

**Committee Name: Council**

**Committee Date: 30/11/2021**

**Report Title: Polling district and polling places review 2021**

<b>Portfolio:</b>	Councillor Kendrick, Cabinet member for resources
<b>Report from:</b>	Head of legal and procurement
<b>Wards:</b>	All

### **Purpose**

To approve proposals for the interim polling districts and polling places review 2021.

### **Recommendation:**

1. Approve the polling scheme as recommended by the polling district and place working group at Appendix A.
2. Approve polling district boundaries changes In Crome, Mancroft and University wards at Appendix B.

### **Policy Framework**

The Council has three corporate priorities, which are:

- People living well
- Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment
- Inclusive economy

This report addresses the following strategic actions in the Corporate Plan: People living well and great neighbourhoods, housing and environment and inclusive economy.

### **Report Context**

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) published its final recommendations following its review of the electoral ward arrangements for the city council on 6 November 2018.
2. The statutory order to implement the changes was laid before parliament in December 2018. They were in place for the local elections on 2 May 2019.
3. These ward boundary changes meant that ward boundaries and county division boundaries were no longer co-terminus. For reference, the LGBCE has now finalised its proposals for future divisions in Norfolk County Council which will come into effect in 2025, which achieve a high degree of co-terminosity with the Norwich City Council wards which will aid electoral understanding and reduce potential problems posed in the event of future dual elections.
4. A full review of polling districts and polling places was approved at council on 22 September 2019. This set out a new polling scheme for the Norwich City Council local elections and Police Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections in May 2020.
5. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the local and PCC elections were delayed until 6 May 2021. This meant that these elections were held on the same day as the Norfolk County Council elections.
6. An interim polling place review was held in November 2020 to ensure that the elections in 2021 were held safely and reflected the combination of the county and city elections.
7. A subsequent review was necessary as we do not require the same interim polling scheme that was in place for those combined polls in 2021.

## **Report Detail**

8. The scope of the 2021 interim polling district review was to consider the following points:
  - a) changes put in place for 2021, concerning public safety reasons
  - b) changes put in place for 2021, concerning the combination of the PCC, city and county elections.
  - c) amendments put in place in 2021 due to the lack of availability of our sheltered housing schemes as venues
  - d) new polling venues recommended in the full review of 2019 which were not put in place due to the cancellation of 2020 polls and the special considerations in place for 2021; and
  - e) changing some polling district boundaries due to new developments, access and availability of venues in those areas. This could include merging existing polling districts.

9. A polling district and polling places working group made up of elected members met to help formulate a polling district and polling places scheme. The working party was politically balanced and consisted of four Labour councillors, two Green Party councillors and one Liberal Democrat councillor.
10. A proposed polling scheme developed by the democratic and elections manager on behalf of the Returning Officer (RO) was presented to the working group and the public for comments as part of the consultation.
11. The members polling district and polling place working party met by MS Teams on 11 November 2021 to propose recommendations to council.
12. Members were asked to propose 13 recommendations (one for each ward) based on the proposed polling scheme, and those recommendations are listed in Appendix A. Members were also asked to propose polling district boundary changes and those recommendations are in Appendix B.
13. The working group were also tasked with considering any other proposals or consultation responses. This could include responses from residents, organisations, political parties, elected representatives and other key stakeholders. There was one response from the Norwich, Norfolk and City Council Labour Party which was considered by the working group.
14. It is important to note that the working group could agree to amend any proposals, however as Returning Officer (RO), the Chief Executive has a statutory duty to ensure free and fair elections. In discharging these duties, the RO will take account of the recommendations made by the polling district and places working group but would retain the right to make changes if deemed appropriate for reasons of practicality and/or other circumstances which may influence the location and use of polling stations within the city boundary. As far as possible, the RO will seek to consult with the working group on any such changes.
15. Those recommendations are to be considered at a meeting of council on 30 November 2021.
16. This will allow any polling station changes to be in place in time for the election on 5 May 2022. If boundary changes are approved, there will be a requirement to republish the electoral register on 1 February 2022 on those new polling district boundaries.
17. The polling scheme will need to be in place to reflect constituency as well as city ward and county division boundaries.
18. The democratic and elections manager worked with the working group in preparing the recommendations to council.

**Table 1: Timetable**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Date</b>
Site visits of current polling stations and potential new venues	ElectionsTeam	August- November 2021
Publish notice of review and start of the consultation	Democratic and elections manager (DEM)	6 September 2021
Publication of Returning Officer's (RO's) proposals and start of public consultation.	DEM	9 September 2021
Close of public consultation		16 October 2021
Polling District and Places Review Working Group to agree on RO's proposals and to recommend changes to council.	Working Party/DEM/RO	11 November 2021
Full meeting of council to agree changes.	Council	30 November 2021
Re-publication of the register on approved new polling scheme (if new boundaries are agreed)	Elections Team	1 February 2022
City Council elections	RO / Elections Team	5 May 2022

**Risks**

19. The risks in not amending the polling scheme would mean that the scheme in place for the elections would not be workable due to boundary differences with the combined election in 2021. This could potentially lead to voter disenfranchisement and confusion.

**Next steps**

20. Approval of the new polling scheme and polling district boundaries by council on 30 November 2021.
21. Republication of the electoral register on new boundaries (if approved) on 1 February 2022. The register will be published on existing polling district boundaries on 1 December 2021.

22. The elections team will continue to visit polling stations in preparation of the elections on 5 May 2022.

## Consultation

23. The consultation period started on 6 September 2021 and ended on 18 October 2021. The consultation was publicised on the council's website.
24. There was one response from the Norwich, Norfolk and City Council Labour Party which was published online and shared and considered by the working group.

## Implications

### Financial and Resources

25. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources.

## Legal

26. There are no specific legal considerations arising from this report.

## Statutory Considerations

Consideration:	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and Diversity	No direct implications.
Health, Social and Economic Impact	No direct implications.
Crime and Disorder	No direct implications.
Children and Adults Safeguarding	No direct implications.
Environmental Impact	No direct implications.

## Risk Management

Risk	Consequence	Controls Required
There are no specific risks arising from this report	Any risks associated regarding polling stations are managed within the election risk assessment documentation prepared by the RO and elections team.	

## **Other Options Considered**

27. No other options have been considered.

## **Reasons for the decision/recommendation**

28. The proposals put forward in this report are required to enable a workable polling scheme to be in place for the city council elections on 5 May 2022.

**Background papers:** None

## **Appendices:**

Appendix A: Polling Station recommendations

Appendix B: Polling District Boundary recommendations (Crome,  
Mancroft and University Ward)

## **Contact Officer:**

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## Proposed polling scheme 2022

### Bowthorpe ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
BO1	Chapelbreak Village Hall	No changes proposed
BO2	Clover Hill Village Hall	No changes proposed
BO3	Fourways Centre	No changes proposed
BO4	Bowthorpe Church Centre	No changes proposed

**Catton Grove ward**

<b>Polling district</b>	<b>Proposed polling station</b>	<b>Polling district review group comments</b>
CG1	Greenfields Community Centre	No changes proposed
CG2	Mile Cross Methodist Church, Aylsham Road	New venue.
CG3	Catton Grove Community Centre	No changes proposed
CG4	Oak Grove Chapel	No changes proposed
CG5	Shipfields Community Centre	No changes proposed

**Crome ward**

<b>Polling district</b>	<b>Proposed polling station</b>	<b>Polling district review group comments</b>
CR1	Pilling Park Community Centre	No changes proposed
CR2	Frere Road Community Centre	The previous station was Fugill Green which is no longer available.
CR3	Plumstead Road Library	No changes proposed
CR3(S)	Plumstead Road Library	To move area to Plumstead Road Library. This reverses the change made in 2021 due to the combined City and County elections.
CR4	St Francis Church	No changes proposed.
CR5(S)	Norwich Judo Club, Heathgate	The previous venue, Don Pratt Court is no longer available.

## Eaton ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
EA1	Eaton Park Community Centre	No changes proposed
EA2	United Reformed Church	No changes proposed
EA3	Eaton Parish Hall	No changes proposed
EA3A	Eaton Parish Hall	No changes proposed
EA4	The Church Of The Latter Day Saints	No changes proposed

## Lakenham ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
LA1	Tuckswood Library	No changes proposed
LA2	Old Lakenham Community Centre	No changes proposed
LA2A	Old Lakenham Community Centre	No changes proposed
LA3	The Flint Room, Ber Street	This new polling station is being for LA3, LA3A and LA3B. These areas were split due to the combined city and county elections in 2021.
LA3A	The Flint Room, Ber Street	This new polling station is being for LA3, LA3A and LA3B. These areas were split due to the combined city and county elections in 2021.
LA3B	The Flint Room, Ber Street	This new polling station is being for LA3, LA3A and LA3B. These areas were split due to the combined city and county elections in 2021.
LA4	Jubilee Centre	No changes proposed

## Mancroft ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
MA1	Russell Street Community Centre	No changes proposed
MA2	Norwich Central Baptist Church	No changes proposed
MA3	Chantry Hall	No changes proposed
MA4	Castle Quarter, Timberhill entrance	New venue.
MA4A	Castle Quarter, Timberhill entrance	New venue.
MA5	Alive Church	No changes proposed

## Mile Cross ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
MX1	St Luke's Church Centre	No changes proposed
MX1A	St Luke's Church Centre	No changes proposed
MX1B	St Luke's Church Centre	No changes proposed
MX2	Norman Centre	No changes proposed
MX3	Temporary polling station in Sloughbottom Park	To move polling station to a temporary polling station in Sloughbottom Park as agreed in the 2019 review.
MX4	St Catherine Church Hall	No changes proposed

## Nelson ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
NE1	Belvedere Community Centre	No changes proposed
NE1A	Belvedere Community Centre	No changes proposed
NE2	Recreation Road Sports Centre	No changes proposed
NE3	Trinity United Reformed Church Hall	No changes proposed
NE4	St Peter's Jessopp Road	No changes proposed
NE5	Douro Place Chapel	Previous station at Douro Place Sheltered Housing is no longer available.

## Sewell ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
SE1	Rosebery Road Methodist Church	No changes proposed
SE2	Christchurch Centre	No changes proposed
SE3	Silver Road Community Centre	No changes proposed
SE4	St Mary Magdelene Church	No changes proposed

## Thorpe Hamlet ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
TH1	Wensum Lodge	No changes proposed
TH2	St Martin At Palace Church	Previous venue at the Maids Head Hotel is no longer available.
TH3	The Norwich Hotel	No changes proposed
TH4	St Matthews Church	No changes proposed

## Town Close ward

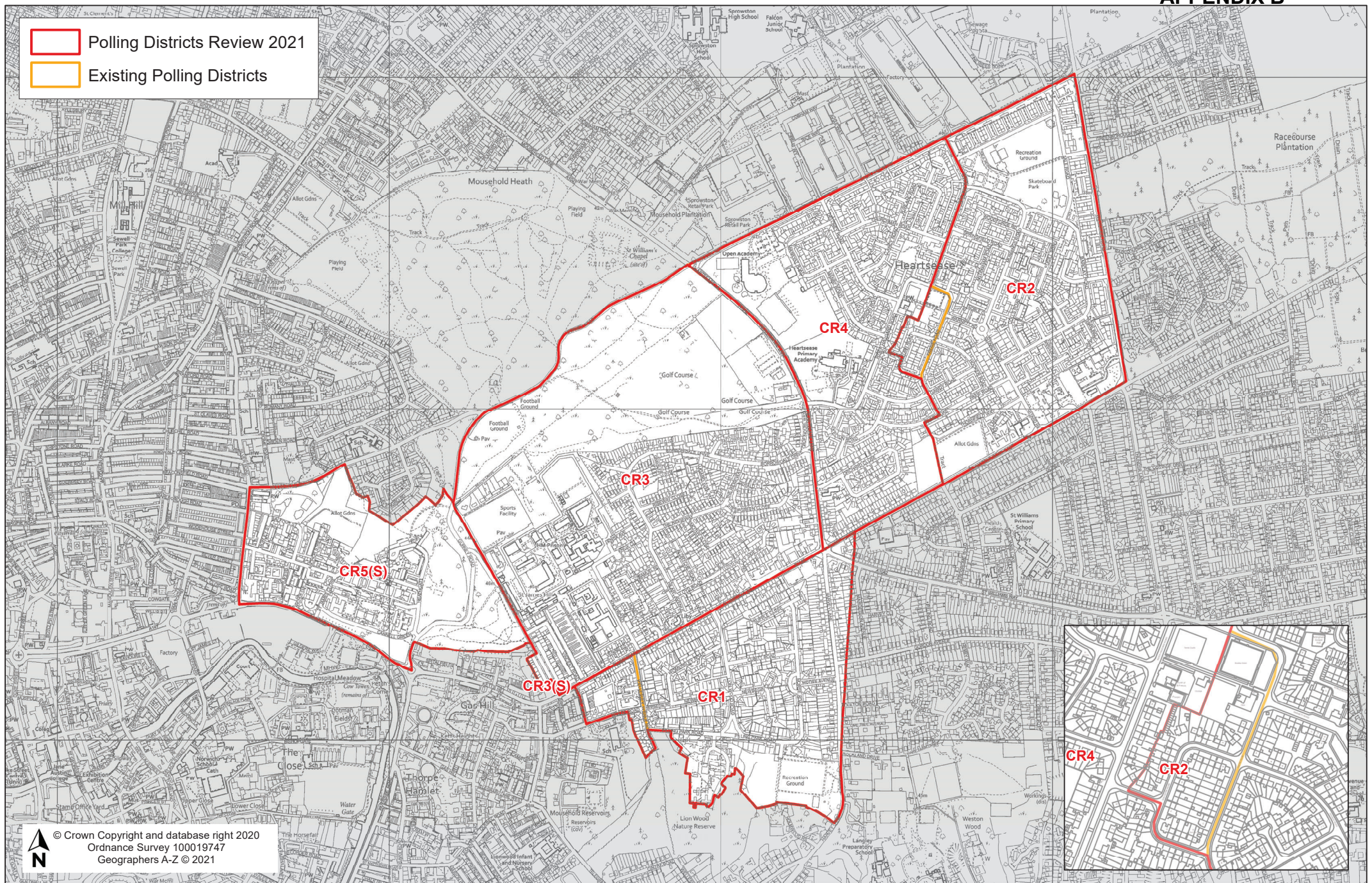
Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
TO1	Jenny Lind Community Room, Suffolk Square	Previous venue at Melbourne Cottages Community Lounge is no longer available.
TO2	Cambridge Street Hall	No changes proposed
TO3	St Albans Church Hall	No changes proposed
TO4	East Anglia Tennis and Squash Club	No changes proposed
TO5	St Albans Church Hall	A new polling station is being sought in the district.

## University ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
UN1	St Marys Church Hall	No changes proposed
UN1A	St Marys Church Hall	No changes proposed
UN1B	St Marys Church Hall	This reverses the change made in 2021 due to the combined City and County elections.
UN2	The Hive, UEA	No changes proposed
UN3 (Merged UN3 and UN4)	St Annes Church Hall	As outlined in appendix B, to combine UN3 and UN4 and for the residents to use St Annes Church Hall.
UN3A (Old UN4A)	St Annes Church Hall	As outlined in appendix B, to combine UN3 and UN4 and for the residents to use St Annes Church Hall.
UN4 (Old UN5)	St Peters Church Jessopp Road	New UN4 due to old UN3 and UN4 being merged.
UN4A (Old UN5A)	St Peters Church Jessopp Road	New UN4A due to old UN3 and UN4 being merged.
UN5 (Old UN6)	West Earlham Community Centre	New UN5 due to old UN3 and UN4 being merged.
UN5A (Old UN6A)	West Earlham Community Centre	New UN5A due to old UN3 and UN4 being merged.

## Wensum ward

Polling district	Proposed polling station	Polling district review group comments
WE1	Marlpit Community Centre	No changes proposed
WE2	The Fat Percy Public House	To move area to The Fat Percy Public House reversing the change made in 2021 due to the combined City and County elections.
WE2A	The Fat Percy Public House	No changes proposed
WE3	Wensum Community Centre	No changes proposed
WE4	Cadge Road Community Centre	No changes proposed



## Crome Ward

### Proposed changes:

To move part of Frere Road and Goulbourn Road of CR4 polling district to CR2 polling district.  
To move the area of CR3 polling district south of Plumstead Road to CR1 polling district.



**NORWICH**  
City Council



