



General Purposes Committee
25 January 2016

Report from the Chief Executive

For Action

Wards affected:
ALL

Review of Polling Places

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 It is customary in advance of major elections to carry out a review of the polling places used at the previous election and to determine the availability of places for the forthcoming election. This report sets out the outcome of that review and makes recommendations for the elections in May 2016. Only a small number of changes are being proposed where circumstances require consideration of alternative premises. No alterations to polling district boundaries are proposed.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That in view of the restrictions required by the Winston Churchill Lycée, the polling place for NBA4 polling district in Barnhill ward be temporary portacabins situated in Greenhill Way.
- 2.2 That in the absence of viable alternatives, the use of Ark Franklyn Academy be agreed in principle as the polling place for HQP3 and HQP5 polling districts in Queen's Park ward and further discussions be held with the Head.
- 2.3 That in view of the unavailability of St Joseph's RC School, Church End and Roundwood Unity Centre be the polling place for CHA3 polling district.
- 2.4 That the polling place for voters in CDU2 polling district in Dudden Hill ward be portacabins situated in Mulgrave Road in preference to the site of Christ Temple on Clifford Way.

- 2.5 That the new Willesden Green Library be the polling place for electors in HBP1 polling district in Brondesbury Park ward.
- 2.6 That the polling places approved at this meeting be adopted for the Greater London Mayoral and Assembly elections.
- 2.7 That in the event of any venue becoming unavailable before the May 2016 elections, authority be delegated to the Democratic Services Manager to make alternative arrangements for polling places for these elections in consultation with the leaders of the political groups of the Council.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The last major review of the borough's polling districts and polling places was carried out in autumn 2013 and reported to members in January 2014. My report to Committee in January 2015 proposed further changes to venues for polling stations in 12 polling districts for reasons of availability and increased efficiency. This report is proposing only a small number of changes where a venue has become or is likely to be unavailable.

3.2 Polling districts, polling places and polling stations may be defined as follows:

A **polling district** is a geographical sub-division of an electoral area, ie a UK parliamentary constituency, a European Parliamentary electoral region, a ward or an electoral division.

A **polling place** is a geographical area in which a polling station is located. However, as there is no legal definition of what a polling place is, the geographical area could be defined as tightly as a particular building or as widely as the entire polling district. In Brent, the polling place has been customarily defined as the premises inside which voting takes place.

A **polling station** is the actual area where the process of voting takes place and must be located within the polling place designated for the polling district.

3.3 A copy of the proposals in this report have been circulated to members for comments. Responses where received have been incorporated into this report and any further comments received after publication will be reported to the meeting.

3.4 Since the 2015 General Election there has been a neighbourhood plan referendum in September and a by election in Kensal Green ward in December. In both cases, the previously used polling stations were retained with one exception. Furness School was unavailable for the by election and was replaced by the Designworks in Park Parade. While the venue was satisfactory, there was a small number of complaints at the change. This

report is proposing that Furness School be the chosen polling place for voters in polling district CKG4.

3.5 Subject to changes described in more detail below, this report proposes that polling stations used at the General Election in May 2015 be retained for the forthcoming Greater London Mayoral and Assembly elections in May 2016. A full list of polling stations for each polling district is attached at Appendix 1.

3.6 **Barnhill Ward: Polling district NBA4 - Huts near the former Town Hall site**

The former Brent Town Hall was long used as a polling place for electors in polling district NBA4 in Barnhill ward. During construction of the Winston Churchill Lycée on the site, the polling place has been two portacabins situated on Greenhill Way. Officers have held discussions on site with staff at the Lycée who are willing for us to use part of the site as a polling place. However they are unwilling for people to gain access to the site without first being checked in by a member of their security staff.

There is potential for objections to be raised by voters and for queues to build up, particularly in the early evening when the majority of voters turn up to vote.

Members for Barnhill ward have asked that if portacabins are required that they be situated alongside the Lycée on Kings Drive. While it is acknowledged that this would be preferable to the existing location on Greenhill Way close to the corner of Kings Drive, there are practical objections. The slope of Kings Drive makes it extremely difficult to construct a ramp to enable wheelchair access. In addition the level of traffic on Kings Drive causes considerable difficulty in delivering and collecting the portacabins. While on site, they do remain a potential hazard to traffic as they occupy more of the road than parked vehicles.

In view of the circumstances described above, this report recommends that the polling place continue to be portacabins situated close to the corner of Greenhill Way and Kings Drive.

3.7 **Queen's Park Ward: Polling Districts HQP3 and HQP5 - Ark Franklyn School (formerly Kensal Rise Primary)**

The Head Teacher has stated that she does not wish the school to be used as a polling station on the grounds of inconvenience for the running of the school.

While the Returning Officer has the power to use any buildings maintained at public expense, including academy schools, consideration has been given to alternative venues. The loss of the school will however be significant in that, since Moberly Sports and Education Centre in Kilburn Lane became unavailable, the Ark Franklyn school serves 2 polling districts.

The alternatives that have been investigated are:

- Kensal Rise Methodist Church on Chamberlayne Road. This venue is situated in an adjacent district (HQP1) and will confuse HQP1 voters many of whom will have to walk past it to their station at Manor School.
- There is a similar objection to the hall at the Church of the Transfiguration at the corner of Chamberlayne Road and Wrentham Avenue
- Co-use of Manor School with HQP1. However this will mean that there will be five polling stations in the school serving three polling districts.

In the circumstances, Ark Franklyn school is the only really suitable venue for electors in this area that has been identified. Further discussion will be held with the Head Teacher and the outcome reported to the meeting.

3.8 Harlesden Ward: CHA3 - St Joseph's School

Following the fire in 2015, the school has operated in temporary accommodation and will remain there for 2 years. It will not be available as a polling place during that time.

Officers have considered alternative locations including Leopold School, which already serves polling district CHA2, but there is no direct walking/driving route between the two sites; and the Restoration Revival Fellowship Apostolic Church which is directly opposite an existing polling place; and Church End and Roundwood Unity Centre which currently serves polling district CHA1.

In view of its proximity, it is recommended that Church End and Roundwood Unity Centre on Church Road be the polling place for polling district CHA3 until St Joseph's School once more becomes available. Although electors in CHA3 will have to cross a busy road, there are pelican crossings allowing safe access. The venue is considered to have sufficient space for the additional polling station.

3.9 Dudden Hill Ward: CDU2 Hut outside Christ Temple, Clifford Way

Although the owners of this site were willing to allow a temporary hut to be placed on their premises, there were protracted negotiations and high charges for use of the site based on the length of time the hut was situated there. Given that there are inherent problems with temporary huts, making them unpopular with both voters and polling station staff, there has been an investigation of alternative locations. Two have been identified, one of which is placing a hut on a different site. Those options are:

- A temporary cabin on Mulgrave Road; or
- Use the existing polling place at Northview School (polling district CDU3) on the other side of Dudden Hill Lane.

The school has sufficient capacity to allow another polling station serving around 1100 electors to be situated there. There is a potential objection in the need for electors to cross Dudden Hill Lane and the limited number of crossing points. On balance Northview School is recommended in preference to the options of a temporary hut at either Mulgrave Road or the existing place on Clifford Way.

One councillor has questioned the use of Northview Primary School given its location at the end of a cul de sac and consequent remoteness for some electors. She also cites the generally turnout in the polling district served by the school and the lack of pedestrian crossings on Dudden Hill Lane.

Given the undesirability of discouraging electors from participating in the election, this report recommends that the polling place for CDU2 polling district be a portacabin situated on Mulgrave Road.

3.10 Brondesbury Park Ward: HBP1 George Furness House

The polling place in this district has traditionally been the Willesden Green Library. While the site was being re-developed, it was replaced by a community room in the nearby George Furness House. Now that the library is fully re-opened it is recommended that it once again be the designated polling place. A site visit has identified a suitable room for use as a polling station.

3.11 Consultation with Members

All members were invited via the weekly information bulletin to comment on the draft of this report. To date 4 responses have been received:

1. A comment about the location of the polling station at the old Brent Town Hall (now Winston Churchill Lycée) which is described in more detail at paragraph 3.6 above.
2. A response to the proposals for polling district CDU2 as set out in paragraph 3.9 above.
3. A recommendation that electors in polling district HBP1 in Brondesbury Park ward resume voting at Willesden Green Library instead of the replacement premises at George Furness House. This proposal has been accepted and Willesden Green Library is included in the list of proposed polling places at appendix 1.
4. The submission relating to Brondesbury Park ward also considered that the Refectory was not large enough to accommodate 2 polling stations.

This location was used for the first time in 2015 after the North West London Jewish School expressed security concerns about its premises being used for elections. Officers have carried out site visits and consider that the premises are suitable. There was no negative feedback received following the General Election in 2015 either from electors, polling station staff or inspectors to contradict this view. It is therefore recommended to members that The Refectory be retained for electors in HBP4 polling district.

5. The final submission referred to the distance from the polling station for electors living in student nursing accommodation in Northwick Park. It was suggested that they be allowed to use a polling place in a neighbouring polling district.

Members may recall that there was some years ago a polling district consisting solely of the university campus and the hospital accommodation and that the polling place was a social club on the site of the hospital. As turnout at elections in that polling district was regularly less than 10%, the decision was taken to merge that polling district with its neighbour.

As there can only be one polling place in a polling district, the proposal could only be implemented by amending polling district boundaries, so as to move the campus and hospital accommodation into the alternative polling district, and subsequently re-publishing the entire electoral register.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of the elections in May 2016 is borne by the Greater London Authority. The total cost for hire of premises for the General Election in 2015 (excluding the costs for Hampstead and Kilburn constituency which were met by Camden Council) was £45,604.09 at an average cost per venue of £584.00. The average cost of a temporary hut was £1586.00.
- 4.2 No net reduction of polling stations arises from the recommendations in this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Representation of the People Act 1983 requires the council to divide every parliamentary constituency or part thereof within its area into polling districts and that these be kept under review. The council must also ensure that all electors are given such facilities for voting as may be reasonable in the circumstances.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The purpose of the review is to ensure that no elector is discouraged from voting because of any inconvenience placed in his or her way by the choice of polling station location in their area. The accessibility of premises for all electors is taken into consideration as a matter of normal procedure.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 None specific

Background Papers

None specific

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Ward	Polling District	Current Polling Place	Polling station electors as at 04/01/15	No of Polling Stations	Recommendation
Alperton	NAL1	Lyon Park Infants School	1991	2	No change
Alperton	NAL2	Alperton Baptist Church Hall	3428	3	No change
Alperton	NAL3	Bethel Community Centre	2711	2	No change
Alperton	NAL4	Abbey Estate Community Centre	1418	1	No change
Barnhill	NBA1	Preston & Mall Y&C Centre	1357	1	No change
Barnhill	NBA2	Hut at Preston Road Car Park	1453	1	No change
Barnhill	NBA3	Parish Hall, Church of the Ascension	1683	2	No change
Barnhill	NBA4	Huts at corner of Greenhill Way and Kings Drive	2693	2	No change
Barnhill	NBA5	Chalk hill Primary School	1184	1	No change
Barnhill	NBA6	English Martyrs Church Hall	1494	1	No change
Brondesbury Park	HBP1	George Furness House	1376	1	Willesden Green Library
Brondesbury Park	HBP2	Stember Hall Scouts Hut	1051	1	No change
Brondesbury Park	HBP3	Queen's Park Community School	1897	2	No change
Brondesbury Park	HBP4	The Refectory, Christchurch Avenue	1689	2	No change
Brondesbury Park	HBP5	Landau House Community Centre	1296	1	No change
Dollis Hill	CDO1	Braintcroft School	2758	2	No change
Dollis Hill	CDO2	Kingfisher Y&C Centre	945	1	No change
Dollis Hill	CDO3	Our Lady of Grace Junior School	2427	2	No change

Dollis Hill	CDO4	Our Lady of Grace Infants School	1276	1	No change
Dudden Hill	CDU1	Christ Embassy (Former Neasden Library)	1221	1	No change
Dudden Hill	CDU2	Hut at Christ Temple, Clifford Way	1072	1	Hut on Mulgrave Road
Dudden Hill	CDU3	Northview School	729	1	No change
Dudden Hill	CDU4	Gladstone Park School	2687	2	No change
Dudden Hill	CDU5	Hut in Car Park, St Mary's Church	809	1	No change
Dudden Hill	CDU6	Pakistan Community Centre	1242	1	No change
Fryent	NFR1	Hut at former Father O'Callaghan Centre	1349	1	No change
Fryent	NFR2	Holy Innocents Church Hall	930	1	No change
Fryent	NFR3	Hut outside Pizza Hut, Kingsbury Rd	1050	1	No change
Fryent	NFR4	St Robert Southwell School	1160	1	No change
Fryent	NFR5	Oliver Goldsmith Primary School	1034	1	No change
Fryent	NFR6	Fryent Primary School	1479	1	No change
Fryent	NFR7	Oliver Goldsmith Primary School	1054	1	No change
Harlesden	CHA1	Church End & Roundwood Centre	1463	1	No change
Harlesden	CHA2	Leopold Primary School	1152	1	No change
Harlesden	CHA3	St Joseph's RC Primary School	1653	2	Church End and Roundwood Unity Centre
Harlesden	CHA4	John Keble CE School	2166	2	No change
Harlesden	CHA5	Harlesden Primary School	2557	2	No change
Kensal Green	CKG1	Roundwood Club	792	1	No change
Kensal Green	CKG2	Newman Catholic College	1462	1	No change
Kensal Green	CKG3	All Souls' Church Hall	1049	1	No change
Kensal Green	CKG4	Furness Primary School	1839	2	No change
Kensal Green	CKG5	St Mark's Church Hall	1184	1	No change
Kensal Green	CKG6	Hazel Road Community Centre	1512	1	No change

Kenton	NKE1	Lindsay Park Baptist Church Hall	1664	1	No change
Kenton	NKE2	Claremont High School	1468	1	No change
Kenton	NKE3	Uxendon Manor Primary School	991	1	No change
Kenton	NKE4	Haridham Hindu Swaminarayan Temple	2402	2	No change
Kenton	NKE5	Mount Stewart Infant School	1458	1	No change
Kilburn	HKi1	Christchurch School	1814	2	No change
Kilburn	HKi2	Kilburn Square Housing Co-op	2278	2	No change
Kilburn	HKi3	Kilburn Square Housing Co-op	1424	1	No change
Kilburn	HKi4	The Royal British Legion	2832	2	No change
Kilburn	HKi5	Marian Community Centre	1285	1	No change
Mapesbury	CMA1	Mora Primary School	2222	2	No change
Mapesbury	CMA2	Anson Primary School	1643	2	No change
Mapesbury	CMA3	St Gabriel's Hall	1063	1	No change
Mapesbury	CMA4	St Gabriel's Hall	2139	2	No change
Mapesbury	CMA5	Watling Gardens Community Centre	1303	1	No change
Northwick Park	NNP1	Hut opposite 86 Northwick Avenue	579	1	No change
Northwick Park	NNP2	St Cuthbert's Church Hall	2907	2	No change
Northwick Park	NNP3	Byron Court Primary School	1519	1	No change
Northwick Park	NNP4	Hut at Sudbury Court Pavilion	1661	2	No change
Northwick Park	NNP5	St George's Church Hall	1566	2	No change
Preston	NPR1	Preston Park Primary School	3082	2	No change
Preston	NPR2	Huts on Pellatt Road	1826	2	No change
Preston	NPR3	Wembley Christian Centre	1457	1	No change
Preston	NPR4	Wembley Primary School	2882	2	No change
Queen's Park	HQP1	Manor Special School	1779	2	No change
Queen's Park	HQP2	Princess Frederica School	1153	1	No change
Queen's Park	HQP3	ARK Franklin Academy	1912	2	No change.

Queen's Park	HQP4	Salisbury Primary School	2432	2	No change
Queen's Park	HQP5	ARK Franklin Academy	1396	1	No change
Queensbury	NQY1	Queensbury Methodist Church Bdg	2952	2	No change
Queensbury	NQY2	Hut outside Mecca Club	884	1	No change
Queensbury	NQY3	White Cross Hall	1332	1	No change
Queensbury	NQY4	Kingsbury Library Plus	1201	1	No change
Queensbury	NQY5	Roe Green Primary School	1762	2	No change
Queensbury	NQY6	Kingsbury Resource Centre	1388	1	No change
Stonebridge	CST1	Children's Centre	2088	2	No change
Stonebridge	CST2	Mitchell Brook School	811	1	No change
Stonebridge	CST3	Leopold Primary School Annexe (formerly Centre for Staff Development)	2680	2	No change
Stonebridge	CST4	Brentfield Primary School	1261	1	No change
Stonebridge	CST5	Stonebridge Hub	2502	2	No change
Stonebridge	CST6	Church Hall, Brentmead Gardens	480	1	No change
Sudbury	NSU1	Sudbury Methodist Church Hall	1971	2	No change
Sudbury	NSU2	LNER Sports & Social Club	932	1	No change
Sudbury	NSU3	Sudbury Baptist Church Hall	1848	2	No change
Sudbury	NSU4	Sudbury Primary School	2000	2	No change
Sudbury	NSU5	St John's Community Centre	1855	2	No change
Tokyington	CTO1	Hut on North End Road	594	1	No change
Tokyington	CTO2	Brent Civic Centre	3209	3	No change
Tokyington	CTO3	Oakington Manor Primary School	2075	2	No change
Tokyington	CTO4	St Michael's Church Hall	2265	2	No change
Tokyington	CTO5	Elsley Primary School	1864	2	No change
Welsh Harp	CWH1	Hut on Mallard Way	1040	1	No change
Welsh Harp	CWH2	Fryent Primary School	1171	1	No change

Welsh Harp	CWH3	St Andrew's New Church Hall	1303	1	No change
Welsh Harp	CWH4	Wykeham Primary School	1426	1	No change
Welsh Harp	CWH5	St Margaret's RC School	1448	1	No change
Welsh Harp	CWH6	Hut on Crispian Close	725	1	No change
Welsh Harp	CWH7	Woodfield School	1005	1	No change
Wembley Central	NWC1	St Joseph's Wembley Pastoral Centre	2932	2	No change
Wembley Central	NWC2	Ealing Road Library	2507	2	No change
Wembley Central	NWC3	Barham Primary School	1899	2	No change
Wembley Central	NWC4	Ealing Road Methodist Church Hall	1822	2	No change
Willesden Green	CWG1	St John & St Francis School	2503	2	No change
Willesden Green	CWG2	St Mary Magdalen's School	2836	2	No change