

**MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL
REPORT FOR RESOLUTION**

Report To: Constitutional and Nomination Committee - 29 July 2010
Subject: Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places: Initial Proposals
Report Of: Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To present the Committee with initial proposals for the designation of polling districts and polling places within the city.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To note and approve the initial proposals for the designation of polling districts and polling places set out in the appendices to this report;
2. To request that the Chief Executive, under delegated authority, undertake a period of consultation on the initial proposals and to seek representations from interested parties
3. To request that the Chief Executive bring forward final proposals to the Committee on completion of the consultation exercise so that it may make final recommendations to the Council.

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR REVENUE BUDGET:

Estimated costs of the review - £50,000

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR CAPITAL BUDGET:

None

WARDS AFFECTED:

All

IMPLICATIONS FOR:

Antipoverty	Equal Opportunities	Environment	Employment
No	Yes	No	No

The accessibility of polling stations is a key consideration in the designation of polling places and districts. Once approved, the initial proposals will be subject to consultation with electors and representatives of disability groups. More detailed information

regarding the implications of the statutory review of polling places and polling districts will be outlined in the report containing the Council's final proposals.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Representation of the People Act 1983
The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections)
Regulations 2006
Report to Constitutional and Nomination Committee 18 June 2010

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Summary of Initial Proposals
Appendix 2: Proposed Changes to Polling Districts
Appendix 3: Polling Place and Polling Station Assessment Criteria
Appendix 4: Ward Maps outlining proposed changes to Polling Districts

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1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting held on 18 June 2010 the Committee authorised the initiation of a statutory review of the City's parliamentary polling districts and polling places, to be combined with a review of local government polling districts.
- 1.2 This report and the appendices set out the Council's initial proposals for changes to polling districts and polling places, which will be subject to consultation with electors and key stakeholders over the summer. Following this consultation, final proposals will be brought forward to this Committee in the autumn and will be submitted to full Council for final approval in October 2010.

2. Development of Initial Proposals

- 2.1 Although the designation of polling districts and polling places is a council function, it is the Returning Officer who decides upon the allocation of polling stations. However in practice the Council's decision as to polling districts and places is very much dependent on the availability of suitable locations for polling stations.
- 2.2 A cross-party member working group was established to work with the Returning Officer to review polling places and stations across the city and to bring forward initial proposals detailed in this report. To inform this stage, statistical information was collated about parliamentary electorates, postal voters, turnout and population projections for each polling district. The Returning Officer also wrote to all Councillors, MPs, candidates and agents for the local and parliamentary elections and polling station staff inviting comments or suggestions regarding the suitability of polling places and districts in the city.
- 2.3 Following an analysis of statistical data and stakeholder representations, the Working Group undertook a series of visits to polling places across the city. The purpose of these visits was to assess the suitability of these premises and to identify changes to polling places or polling districts where appropriate.

An example of the criteria used to assess polling places is attached at appendix three. The following factors were also taken into account during these visits:

- the proximity of the polling place to populated areas
- accessibility
- signage
- management and configuration of the polling station
- capacity of polling places to accommodate more than one polling station if necessary
- the number of electors within the district
- recent development and population changes

4. The Initial Proposals

4.1 The initial proposals are intended to meet the statutory requirements that the Council must consider when designating polling districts. In particular, the Council is required to:

(a) seek to ensure that all the electors in the constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances;

(b) seek to ensure that so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places it is responsible for are accessible to all electors who are disabled;

(c) have regard to the accessibility to disabled persons of potential polling stations in the polling place;

(d) other than in special circumstances, locate the polling place in the polling district it serves; and

(e) ensure the polling place is small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the polling district how they will be able to reach the polling station.

4.2 A summary of the initial proposals in respect of parliamentary polling districts is set out below and a more detailed analysis is attached at appendix one to this report. In all cases the proposed parliamentary polling districts are the proposed local government polling districts.

Summary of Initial Proposals: Polling Districts

Ward	Polling District Changes
Cheetham	CTH, CTB, CTF and CTD
Harpurhey	HAE and HAF
Bradford	BDA, BDB, BDC, BDD, BDE, BDH and BDL
Hulme	HUB, HUE and HUD
Miles Platting and Newton Heath	MNA, MNC, MND, MNE and MNG
Mosside	MSD and MSG
Whalley Range	WRB, WRC, WRD and WRF
Fallowfield	FAA and FAF
Gorton North	GNA, GNB, GNE, GNF and GNJ
Burnage	BUC and BUD
Chorlton	CLA and CLB
Old Moat	OME and OME
Sharston	SHB and SHK
Woodhouse Park	WPA and WPG

- 4.3 The initial proposals for changes to polling places have been identified following representations received from stakeholders and from a review of premises in the areas affected. It should be noted that proposals to change polling places are still subject to discussion and negotiation with premises owners/managers and will require detailed inspection before any changes can be finalised. A summary of the initial proposals in respect of parliamentary polling places is set out below and a more detailed analysis is attached at appendix one to this report.

Summary of Initial Proposals: Polling Places

Ward	Polling Districts affected by proposed changes to Polling Places
Cheetham	CTH and CTF
Bradford	BDC and BDH
City Centre	CCB and CCF
Hulme	HUC, HUD and HUB
Whalley Range	WRD and WRF
Gorton North	GNH and GNJ
Longsight	LOD and LOF
Burnage	BUB and BUC
Chorlton	CLB
Didsbury West	DWA and DWB
Withington	WTB

5. The Next Stages of the Review

- 5.1 Subject to the view of this Committee, the Chief Executive will publish the initial proposals on the Council's website and will undertake a public consultation on the initial proposals throughout the summer until 15th September. The consultation will actively encourage involvement from all interested parties including electors from constituencies wholly or partly located within the local authority boundary. Copies of these initial proposals will also be sent to all ward councillors, MPs, political parties and to representatives disability groups. Hard copies of these proposals, including maps, will be available for inspection in each constituency as follows:

Constituency	Location
Blackley and Broughton	North City Library, Harpurhey
Manchester Central	Electoral Services Unit, Manchester Town Hall
Manchester Gorton	Gorton Library
Manchester Withington	Chorlton District Library
Wythenshawe and Sale East	Forum Library, Wythenshawe

- 5.2 Upon completion of the consultation the Chief Executive will produce final proposals for future polling districts and polling places which will take into account the statutory requirements outlined and all other relevant factors, including submissions made during the consultation process. At the same time, the Chief Executive will also publish the Returning Officer's representations with regards to existing and proposed polling stations within polling places. These final proposals will be reported to this Committee before submission to full Council in October. This will allow sufficient time for the Chief Executive, in his capacity as the Electoral Registration Officer, to make any necessary adjustments to polling districts in the 1 December 2010 register.
- 5.3 Once approved by both the Committee and the full Council, the Council's reasons for its decisions will be published. The Council will also publish:
- (a) the Returning Officer's response to the Council's final proposals
 - (b) all correspondence sent to any person whom the authority thinks has particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability as well as any representations made by them;
 - (c) the minutes of any meeting held by the authority to consider any revision to the designation of polling districts or polling places within its area as a result of the review;
 - (d) details of the designation of polling districts or polling places within its areas of as a result of the review; and
 - (e) details of the places where the results of the review have been published.
- 5.4 Once the review is completed, no further complete review need be carried out for 4 years. However, the Council may still review particular polling districts and places, as required, before that time.

6. Costs of the Review

- 6.1 As reported to the Committee previously, it is estimated that the cost of undertaking the review will be £50,000. More detailed costings will be submitted to the Committee with the final proposals.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Recommendations to the Committee appear at the front of this report.