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The Review Officer (Trafford),  
Local Government Boundary Commission for England,  
1st Floor, Windsor House,  
50 Victoria Street,  
London.  
SW1H 0TL.

Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Dear The Review Officer (Trafford).

Please find attached the joint response from Trafford Conservatives to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England ("LGBCE")'s warding arrangement consultation to their draft report for the Metropolitan Borough of Trafford ("Trafford"). This is a joint submission from the Trafford Conservative Councillors Group, along with the three constituency Conservative Associations.

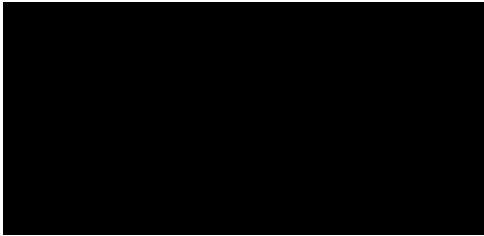
Again, we welcome the opportunity to contribute to the review of Trafford's electoral arrangements. We agree with and thank the LGBCE for the decision to fix the boundaries at 63 councillors across 21 Wards. We have aimed as part of this review to ensure that;

- Electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- The recommendations reflect community identity.
- The arrangements provide support to effective and convenient local government.

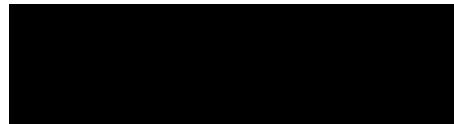
We recognise the difficulty with drawing any ward boundary, and to managing the different considerations is a balancing act, and therefore highlight only one specific area where we cannot support the proposals.

We thank you for your time on this review, and appreciate the time spent on the main proposals. If any of the reviewing officers require questions answered, we would be happy to answer them on behalf of our Council Group and Constituency Associations.

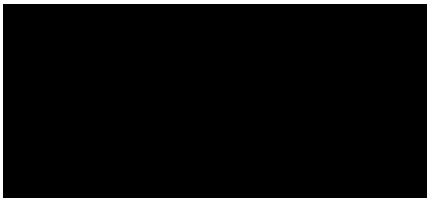
Kind regards,



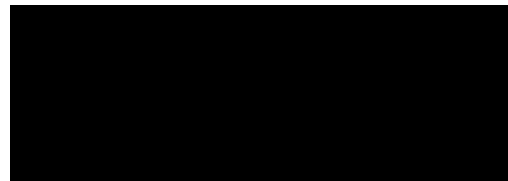
Nathan Evans  
Leader of Trafford Conservative Group



Michael Young  
Chairman of Altrincham and Sale West  
Conservative Association



Jonathan Coupe  
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John Morton  
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Conservative Association

# Electoral Review of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council

Trafford Conservatives Response to the Local  
Government Boundary Commission for England's  
Proposals on Warding Patterns

February 2022

## **Background**

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (“LGBCE”) review of Trafford Council’s size began in 2020, and will conclude with all out elections due to take place in May 2023.

The Commission is minded to recommend 63 councillors should serve Trafford Council in the future, with which the Conservative Group agrees.

The Commission has three considerations to consider

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents. The aim is to create ‘electoral equality’, where the number of electors is as equal as possible, ideally within 10% of being exactly equal.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

As stated, the aim is to strike the best balance between these three considerations. We accept these considerations, and have based our discussions upon them. Generally, Trafford Conservatives are content with the warding pattern proposed by the LGBCE, and acknowledge these mostly provide a good level of electorate equality across the borough, with clear and identifiable boundaries.

There is one specific area we cannot support, and this is the proposed Western Parishes. We do not believe that it is acceptable to have such an undersized electoral ward, but in addition, to have such a huge and disparate ward created. This is discussed further in our commentary in this area, but given that one of the key objectives of the commission is “Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents”, we do not believe this proposed ward does this.

We have therefore made suggested amendments, which we believe improve the electoral equality, whilst also retaining community identity and provide arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

Trafford Conservative Group

Altrincham and Sale West Conservative Association

Stretford and Urmston Conservative Association

Wythenshawe and Sale East Conservative Association

## **North West Trafford**

Trafford Conservatives are minded to accept the proposals in North West Trafford. The proposed ward of Davyhulme and Flixton are well served with the proposed boundaries, with clear boundaries between them, and the proposed Davyhulme ward with Urmston and Lostock & Barton ward.

We accept the proposed boundaries for Urmston ward. Whilst we proposed crossing the M60 near Urmston town centre, and indeed some of the communities on the other side of the M60 identify as part of Urmston, the M60 is a significant boundary and ideally wouldn't be crossed at all, but unfortunately given the limitations of the maintaining equal electoral numbers, needs to be crossed at a at least one point. Whilst the boundary with Urmston and Stretford run under the motorway, with junctions at the M60 within Lostock and Barton, either way these are significant boundaries, and given the limitations of crossing the M60 at one point, to cross the motorway at junction 9 and junction 10 of the M60 is a reasonable decision to do. Similarly the boundaries of Urmston ward to the north with the proposed Davyhulme and Lostock and Barton ward, are most clear road boundaries, which will be identifiable. Whilst we accept the boundaries with Flixton ward, ideally would be clearer, especially around Chassen Road.

Stretford ward has clear boundaries with the Mersey to the south, and to the east with Longford Ward along Chester Road. To the north, it mostly has identifiable borders with the Railway or Derbyshire Road. The one exception to this is the communities to the south of Humphrey Park. These communities identify with Stretford not Lostock, and ideally would be included with the rest of Stretford in one ward. However we realise that this is highly unlikely given the limitations of electoral equality, and therefore accept the proposed Stretford Ward.

## **North East Trafford**

Trafford Conservatives support the boundaries for the new Lostock and Barton Ward. It has a clear boundary with Gorse Hill Ward and the proposed Davyhulme Ward, and as discussed before, mostly strong boundary with Stretford Ward, although ideally it wouldn't included the communities to the south of the Railway line, which identify with Stretford Ward. The boundary with Urmston Ward is a difficult boundary to draw, and whilst not in parts clear (although using Lostock Road is an identifiable boundary), we accept the boundary, as it is difficult to propose and alternative given the constraints of electoral size.

As discussed before, the boundary with Lostock and Barton Ward is a clear boundary, as is the boundary with Old Trafford Ward and the north of Longford Ward with the Railway, although ideally the communities between the Railway and Canal, which look to Gorse Hill would be included in a Gorse Hill Ward (indeed to get to any other point in Longford Road, to drive they would have to enter Gorse Hill Ward). However, given the other constraints, we accept the proposed Gorse Hill Ward.

The Old Trafford Ward proposed has very strong borders, which are clearly defined, and we support these proposals. The proposed Longford Ward mostly has very strong borders, and continues to effectively unite the communities of Firwood and Longford Park, although as discussed before, it does include communities from Gorse Hill, which ideally would be in Gorse Hill Ward.

### **Sale and Brooklands**

The proposals in this area mirror the proposals we made in our submission, and therefore, we are more than happy to support these proposals. Regarding the names of the ward, the name of Priory doesn't recognise any location with which the community would be able to identify, and our proposed Sale name would be a stronger identification of the ward location, representing Sale Town Centre, one of the Council's four key towns.

### **Timperley and Hale Barns**

The proposals for the two Timperley wards are unique, but as with any community we need to divide them as they are larger than the quota. There are no ideal way to divide the town, and the proposal suggested by the boundary commission retains a strong border, in this case the Railway and Brook Lane as the boundary for the wards. Whilst not our initial suggestion on the way to split these wards, it is a reasonable proposals, and we support the boundary commission's proposals.

The boundary of the proposed Timperley Central Ward with the proposed Hale Barns and Timperley South Ward, is in line with our proposals, and we are happy to agree with it, and similarly between Timperley North and the proposed Brooklands, Broadheath and Altrincham Wards. However, we would ideally prefer Mainwood Road to be the key boundary. Including some properties north of it will be confusing to residents, and retaining the road as the strict boundary would be a better divide to understand for communities, with minimal affect on the electoral split between the wards. The ward names for the proposed Wards seem reasonable, although it is worth noting that the areas to the north of the Fairywell Brook identify with Sale and Brooklands, with "M" postcodes, not with a "WA" postcode.

Regarding the proposed Hale Barns and Timperley South Ward, as discussed above, we agree with the proposed ward name, and it recognises the split nature of the ward. However, it is worth noting that in agreeing with the Council's proposed southwest boundary of Park Road, it does mean that some Hale communities are now included in it, which don't look to Hale Barns Village, but with Hale Village centre.

## **Altrincham and Hale**

The proposed Hale Ward is effectively the existing ward, in addition to the Welman Way estate. The existing ward has worked well, and the Welman Way estate is a distinct community itself, separated from the rest of the ward, and therefore, its addition to the rest of Altrincham Ward is a reasonable one, we are happy to support.

Similarly, the Altrincham Ward retains its existing northern and eastern boundary otherwise, and its southern border excluding the small amend to adjust for the Welman Way estate. It's western boundary has been adjusted to add the communities of Oldfield Brow, along with the Bickerton Road-Thurleston Road estate. Whilst the boundary is less distinct than Seamons Road which we proposed, the advantage of the boundary is that it ensures the whole of the Oldfield Brow is kept together in the same ward. We are therefore happy to support the proposed boundaries.

## **Bowdon and Bucklow-St Martins**

The boundary commission has proposed a new Western Parishes Ward, which is 23% undersized in 2021, and even after a number of housing developments built, will be 14% undersized. This is a significant electoral inequality, and substantially above the aim to be within 10% of being equal across all wards. This is a substantial variance, which cannot be justified as an acceptable burden on other communities, who will have substantially more electors per councillor.

It would create a huge ward, far larger than any other ward, and covering a substantial amount of the borough. As stated in the draft report, it has poor transport links in the area, and creating a vast ward, nearly twice the size of any existing ward, would effectively limit the pool of possible councillors to those with access to private vehicles.

Both Dunham Massey and Warburton are rural farming areas whilst Partington and Carrington are much more urban and both industrial and commercial in character. Partington has the bulk of the population of the proposed ward and is an overflow estate from Manchester City and is a completely different character from the rest of the area.

We would be putting all of the rural parishes in one ward, which would add a significant amount of work. The councillors in Bowdon ward attend the meetings of Warburton Parish Council and Dunham Massey Parish Council, whilst previously some councillors in Bucklow-St Martins Ward have been dual members on Partington Parish Council. Putting this additional burden on councillors, along with the huge geography to cover, would further restrict councillors who have the time to cope with the burden. Trafford has a system of evening meetings to enable a broad range of councillors to be able to be elected, and limiting the breadth of councillors able to be elected, would be a detriment to the local community and the borough as a whole.

Such a large ward would ignore the immense differences between the ward in terms of interest. The communities of Partington, Carrington, Dunham Massey and Warburton are very different socio economically, and do not share the same community links. The communities of Dunham Massey and Warburton look to Altrincham and Bowdon in terms of the services they access and have done since before the foundation of Trafford. In terms of Dunham Massey, the Stamford Family Chapel in Dunham Massey is part of Bowdon Church, and in 1973 the Stamford Family handed it over to Bowdon. Indeed both Bowdon and Dunham Massey were part of Stamford Estate, and the key links for these communities is along the south, across Dunham Lane and Woodhouse Lane, to Bowdon.

On the other hand, Partington is linked via the A6144, through Carrington to Sale and Flixton, and indeed is currently in the Stretford and Urmston constituency along with wards to the north of the Mersey. Trafford splits the borough into localities, and for Bucklow St-Martins, puts it into “West”, along with Davyhulme, Flixton and Urmston (whilst Dunham Massey and Warburton Parishes have been included in “South”, with Bowdon and other Altrincham communities). Whilst the road is not ideal, plans are in place to improve those connections with Flixton and Sale, further separating Partington from the communities to the south.

In conclusion, we cannot support the proposed Western Parishes ward. Therefore, we propose separating Dunham Massey and Warburton Parishes, and including them within Bowdon Ward. Otherwise, we agree with retaining the proposed Bowdon ward boundaries suggested by the LGBCE with both Altrincham Ward, and with Hale Wards. This proposed ward, we estimate would only be slightly over the electoral guidance at 2% over (see Appendices), and therefore is very acceptable.

For the remainder of the proposed “Western Parishes” ward, it would now be very undersized, and over an estimated 21% by 2027 (and greater in 2021). Therefore, for electoral equality reasons, we have to consider additional communities within this ward. We therefore propose recreating the Bucklow-St Martin’s Ward as per the current ward boundaries, as an Option A, which would be 3% undersized. As discussed before, this community has similar issues and is of the same character as Partington and Carrington, and whilst some distance from each other, the communities of Partington and Carrington look to the north through their transport links, which are now being improved by the Council.

However, as we have previously mentioned, ideally we would like to unite the communities of the Devon Estate. We discussed below in the Ashton upon Mersey and Manor section, that the Devon Estate covers the communities to the east and west of Manor Avenue, who use the same services. The Bodmin Road Health Centre, and mini shopping centre on Plymouth Road, are key services, plus the play park off Christchurch Road, and splitting this community in any way, either by the proposals by the LGBCE or by our Option B proposals.

Therefore, we have suggested an “Option B”, which moves the remaining communities between Manor Avenue and Firs Road remaining in Manor Road from Manor Ward into Bucklow-St Martin’s



Ward. This leaves a clear boundary for Bucklow-St Martins with both Manor to the south, along with Ashton-upon-Mersey to the east, along with uniting the Devon Estate within Bucklow-St Martins Ward.

### **Ashton upon Mersey and Manor**

The proposed ward boundaries above have an impact on the proposed Ashton-upon-Mersey and Manor wards. As discussed above, we are suggesting two approaches which are improved solutions. The first option retains the existing ward boundaries. The first is to retain the existing ward boundaries, which have worked for the communities for well over two decades. The proposal by the boundary commission, whilst uniting some of the communities around the Devon Estate, would split the community to the west of Manor Avenue, which uses the same services such as the Bodmin Road Health Centre, and mini shopping centre on Plymouth Road.

However, as discussed in our second option, another improvement to the proposed boundaries is to unite the whole of the Devon Estate. The Devon Estate is a distinct community, and as discussed above, includes the communities between Firs Road and Manor Avenue, but also the communities to the west of Manor Avenue between it and Dainewell Park. The proposals of the LGBCE propose splitting it between two wards, but in Option A we have proposed also splits it between Bucklow-St Martins and Manor wards. Our Option B proposals offer a suggestion of uniting it in entirely in Bucklow-St Martin's Ward. The advantage of our Option B proposals means that we not only unite the whole of the Devon Estate in one ward, but also have stronger borders for the proposed Manor Ward, with it running north along Firs Road. Whilst not quite as strong for electoral equality, they are both under the 10% limit for boundaries. We have detailed maps and roads moved in the Appendix to this report.

### **Broadheath Ward**

Whilst our initial proposals suggested a border at Woodhouse Lane, we agree with the proposed boundaries. They improve the border at the east, by having the border along the Canal, whilst retaining the rest of the ward, which has worked well as a community for years, with the Sale communities north of Woodheys Clough together with the Broadheath communities south of it.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, whilst we are happy to agree with the vast majority of the proposals of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England for Trafford, we cannot agree with the proposed Western Parishes ward. We do not think it is reasonable to have such a geographically large ward for three ward councillors to represent, verses others in the Borough, and we do not believe it could be effectively represented. Given the complete lack of community links, and four individual Parish Councils, all with competing interests put upon them, this will be very difficult to represent, and would add a considerable burden upon the councillors elected for them. As discussed in the report, they have very poor public transport between them, which means such a large area would be impossible to represent unless you drove, limiting the ability of certain people to represent them.

The communities of Dunham Massey and Warburton have historic links with Bowdon, as discussed dating back to well prior to the creation of Trafford, with those having been represented with Bowdon ward historically since the creation of Trafford Council. Partington on the other hand, is linked up, through Carrington to the communities in Flixton, and in Sale, including in St Martins. The ward has built up a coherent ward profile, as the ward faces similar community interests and issues.

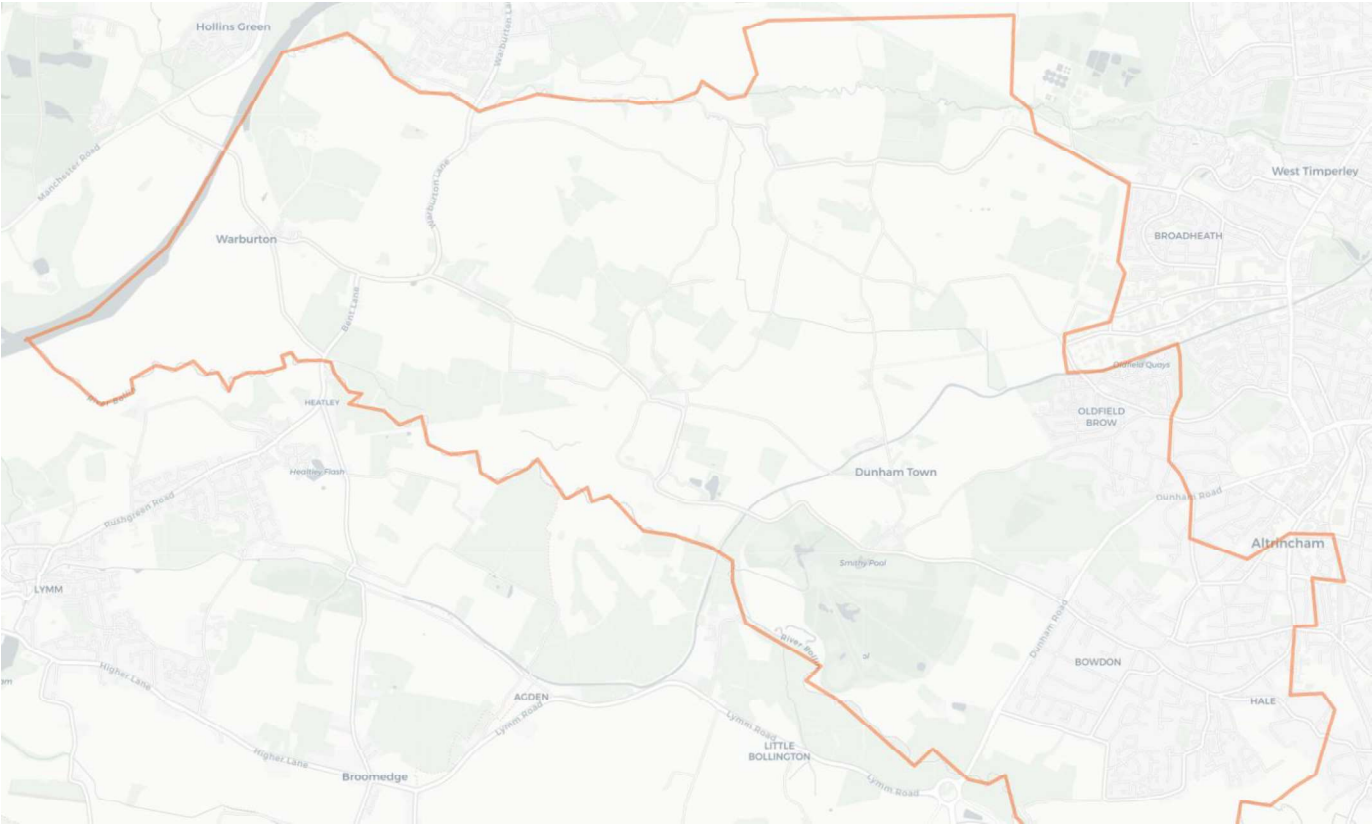
Finally, we do not believe a ward which is significantly undersized, at 23% in 2021, is a reasonable expectation for other communities in Trafford. Even with proposed developments, it will still remain significantly undersized compared to both other wards, and the variance from average of 10%, that we would deem acceptable in 2027.

We have therefore proposed two options, in Appendix A, both give significantly improved electoral equality, retain community interests and have strong and easily identifiable borders.

## Appendix A – our Proposed Wards

Proposed Ward	Number of Councillors	Option A		Option B	
		Electorate (2027)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2027)	Variance from average %
Altrincham	3	8,116	(6.9)%	8,116	(6.9)%
Ashton-upon-Mersey	3	8,085	(7.3)%	8,085	(7.3)%
Bowdon	3	8,882	1.8%	8,882	1.8%
Broadheath	3	9,111	4.5%	9,111	4.5%
Brooklands	3	8,067	(7.5)%	8,067	(7.5)%
Bucklow-St Martins	3	8,454	(3.1)%	9,442	8.3%
Davyhulme	3	9,247	6.0%	9,247	6.0%
Flixton	3	8,967	2.8%	8,967	2.8%
Gorse Hill	3	9,519	9.2%	9,519	9.2%
Hale	3	8,120	(6.9)%	8,120	(6.9)%
Hale Barns & Timperley South	3	9,080	4.1%	9,080	4.1%
Longford	3	8,844	1.4%	8,844	1.4%
Lostock & Barton	3	9,108	4.4%	9,108	4.4%
Manor	3	8,928	2.4%	7,940	(9.0)%
Old Trafford	3	8,734	0.2%	8,734	0.2%
Sale Moor	3	8,549	(2.0)%	8,549	(2.0)%
Sale	3	8,253	(5.4)%	8,253	(5.4)%
Stretford	3	9,002	3.2%	9,002	3.2%
Timperley Central	3	8,169	(6.3)%	8,169	(6.3)%
Timperley North	3	8,839	1.4%	8,839	1.4%
Urmston	3	9,062	3.9%	9,062	3.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>183,136</b>		<b>183,136</b>	

Appendix B – Bowdon Ward

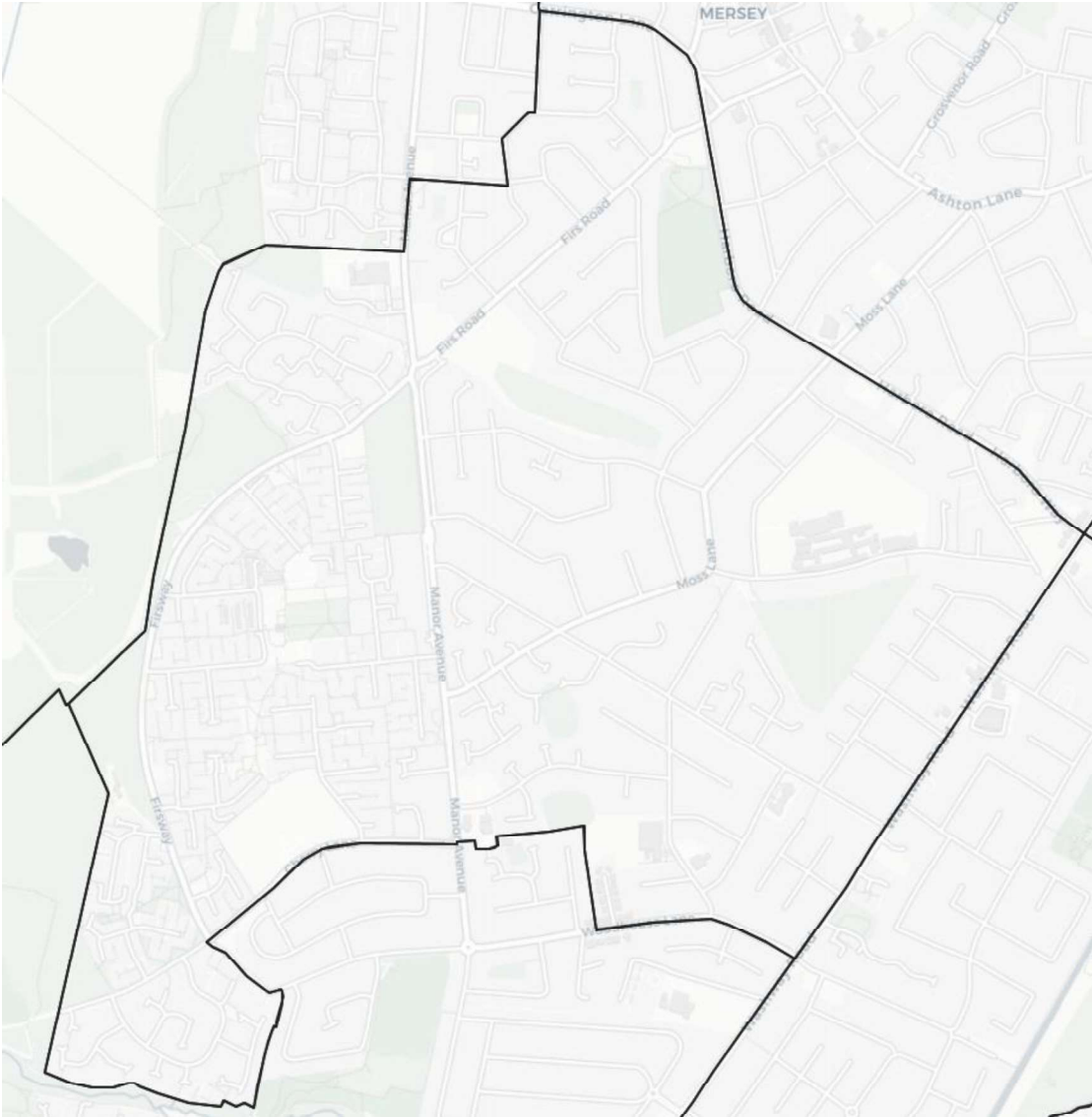


Appendix C – Bucklow-St Martins Ward (Option A)

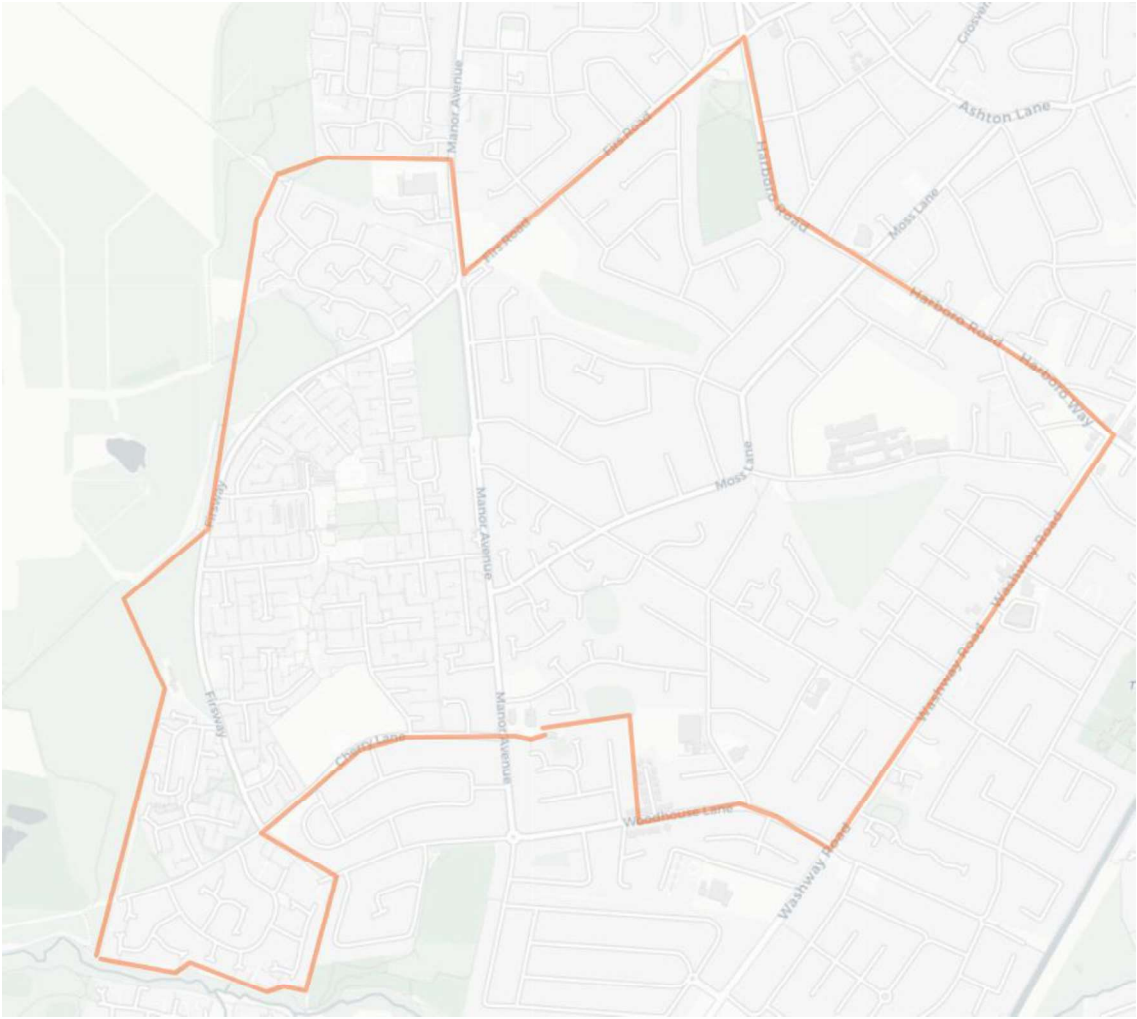


A map of the study area in Greater Manchester, UK. The River Mersey flows from the top left towards the bottom right. Several roads are labeled: Lower Irlam, Cadishead, Partington, Carrington Lane, Carrington Spur, Carrington Way, Manchester Road, and Carrington Lane. The map shows a mix of urban areas with buildings and green spaces. A thick orange line outlines the study area, which follows the river and extends into the surrounding land.

Appendix D – Manor Ward (Option A)



Appendix C – Manor Ward (Option B)





## Appendix F – Proposed changes

### *Bowdon Ward*

	2027 Electorate
LGBCE Draft Bowdon Ward	8,238
1BDF Polling District	264
1BDE Polling District	380
<b><i>Proposed Bowdon Ward</i></b>	<b><i>8,882</i></b>

### *Ashton-upon-Mersey Ward*

	2027 Electorate
LGBCE Draft Ashton-upon-Mersey Ward	9,279
2BSF Polling District	(1,194)
<b><i>Proposed Ashton-upon-Mersey Ward</i></b>	<b><i>8,085</i></b>

### *Bucklow-St Martins Ward – Option A*

	2027 Electorate
LGBCE Draft Western Parishes Ward	7,524
1BDF Polling District	(264)
1BDE Polling District	(380)
2BSF Polling District	1,573
<b><i>Proposed Bucklow-St Martins Ward</i></b>	<b><i>8,454</i></b>

### *Manor Ward – Option A*

	2027 Electorate
LGBCE Draft Manor Ward	9,307
2BSF Polling District	(379)
<b><i>Proposed Manor Ward</i></b>	<b><i>8,928</i></b>

### *Bucklow-St Martins Ward – Option B*

	2027 Electorate
LGBCE Draft Western Parishes Ward	7,524
1BDF Polling District	(264)
1BDE Polling District	(380)
2BSF Polling District	1,573
1SMA Polling District (part – see below)	988
<b><i>Proposed Bucklow-St Martins Ward</i></b>	<b><i>9,442</i></b>

*Manor Ward – Option B*

	2027 Electorate
LGBCE Draft Manor Ward	9,307
2BSF Polling District	(379)
1SMA Polling District (part – see below)	(988)
<b><i>Proposed Manor Ward</i></b>	<b><i>8,928</i></b>

1SMA Polling District – Option B suggestions (Manor Ward to Bucklow-St Martins Ward)

	Estimated Electorate
Carrington Lane	53
Brayton Avenue	36
Totnes Road	52
Exmouth Road	145
Sidmouth Road	92
Falmouth Avenue	29
Salcombe Close	28
Oakhampton Crescent	118
Tavistock Road	22
Paignton Drive	43
Brixham Drive	43
Dawlish Road	22
Oaklea Road	75
Firs Road	110 (North side – Evens only)
Manor Avenue	120 (Odds 93-153 and Manor Court)
<b><i>Proposed Adjustments</i></b>	<b><i>988</i></b>