



General Purposes Urgency Sub Committee

Date:	24 November 2011
Classification:	For General Release
Title:	Outstanding issues arising out of the Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places report at the General Purposes Committee on 18 October 2011
Report of:	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Management of the Council
Financial Summary:	The cost of using polling places is met from the Government grant in respect of UK and European Parliamentary elections and referendums, from the GLA in respect of London Mayor and GLA elections and by the City Council for its own elections
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires the City Council to review its polling districts and polling places every 4 years. Review proposals were presented at the General Purposes Committee on 18 October 2011
- 1.2 The following matters remained outstanding and were referred to this General Purposes Urgency Sub Committee.
 - a) Councillor David Boothroyd's scheme for three revised polling districts within Westbourne Ward. Councillor Boothroyd was contacted post the General Purposes Committee on 18 October to advise whether he wished to make further representation in respect of his original scheme. To-date further representation has not been made by Councillor Boothroyd.

- b) In respect of Councillor Boothroyd's suggestion that the Bayswater Childrens Centre could replace St Mary of the Angels school as the polling place for WBB polling district in Westbourne ward it was noted that in Section 4.32 (i) of the Report for the General Purposes Committee officers had confused Bayswater Families Centre with the Bayswater Childrens Centre. Officers apologise for this error and visited Bayswater Childrens Centre as part of this review.
- c) Councillor Robert Davis asked that officers investigate the possibility of the polling place for LGC polling district in Lancaster Gate reverting back to Hallfields School, Hallfield Estate from Pickering Hall, Hallfield Estate. Pickering Hall was used for the first time at the referendum on 5 May 2011.
- d) Councillor Ian Adams requested further information on which schools used as polling places at the referendum on 5 May 2011 closed to pupils and, in terms of polling places which did not provide disabled access at the referendum, what level of use was made of them by voters with disabilities (A note has been sent to Councillor Adams. This appears as Appendix A).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the proposal, submitted by Councillor David Boothroyd in respect of the reconfiguration of polling districts in Westbourne Ward and referred to in paragraph 3.1 of the report be not supported for the reasons set out in that paragraph.
- 2.2 That proposals to use Bayswater Children's Centre as polling place for Polling District WBB be supported for the reasons set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report.
- 2.3 That the proposal to relocate the polling place LGC to Hallfield School, referred to in paragraph 3.3 of the report, be supported for the reasons set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report.

3. Background Information

- 3.1 In respect of Councillor David Boothroyd's Westbourne ward proposal as presented at the General Purposes Committee on 18 October. This proposal not be supported. The reasons for not supporting the proposal are as those listed in the 18 October General Purposes Committee report recommendations. The proposal would result in confusion and disruption to voters, would result in polling places having to be used which are not as suitable as those currently used, and would transfer the issue of having higher numbers of voters in one polling district to another polling district. Any issues appeared to arise out of the shape of the ward. This review cannot make any changes to ward boundaries. Officers can further confirm that no proposal was received to change polling district boundaries and polling places from any voter within this ward. All the information collected at previous elections and

the referendum would appear to indicate that voters are content with the level and type of provision provided. Officers advise that in the event of a high turnout being predicted at a specific polling place officers can arrange resources so that this demand is met. This can be actioned by providing more polling stations (or issuing tables) or by appointing more staff to work at each of these stations. This is standard practice at all elections and at all polling places.

- 3.2 In respect of Councillor Boothroyd's suggestion that the Bayswater Childrens Centre could replace St Mary of the Angels school as the polling place for WBB polling district in Westbourne ward. Officers visited the Bayswater Childrens Centre, which is sited on the corner of Westbourne Park Road and Shrewsbury Road, and found that it provides all the facilities required by voters and staff working at an election. There is disabled access into the building and a lift can take disabled voters into the room on the lower ground floor which is the preferred area to be used for voting. It is therefore recommended that Bayswater Childrens Centre, Westbourne Park Road/ Shrewsbury Road be designated as the polling place for WBB polling district in the Westbourne Park ward.
- 3.3 In respect of the request from Councillor Davis that officers investigate the possibility of using Hallfield School, Hallfield Estate (instead of Pickering Hall, Hallfield Estate) as the polling place for LGC polling district in Lancaster Gate ward. Officers agree that Pickering Hall is cramped and that the polling place should revert back to Hallfield School. It is therefore recommended that Hallfield School, Hallfield Estate be designated as the polling place for LGC polling district in Lancaster Gate ward.

4. Other Implications

These remain as set out in the report to the General Purposes Committee on 18 October, listed as a background document.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact:
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BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. General Purposes Committee Report 18 October 2011
2. Appendix A re school closures and disability access at the Referendum on 5 May 2011
3. Appendix B. Designated polling places