second polling station could instead be situated at Devonshire Court, Howdon Road, or the United Reformed Church, Rosemead Drive.

Returning Officer Comments:

The objection to the proposal is noted. For some electors in the proposed G1 polling district, the use of Parklands Leisure Centre would in fact reduce the walking distance in comparison to Coombe Park Pavilion, however it is appreciated that for some electors the distance would also increase, and there is no public transport provision to compensate for this.

Use of the United Reformed Church, Rosemead Drive would not be appropriate as it is located in Oadby St Peters Ward and is already currently used as a polling station within polling district B.

The use of Devonshire Court would not be appropriate because it is located in close proximity to Coombe Park and hence would not provide a natural geographical split within the Ward. The venue is also located along the one-way system alongside Beauchamp College which makes access and parking a considerable issue.

The main community room at Coombe Park Pavilion is simply not big enough to accommodate in excess of 3,000 electors plus two sets of staff, polling booths, equipment and notices for voters that are essential for a dual station in order to satisfy all of the Electoral Commission's requirements. Attempting to set up two polling stations within this room carries the potential to compromise voter privacy, as well as leaving insufficient space to accommodate wheelchair users and those with a right of access to oversee proceedings such as polling agents or accredited observers.

In view of the Ward Members' objection to the Parklands proposal, this means that the only viable option is to continue with the setup used at the Pavilion used during the 2017 elections, whereby the corridor leading to the changing rooms is used to accommodate the second polling station, in spite of the negative feedback received from polling staff during last year's elections. This option does provide additional space, although the lighting and heating capacity of the corridor is severely limited. As the Pavilion is a Council owned facility, additional effort will be made in the coming months to identify any further provision that can be made to ensure the comfort and wellbeing of staff during the 16 hour polling day.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Retain this polling station.

Wigston St Wolstans

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|---|-----------------|
| H | 1808 | Freer Community Centre, 242A Leicester Road | Yes |
| I | 1745 | Glenmere Community Primary School, Estoril Avenue | Yes |
| J | 1476 | Freer Community Centre, 242A Leicester Road | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

Polling District H:

No comments received.

Polling District I:

A letter of objection was received from Councillor Mrs L M Broadley (Ward Member for Wigston St Wolstans and County Member for North Wigston Division) and F S Broadley (Ward Member for Wigston St Wolstans) to the proposed retention of Glenmere Community Primary School, highlighting objections received from parents over previous years about the closure of the school on polling day. The letter suggested Parklands Leisure Centre as an alternative polling place to serve electors in this polling district.

Returning Officer Comments:

The objection to the proposal is noted. Similar concerns were raised and considered in detail as part of the previous polling review carried out in 2013. The polling district remains almost entirely residential, with no other community buildings or venues available that are suitable for polling use.

Electoral Commission guidance is clear that the polling place must be within the polling district unless special circumstances make it desirable to designate an area wholly or partly outside the district (for example, if no accessible polling place can be identified within the district). In this case, Glenmere Primary School is conveniently located close to the main density of housing within the polling district and is accessible to all electors. The alternative venue suggested, Parklands Leisure Centre, is not located within the polling district and also does not sit within the same County Division.

It is fully recognised that school closures present considerable inconvenience to parents, teachers and pupils; however the main criteria set out by the Electoral Commission for consideration when conducting a review of polling places are the location, size, availability and accessibility of the proposed venue. In this regard, the Primary School scores highly against all of these criteria, which suggests that there are no special circumstances which justify designating a venue outside of the polling district such as Parklands which has a less advantageous location for voters in the polling district and as noted in the Brocks Hill proposal, no convenient public transport links.

The law provides that the Returning Officer has the power to require a school to act as a polling venue; whether or not the school then has to close is a decision solely for the head teacher, as opposed to the Returning Officer. Decisions about closure will usually depend on what arrangements can be made for voting to take place separately from the rest of the school premises. If pupils and the voting public can be kept apart, with a separate entrance and exit, and without compromise to the school's controlled access or interruption to education, it may be possible for the school to remain open.

Several other schools used as polling places in the Borough have successfully managed to put arrangements in place enabling them to remain open whilst polling takes place. Officers met with the head teacher of Glenmere School during the previous polling review in 2013, but unfortunately the head teacher was not satisfied from a safeguarding and security perspective that the use of the school as a polling place could take place alongside the school remaining open. Officers remain open to further dialogue with the school to enable the head teacher to reconsider this position.

In the absence of any alternative venues suitable for polling use within the polling district, and in the absence of any special circumstances making it desirable to designate a polling place that falls outside of the polling district, it is considered that Glenmere Primary School remains the most suitable venue for the polling district in terms of its location, size, availability and accessibility.

Polling District J:

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling District H – Retain this polling station.

Polling District I – Retain this polling station.

Polling District D – Retain this polling station.

Wigston Meadowcourt

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|---|-----------------|
| K1 | 2280 | Meadow Community Primary School, Meadow Way | Yes |
| K2 | 489 | Meadow Community Primary School, Meadow Way | Yes |
| L | 1821 | Girl Guide Clubroom, Welford Road | Limited |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

Polling Districts K1 & K2:

No comments received.

Polling District L:

A letter of support was received from Councillor M H Charlesworth, (Ward Member for Wigston All Saints Ward and County Member for East Wigston Division) to the Returning Officer's proposal to designate South Leicester Rugby Club as the polling place for polling district L.

Returning Officer Comments

The support for the proposal is noted.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling Districts K 1 & K2 – Retain this polling station.

Polling District L - That the Club House at South Leicester Rugby Club be designated as the polling place for polling district L.

Wigston All Saints

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|---|---------------------|
| M | 2156 | The Pavilion, Horsewell Lane Recreation Ground | Yes |
| N1 | 2256 | The Elms and Ex-Services Social Club, Bushloe End | Yes – ramp provided |
| N2 | 253 | The Elms and Ex-Services Social Club, Bushloe End | Yes – ramp provided |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling District M – Retain this polling station.

Polling Districts N1 & N2 – Retain this polling station.

Wigston Fields

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|--|-----------------|
| O | 2099 | Central Avenue Christian Church Hall, Central Avenue | Yes |
| P1 | 2580 | Bethel Evangelical Free Church Hall, Burleigh Avenue | Yes |
| P2 | 373 | Bethel Evangelical Free Church Hall, Burleigh Avenue | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling District O – Retain this polling station.

Polling Districts P1 & P2 – Retain this polling station.

South Wigston

Existing Arrangements

| Polling District | Electors | Polling Place | Disabled access |
|------------------|----------|--|-----------------|
| Q | 1825 | Bassett Centre, Bassett Street, South Wigston | Yes |
| R | 1630 | The Pavilion, Blaby Road Park | Yes |
| S | 2439 | Fairfield Community Primary School, Chester Building, Cheshire Drive | Yes |

Consultation Responses & Returning Officer Comments

No comments received.

Returning Officer's Final Proposal

Polling District Q – Retain this polling station.

Polling District R – Retain this polling station.

Polling District S – Retain this polling station.