

Meeting of the

# GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

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Tuesday, 13 February 2007 at 8.00 p.m.

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## A G E N D A

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### VENUE

Committee Room, 1st Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove  
Crescent, London, E14 2BG

Members:	Deputies (if any):
Chair: Councillor Marc Francis Vice-Chair:	
Councillor Rajib Ahmed Councillor M. Shahid Ali Councillor Peter Golds Councillor Clair Hawkins Councillor Fozol Miah Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman	Councillor Philip Briscoe, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Peter Golds) Councillor Stephanie Eaton, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Rajib Ahmed) Councillor Shafiqul Haque, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Marc Francis, M. Shahid Ali, Clair Hawkins and Motin Uz Zaman) Councillor Waiseul Islam, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Fozol Miah)

[Note: The quorum for this body is 3 Members].

If you require any further information relating to this meeting, would like to request a large print, Braille or audio version of this document, or would like to discuss access arrangements or any other special requirements, please contact: Angus Dixon, Democratic Services, Tel: 020 7364 4850, E-mail: [angus.dixon@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:angus.dixon@towerhamlets.gov.uk)

# LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 February 2007

8.00 p.m.

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992.

#### Note from the Chief Executive

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members must declare any **personal interests** they have in any item on the agenda or as they arise during the course of the meeting. Members must orally indicate to which item their interest relates. If a Member has a personal interest he/she must also consider whether or not that interest is a **prejudicial personal interest** and take the necessary action. When considering whether or not they have a declarable interest, Members should consult pages 181 to 184 of the Council's Constitution. Please note that all Members present at a Committee meeting (in whatever capacity) are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interests.

A **personal interest** is, generally, one that would affect a Member (either directly or through a connection with a relevant person or organisation) more than other people in London, in respect of the item of business under consideration at the meeting. If a member of the public, knowing all the relevant facts, would view a Member's personal interest in the item under consideration as so substantial that it would appear likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest, then the Member has a **prejudicial personal interest**.

#### Consequences:

- If a Member has a **personal interest**: he/she must declare the interest but can stay, speak and vote.
- If the Member has **prejudicial personal interest**: he/she must declare the interest, cannot speak or vote on the item and must leave the room.

When declaring an interest, Members are requested to specify the nature of the interest, the particular agenda item to which the interest relates and to also specify whether the interest is of a personal or personal and prejudicial nature. This procedure is designed to assist the public's understanding of the meeting and is also designed to enable a full entry to be made in the Statutory Register of Interests which is kept by the Head of Democratic Renewal and Engagement on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.

### **3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES**

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2006.

### **4. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION**

	<b>PAGE NUMBERS</b>	<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED</b>
<b>4 .1 Appointments to External Bodies and Committees of the Council</b>	<b>1 - 4</b>	
<b>4 .2 Election Polling Places Review</b>	<b>5 - 24</b>	
<b>5. ANY OTHER SECTION ONE BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT</b>		

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# Agenda Item 4.1

Committee <b>General Purposes Committee</b>	Date <b>13<sup>th</sup> February, 2007</b>	Classification <b>Unrestricted</b>	Report No.	Agenda Item No. <b>4.1</b>
Report of: <b>Assistant Chief Executive</b>		Title		
Originating Officer(s): <b>Angus Dixon</b>		<b>APPOINTMENTS TO EXTERNAL BODIES AND COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL</b> Ward(s) affected: <b>All</b>		

## SUMMARY

1. The Committee is requested to consider nominations received from the Council's political groups for positions on external bodies and committees of the Council. Since the Committee's last meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 a number of organisations have requested the Council to consider its nominations, and political groups have also requested renewed nominations to Committees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That further appointments be made to:
  - a. External bodies for the Municipal Year 2006/2007 as listed in Appendix A to the report.
  - b. Committees of the Council for the Municipal Year 2006/07 as listed in Appendix B to the report.

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

#### LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

**Brief description of "background paper"**

**Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection**

Letter received 'English Heritage'  
Letter received 'London City Airport Consultative Committee'  
General Purposes Minute Book

Angus Dixon  
020 7364 4850

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The General Purposes Committee was established by Council on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 to enable the swift determination of non-strategic issues, including appointments to external bodies and Committees of the Council. Since the Committee's last meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 a number of organisation have requested the Council to consider its nominations, and political groups have also requested renewed nominations to Committees.
4. The Committee is requested to consider the nominations for appointments to external bodies and committees of the Council which have been received from the political groups on the Council.

## **ROLE OF MEMBERS ON EXTERNAL BODIES**

5. Participating in the work of external bodies is a key part of the role of elected members but is different in nature from other aspects such as being a member of a local authority executive or sitting on regulatory committees. In some cases it will involve actively representing and defending the authority's interests on local authority associations. In others it will involve becoming a trustee of a charity or a director of a company limited by guarantee. In this case members have a duty to act in the best interests of the organisation to which they have been appointed rather than exclusively pursue the authority's interests. There are potential tensions in carrying out this role effectively. Guidance formulated to assist members in carrying out this role has been circulated to all members of the Council and is on the members' intranet.
6. A key part of this role is ensuring that information about the activities of external bodies is communicated to the Council. Much of this may take place through day to day contact with colleagues or with officers responsible for that area of work.
7. To ensure that this communication takes place consistently and effectively a framework has been agreed whereby Members appointed by the Council to external bodies will report regularly to this Committee on the work of the organisation with particular emphasis on any implications for the Council.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That further appointments be made to:

- a. External bodies for the Municipal Year 2006/2007 as listed in Appendix A to the report.
- b. Committees of the Council for the Municipal Year 2006/07 as listed in Appendix B to the report.

## Appendix A

ORGANISATION	NUMBER OF REPS. TO BE APPOINTED	ON-GOING APPOINTMENTS	CURRENT APPOINTMENTS	LABOUR GROUP NOMINATIONS 2006/2007	RESPECT GROUP NOMINATIONS 2006/2007	CONSERVATIVE GROUP NOMINATIONS 2006/2007	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP NOMINATIONS 2006/2007	APPOINTED AT GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE 13 <sup>th</sup> February, 2007
East London Nursing Society	1		Mr Brian R. Boag	Ms Anna Lynch				
City Airport Consultation Group	1		new position	Cllr Bill Turner				
English Heritage	1		new position	Cllr Denise Jones				

## **APPENDIX B**

### **POSITIONS ON COMMITTEES**

The following nominations have been received:-

(i) **Licensing Committee**

Councillor Stephanie Eaton to be appointed to the Licensing Committee in place of Councillor Rajib Ahmed.



# Agenda Item 4.2

<b>Committee:</b> General Purposes Committee	<b>Date:</b> 13 February 2007	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>Agenda Item No:</b>
<b>Report of Assistant Chief Executive</b>		<b>Title:</b> Election Polling Places Review		
<b>Originating Officer:</b> Isabella Freeman		<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b> All		

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This is an update report on the process of polling station reviews and other legislation relating to elections.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee are asked to agree the process for polling station reviews set out in Appendix A.

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 (SECTION 97)

#### LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background papers"	Tick if copy supplied for register	If not supplied, name and telephone number of holder
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None

### 3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In the last report on 15 November, Members were advised that the review of polling places must be completed by the end of 2007 under the new legislation (section 16 of the Electoral Administration Act 2006). We proposed to formally start the review in April 2007 with the publication of a Notice that the Council are holding a review. It is the Returning Officer who makes representations to the Council as to the location of polling stations within polling places. Then the Council seeks representations from "persons with particular expertise" regarding access for the different forms of disability, and from electors who wish to make representations. The Council then decides what the outcome will be and gives its reasons.
- 3.2 Members are advised that last April 2006 the Head of Facilities reviewed all polling stations for disabled access prior to the election and temporary ramps etc were provided for those polling places that required it. This would always be the case but there may be other reasons why a disabled group consider changes should be made.
- 3.3 Before starting the formal review in April 2007 the Returning Officer needs to obtain the views of Members on any particular issues and also review any reports from the polling station officers in the May elections. These comments can then be reviewed and alternatives explored. Whilst it is acknowledged that many schools do not wish to have polling stations within their boundary or school building. It is not possible to find alternative locations for all schools.
- 3.4 We have attached relevant details from past reviews for information. Members will find attached at Appendix B, the numbers of electors on the Register as at 1 December 2006, at Appendix C, the Review of Parliamentary Constituencies letter of Boundary Commission dated 11 December 2006, Appendix D is the Report of General Purposes Committee dated 15 February 2006, Appendix E is the Report to Council on Polling Place Review dated 14 December 2005.

### 4. **INFORMATION UPDATE ON ELECTION MATTERS**

- 4.1 From local publicity Members will be aware that the two remaining petitions in Bethnal Green South and Mile End & Globe Town have been dismissed by the Election Court on 29 January 2007. The same day the House of Lords rejected a request to appeal the Court of Appeal decision in St Katharines. The challenges upon the 2005 Council elections are now all completed. The challenges upon the 2006 Council Elections are now all completed.
- 4.2 On 29 January 2007 letters were sent out by the Election Team asking existing postal voters to confirm personal identifiers signature and date of birth under the new rules and these signatures are being scanned in under the new software programme. After 21 days if there is no reply then a reminder is sent and if there is no reply after a further 21 days they will be removed as postal voters. They can always re-apply in future.

**5. COMMENTS OF ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL**

5.1 It is a legal requirement to carry out the review of polling places this year before 31 December 2007 and thereafter every four years.

**6. COMMENTS OF CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

**7. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 It is essential that disabilities issues are taken into account in election matters particularly in the polling station review.

**8. ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no implications in this report.

**9. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

9.1 There are no implications in this report.<sup>2</sup>

## APPENDIX A

### PROCESS FOR POLLING PLACES REVIEW

1. Publish item in Members Bulletin in February for members to advise the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) of any issues relating to polling stations/places by the end of February 2007.
2. Officers to review issues and alternatives by the end of March.
3. Interim report to General Purposes Committee in April 2007.
4. Public Notice – April 2007 - consultation.
5. Final report General Purposes Committee (date to be confirmed)
6. Report to Council (date to be confirmed)

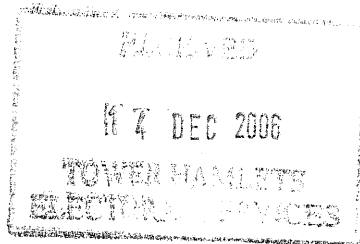
December 2006 Register Electorate Totals

Constituency	Ward Name	Polling District	Electors	Total	Councillor
Poplar and Canning Town	Bromley By Bow	BBB1	3387		
Poplar and Canning Town	Bromley By Bow	BBB2	3351		
Poplar and Canning Town	Bromley By Bow	BBB3	1185		
			<b>7923</b>	<b>2641</b>	
Poplar and Canning Town	Blackwall and Cubitt Town	BCT1	3423		
Poplar and Canning Town	Blackwall and Cubitt Town	BCT2	2132		
Poplar and Canning Town	Blackwall and Cubitt Town	BCT3	3083		
Poplar and Canning Town	Blackwall and Cubitt Town	BCT4	1640		
			<b>10278</b>	<b>3426</b>	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow East	BE1	2203		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow East	BE2	2317		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow East	BE3	1736		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow East	BE4	1858		
			<b>8114</b>	<b>2705</b>	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green North	BGN1	1164		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green North	BGN2	3009		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green North	BGN3	1914		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green North	BGN4	2649		
			<b>8736</b>	<b>2912</b>	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green South	BGS1	1447		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green South	BGS2	4327		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green South	BGS3	2069		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bethnal Green South	BGS4	1194		
			<b>9037</b>	<b>3012</b>	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow West	BW1	2787		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow West	BW2	2416		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow West	BW3	1167		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Bow West	BW4	1747		
			<b>8117</b>	<b>2706</b>	
Poplar and Canning Town	East India & Lansbury	EIL1	2042		
Poplar and Canning Town	East India & Lansbury	EIL2	1195		
Poplar and Canning Town	East India & Lansbury	EIL3	1629		
Poplar and Canning Town	East India & Lansbury	EIL4	2115		
Poplar and Canning Town	East India & Lansbury	EIL5	1635		
			<b>8616</b>	<b>2872</b>	
Poplar and Canning Town	Limehouse	LI1	1541		
Poplar and Canning Town	Limehouse	LI2	3136		
Poplar and Canning Town	Limehouse	LI3	1787		
Poplar and Canning Town	Limehouse	LI4	3131		
			<b>9595</b>	<b>3198</b>	
Poplar and Canning Town	Mile End East	MEE1	1623		
Poplar and Canning Town	Mile End East	MEE2	2151		
Poplar and Canning Town	Mile End East	MEE3	1804		
Poplar and Canning Town	Mile End East	MEE4	2050		
			<b>7628</b>	<b>2543</b>	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Mile End & Globe Town	MGT1	2819		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Mile End & Globe Town	MGT2	1673		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Mile End & Globe Town	MGT3	2698		
Bethnal Green and Bow	Mile End & Globe Town	MGT4	1978		
			<b>9168</b>	<b>3056</b>	
Poplar and Canning Town	Millwall	MI1	5153		
Poplar and Canning Town	Millwall	MI2	3614		
Poplar and Canning Town	Millwall	MI3	2877		

December 2006 Register Electorate Totals

			<b>11644</b>	<b>3881</b>
Bethnal Green and Bow	St Dunstan`s & Stepney Green SDS1		2263	
Bethnal Green and Bow	St Dunstan`s & Stepney Green SDS2		3873	
Bethnal Green and Bow	St Dunstan`s & Stepney Green SDS3		3696	
			<b>9832</b>	<b>3277</b>
Bethnal Green and Bow	Shadwell	SH1B	1907	
Poplar and Canning Town	Shadwell	SH1P	1534	
Poplar and Canning Town	Shadwell	SH2	1857	
Poplar and Canning Town	Shadwell	SH3	1612	
Poplar and Canning Town	Shadwell	SH4	1866	
			<b>8776</b>	<b>2925</b>
Bethnal Green and Bow	St. Katharine`s & Wapping	SK1	2084	
Bethnal Green and Bow	St. Katharine`s & Wapping	SK2B	1430	
Poplar and Canning Town	St. Katharine`s & Wapping	SK2P	897	
Bethnal Green and Bow	St. Katharine`s & Wapping	SK3	2887	
Bethnal Green and Bow	St. Katharine`s & Wapping	SK4	1733	
			<b>9031</b>	<b>3010</b>
Bethnal Green and Bow	Spitalfields & Banglatown	SPB1	1858	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Spitalfields & Banglatown	SPB2	2277	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Spitalfields & Banglatown	SPB3	2423	
			<b>6558</b>	<b>2186</b>
Bethnal Green and Bow	Weavers	WE1	2372	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Weavers	WE2	2409	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Weavers	WE3	3404	
			<b>8185</b>	<b>2728</b>
Bethnal Green and Bow	Whitechapel	WH1	1702	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Whitechapel	WH2	1706	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Whitechapel	WH3	2681	
Bethnal Green and Bow	Whitechapel	WH4	2862	
			<b>8951</b>	<b>2984</b>
			<b>150189</b>	<b>50063</b>
			(excludes 87 overseas)	

Electoral Registration Officer  
London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Council Office  
1 Rushmead  
London  
E2 6NE



Dear Electoral Registration Officer,

REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES

As you may know, the fifth general review of Parliamentary constituency boundaries in England, which began on 17 February 2000, was formally completed on 31 October 2006 when the Commission submitted their Fifth Periodical Report, containing their final recommendations, to the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs. We understand from the Department for Constitutional Affairs that the Report and a draft Order in Council to implement the recommendations may be laid in Parliament in February or March 2007, although this is not yet confirmed. The new constituency boundaries will take effect at the first general election following the making of the Order in Council. The Commission's Report will be published in due course and a link to it will then be placed on the website shown at the bottom of this page.

The Commission have asked me to write to you to express their thanks for the invaluable assistance you provided to them during their fifth general review. Without your help the review could not have been successfully completed.

During the course of the review one of my colleagues wrote to you requesting the numbers of registered Parliamentary electors in each ward in your district on the enumeration date (17 February 2000), which the Commission were required to use throughout the review. You provided these figures, and you continued to supply the updates to the electoral register since then. What has been particularly appreciated is your (sometimes difficult and time-consuming) work in re-basing the 2000 ward electorates once new wards had been introduced following the Periodical Electoral Review by the Boundary Committee for England (formerly the Local Government Commission for England).

At the start of the review in 2000, you also greatly assisted the Commission in fulfilling their statutory consultation obligations by identifying suitable places in your district, such as Council Offices and Public Libraries, where the Commission could publicly display their maps and other documents; by identifying which newspapers circulated in your district so that the Commission could decide where to publish their official notices; and by suggesting venues where the Commission could hold a public inquiry, should one be required. At each stage of the review in your area, you further assisted by arranging for the Commission's documents to be put on public display.

As you may also know, the Boundary Committee for England is currently conducting a Further Electoral Review of a small number of districts where electoral imbalances between the ward electorates have already arisen since the Periodic Electoral Review. In some of those districts, the changes to ward boundaries will put them out of alignment with the new Parliamentary constituency boundaries. The Commission will consider whether to conduct interim reviews of the affected constituencies once the Order in Council has been made. It is possible that there will be one interim review of eleven constituencies in 2007 and a further review in 2008 so that the constituency boundaries will be realigned with ward boundaries in time for a general election in 2009 or 2010. I shall write to the Electoral Registration Officers of the districts involved next year.

Once again, thank you for your assistance during the fifth general review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R Farrance', written in dark ink.

Robert Farrance  
Secretary to the Commission



Committee General Purposes	Date 15 February 06	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No.
Report of: Chief Executive Originating Officer(s) : Interim Head of Electoral Services		Title : Review of Polling Places  Ward(s) Shadwell, Bow East and Whitechapel		

**1. SUMMARY**

1.1 This report seeks the approval of the Members to the designation of a new polling place in Shadwell Ward (SH4) and some modifications to polling places in Bow East (E1) and Whitechapel (WH3)

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 The Committee is asked to endorse the proposals to provide polling facilities at St. Katharine's Foundation as an alternative location to the Olgilvie Community Club and minor changes to two other polling places prior to the recommendation to Council for formal approval (para. 4 & 5).

2.2 The Committee is also asked to approve that a complete review of the Ward polling district boundaries be undertaken over the course of the next year, prior to the 2008 Mayor and Assembly elections, to ensure adequate and suitable voting facilities have been identified to deal with the increasing electorate in certain parts of the borough (para.7).

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Section 18(2) RPA 1983 imposes a duty on Local authorities to divide the borough area into polling districts for the purpose of conducting elections.

3.2 The Council must exercise the powers conferred by this section of the Act with a view to giving all electors within their area such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances and, in particular, they shall so far as is reasonable and practicable, designate as polling places only places which are accessible to electors who are disabled.

**4. THE POLLING PLACE REVIEW**

4.1 Initially the comments of all the Presiding Officers have been analysed to identify any polling place problems and any specific complaints that they handled during the course of Election Day in May 2005. In addition, an article in the Members' Bulletin advised that the review was being undertaken in preparation for the May elections in 2006 and invited views from Ward Members.

4.2 As a result of the above seven of the 64 polling places used last year have been visited to review complaints. Of the seven mentioned there were only, in fact, three that needed change or modification for the Local Elections due to be held on 4<sup>th</sup> May. The polling places concerned were:-

Ward	Polling District	Problem
Bow East	BE1	Portacabin was considered to be too small to deal with the numbers of people voting
Shadwell	SH4	Olgilvie Community Club site not satisfactory due to access problems
Whitechapel	WH3	Stepney Library now closed

## 5. PROPOSALS TO DEAL WITH THE ABOVE PROBLEMS

- 5.1 Bow East Ward (BE1) : It has not been possible to identify an alternative site within the polling district so it is proposed that the hire of a larger, two compartment, portacabin be arranged to ensure satisfactory voting arrangements for those electors registered to vote in the district.
- 5.2 Shadwell Ward (SH4) : Due to difficult access to the Olgilvie Community Club every effort has been made to identify an alternative site within the polling district. A visit has been made to the Royal Foundation of St. Katharines, Butcher Row, London E14 8DS who are prepared to allow a portacabin to be placed on their private access road. The building itself cannot be used as a Conference is being held there on 4<sup>th</sup> May . The arrangements for polling day would include the use of facilities within St. Katharines premises for the polling station staff and disabled parking space.
- 5.3 Whitechapel Ward (WH3) Stepney Library has now closed following the opening of the Ideas Store and the building is being used as a book store. Following a visit to site it has been established that sufficient space could be made available for polling provided book stacks are moved and the accommodation is properly cleaned. If subsequently the space proved to be insufficient it would be possible to locate a portacabin in the car park as there is more than sufficient space to accommodate this. The facilities would still be available within the library for polling staff to use.

## 6 ISSUES CONCERNING OTHER POLLING PLACES

- 6.1 Blackwall and Cubitt Town Ward (BCT1) : There was an issue raised concerning the difficulty during the General Election of finding the Local Labour In Construction Centre, 316 Poplar High Street. As this polling place is located in a relatively central position within the polling district and is very suitable in terms of facilities etc. it is suggested that extra signing be placed in Poplar High Street on polling day directing voters to the entrance in Ditchburn Street.
- 6.2 Weavers Ward (WE2) : Some concern was expressed about the location of Virginia Primary School and that some electors had to walk some distance to the polling place. However, it has not been possible to identify an alternative site at this stage and it is proposed that the matter be given further consideration as part of a wider review.

## 7. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

There is provision in the Electoral Administration Bill that is currently being debated in Parliament for authorities to establish a framework to review polling places regularly to ensure they provide proper access and facilities for people voting in person. It is, therefore recommended that a further review be undertaken after the local elections and this review

should deal with not only the polling places and their suitability for access but also the electoral numbers in each polling district. The electorate numbers in many of the polling districts have increased significantly since the new Wards were established in 2002 resulting in the need to create further districts within the Wards. Redrawing these polling district boundaries and creating further districts would offer the opportunity to designate additional polling places thus overcoming the type of issue raised in para. 6.1 and 6.2 above. Any such exercise is very time consuming as each ward has to be evaluated in terms of :-

- The current electorate figure
- The number and alignment of the current polling district boundaries;
- The impact of regeneration on developing areas;
- The existing natural boundaries e.g. major roads, water-ways etc.
- The potential to identify suitable additional polling places.

As there is unlikely to be a major election until 2008 it is proposed that this review be commenced as soon as possible after the Local Elections to allow sufficient time for consultation with all stakeholders prior to submission to General Purposes and then to full Council for final approval.

## 8. CONSULTATION

This report has been circulated to all Members of the Council on 27<sup>th</sup> January highlighting the minor issues that were identified during the General Election last year and explaining the need for a more radical review in terms of the polling district boundaries. In view of the limited timescale for consultation, any responses will be reported to Committee verbally.

## 9. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Any additional costs incurred through the use of portacabins will be financed from the local elections budgets.

## 10. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Legal Services)

- 10.1 Section 18 of Representation of the People Act 1983 places a duty on the Council to keep parliamentary polling districts and polling places under review and Section 31 provides a power to determine polling districts for local government elections.
- 10.2 This report is pursuant to those responsibilities and makes recommendations for the forthcoming Council Elections and for a more comprehensive review prior to the following major elections in 2008. The report demonstrates that the Council is fulfilling its legal obligations appropriately.

## 11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMENTS

Access issues in relation to temporary buildings are dealt with as part of the portacabin installation ensuring that a temporary ramp is correctly fitted with the appropriate handrails.

## 12. ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

There are no implications in this report.

## 13. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

There are no implications in this report

#### 14. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessments for temporary polling places (portacabins) are carried out as part of installation especially in connection with the fitting of access ramps. In addition, the job activities of the staff involved in the election will be assessed for risk and the training programme covers both risk and health and safety as a core module.

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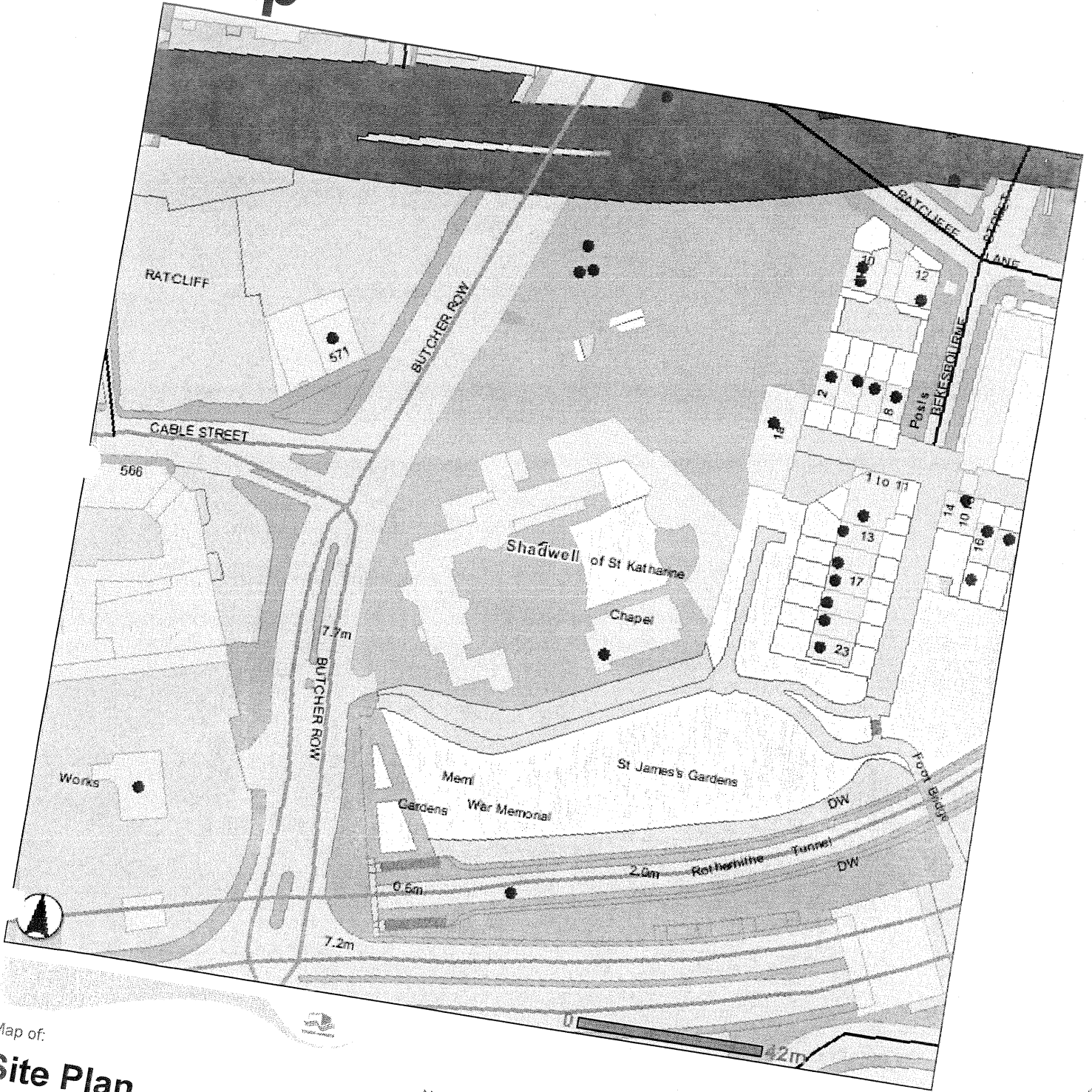
#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"

Name and telephone  
number of and address where  
open to inspection

Pat Parker  
020 7364 3778  
5<sup>th</sup> floor, Town Hall,  
Mulberry Place  
5 Clove Crescent E14 2BG

# Map



## Map of: Site Plan

Notes:

Scale 1:1228

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**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE (8.6)**

**15<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2006**

To receive the report of the General Purposes Committee arising from its meeting held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.

The Members who attended our meeting were:-

Councillor Ashton McGregor (Chair)  
Councillor Rofique Uddin Ahmed  
Councillor James Sanderson  
Councillor Marian Williams

**\* 1. REVIEW OF POLLING PLACES**

We considered a report from the Interim Head of Electoral Services relating to a review of Polling Places in Shadwell, Bow East and Whitechapel Wards.

We were informed that Section 18(2) of the Representation of the People's Act imposes a duty on Local Authorities to divide the borough area into polling districts for the purposes of conducting elections. The Council must exercise the powers conferred by this section of the Act with a view to giving all electors within their area such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances and, in particular, they shall so far as is reasonable and practicable, designate as polling only places which are accessible to electors who are disabled.

Following consideration of the comments of Presiding Officers and the seeking of views of Ward Members, three polling stations out of the 64 used last year were identified as requiring change or modification:-

- (i) Bow East BE1 - two compartment portacabins with disabled access to be provided.
- (ii) Shadwell SH4 - Olgivie Community Club considered not to be satisfactory, accordingly portacabins with disabled access to be provided in the grounds of the Royal Foundation of St. Katherine's, Butcher Row, London E14.

- (iii) Whitechapel WH3 - Stepney Library now closed – but would be used if appropriately cleaned and if necessary portacabins to be provided.

We were also informed that there was provision in the Electoral Administration Bill that was currently being debated in Parliament for Local Authorities to establish a framework to review polling places regularly to ensure that they provide proper access and facilities to people voting in person. We agreed that a further review should be undertaken after the Borough Elections in May 2006 and that this review should not just consider the suitability of polling places and their suitability for access but also the electoral numbers in polling districts. We noted that the electorate numbers in May, if the Borough's polling districts had increased significantly since the new wards were established in 2002. All stakeholders would be consulted prior to a report being submitted to this Committee for consideration and then to Council for approval.

**We therefore recommend Council to:-**

That two compartment portacabins be provided in polling district BE1, Bow East Ward, that portacabins be provided in the grounds of the Royal Foundation of St. Katherine's in polling district SH4, Shadwell Ward in place of the Olgvie Community Club Site and Stepney Library polling district WH3, Whitechapel Ward continue to be used if appropriate, but if necessary a portacabin be located in the library car park.

**Councillor Ashton McGregor  
Chair, General Purposes  
Committee**

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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)**  
**LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS**  
**REPORT**

Brief description of "background paper" number of holder	Tick if copy supplied	If not supplied, name and telephone
Agenda General Purposes Committee – 15/02/06		Tim Hogan 020 7364 4850

**LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 14th DECEMBER, 2005**

**DRAFT REPORT ON  
POLLING PLACE REVIEW AND THE RE-  
ALIGNMENT OF A POLLING DISTRICT  
BOUNDARY IN MILLWALL WARD**

**AGENDA ITEM NO.**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF  
DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL  
AND ENGAGEMENT**

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of Council to the re-alignment of a polling district boundary between MI1 and MI2 in Millwall Ward.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Section 18(2) RPA 1983 imposes a duty on Local authorities to divide the borough area into polling districts for the purpose of conducting elections.
- 2.2 The Council shall exercise the powers conferred by this section of the Act with a view to giving all electors within their area such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances and, in particular, they shall so far as is reasonable and practicable, designate as polling places only places which are accessible to electors who are disabled.

**3. THE REVIEW PROCESS**

- 3.1 Initially the comments of all the Presiding Officers have been analysed to identify any polling place problems and any specific complaints that they handled during the course of Election Day in May '05. In addition, an article in a recent Members' Bulletin advised that the review was being undertaken in preparation for the May elections in 2006 and invited views from Ward Members.



3.2 As a result of the above seven of the 64 polling places used on election day have been identified for possible replacement and twenty-two for site checks to review minor problems.

3.3 There was also a major complaint concerning the boundary between polling district MI1 and MI2 in Millwall Ward and as any changes to polling district boundaries affect the structure of the Electoral Register it is important that this problem is resolved as a matter of priority.

#### **4. MILLWALL WARD/THE ACCESS PROBLEMS**

4.1 The complaints centred around electors living in Polling District MI2 because in order to vote in person at St. Edmund's Primary School, Westferry Road, they had to pass the polling station in MI1 (Seven Mills Primary School, Malabar Street).

4.2 The current polling district boundary between MI1 (3,497 electors) and MI2 (4,118 electors) is drawn along the middle of Tiller Road and Pepper Street (part) with the even numbered properties voting in MI1 and the odd numbered properties voting in MI2. In addition there are a number of developments leading off Tiller Road that can only be accessed via that road e.g

- Caravel Close
- Claire Place
- Starboard Way
- Omega Close
- Arnheim Place
- Wateridge Close

4.3 If the boundary was moved from the middle of Tiller Road and Pepper Street (part) to link up with the boundary boarding Cubitt Town and drawn across the Millwall Outer Dock to the opposite side of the Docklands Sailings & Water Centre this would naturally divide Westferry Road (see map attached).

4.4 It is difficult to assess at this stage the number of electors that would be affected by any boundary change as the register is still in the process of up-date but as an indication using the 2005 register it would involve a move of approx. 260 electors from MI2 to MI1. Paragraph 4.2 above outlines the numbers of electors currently registered in each district with MI1 having 621 fewer electors. Therefore any move of electors from MI2 to MI1, as proposed, would not distort the electorate totals under the current circumstances.

#### **5. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMESCALE**

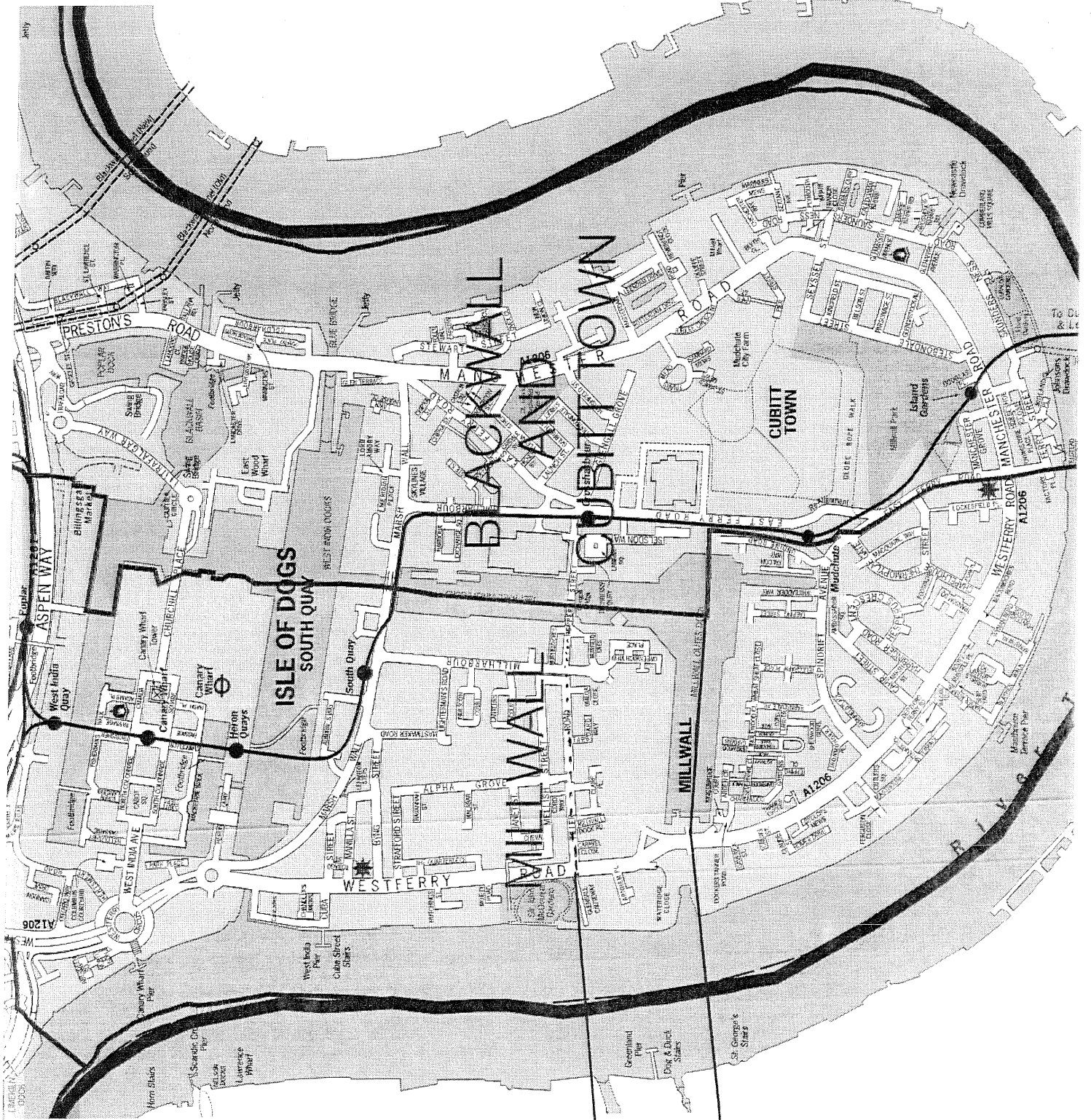
5.1 This draft report has been circulated to the Millwall Ward Members and local party agents seeking comments by Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November. Following consultation the report will be presented to General Purposes Committee prior to formal ratification by Council. The new structure for Millwall Ward will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006. At that stage it is intended to publish a revised version of the register to

deal with the boundary change and to ensure that the register is as up to date as possible for the May elections.

5.2 The polling places will be the subject of another report to Council in March following the normal consultation process.

## **6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 Subject to agreement by General Purposes Committee, the Council is asked to endorse the proposal for the re-alignment of the polling district in Millwall Ward (see para.4.3)
- 6.2 To note that a further report dealing with the polling places to be used for the May 2006 elections will follow early next year (para. 6.2)



EXISTING  
BOUNDARY

PROPOSED  
RE-ALIGNMENT

**MILLWALL BOUNDARY CHANGES (January 2006)**  
**List of properties currently in Polling District MI2, to be transferred to Polling District MI1.**

Property	Total Number of Properties	Total Number of Electorates
Arnhem Wharf (Arnhem Place)	62	66
Arnhem Place		
Caravel Close (Tiller Road)	50	59
Claire Place (Tiller Road)	51	71
Jetty Court (Old Bellgate Place)	20	20
Kedge House (Tiller Road)	40	62
New Atlas Wharf (3 Arnhem Place)	151	211
Old Bellgate Place (130 Westferry Road)	17	27
Omega Close (Tiller Road)	16	40
Pepper Street (currently all in BCT3)		
Riverview Court (Old Bellgate Place)	26	29
Starboard Way	20	37
Tiller Road	28	34
Westferry Road (split)		
Winch House	12	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>493</b>