

Appendix S

HARROW WEALD LOCAL POLLS (1913, 1925 and 1927)

In February 1913 and April 1925 local polls took place in the Harrow Weald Parish Council area. The issue on these occasions was whether to adopt the **Lighting and Watching Act 1833**. This Act could be adopted locally, following the simple procedure of calling a properly constituted meeting, to establish arrangements for lighting (i.e. gas or oil lamps in the streets) and watching (i.e. watchmen to prevent crime and breaches of the peace). Where adopted a parish was empowered to levy a rate, to become a Lighting Authority in its own right, and to appoint policemen.

The Act was adopted in a great many places, usually where the system of Parochial Constables was failing to meet the needs of the community. As the Act provided for local inhabitants to pay for their own policing or lighting there must generally have been some problem in existence for which residents were prepared to pay to solve. By 1925 contemporary reports suggested, in the case of Harrow Weald, that it was the only parish in Middlesex without street lights.

The issue was raised initially at a properly constituted Parish Meeting on 5 February 1913 when parish councillor Cllr. A.E. Hammond proposed, and Mr. P.J. Walk seconded, the following resolution:

That the Lighting and Watching Act 1833 be and hereby is adopted in the Parish.

The proposers suggested that about 38 street lamps be erected and maintained for the first year at the cost of a 3d. rate, and that in succeeding years the number could be gradually added to, still at the same cost. A total of 28 electors voted in favour of the resolution, whilst 51 voted against (a majority against of 23). A poll was demanded and this took place on 15 February 1913 with the following result:

Electors: 512
Total votes cast in local poll: 135
T'out: 26.4%

| Preference | Votes | % |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Opposed to Adoption of the Act | 98 | 72.6 |
| In Favour of Adoption of the Act | <u>37</u> | <u>27.4</u> |
| | 61 | 45.2 |

The question of adopting the Act was considered again at the Parish Annual Meeting on 16 March 1925, when parish councillor Cllr. F.C. Pittam proposed, and parish councillor Cllr. A.E. Hammond seconded, the following resolution:

That the Lighting and Watching Act 1833 be adopted for the Parish.

A total of 102 electors voted in favour of adoption of the Act, whilst 15 voted against (a majority in favour of 87). A poll was demanded by former parish councillor Mr. H.G. Assiter, which was assented to by the Chairman. Protests were made and Assiter indicated that he wished to withdraw the demand, but this was rejected by the Chairman. The poll took place concurrently with the election for Rural and Parish Councillors on 6 April 1925.

A total of 642 votes were recorded, so the remaining 80 electors who went to the poll for the other elections either spoiled their ballot papers, expressed no preference, or did not apply for a ballot paper. More than the required two-thirds of electors who expressed a preference supported adoption of the Act. The result was as follows:

Electors: 1,736
 Electors voting in concurrent election of Rural District Councillors: 722
 Total votes cast in local poll: 642
 T'out in local poll: 37.0%

| Preference | Votes | % |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| In Favour of Adoption of the Act | 497 | 77.4 |
| Opposed to Adoption of the Act | <u>145</u> | <u>22.6</u> |
| | 342 | 54.8 |

The third occasion when a local poll was held was on the matter of **amalgamation of districts**. This issue had been the subject of a number of Parish Meetings during 1927, and at one such meeting on 4 November 1927 parish councillor Cllr. A.E. Hammond moved, and parish councillor Cllr. F.C. Pittam seconded, the following resolution:

That this Meeting of Local Government Electors approve the Hendon Rural Council's scheme to amalgamate the Hendon Rural Council with the Urban District of Wealdstone.

Former parish councillor Mr. H.G. Assiter proposed, and Mr. C.S. Judd seconded, an amendment as follows:

That this Meeting of Local Government Electors approves the scheme to amalgamate the Parish of Harrow Weald with the Urban Districts of Harrow and Wealdstone, and the Parishes of Pinner and Great Stanmore.

Upon a vote, 25 people voted for the amendment and 51 voted for the resolution (a majority of 26 in favour of the original resolution). A poll was demanded and allowed. The Minutes of the meeting continue: "Requests were made for the withdrawal of this [including from the seconder, Mr. Judd] and unpleasant remarks were directed." Assiter did not withdraw the request, and the poll took place on 18 November 1927 with the following result:

Electors: 2,077
 Total votes cast in local poll: 141 (including 1 spoilt paper)
 T'out: 6.8%

| Preference | Votes | % |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| In Favour of the scheme to amalgamate the Parish of Harrow Weald with the Urban Districts of Harrow and Wealdstone, and the Parishes of Pinner and Great Stanmore | 76 | 54.3 |
| In Favour of the Hendon Rural Council's scheme to amalgamate the Hendon Rural Council with the Urban District of Wealdstone | <u>64</u> | <u>45.7</u> |
| | 12 | 8.6 |