

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – 18 MARCH 2004

ADDENDUM TO REPORT FROM THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

European and Greater London Authority Elections - Polling Places and Stations

Two additional issues have arisen from our consultation that need to be drawn to members' attention. However the effect of both would be to require the creation of new polling districts which is not recommended so close to an election. Both these issues could be considered as part of a review of polling district boundaries later in the year.

(i) Dudden Hill Ward: Polling District EDU4 – Gladstone Park School

Comments from Ward Councillor Lyon:

Could consideration be given to the Pakistan Community Centre as a polling station for that part of EDU4, east of Park Avenue North. At present it is used as a Mapesbury polling station, EMA3, though technically it is in Dudden Hill, ... it should also serve as a Dudden Hill station as well. There's a certain amount of local feeling about this - e.g. in Marley Walk estate especially - since by keeping Gladstone School we are requiring voters to go to a less convenient place further away.

Response:

Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 only provides for **one** polling place in each polling district. This is reflected in guidance and made more explicit in the Electoral Administrators manual which states that "There can be one or more polling stations in the same polling place, but it is not possible to have a polling district served by two polling stations not in the same polling place". The polling station serving the district is well situated within the area. However it is accepted that residents living in the Lennon Road area will have a longer journey to their polling station and may be confused that the adjoining district's place is on their door-step. Unfortunately, there is not an appropriate site for a station in that adjoining district. It is the intention that another polling district boundary review will be undertaken in September 2004. District EDU4 is a large district and at that time the representations received on this matter will be further considered and referred to members for a decision.

(ii) Fryent Ward: Polling District NFR5 – Oliver Goldsmith School

Comments from Ward Councillor Moher

We request an extra polling station in Fryent, preferably on Wakeman's Hill Avenue (portable?). Since the closure of Buck Lane to traffic at the Kingsbury Road end, people have difficulty in getting to Oliver Goldsmith school easily, particularly the elderly in bad weather.

Response:

It is felt that the level of inconvenience will be minimal if it is confined to those travelling to the polling station by car. Pedestrian access continues to be possible through the road closure and therefore those travelling by foot would potentially be confused if their polling station was in another location. As stated above, it is not possible to have more than one polling place serving a district and what would be required would be the creation of a separate district with those voters voting in a new polling place. Again the points raised will be taken into consideration within the review in September.

COMMENTS

Any attempt to re-draw the polling district boundaries at this stage should be firmly resisted because any changes would result in the need to amend the register and re-publish it. Being so close to the June elections, this would only cause confusion, given the number of people already having a copy of the existing register. It may even lead to candidates' nominations being declared invalid as a result of their using an old register.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION:

That the comments from ward councillors of Fryent and Dudden Hill Wards be noted and that the district boundary review to be carried out in Autumn 2004 consider the possible creation of new districts in Fryent and Dudden Hill wards with polling places more convenient to the voters in the Wakeman's Hill Avenue and Lennon Road areas respectively.

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