

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director of Governance (Introduced by the Leader of the Council)	Council	15 December 2009

## PROPOSED CHANGES TO POLLING STATIONS

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To gain approval from Members for proposed changes to Polling Stations and to obtain delegated authority for the Chief Executive to make any urgent changes to Polling Stations if required.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That a decision is made regarding the adoption of the new polling stations
2. That the Chief Executive is given delegated authority to change polling stations in an emergency situation.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. Set out below are a number of proposed changes to polling stations affecting the wards of Astley and Buckshaw and Chisnall.
4. Also included below is a recommendation for the Chief Executive to be given delegated powers to approve changes to polling stations at short notice should the need arise in the run up to elections.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

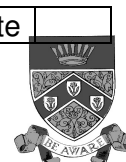
#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

5. The proposed changes to polling stations will better meet the needs of the electorate and give an improved provision for future voting.
6. Giving the Chief Executive delegated authority to make short notice emergency changes to polling stations will add the necessary resilience to the elections process should an existing polling station be made unavailable in the immediate pre-election period.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional		Develop local solutions to climate	
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economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		change.	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances		Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	
Involving people in their communities	✓	Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	✓

## BACKGROUND

8. The Electoral Services Office has received two requests for changes to polling stations.
9. It has been recognised that currently a problem exists in that there is no provision in place within the Council to allow for an urgent change of a polling station(s) should one or more be made unavailable in the immediate run up to an election. This could be the result of say a fire, a flood or unscheduled building maintenance taking place.

## POLLING STATION PROPOSED CHANGES

10. Chisnall Ward – Charnock Richard Primary School

A request was received from Charnock Richard Parish Council and the Head Teacher of this school to consider an alternative venue for a polling station. This is to avoid disruption to the school during elections.

After investigations an alternative was found in the Scout and Guide Headquarters building on Charter Lane, Charnock Richard. This is a relatively new building just around the corner from the school and would be a suitable alternative for use as a polling station.

11. Astley and Buckshaw Ward – Astley Village Community Centre

A request was received from an existing Ward Councillor to consider the use of the new Community Centre on Buckshaw Village for some of the electors who currently have to travel to Astley Village Community Centre.

Currently the Astley and Buckshaw Ward consists of three polling districts, 02A, 02B and 02C. The electors in all these polling districts are allocated the Astley Village Community Centre as a polling station. Whilst this polling station is convenient for those electors in 02A and 02B it is a considerable distance for those in 02C to travel.

It is therefore suggested that the a new polling station is introduced for the electors in polling district 02C and that this is located in the new Community Centre being built on Buckshaw Village. This would initially be made available for 334 electors but as there are around a further 1000 new build properties scheduled for this area in the next few years this provision would provide for future expansion.

**PLEASE NOTE: The change in the Astley and Buckshaw Ward is recommended on the basis that the Community Centre is fully available in time to fit in with the working schedule for the next election. Should this not be the case then current arrangements will still apply and the proposals implemented for subsequent elections.**

There are cost implications in this instance in the region of £500 per election.

12. Chief Executive Delegated Authority

In order to comply with current Electoral Legislation there is a need for the Chief Executive as Returning Officer to have delegated authority to make emergency changes to polling station allocations. This would greatly simplify the situation should a polling station become unavailable at short notice.

**IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT**

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

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	No significant implications in this area	

ANDREW DOCHERTY  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR GOVERNANCE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Phil Davies	5131	26 November 2009	***