

Constitutional and Nomination Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 28 November 2018

Present: Councillor Karney (Chair) – in the Chair

Councillors: Curley, Flanagan, Leech and N Murphy

Apologies: Councillor Lanchbury, Leese, S Murphy, Razaq and Reeves

CN/18/16. Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record, the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2018.

CN/18/17. Polling Districts and Polling Places: proposed changes to the current scheme and proposed timing of the next compulsory review

The report detailed how as part of preparations for the local elections taking place on 2 May 2019, work has been undertaken by officers to ensure that polling places have the suitable access, space and facilities for electors. This work has been based on practical considerations relating to the availability of polling places as well as feedback from local councillors and comments received from polling station inspectors and other senior officers who worked at the 3 May 2018 local elections. This work has also considered the most suitable timings for the next compulsory review of polling districts and polling places.

The designation of the city's polling districts and places is the responsibility of the Council and the relevant functions are delegated to the Constitutional and Nomination Committee in the Scheme of Delegation. This includes the Council's duties under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to divide constituencies into polling districts and the power to divide wards into polling districts at local elections. The Electoral Commission advises that polling districts for UK parliamentary and local government elections should always be the same. It therefore follows that any review of parliamentary polling arrangements should be conducted simultaneously with one of local government arrangements.

On occasion, it may be necessary to change the designation of a polling place outside the statutory review process or meeting of the Constitutional and Nomination Committee. This usually occurs as a result of premises being closed or unexpectedly becoming unavailable, often at short notice, or if an unscheduled poll takes place. Authority is delegated to the Chief Executive to make, where necessary, alterations to the designation of any polling place in such circumstances, in consultation with group leaders, ward Councillors and the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee, as agreed by Council at its 24 January 2018 meeting.

It was originally intended for the Council to conduct its next compulsory review of parliamentary and local polling districts and polling places in the autumn of 2018. However, after taking into considerations points set out in the report, it is proposed to the Committee that the compulsory review begins in July 2019, with consultation taking place during the summer/autumn of 2019. Proposals agreed would then come into effect on 1 December 2019, when the electoral register is published.

Decisions

1. To note the background to the proposed timetable for the next compulsory review of polling districts and polling places.
2. To authorise the initiation of a review of the parliamentary polling districts and polling places within the Council's area, and that this be combined with a review of the equivalent local government polling arrangements, beginning in July 2019, with further details of the timetable and process to be brought to the Committee, closer to the time.
3. To approve the changes to the current scheme as set out in paragraphs 5.1, 5.1.1, 6.1 and 6.1.1 of the report submitted, to come into effect on 1 December 2018.
4. To adopt the changes, referred to in decision 3 (above), to the scheme for both parliamentary and local elections.

CN/18/18. Membership of Council committees and representation on joint boards and joint committees

Decisions

1. To request the Council to agree to suspend Procedural Rule 25.1 to allow the following decisions which involve reconsideration of a decision taken by the Council within the previous six months.
2. To recommend the Council to make the following changes in appointments to Committees and Joint Committees of the Council.

Membership of Committees

The Committee reviewed the membership of committees.

Decision

To recommend the Council to make the following changes in appointments to Committees and Joint Committees of the Council.

Committee	Member removed	Member appointed
Planning and Highways Committee	Councillor Strong	

Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee		Councillor Douglas
GM Housing, Planning and Environment Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Wilson	