

MEETING	THE COUNCIL
DATE	15 December, 2011
TITLE	REVIEW OF POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES
PURPOSE	To propose changes to the polling districts and polling places following a review
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PORTFOLIO LEADER	Councillor Stephen Churchman, Senior Leader Resources

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

Introduction of the changes listed in the schedule following a consultation period on a review of polling districts and polling places.

2. REASON FOR SEEKING A DECISION

Local Authorities are required to divide their areas into polling districts for parliamentary elections and to designate polling places for these polling districts.

Under the Electoral Administration Act 2006, the Council is required to review every polling district and polling place at least every four years. The first review was held in 2007.

3. THE 2011 REVIEW

The review was commenced during September with a report to the area committees on the arrangements for the review. A public notice of the review was issued, together with details of the current polling districts and polling stations, and copies were sent to potential interested parties, such as councillors, town and community councils, political parties and other stakeholders.

4. CONSIDERATION OF THE RESPONSES

Reports were presented to the three area committees containing observations received during the consultation and the response of the Returning Officer to them and, where it is relevant, recommendations to consider for changing the current procedure.

The observations of the Returning Officer on a number of matters she believed needed addressing were also included.

As part of the review, in order to ensure value for money and to ensure that the best use of resources is made, consideration was given to those polling places which had fewer than 150 voters registered there, which are within approximately three miles to the nearest polling station and with no resulting electoral complications, and what the implications of their closure would be.

Any firm proposals for change were sent to the local member and the community council and their responses were reported to the relevant area committee.

5. COST IMPLICATIONS

By closing stations there are possible savings to be made by not employing staff to work at the station on the day, travelling and staff training costs and the cost of hiring a building. The cost of using a building as a polling station is estimated at around £500 per election.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Meirionnydd Area. The Meirionnydd Area Committee met on 14 November and their recommendations are appended at Schedule 1. The Council is asked to approve the recommendations.

6.2 Arfon and Dwyfor Areas. The Arfon and Dwyfor Area Committees had not met to discuss the recommendations at the time the Council's agenda was distributed. The recommendations of the Returning Officer, which will be presented to the area committees, are to be found at Schedule 2. The recommendations of the area committees will be available to members before the Council meets and the Council is asked to approve the recommendations of the area committees.

The recommendations of the Meirionnydd Area Committee

Retain the AG2 (Bontddu) register separately and combine E1, E3 and E4 (Barmouth).

Close the polling station at the Oakeley Arms, Maentwrog and move the register to Gellilydan polling station.

Close the polling station in Sarnau and move the register to Llandderfel polling station.

Close the polling station in Bontddu and move the register to Llanelltyd polling station.

Schedule 2

The Returning Officers Recommendations to the Arfon Area Committee

(the area committee's recommendations will be submitted after it has met)

Details	Polling District	Polling Station	Recommendation	Practical Consequences
Llanberis Community Council Ward Nant Peris Llanberis Electoral Division	B1B – Llanberis – Nant Peris B	Festri Capel Rehoboth, Nant Peris	As only 94 electors close polling station and transfer to Llanberis	Approximately 2.5 miles travelling to vote in Llanberis

The Returning Officers Recommendations to the Dwyfor Area Committee

(the area committee's recommendations will be submitted after it has met)

Details	Polling District	Polling Station	Recommendation	Practical Consequences
Dolbenmaen Community Council Ward Bryncir Rhanbarth Etholiadol Dolbenmaen Electoral Division	CB6 - Dolbenmaen – Bryncir	Festri Capel Soar, Bryncir (86 electors)	As only 86 electors close polling station and transfer register to Garn Dolbenmaen	Approximately 2.5 miles travelling to Garn Dolbenmaen
Dolbenmaen Community Council Ward Prenteg Rhanbarth Etholiadol Porthmadog/Tremadog Electoral Division	CD6 - Dolbenmaen – Prenteg	Canolfan Prenteg (93 electors)	As only 93 electors close polling station and transfer register to Tremadog	Approximately 2 miles travelling to Tremadog
Llanaelhaearn Community Council Ward Pistyll Rhanbarth Etholiadol Llanaelhaearn Electoral Division	HB6 – Pistyll	Capel Bethania Pistyll (120 electors)	As only 120 electors close polling station and transfer register to Llithfaen	Approximately 2.5 miles travelling to Llithfaen