

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive/Returning Officer	Council	21 January 2020

POLLING STATION PROPOSALS FOR THE NEW WARD BOUNDARIES

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To propose the location of polling stations based on the new ward boundary arrangements as determined by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) following its electoral review of Chorley Council in 2018/19.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the proposed location of polling stations as contained in the table at paragraph 10 be approved.
3. That the council launch a publicity campaign advising voters of any changes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

4. Following the electoral review of Chorley Council in 2018/19 (the purpose of which was to improve voter equality across the borough) the LGBCE determined that the council size be reduced from 47 to 42 elected members, representing 14 wards, with three members per ward and the borough ward boundaries being redrawn.
5. As a result of the ward boundaries being redrawn, a review of polling stations was conducted to determine the appropriateness of location within the new wards. To inform the review, responses made by members of the public and interested groups/individuals from the national 5-year polling place review of Chorley undertaken recently were considered.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

6. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	X	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

7. As part of its work programme for the year 2018/19 the LGBCE conducted an electoral review of Chorley Council. On its conclusion in March 2019, the LGBCE determined that the size of the council be reduced from 47 elected members to 42. The authority's preference to continue to elect its membership by thirds, triggered a requirement of LGBCE, which stipulated each ward must be represented by three ward members. As a result, the number of wards was reduced from 20 to 14, and the ward boundaries redrawn by the LGBCE to reflect the changes. The new ward boundaries are due to come into force at the next scheduled local election on 7 May 2020.
8. Following the results of the electoral review being published, the existing polling districts have been revised and a review of the council's polling stations was required.
9. The polling station review coincided with the national 5-year Polling Place Review which all councils across the UK had to complete by the end of January 2020. Although there is a requirement for the Polling Place Review be conducted on current polling districts, polling places and polling stations, feedback received during the public consultation helped inform the council's own polling station review for the new ward boundaries.

Proposed Polling Stations

10. The table below, provides a list of the proposed polling stations for each of the new wards. Individual ward maps plotting the new polling stations can be found in appendix 1 (to follow).
11. Although, most of polling stations are located within the relevant ward itself, there are two wards that have a polling station situated outside their ward boundary. The wards affected are -
 - **Chorley South East & Heath Charnock** which has a polling station at Anderton Primary School. This arrangement already exists have has been for over 30 years.
 - **Croston, Mawdesley & Euxton South** which, if approved, will have a polling station in Euxton Parish Community Centre. This is to allow those residents in South Euxton the opportunity to vote closer to home, than having to travel to the nearest polling station for that ward in Ulnes Walton.

BOROUGH WARD	POLLING STATION PROPOSED (** denotes a new polling station)
Adlington & Anderton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adlington Primary School, Park Road, Adlington, Chorley, PR7 4JA • Fair View Community Centre, Highfield Road North, Adlington, Chorley, PR6 9RN • Anderton Primary School, Babylon Lane, Anderton, Chorley, PR6 9NW • Rivington Parish Church Hall, Horrobin Lane, Rivington, Horwich, Bolton, BL6 7SE
Buckshaw & Whittle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whittle-le-Woods Village Hall, Union Street, off Chorley Old Road, Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley, PR6 7LN • ** Lancaster Way Community Centre, 10 Hall Gate, Chorley, PR7 1XA (<i>replacing Buckshaw Village Community Centre</i>)
Chorley East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chorley District Scout Centre, Wright Street, Chorley, PR6 0SL • St James' CE Primary School, Devonport Way, Chorley, PR6 0TE • Sacred Heart RC Primary School, Brooke Street, Chorley, PR6 0LB
Chorley North & Astley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Astley Village Community Centre, Hallgate, Astley Village, Chorley, PR7 1XA • ** St Joseph's Parish Centre, Harpers Lane, Chorley, PR6 0HR (<i>replacing The Practice Hall, All Seasons Leisure Centre</i>) • St Peter's CE Primary School, Eaves Lane, Chorley, PR6 0DX
Chorley North East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Chads, Blackburn Road, Whittle-le-Woods, Chorley, PR6 8LL • St Barnabas Church, Chapel Lane, Heapey, Chorley, PR6 8EW • Heapey & Wheelton Village Hall, West View, Meadow Street, Wheelton, Chorley, PR6 8HJ • Hillside Methodist Church Hall, Park Road, Brinscall, Chorley, PR6 8JP • Withnell Fold Primary School, Withnell Fold, Withnell, Chorley, PR6 8BA • St Joseph's RC Primary School, Bury Lane, Withnell, Chorley, PR6 8SD • Abbey Village Primary School, Bolton Road, Abbey Village, Chorley, PR6 8DD
Chorley North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Hornchurch Drive, Chorley, PR7 2RJ • Chorley Methodist Church, Gillibrand Walks, Chorley, PR7 2EZ • St Mary's Parish Community Centre, Devonshire Road, Chorley, PR7 2SR • ** St Laurence's Church Refectory, Union Street, Chorley, PR7 1EB (<i>replacing St Laurence's Primary School</i>).
Chorley South East & Heath Charnock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duke Street Primary School, Duke Street, Chorley, PR7 3DU • St Georges CE Primary School, Carr Lane, Chorley, PR7 3JU • Temporary Mobile Polling Station, White Horse Car Park, Rawlinson Lane, Heath Charnock, Chorley, PR6 9LJ • Anderton Primary School, Babylon Lane, Anderton, Chorley, PR6 9NW

Chorley South West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eaves Green Community Centre, 35 Cottage Fields, Chorley, PR7 3QE • All Saints CE Primary School, Moor Road, Chorley, PR7 2LR • Buttermere Community Centre, Buttermere Avenue, Chorley, POR7 2JG
Clayton East, Brindle & Hoghton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoghton Village Hall, Blackburn Old Road, Hoghton, Preston, PR5 0SJ • Trinity Methodist Church, Gregson Lane, Hoghton, Preston, PR5 0ED • Brindle Village Hall, Water Street, Brindle, PR6 8NH • Clayton Brook Village Hall, Tunley Holme, Clayton Brook, Bamber Bridge, PR5 8ES • St Bedes Parish Centre, Preston Road, Clayton-le-Woods, PR6 7EB
Clayton West & Cuerden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Club House, Cuerden Residential Park, Willow Crescent, Clayton-le-Woods, Chorley, PR25 5PB • Spring Meadow Community Centre, Spring Meadow, Clayton-le-Woods, PR25 5LX • Clayton-le-Woods Manor Road Primary School, Manor Road, Clayton-le-Woods, Chorley, PR6 7JR • Clayton-le-Woods Primary School, Back Lane, Clayton-le-Woods, Chorley, PR6 7EU
Coppull	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Oswalds RC Primary School, Spendmore Lane, Coppull, Chorley, PR7 5DH • St John the Devine Church Hall, Hewlett Street, Coppull • Coppull Parish CE Primary School, Roe Hey Drive, Coppull, Chorley, PR7 4PU
Croston, Mawdesley & Euxton South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • **Euxton Community Centre, School Lane, Euxton, Chorley, PR7 6JL (or St Mary's Parish Centre, Wigan Road, Euxton, PR7 5JW) • Mawdesley Village Hall, Hurst Green, Mawdesley, Ormskirk, L40 2QT • Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Westhead Roadm Croston, Leyland, PR26 9RQ • Bretherton Congregational Church Hall, South Road, Bretherton, PR26 9AH • The Old School, Ulnes Walton Lane, Ulnes Walton, PR26 8LT
Eccleston, Heskin & Charnock Richard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ** Eccleston Community Hub, Drapers Avenue. Eccleston, Chorley, PR7 5SY (<i>replacing Eccleston Primary School</i>) • Bateman Hall, Sagar Street, Eccleston, Chorley, PR7 5TA • Heskin Village Hall, 215 Wood Lane, Heskin, Chorley, PR7 5NS • Charnock Richard Scouts & Guides HQ, Charter Lane, Charnock Richard, Chorley, PR7 5LZ
Euxton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ** The Talbot, 30 Balshaw Lane, Euxton, Chorley, PR7 6HX (<i>replacing Balshaw Lane Primary School</i>) • ** Euxton Library, St Mary's Gate Euxton, Chorley, PR7 6AH (<i>replacing Primrose Hill School</i>) • ** 1st Euxton ROF Scout Group, Mile Stone Meadow, Euxton, Chorley, PR7 6FX • ** Euxton Community Centre, School Lane, Euxton, Chorley, PR7 6JL (or St Mary's Parish Centre, Wigan Road, Euxton, PR7 5JW)

12. The new proposals listed above, exclude seven of the current polling stations used, the reasons for which are listed below:

- Headteachers from **Primrose Hill Primary School, Euxton**, and **Balshaw Lane Primary School, Euxton** (*to be replaced by Euxton Library and The Talbot public house respectively*) have asked on numerous occasions if the council could consider using alternative premises to their schools due to the amount of disruption it causes, especially when an election is not scheduled. They have cited increasing pupil numbers, pressure from parents for the school to remain open on polling day, impact on parking and serious concerns over safeguarding issues. Similar comments to those from the above headteachers have been echoed by the headteachers from **Eccleston Primary School, Eccleston** (*to be replaced by Eccleston Community Hub*) and **St Laurence's Primary School** (*to be replaced by St Laurence's Church Refectory, Chorley*). These issues have also been raised as part of the public consultation of the Polling Place Review which took place last year. The proposed replacement premises have been evaluated and it is considered each new premise would be suitable venues for polling stations.
- **The Practice Hall, All Seasons Leisure Centre, Chorley** (*to be replaced by St Joseph's Parish Centre*) is a very unpopular premise amongst polling station staff. There is little in the way of facilities and the venue is extremely cold at any time of the year irrespective of the temperature outside. The council does provide heaters and staff are told to be prepared for the cold, but even with these measures in place, the room is extremely uncomfortable for staff who are required to remain in the polling station for over 15 hours. Voters often comment how cold it is in this premise. During the recent Parliamentary Election, because the only door available for use is an exterior door, which has to remain open for voters, rainwater was blowing into the room making the entrance a potential slip hazard. The proposed replacement polling station is considered a much better venue for both voters and staff with off street parking available in front of the premise and a larger car park to the rear.
- **Buckshaw Village Community Centre** (*to be replaced by Lancaster Way Community Centre*) has been used as a polling station premise since its opening. However, since the premise was opened, the surrounding area has been built-up with both residential properties and local businesses. As a result, parking in this area has become difficult. The centre does have a car park with 16 spaces, but when this is full, on street parking is very difficult due to the area being so busy. The new location is considered a better proposition as a polling station venue as it is council owned/run and has its own car park consisting of 30 parking spaces. The surrounding area has already been built in a commercial part of Buckshaw Village 0.3 miles from Buckshaw Village Community Centre.
- The proposition to stop using **St George's Church Hall, Chorley** is aimed at improving efficiency in the area. The electoral register for this polling station is small and will continue to remain so with less than 400 electors (the figure includes 91 postal voters at the time of writing this report). It is proposed that voters who would normally attend this polling station would instead present themselves at St Mary's Parish Community Centre which, under the new warding arrangements would consist of just over 700 electors (of which 400 electors are postal voters at the time of writing this report). Under existing ward arrangements these two polling stations could not be merged as they are in different wards, but under the new arrangements they both fall in the same ward.

13. The list detailed in table 1 is not a definitive list, after the election in May 2020, suitability of the polling stations will be reassessed, and any changes proposed will be reported to a meeting of full council for consideration.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	x	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

15. The proposed changes to polling station could cause confusion amongst voters who will need to go to a different polling station than they are used to on the 7 May 2020. However, it is proposed that a publicity campaign should commence as soon as is practicable to inform voters of the changes.
16. In a minority of cases, every four years some voters will not be able to attend their usual polling station for the Lancashire County Council elections due to the ward and division boundaries not aligning. This arrangement is not uncommon across other local authorities. For those voters effected, a letter of explanation will be sent to them with a postal vote application form which they can complete if they so wished.

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

17. The publicity campaign and any changes to staffing at polling stations can be met within existing budgets and grant funding”

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

18. Members are required to nominate polling stations to meet the needs of the electorate in each ward. The proposals within this report are reasonable and evidence based.
19. Any risk outlined in the report concern voter confusion will be mitigated by the publicity campaign and of course the correct information being provided on poll cards.

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE/RETURNING OFFICER

Report Author	Ext	Date
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