

Birmingham City Council
Council Business Management Committee

30 May 2023



Subject: Review of Polling Districts and Places - Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

Report of: Robert Connelly, Returning Officer

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 To consider the proposed change of polling place for polling district NEW4 in respect of the forthcoming Jewellery Quarter Neighbourhood Planning Referendum (NPR) on 13th July 2023.
- 1.2 To note the other polling stations, including 1 change, within the NPR area.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To agree proposed change and note the situation of the other polling stations within the NPR area.

3. Background

- 3.1 On Thursday 13 July, there will be a business and residential Neighbourhood Planning Referendum (NPR) for the Jewellery Quarter, which will cover parts of the wards Soho & Jewellery Quarter and Newtown.

- 3.2 Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 places a duty on the Council to keep the Parliamentary Polling Districts under review with a view to giving all electors reasonable facilities for voting. Section 31 of the Act deals similarly with Polling Districts at Local Government elections. The Council's powers and duties in this respect are delegated to Council Business Management Committee (CBMC).
- 3.3 Polling places are designated buildings or areas within the polling district where the polling station (the venue where voting takes place) is located.
- 3.4 In the majority of cases, the polling district is assigned as the polling place. However occasionally where the polling station sits outside the polling district, the Returning Office will specify a particular venue where the polling station will be located.
- 3.5 Whereas polling districts and polling places are the responsibility of the Council (delegated to CBMC), the siting of a polling station is the responsibility of the relevant Returning Officer. This means that any changes to polling places must receive approval from CBMC.
- 3.6 Neighbourhood planning referendums often cover areas which cross ward and polling district boundaries, and as such may require changes to polling places.
- 3.7 In this instance agreement is sought from CBMC to approve the change of 1 polling place, and to note the location of the other polling stations within the referendum area.

Proposed Change

- 3.8 Part of polling district NEW4 sits inside the NPR area. The entire polling district is designated the polling place. However the usual polling station for this polling district is *St George's CE Academy Newtown, St Georges Street*, which sits outside the NPR area.
- 3.9 There is no other suitable venue within the part of NEW4 which is in the NPR area, and as such, rather than disrupt the school for an electoral event taking place outside their area, we are looking to move the polling station into the neighbouring polling district for this polling day only, in this case the polling station for polling district SHQ6, *Ramgharia Community Centre, Newhall Hill* which is large enough to contain two separate polling stations.
- 3.10 The change is detailed below

Polling District	Current Polling Place	Proposed Polling Place (13/7/23 only)
NEW4 (part)	NEW4 polling district	Ramgharia Community Centre

Other Polling Stations

- 3.11 Although no approval is needed (as there is no proposed change to polling place), CBM is asked to note the other change to polling stations within the NPR area. The details of polling stations are as follows:

Polling District	Current Polling Station	Polling Station in use on 13/7/23
SHQ5	Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Vyse Street	Jewellery Quarter Conference Centre, Vyse Street
SHQ6	St Paul's Church, St Pauls Square	No change
SHQ7	Ramgharia Community Centre, Newhall Hill	No Change

- 3.12 It is also noted that there is a Business Neighbourhood Planning Referendum on the same day. The polling station for all businesses within the area will be *Jewellery Quarter Conference Centre (1st Floor)*

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 None other than those stated above

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 None.

6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 6.1 None.