

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report To:** Constitutional and Nomination Committee – 12 September 2012  
**Subject:** Polling Place Changes  
**Report Of:** The Chief Executive

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**Purpose of the report**

To seek the Committee's approval for changes to a number of polling places across the city.

**Recommendations**

1. To approve changes to the polling places for polling districts CTC (Cheetham Ward), HAL (Harpurhey ward), HBD (Higher Blackley ward) and NOA (Northenden ward).
2. To confirm that these changes should take effect immediately.

**Financial consequences for revenue budget:**

The cost of changes to the polling places is approximately £600 taking into account the additional cost of premises hire.

**Financial consequences for capital budget:**

None

**Wards affected:**

Cheetham, Harpurhey, Higher Blackley and Northenden.

**Implications for:**

|             |                     |             |            |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|------------|
| Antipoverty | Equal Opportunities | Environment | Employment |
| No          | Yes                 | No          | No         |

**Equal Opportunities Implications**

The accessibility of polling stations is a key consideration in the designation of polling places and districts.

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**Background documents:**

- Representation of the People Act 1983
- The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006
- Report to Council and the Constitutional and Nomination Committee 13 October and 1 October 2010

**Contact officers:**

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## 1. Background

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 introduced a duty for all parliamentary polling districts and polling places to be reviewed every 4 years. The City Council adopted a revised scheme of polling places and polling districts in October 2010.
- 1.2 The Electoral Services Unit consults with candidates, agents, ward councillors and staff about the suitability of polling stations after every election. The Committee is asked to consider proposals to change the designation of polling places for four polling districts following issues identified after the May 2012 elections. Further details of these polling places are set out in 4 and 5 below. Subject to the Committee's approval, these changes will take effect immediately and the new polling places will be used for the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections on 15 November 2012.

## 2. Terminology used in this Report

- 2.1 **Polling district:** the area created by the division of a constituency, ward or European Parliamentary electoral region into smaller parts, within which a polling place can be determined which is convenient to electors.
- 2.2 **Polling place:** the geographical area in which polling stations will be sited by the Returning Officer.
- 2.3 **Polling station:** the actual area where the poll takes place and which must be located within the polling place. Polling Stations are chosen by the Returning Officer and publicised in the Notice of Situation of Polling Stations and communicated to electors via their poll cards.

## 3. The designation of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

- 3.1 The designation of the city's polling places and districts is the responsibility of the Council and the relevant functions are delegated to the Constitutional and Nomination Committee in the Scheme of Delegation. The Chief Executive also has delegated authority to make changes to the designation of polling places outside of the full reviews in consultation with group leaders, the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee and Ward Councillors. The next full review will be held in 2013. The allocation of polling stations within polling places is not a Council function and is the responsibility of the Returning Officer.
  - 3.2 Polling districts for local government elections are not automatically part of the statutory review. However, the Electoral Commission advises that reviews of parliamentary polling arrangements should always be conducted simultaneously with a review of local government arrangements and that the polling districts for UK parliamentary and local government elections should always be the same. Consequently, polling places and polling districts adopted by the Committee for parliamentary elections will also be effective for local government elections.
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- 3.3 When designating polling districts, the Council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances. In designating polling places it must:
- (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 of potential polling stations to disabled persons;
  - (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.
- 3.4 The description of the polling place should be read as to be not only the building itself, but also the immediate environs. This will provide sufficient flexibility for the Returning Officer to site additional or alternative stations on the site as required.

## **4. BLACKLEY AND BROUGHTON CONSTITUENCY**

### **4.1 Cheetham Ward**

#### CTC - 1070 electors in person

- 4.1.1 The current polling place for CTC is Temple Primary School. However, because of extensive building work the School will not be able to host a polling station for the foreseeable future.
- 4.1.2 Following consultation with ward councillors, the Ukrainian Centre on Smedley Lane has been identified as a suitable alternative station, with good facilities for voting. It is therefore recommended that the Ukrainian Centre be adopted as the polling place for this district. This proposal is supported by Cheetham Ward Councillors.

### **4.2 Harpurhey Ward**

#### HAL – 1204 electors in person

- 4.2.1 The current polling place for HAL is Lily Lane Primary School. The Electoral Services Unit received representations from electors about the suitability of the venue at the May 2012 elections.
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4.2.2 Following consultation with ward councillors, Sharon Church on Brendon Avenue has been identified as a suitable alternative and has good facilities for voting. It is recommended that Sharon Church be adopted as the polling place for this district. This proposal is supported by Harpurhey Ward Councillors.

### **4.3 Higher Blackley Ward**

#### HBD – 779 electors in person

4.3.1 The current polling place for HBD is Camberwell Park Specialist Support School. The Electoral Services Unit received representations about the suitability of the venue at the May 2012 elections.

4.3.2 Plant Hill Adult Learning Centre on Plant Hill Road has been identified as a suitable alternative and has good facilities for voting. It is recommended that Plant Hill Adult Learning Centre be adopted as the polling place for this district. This proposal is supported by Higher Blackley Ward Councillors.

## **5. WYTHENSHAW AND SALE EAST CONSTITUENCY**

### **5.1 Northenden Ward**

#### NOA – 1704 electors in person

5.1.1 The current polling place for this district is St Aidan's RC Primary School and the polling station is normally situated in the School Hall. The School Hall is a considerable distance from the public highway and electors are required to walk a long and complicated route to reach the polling station.

5.1.2 Rackhouse Primary School on Yarmouth Drive has previously been used as a polling station, and the school can accommodate a polling station in their Hall again at future elections. Rackhouse Primary School is centrally located to serve electors in the polling district and it offers better access and facilities for voting. This proposal is supported by Northenden Ward Councillors.

## **6. Next Steps**

6.1 All electors whose polling place will change will receive a letter from the Electoral Services Unit notifying them of the change, along with information about how to apply for a postal vote and a map showing the location of the new station. Poll cards for the Greater Manchester Police and Crime Commissioner election on 15 November 2012 will also highlight the change of polling station.

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