

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Constitutional and Nomination Committee – 15 January 2014
Council – 29 January 2014

Subject: Statutory Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places: Draft
Final Proposals

Report of: Chief Executive

Purpose of the report

To consider the Council's draft final proposals for the statutory review of polling districts and polling places.

Recommendations

1. To note the submissions made to the Council in respect of the review of polling districts and polling places for the City of Manchester.
2. To note the final proposals in respect of the review.
3. To recommend to the Council the adoption of parliamentary polling districts and parliamentary polling places as set out in the scheme contained in Appendix 1 and in the maps found at Appendix 7.
4. To recommend to the Council the approval of the reasons given in the report for the decisions taken in respect of the designation of parliamentary polling districts and parliamentary polling places.
5. To recommend to the Council that the scheme contained in Appendix 1 be adopted in relation to local government elections.
6. To recommend to the Council that the Chief Executive is requested to publish such notices and other documentation required by law on completion of the review.
7. To recommend that the Council request that the Electoral Registration Officer make the necessary amendments to polling districts for the 17 February 2014 electoral register.
8. To note that final proposals have yet to be made in respect of the polling places for the BAF polling district in the Baguley ward, DWE polling district in the Didsbury ward, LOE polling district in the Longsight ward and MNE polling district in the Miles Platting and Newton Heath ward, and to recommend to the Council that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to designate those polling places in consultation with ward councillors, group leaders and the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee.

9. To recommend to the Council that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to make, where necessary, alterations to the designation of any polling place prior to the next full review in consultation with ward councillors, group leaders and the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee.

Wards affected:

All

Financial consequences for revenue budget:

The costs of undertaking the review has been in the region of £1,200 covering the production of consultation materials (£600), the access audits undertaken by Manchester Disabled People's Access Group (£400) and transportation relating to polling district and place site visits (£200).

It is expected that the implementation of the final proposals will reduce the cost of polling stations (premises and staffing) by approximately £50,000. Taking into account that polling station costs at combined national and local polls are apportioned between central government and the Council, this means that the savings to the Revenue Budget will be in the region of £25,000 annually.

Financial consequences for capital budget:

None

Equal Opportunities	Risk Management	Legal Considerations
Yes	No	See report

Equal Opportunities Implications

The City Council has a statutory obligation to ensure that polling places are accessible to all electors. The accessibility of buildings and location of polling places has been a key factor in developing the final proposals. Consultation with electors and work with disability group representatives has been undertaken. The City Council will continue to work with disability groups' representatives to implement recommendations regarding reasonable adjustments to polling places and provide the appropriate training to polling station staff.

Background documents:

- Representation of the People Act 1983
- The Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006
- The Electoral Administration and Registration Act 2013
- Report to Constitutional and Nomination Committee 11 September 2013
- Review consultation questionnaire
- Summary of representations received by the City Council and the (Acting) Returning

Officer in connection with the review

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Final Proposals for changes to polling districts and polling places
- Appendix 2: Polling Place/Station Risk and Suitability Assessment Criteria
- Appendix 3: (Acting) Returning Officer's Representations published 18 October 2013)
- Appendix 4: Review of polling districts and polling places 2013 consultation questionnaire
- Appendix 5: Summary of responses to the consultation
- Appendix 6: Manchester Disabled Person's Access Group – Access Audits
- Appendix 7: Ward Maps detailing existing and proposed Polling District boundaries and Polling Places

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration and Registration Act 2013 included a new provision altering the timing of statutory reviews of Parliamentary polling districts and polling places. This means that all local authorities have a duty to complete a statutory review of their polling districts and polling places between 1 October 2013 and 31 January 2015. These reviews will then take place on a five yearly cycle, reflecting the move to fixed term parliaments. Given that Local Government and European Parliamentary Elections are due to be held in May 2014 followed directly by the transition to IER from July 2014 onwards, the review commenced as soon as possible within the new cycle to enable changes to be put in place in advance of the 2014 elections.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 11 September 2013, this 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. The review formally commenced on 1 October 2013 to finish January 2014, thereby allowing the changes in polling districts to be reflected in the electoral register when it is published on 17 February 2014.
- 1.3 This report and the appendices set out the Council's final proposals for changes to polling districts and polling places, with the exception of BAF in the Baguley ward, DWE in the Didsbury ward, LOE in the Longsight ward and MNE in the Miles Platting and Newton Heath ward.

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. In Manchester, each ward is divided into a number of polling districts which each have a three letter code e.g. ACA, ACB based on the ward in which they are based. It should be noted that Ringway Parish must have its own polling district.
- 2.2 **Polling place:** the location (normally the building) in which polling stations will be sited by the Returning Officer.
- 2.3 **Polling station:** the room where the poll takes place (e.g. community room), which must be located within the polling place. The polling station is chosen by the Returning Officer. It is publicised in the Notice of Situation of Polling Stations and communicated to electors via their poll cards and is also published on the Council's website.
- 2.4 Where possible, every polling district should have its own dedicated polling place and all electors in that polling district are assigned to vote at the polling station located in that place.
- 2.5 It should be noted that the terms 'polling place' and 'polling station' are often used interchangeably and most people consider the polling place (such as a

community centre) to be the polling station. However, it is possible to have more than one polling station per polling place (e.g. two sets of staff, two ballot boxes, two electoral registers) and these double stations are often provided in polling districts with a large number of electors in person or where there is a high turnout or a large number of people voting at certain times of the day. For example, there were 210 polling places and 244 polling stations in the city, at the May 2012 combined local elections and referendum.

3. The designation of polling districts, polling places and polling stations

- 3.1 The designation of the city's polling districts and places is the responsibility of the Council and the relevant functions are delegated to the Constitutional and Nomination Committee in the Scheme of Delegation. This includes the Council's duties under the Representation of the People Act 1983 to divide constituencies into polling districts and also the power to divide wards into polling districts at local government elections.
- 3.2 The allocation of polling stations within polling places is not a Council function and is the responsibility of the Returning Officer for the election concerned. However, in practice, the location of likely polling stations is a key consideration when identifying of polling places and the boundaries of polling districts, particularly in those areas of the city where there are no suitable premises e.g. community venues or schools.
- 3.3 Although the legislation would seem to suggest the adoption of a top down approach to the review, with polling districts being determined before polling places, in practice a bottom up approach is usually adopted. The reality is that, where good quality polling station sites are identified, it is sensible to build polling places and districts around them and this is recognised by the Electoral Commission, which produces guidance to local authorities with regard to the designation of polling places and districts.
- 3.4 Polling districts for local government elections are not automatically part of the statutory review. However, the Electoral Commission advises that the polling districts for UK parliamentary and local government elections should always be the same, and it therefore follows that any review of parliamentary polling arrangements should be conducted simultaneously with one of local government arrangements. Consequently, polling districts and polling places adopted by the Council for parliamentary elections will also be effective for local government elections.

4. Aims of the review

- 4.1 In conducting a statutory review the Council must, when designating polling districts, seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances.
- 4.2 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 disabled persons to 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.

4.3 The focus of the review was to identify wherever possible polling places/polling stations which met set criteria, relating to:

- Location
- Facilities
- Accessibility
- Health and safety, and
- Space

4.4 The review also included an evaluation of temporary polling stations.

4.5 Whilst ideally the Council would have the choice of a range of fully accessible buildings, conveniently located for the electors in the area, this is not always the case and there may be little choice available. Where it is not possible to identify polling stations which meet the specification exactly, particularly around accessibility, every reasonable adjustment will be undertaken to provide access for all electors.

4.6 In drawing up the review consideration has also been given to the number of polling stations allocated for a given electorate. Taking into account the Electoral Commission's guidance it is suggested an average electorate of between 1,500 and 2,500 electors in person would maintain the level of service to electors in polling stations while providing optimum value for money by reducing current operating costs. However, it has also been recognised that there are some instances where this average cannot be achieved, usually because of the physical geography of the ward. Where high elector numbers are a possible concern, it is proposed that a further polling station should be located within the same polling place and the size and suitability of these premises to accommodate multiple polling stations has been considered as part of the review. This applies in polling districts where there have been more than 2,500 electors in person on average and also in districts where the turnout maybe high, even if elector threshold has not previously been met. Ideally therefore there should be sufficient space to locate additional stations in polling places across the city where this may be required.

- 4.7 In addition to the statutory criteria, the review also sought to identify areas where the number of polling stations could be reduced whilst still ensuring that polling stations are accessible and conveniently located for electors. This reflects the City Council's previous commitment to seek to reduce the cost of polling stations by up to £30,000 annually.

5. The Review Process and timetable

- 5.1 The review comprised three formal stages as well as a preliminary informal stage when preparatory work was undertaken. These stages are set out in the timetable below:

Date and stage	Activity
Preliminary stage	
July 2013 – September 2013	Preparatory work – data and intelligence gathering. Analysis of information. Establishment of the Cross Member Working Group.
Stage 1 – Formal notification of the review	
1 October 2013	Initiation of review by publication of statutory notice.
Stage 2 – Consultation	
1 October 2013	Consultation period commenced.
18 October 2013	Publication of the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations informed by the work of the Member Working Group.
1 October 2013 until 10 December 2013	Development of the Council's proposals based on representations received including those from the (Acting) Returning Officer. Ongoing visits to polling places/stations.
10 December 2013	Consultation period closed.
Stage 3 – Conclusion of the review	
15 January 2014	Consideration of draft final Proposals by Constitutional and Nomination Committee.
29 January 2014	Draft final proposals considered by to City Council.
Following 29 January 2014	Publication of all notices and other documentation required by law.

5.2 Intelligence and data collection

5.2.1 Significant preparatory work was undertaken in advance of the review, to gather intelligence provided by officers including Polling Station Inspectors and Presiding Officers and stakeholders. In addition, statistical information was collated about parliamentary and local electorates, voters in person, postal voters and polling station turnout at previous elections. In particular, turnout figures from the elections in 2010, 2011 and 2012 were considered. Figures from the 2010 parliamentary general election are of particular importance, as parliamentary general elections are generally when the turnout is highest. Information about developments to and around district centres, residential and transportation developments including the impact of Metrolink were also all taken into consideration.

5.2.2 In preparation for the review, the (Acting) Returning Officer for parliamentary elections established a Member Working Group (Councillors Chamberlain, Fender and Sue Murphy) to also undertake preparatory work which was used to inform the development of the Returning Officer's compulsory response to the review consultation. The Group worked with Officers to develop an approach to reviewing the current arrangements and to identify any suitable alternative polling stations where appropriate. As part of this work, detailed discussions took place with Councillors in those wards where possible changes were identified. This local knowledge enabled more detailed consideration to be given to the operation of polling arrangements in each ward, and for the views of ward Councillors to be taken into account at an early stage.

5.3 Polling Place/Station Visits

5.3.1 Officers undertook visits to polling places / stations on behalf of the Working Group during September and October 2013. The purpose of these visits was to assess the suitability of existing arrangements and to evaluate alternative polling stations in order to develop the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations. Officers undertook further visits in October, November and December in response to the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations and in light of further comments and representations received throughout the consultation process.

5.3.3 When assessing the suitability of polling places/stations an assessment of the following issues were taken into account:

- 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

5.3.4 The detailed criteria used to assess potential polling places /stations is attached at Appendix 2.

6. Consultation approach and representations received

6.1 Overview

6.1.1 The consultation period ran between 1 October 2013 and 10 December 2013. During this time, any elector in a constituency located wholly or partly in the Council's area could make representations, together with other interested persons and bodies, including elected representatives. By law, representations must also be sought from such persons as the Council considers to have particular expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for persons who have different forms of disability; such persons must also have an opportunity to make representations and comment on the Returning Officer's representations.

6.2 The (Acting) Returning Officer's representations

6.2.1 The (Acting) Returning Officer for relevant Parliamentary constituency or constituencies is required to make a compulsory submission which must then be published by the Council. This must include information regarding the location of polling stations within polling places. As part of this review the (Acting) Returning Officer identified a number of issues relating to particular polling districts/places to be considered by the Council in detail as part of its statutory review. The Council must publish the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations within 30 days of receipt. In this review, these representations were published on 18 October 2013 and are attached at Appendix 3. Persons involved in the consultation, set out under 6.1.1. also have the right to comment on the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations.

6.3 Consultation with Electors

6.3.1 A consultation questionnaire seeking views on current polling arrangements was published on the City Council's website. Hard copies of the questionnaire were also available and were circulated to all libraries in the city as well as being available in the Electoral Services Unit. A copy of the review consultation questionnaire is available at Appendix 4. Maps showing the current arrangements were also available for inspection in the locations shown in the table below. From 18 October, the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations were also published on the Council's website and in hard copy at the same the locations.

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

6.3.2 A total of one response was received from an elector through the online questionnaire and three responses were received in hard copy which can be found summarised at Appendix 5. Where possible, representations have been reproduced exactly as received, however where this is not practicable due to the length of the submission or where it has been received at a meeting, the key points have been summarised instead. Responses covered the following issues:

- one elector commented that they thought a polling place on Mount Road, such as Gorton South Neighbourhood Office which has been used as a polling place in the past would be more convenient for most electors rather than Sunny Brow Lodge. This issue is addressed under the proposals for Gorton South;
- one elector who is currently registered to vote as a postal voter stated that they would prefer to vote in person. As a result of this, the Electoral Services Unit have contacted the elector to advise them how to change their current arrangements;
- one elector wanted the polling district in which they live to move from one ward to another. However ward boundaries are set by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and are therefore outside the scope of the review;
- one elector made comments wholly outside the scope of the review.

6.4 Disability Groups

6.4.1 The Council sought representations on the current arrangements and the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations from the following groups:

- Manchester Disabled People's Access Group
- Breakthrough UK
- Greater Manchester Coalition of Disabled People
- Manchester Deaf Centre
- Manchester People First

6.4.2 Officers also attended a meeting of the Manchester Disabled People's Access Group as part of the consultation, where the review was discussed together with wider issues regarding the assistance available to disabled people at polling stations.

6.4.3 The Manchester Disabled People's Access Group was also commissioned by the Council to undertake a number of access audits of potential new polling places/stations which had been identified through the course of the review. A copy of this report can be found at Appendix 6. Four of the polling places/stations visited, now appear in the final proposals: Cheetwood Community Centre in Cheetham ward (CTF), the Stirling Centre in Miles Platting and Newton Heath ward (MNG) and Westcroft Community Centre in

Burnage ward (BUE) and Didsbury Baptist Church in Didsbury East ward (DEB) now appear in the final proposals. Where necessary, the Electoral Services Unit will work with these premises to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure the polling places are accessible to all electors.

6.4.4 The Electoral Services Unit holds information on all polling places/stations within the city and includes specific instructions to polling station staff about temporary reasonable adjustments required to ensure the station is accessible. All polling station staff receive a copy of the Electoral Commission's Handbook which includes guidance on dealing with disabled electors and this is also covered in training provided to them. On the basis of the discussion had at the Manchester Disabled People's Access Group further work on communicating the assistance available to disabled voters is planned for the 2014 elections.

6.4.5 No responses were received from the other groups listed above.

6.5 Key stakeholders

6.5.1 As already referred to under paragraph 5.5.2, ward Councillors were consulted regarding the operation of polling arrangements in their ward, which informed the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations.

6.5.2 For the formal review process, the Council wrote to the following groups inviting comments or suggestions regarding the suitability of polling districts and polling places in the city.

- Councillors
- Members of Parliament for Manchester's five parliamentary constituencies
- Political parties

6.5.3 A total of four responses to the formal consultation process were received from ward Councillors, including one record of a meeting which can all be found summarised at Appendix 5. Where possible, these representations have been reproduced exactly as received, however where this is not practicable due to the length of the submission or where it has been received at a meeting, the key points have been summarised instead. As referred to in paragraph 5.2.2, detailed discussions took place with Councillors who represent wards where potential changes to voting arrangements were identified, and these discussions informed the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations at Appendix 3.

7. The Final Proposals

7.1 The final proposals have been devised to meet the statutory requirements that the Council must consider when designating polling districts and polling places. In particular, the Council is required consider the criteria set out at paragraph 4.2 of this report and also to the following factors:

- (a) geographical size of polling districts;
- (b) size of the electorates of polling districts (however, a large polling district electorate may not itself be an issue, provided that its polling place is such that the required number of polling stations can be properly accommodated). This also included consideration of merging smaller polling districts, particularly in areas of low turnout, so that resources can be targeted effectively to where they are most required;
- (c) need for Ringway Parish to have its own polling district;
- (d) need for polling districts to have boundaries that enable it to contain a suitable polling place;
- (e) distance of the polling place from all areas of the polling district;
- (f) other features of the polling district's geography that may make reaching a polling place difficult for some or all of its electors;
- (g) accessibility of the polling place to disabled electors;
- (h) the likely location of any polling station(s) within the polling place, including consideration of their accessibility for disabled electors;
- (i) suitability of the polling place in terms of the space required to effectively conduct polling;
- (j) the need to minimise disruption caused to schools and other premises as much as possible. The (Acting) Returning Officer is entitled to use free of charge schools maintained or assisted by the local authority as well as those schools that receive grants made out of monies provided by parliament. The Electoral Services Unit have worked with schools to find solutions to enable them to remain open while being used as polling stations. In other cases alternative premises have been explored and utilised where possible.

7.3 A summary of the final proposals in respect of polling districts are set out below and a more detailed analysis of the nature of these changes, including the streets affected and electorate numbers, is attached at Appendix 1 and in the maps found at Appendix 7. The electorates in this report and in the appendices are based on local rather than parliamentary electorates (as the local figures are higher) on 1 November 2013. This is with the exception of Ancoats and Clayton ward, where the 1 October 2013 figure has been used instead. This is to avoid the inflated figure in November, which occurred as a result of a by election during the canvass period. Where changes to polling districts are proposed, the electorate figures are indicative only, as final electorate figures cannot be determined until after the publication of the electoral register on 17 February 2014. In all cases the proposed parliamentary polling districts are the proposed local government polling districts.

- 7.4 The final proposals for changes to polling places have been identified in a number of different circumstances:
- where premises are no longer available or have requested not to be used;
 - where premises have become unsuitable;
 - following a wider review of premises in the area;
 - following representations received formally through the review;
 - following the (Acting) Returning Officer's representations.
- 7.5 A summary of the final proposals in respect of parliamentary polling places is set out below and a more detailed analysis is attached at Appendix 1 (and in the maps found at Appendix 7) to this report. For polling districts BAF in the Baguley ward, DWE in the Didsbury ward, LOE in the Longsight ward and MNE in the Miles Platting and Newton Heath ward, proposals to change polling places are still subject to further investigation or discussion with premises. The Committee is therefore requested to recommend to City Council that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with ward councillors, group leaders and the Chair of the Committee, to determine polling places for these districts.
- 7.6 For the purposes of the review, 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.
- 7.7 It should be noted that if any proposals result in a change in the overall number of polling districts within a ward, the three letter codes for polling districts in that ward will be revised to ensure these are sequential.

8. BLACKLEY AND BROUGHTON CONSTITUENCY

8.1 Charlestown Ward

- 8.1.1 It is proposed to merge CNC with CNH to create one polling district, with approximately 1542 electors in person. Both sets of electors already have Chain Bar Methodist Hall as their polling place and would continue to do so thereby achieving a more efficient use of staff and premises, with no negative impact on electors.
- 8.1.2 It is proposed to merge CND with CNE which would create one polling district with approximately 1726 voters in person, with St. Mark's Church Hall as the polling place.

8.2 Cheetham Ward

- 8.2.1 It is proposed to abolish CTE by splitting it between CTD and CTH polling districts. This would create two polling districts, CTD with approximately 927 electors in person with Saviour Church as the polling place and CTH with approximately 2062 electors in person with Park Inn Hotel as the polling place. This would achieve a more efficient use of staff and premises.

- 8.2.2 In order to reduce the number of electors in person in CTG thereby improving the experience for electors, it is proposed to reduce the size of this polling district by moving part of it into CTJ. This would create a smaller CTG with approximately 2419 electors in person with St. Chad's Primary School as the polling place and a new extended CTJ polling district with approximately 1266 electors in person with Cheetham CE Primary School as the polling place.
- 8.2.3 It is proposed to designate Cheetwood Community Centre on Allesley Road as the polling place for CTF as this building is more centrally located within the polling district.
- 8.3 Crumpsall Ward
- 8.3.1 It is proposed to designate St. Thomas with St. Mark Church as the polling place in CRD instead of Irk Valley Primary School to minimise disruption to the school. St Thomas with St Mark Church is located approximately 400 yards from the existing polling place and so remains conveniently located for electors within the polling district.
- 8.4 Harpurhey Ward
- 8.4.1 It is proposed to abolish the HAC polling district and for properties in this district to be split between the existing HAB and HAD districts. It is proposed that HAB takes in part of HAC north of Church Lane. This would create a polling district with approximately 1980 electors in person, with Holy Trinity Primary School as the polling place.
- 8.4.2 It is proposed that HAD takes in part of HAC south of Church Lane to create a polling district with approximately 1489 electors in person, with Harpurhey Neighbourhood Centre as the polling place.
- 8.4.3 It is proposed that HAH takes in part of HAK from west side of Nigel Road to create a polling district with approximately 1795 electors in person, with Moston Lane Primary School as the polling place.
- 8.4.4 It is proposed to designate St. Thomas with St. Mark Church as the polling place for HAJ (which is also used by CRD) instead of Irk Valley Primary School to minimise disruption to the school. St Thomas with St Mark Church is located approximately 400 yards from the existing polling place and so remains conveniently located for electors within the polling district.
- 8.4.5 It is proposed to abolish the HAK polling district and for properties in this district to be split between the existing HAH and HAL districts. This would mean that HAL would take in part of HAK from east side of Nigel Road to create polling district with approximately 1795 electors in person, with Sharon Pentecostal Church as the polling place.

8.4.6 It is considered that the revised arrangements for the Harpurhey ward would achieve a more efficient use of staff and premises, and provide improved arrangements for electors.

8.5 Higher Blackley Ward

8.5.1 It is proposed to abolish the HBK district and for the properties in this district to be divided between the current HBB and HBK districts so that HBB takes in the top part of HBK to create a polling district with approximately 1562 electors in person, with Higher Blackley Education Village as the polling place.

8.5.2 It is proposed that HBC is merged with HBF and part of HBD taking in properties along Hill Lane to the south of HBC and HBF. This would create a polling district with approximately 2200 electors in person, with E-Act Blackley Academy as the polling place. This would achieve a more efficient use of staff and premises and provide improved arrangements for electors.

8.5.3 It is proposed to abolish the HBE district and for the properties to be split between the current HBG and HBJ districts so that HBG takes in the northern part of HBE, to the bottom of Chapel Road and the southern part of HBK north of Victoria Avenue. This would create a polling district with approximately 541 electors in person, with St. Andrew's Hall as the polling place.

8.5.4 Different options to avoid the use of the temporary building in HBJ were investigated. Although it was not possible to identify any alternative premises for a permanent polling place, it is proposed that the temporary building is sited directly outside the shops on Riverdale Road which should be more convenient for electors.

9. MANCHESTER CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY

9.1 No changes are proposed for Hulme and Moss Side wards.

9.2 Ancoats and Clayton Ward

9.2.1 It is proposed that Clayton Sure Start Centre is designated as the polling place in ACC, to replace Manchester Learning Disability Partnership which is no longer in use. This is geographically very close to the previous polling place and offers good facilities for voting.

9.3 Ardwick

9.3.1 It is proposed to extend ARD to take in part of ARG south of and including Plymouth Grove West and part of ARH south of Hathersage Road. This would create a polling district with approximately 2211 electors in person, voting at St. Joseph's RC Primary School. Making these changes to the polling district boundaries will provide the majority of electors in the district with more convenient voting arrangements, while also achieving more efficient use of premises and staff.

9.3.2 It is proposed to extend ARF to take in the top part of ARG located north of Plymouth Grove West to create a polling district with approximately 1627 electors in person, voting at St. Luke's Church and Neighbourhood Centre. Making this change will provide the majority of electors in the district with more convenient voting arrangements, while also achieving more efficient use of premises and staff.

9.3.3 It is proposed that ARH continues to use St. Chrysostom's CE Primary school as the polling place. However, as the nursery rather than the previously available caretaker's bungalow would now need to be used, it is proposed that polling places in this polling district are reviewed again once Elizabeth Gaskell House, situated close by, opens in the summer of 2014.

9.4 Bradford Ward

9.4.1 It is proposed to merge BDE and BDF to create one polling district, with approximately 2085 electors in person. Electors in these polling districts already vote at New Roundhouse and would continue to do so thereby achieving a more efficient use of staff and premises.

9.5 City Centre Ward

9.5.1 It is proposed to extend CCC to take in roads west of and including Corporation Street to create a polling district with approximately 1418 electors in person with the Town Hall as the polling place. This change will provide the majority of affected electors with more convenient voting arrangements.

9.5.2 It is proposed that CCD is extended to take in part of CCE to the west of and including Albion Street. This would create a polling district with approximately 2920 electors in person which provides a more equitable split between CCD and CCE. Based on previous issues experienced at the Castlefield Visitors Centre which is not currently an operating building, it is proposed that the Castlefield Hotel is designated as the polling place. This is a suitable alternative given it is situated directly next to the Visitors Centre and so is conveniently located for electors, and has the space to accommodate two polling stations.

9.5.3 The CCE district currently has approximately 4175 electors in person it is proposed to reduce the size of this polling district as set out under paragraph 9.5.2. This will then create a polling district with approximately 3005 electors in person. Concurrently it is proposed to designate the Anthony Burgess Foundation on Cambridge Street as the polling place instead of the Dancehouse Theatre, as the latter cannot comfortably accommodate two polling stations. These premises provide better facilities and improved access given their location on a relatively quiet road, but which remains centrally located for electors within the polling district.

9.5.4 Following representations from a ward Councillor visits undertaken were to seek to identify suitable alternative premises to Sheena Simon for the CCB/F districts. However, no premises offering better or more accessible premises

were identified and therefore it is proposed that current arrangements remain the same in these polling districts.

9.6 Miles Platting and Newton Heath Ward

- 9.6.1 It is proposed that Victoria Mill Community Hut is designated as the new polling place in MNA, providing electors with access to newly refurbished facilities.
- 9.6.2 It is proposed that MNE takes in the bottom part of MND below and including Droyslden Road and also the top part of MNF to the rear of Seabrook and Chelsea Road. This would create a polling district with approximately 2460 electors in person. It is requested that delegated authority is granted to the Chief Executive to determine the polling place for MNE in consultation with the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee, Group Leaders and Ward Councillors to replace Christ the King Primary School. We have recently been advised that this polling place will not be available in 2014 due to building works on the site.
- 9.6.3 It is proposed that MNG takes in part of MNF to create a polling district with 2418 electors in person. It is proposed that the Stirling Centre on Scotland Hall Road is designated as the new polling place.

9.7 Moston Ward

The polling place for MOG is currently Moston Fields Primary School. The school is moving to new premises on the site of the former North Manchester High School for Girls on Brookside Road during January. It is recommended that the new School building is designated as the polling place for MOG.

10. **MANCHESTER GORTON CONSTITUENCY**

- 10.1 No changes are proposed for the Rusholme and Whalley Range wards.

10.2 Fallowfield Ward

- 10.2.1 The number of electors in the FAB district is the highest in the city (approximately 4960) and so it is proposed to create an additional polling district from within the existing boundaries, which takes in Owens Park/Oak House and roads south of Moseley Road. It is proposed to designate premises within the Owens Park/Oak House complex as the polling place. It is also proposed for FAC to take in roads in FAB up to Carrington Road. This would then mean there were two polling districts – the existing part of FAB with approximately 2255 electors in person and the new polling district with approximately 2150 electors in person. Taken together this would better distribute electors between the three polling districts and provide electors in the new polling district with a more conveniently located polling place.
- 10.2.2 It is proposed that FAD and FAE polling districts are merged together to create one polling district. This would create one polling district with approximately

1660 electors in person, with the FAD's existing premises Whalley Range High School for Girls as the polling place. This would achieve a more efficient use of premises and staff and be more convenient for the majority of electors living in FAE.

10.3 Gorton North Ward

10.3.1 It is proposed that GNB polling district is extended to take in roads in GNC from the junction of Froxmer Road and Gorton Lane down Wellington Street to Hyde Road. This would achieve a better distribution of electors in person between GNB (approximately 2054 electors in person) and GNC (approximately 2367 electors in person). No changes to polling places are proposed.

10.4 Gorton South Ward

10.4.1 It is proposed to abolish the GSA polling district and for properties to be split between the current GSC and GSE districts so that GSC takes in part of GSA east of Wembley Road . This would create a polling district with 1187 electors in person, with Old Hall Drive Primary School as the polling place.

10.4.2 It is proposed that GSJ merges with GSE and at the same time takes in the remainder of GSA (properties west of Wembley Road). This would create a polling district with approximately 2572 electors in person voting at Gorton Mount Primary School on Mount Road. This reflects representations made by an elector during the consultation, who thought a polling place located on Mount Road would be more convenient for electors than Sunny Brow Lodge.

10.5 Levenshulme Ward

10.5.1 It is proposed that LED takes in part of LEE east from the railway line. This would create a polling district with approximately 2020 electors in person, with St. Andrew's Scout Hut as the polling place.

10.5.2 It is proposed that LEF takes in the remainder of LEE. This would create a polling district with approximately 1834 electors in person. It is proposed that St. Mary's RC Primary School is the designated polling place for this polling district.

10.6 Longsight Ward

10.6.1 It is requested that delegated authority is granted to the Chief Executive to determine the polling place for LOE in consultation with the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee, Group Leaders and Ward Councillors to replace Victoria Park Day Centre which is no longer in use.

11. **MANCHESTER WITHINGTON CONSTITUENCY**

11.1 No changes are proposed for Chorlton Park, Old Moat and Withington wards.

11.2 Burnage Ward

11.2.1 It is proposed that BUE is extended in size to take in part of BUD. This would cover both sides of Westcroft Road and all of Moss Bray Avenue. This will better distribute electors between BUD (approximately 1613 electors in person) and BUE (approximately 1219 electors in person). It is proposed that Westcroft Community Centre is designated as the polling place in this polling district providing more convenient arrangements for the majority of electors.

11.3 Chorlton Ward

11.3.1 It is proposed that CLD is extended to take in properties from the CLE district on Chorlton Green, Crossland Road, Finney Drive and the east side of Brookburn Road near the Bowling Green pub. The number of electors in person would therefore increase from approximately 512 to 706 in CLD and reduce from approximately from 2563 to 2369 in CLE.

11.3.2 It is proposed that St. Clement's CE Church on Edge Lane is designated as the polling place in CLF.

11.4 Didsbury East Ward

11.4.1 No changes are proposed to DEA polling district. Visits have been made to the Gardening Society on Kingslea Road and the Bowling Hut in Fog Lane Park on the basis of representations received from a ward councillor. However neither premises offer suitable facilities as polling places and it is therefore proposed that the polling place remains as St. Cuthbert's RC Primary School.

11.4.2 It is proposed that Didsbury Baptist Church is designated as the polling place for DEB, which is located on the corner of School Lane/ Beaver Road and provides good facilities close to the previous polling place. This takes into account representations received from ward Councillors regarding use of Beaver Road School.

11.4.3 It is proposed that the boundaries between DED, DEE and DEF are redrawn to abolish the current DED polling district. This would create two new polling districts with the boundary being above Oakway across Kingsway, around the top of Selsey Drive and across the bottom of Broad Oak Avenue. DEE would then have 1282 electors in person with Broad Oak Primary School as the polling place. DEF would have 1458 electors in person with East Didsbury Methodist Church as the polling place. This addresses concerns raised by ward Councillors about the remoteness of Parrs Wood High School as the polling place in DED.

11.5 Didsbury West Ward

11.5.1 It is proposed to move the properties on the following roads from DWA to DWB to create a more equitable split between districts: Burton Road from Barlow Moor Road up to junction with Lapwing Lane; properties on the relevant part of Barlow Moor Road; Northen Grove; Stratford Avenue;

Kenilworth Avenue; Warwick Avenue; Leamington Avenue; Walsingham Avenue; Beaufort Avenue and Montrose Avenue. DWA would then have 2389 electors in person with Didsbury United Reform Church as the polling place. DWB would then have 1433 electors in person with Fielden Campus as the polling place. This change will provide the majority of affected electors with more convenient voting arrangements.

11.5.2 It is requested that delegated authority is granted to the Chief Executive to determine the polling place for DWE, in consultation with the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee, Group Leaders and Ward Councillors. This is because the current polling place, Ivy Manchester Church, is going to be closed as a result of redevelopment, at a date yet to be confirmed. However, it is considered prudent to identify a new polling place now so that this can be used in 2014 and its suitability assessed in advance of the parliamentary general election in 2015.

12. WYTHENSHAW AND SALE EAST CONSTITUENCY

12.1 No changes are proposed for Woodhouse Park ward.

12.2 Baguley

12.2.1 It is proposed that BAA is merged with BAH to create one polling district with approximately 2404 electors in person, with Royal Oak Community Centre as the polling place.

12.2.2 It is requested that delegated authority is granted to the Chief Executive to determine the polling place for BAF in consultation with the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination Committee, Group Leaders and Ward Councillors to replace Scout Drive Children's Centre which is no longer an operating building.

12.3 Brooklands Ward

12.3.1 It is proposed that BKA is merged with BKB to create one polling district with approximately 1777 electors in person, with Sandilands Primary School as the polling place.

12.4 Northenden Ward

12.4.1 It is proposed that NOC takes in part of NOD, north of Church Road to create a polling district with approximately 1547 electors in person, with Northenden Primary School as the polling place.

12.4.2 It is proposed that NOE takes in the remainder of NOD, south of Church Road to create a polling district with approximately 1877 electors in person, with Wythenshawe Cricket Club as the polling place.

12.5 Sharston Ward

12.5.1 It is proposed that SHB is merged with SHJ to create one polling district with approximately 1609 electors in person, with Wythenshawe Community Church as the polling place.

12.5.2 It is proposed that SHC is merged with SHD to create one polling district with approximately 1495 electors in person and that Crossacres Primary School is the polling place for this district.

12.5.3 Proposals in Sharston have taken into account the current work being undertaken on the construction of Metrolink and the possible impact of this on access to polling places. Metrolink have advised that the majority of the major construction work will be completed by March 2014 including the Brownhill Road section of the track. Vehicular and pedestrian access should therefore be maintained to all parts of the ward. For the local and European Parliamentary Election on 22 May 2014, additional signage to polling stations can be provided by Transport for Greater Manchester if required.

13. Publication of final proposals

13.1 Once the final proposals are approved by the Constitutional and Nomination Committee and by the City Council, the Council's reasons for its decisions must be published. The Council must also publish:

(a) all correspondence sent to the Returning Officer in connection with the review;

(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;

(c) all representations made by any person in connection with the review;

(d) 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;

(e) details of the designation of polling districts or polling places within its areas as a result of the review; and

(f) details of the places where the results of the review have been published.

14. Further Reviews

14.1 Once the review is completed, another review must take place within the next five years. However, the Council has discretion to review polling districts and places before that time if necessary.

14.2 On occasion, it may be necessary to change the designation of a polling place outside of the statutory review process. This can arise as a result of premises being closed, or where better facilities are identified.

- 14.3 The Committee is requested to authorise the Chief Executive, in consultation with group leaders and the Chair of Constitutional and Nomination, to make changes to the designation of polling places which occur outside of the formal review process.

15. Financial Implications

- 15.1 The costs of undertaking the review has been in the region of £1,200 covering the production of consultation materials (£600), the access audits undertaken by Manchester Disabled People's Access Group (£400) and transportation relating to polling district and place site visits (£200).
- 15.2 The cost of a polling place is dependant on a number of factors, including staffing and premises hire (where these are payable), caretaker and/or security costs and any adaptations e.g. temporary ramps and barriers, where required. However, on average the cost of each polling place is in the region of £1,000 and a minimum of £2,000 for temporary polling places.
- 15.3 As referred to in paragraph 4.7, the Council previously agreed to seek to reduce the cost of polling stations by up to £30,000 annually. If adopted, the revised scheme would result in a reduction of circa £25,000 annually to the revenue budget. This has been calculated on the basis of:
- a review of staffing levels at polling stations to take into account the requirements of each election based on the number of electors in person and anticipated turnout. Staffing levels will be reviewed on a case by case basis in advance of each poll;
 - a reduction of twenty polling stations across the city;
 - the identification of ten new premises where hire costs are now incurred to replace free to use buildings which have closed since the last election, or to replace schools where alternative suitable premises have been identified within the polling district.

16. Recommendations

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