

New electoral arrangements for Blackpool Council Final Recommendations

July 2022

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A note on our mapping:

The maps shown in this report are for illustrative purposes only. Whilst best efforts have been made by our staff to ensure that the maps included in this report are representative of the boundaries described by the text, there may be slight variations between these maps and the large PDF map that accompanies this report, or the digital mapping supplied on our consultation portal. This is due to the way in which the final mapped products are produced. The reader should therefore refer to either the large PDF supplied with this report or the digital mapping for the true likeness of the boundaries intended. The boundaries as shown on either the large PDF map or the digital mapping should always appear identical.

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Introduction

Who we are and what we do

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is an independent body set up by Parliament¹. We are not part of government or any political party. We are accountable to Parliament through a committee of MPs chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Our main role is to carry out electoral reviews of local authorities throughout England.

2 The members of the Commission are:

- Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
- Andrew Scallan CBE (Deputy Chair)
- Susan Johnson OBE
- Peter Maddison QPM
- Amanda Nobbs OBE
- Steve Robinson
- Jolyon Jackson CBE (Chief Executive)

What is an electoral review?

3 An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for a local authority. A local authority's electoral arrangements decide:

- How many councillors are needed.
- How many wards or electoral divisions there should be, where their boundaries are and what they should be called.
- How many councillors should represent each ward or division.

4 When carrying out an electoral review the Commission has three main considerations:

- Improving electoral equality by equalising the number of electors that each councillor represents.
- Ensuring that the recommendations reflect community identity.
- Providing arrangements that support effective and convenient local government.

5 Our task is to strike the best balance between these three considerations when making our recommendations.

¹ Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

6 More detail regarding the powers that we have, as well as the further guidance and information about electoral reviews and review process in general, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why Blackpool?

7 We are conducting a review of Blackpool Council ('the Council') as its last review was completed in 2001, and we are required to review the electoral arrangements of every council in England 'from time to time'.²

8 This electoral review is being carried out to ensure that:

- The wards in Blackpool are in the best possible places to help the Council carry out its responsibilities effectively.
- The number of electors represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the borough.

Our proposals for Blackpool

9 Blackpool should be represented by 42 councillors, the same number as there are now.

10 Blackpool should have 21 wards, the same number as there are now.

11 The boundaries of most wards should change; six will stay the same.

12 We have now finalised our recommendations for electoral arrangements for Blackpool.

How will the recommendations affect you?

13 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward. Your ward name may also change.

14 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of the borough or result in changes to postcodes. They do not take into account parliamentary constituency boundaries. The recommendations will not have an effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums and we are not able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

² Local Democracy, Economic Development & Construction Act 2009 paragraph 56(1).

Review timetable

15 We wrote to the Council to ask its views on the appropriate number of councillors for Blackpool. We then held two periods of consultation with the public on warding patterns for the borough. The submissions received during consultation have informed our final recommendations.

16 The review was conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
17 August 2021	Number of councillors decided
24 August 2021	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
1 November 2021	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
1 February 2022	Publication of draft recommendations; start of second consultation
11 April 2022	End of consultation; we began analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
5 July 2022	Publication of final recommendations

Analysis and final recommendations

17 Legislation³ states that our recommendations should not be based only on how many electors⁴ there are now, but also on how many there are likely to be in the five years after the publication of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for our wards.

18 In reality, we are unlikely to be able to create wards with exactly the same number of electors in each; we have to be flexible. However, we try to keep the number of electors represented by each councillor as close to the average for the council as possible.

19 We work out the average number of electors per councillor for each individual local authority by dividing the electorate by the number of councillors, as shown on the table below.

	2021	2027
Electorate of Blackpool	102,354	101,586
Number of councillors	42	42
Average number of electors per councillor	2,437	2,419

20 When the number of electors per councillor in a ward is within 10% of the average for the authority, we refer to the ward as having 'good electoral equality'. All/ of our proposed wards for Blackpool are forecast to have good electoral equality by 2027.

Submissions received

21 See Appendix C for details of the submissions received. All submissions may be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

22 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2027, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2022. These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and predicted a decrease in the electorate of around 1% by 2027.

23 We considered the information provided by the Council and are satisfied that the projected figures are the best available at the present time. We have used these figures to produce our final recommendations.

³ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

⁴ Electors refers to the number of people registered to vote, not the whole adult population.

Number of councillors

24 Blackpool Council currently has 42 councillors. We have looked at evidence provided by the Council and have concluded that keeping this number the same will ensure the Council can carry out its roles and responsibilities effectively.

25 We therefore invited proposals for new patterns of wards that would be represented by 42 councillors – for example, 42 one-councillor ward, 21 two-councillor wards, 14 three-councillor wards, or a mix of one-, two- and three-councillor wards.

26 We received no submissions about the number of councillors in response to our consultation on our draft recommendations. We have therefore maintained 42 councillors for our final recommendations.

Ward boundaries consultation

27 We received 25 submissions in response to our consultation on ward boundaries. These included two borough-wide proposals, from Blackpool Conservative Group ('Conservative Group') and Blackpool Labour Group ('Labour Group'), and a partial scheme from Blackpool South Conservative Association ('Conservative Association') covering the southern wards of the borough. The remainder of the submissions provided localised comments for warding arrangements in particular areas of the borough.

28 The two borough-wide schemes provided uniform patterns of two- councillor wards for Blackpool. We carefully considered the proposals received and were of the view that the proposed patterns of wards resulted in good levels of electoral equality in most areas of the authority and generally used clearly identifiable boundaries.

29 Our draft recommendations also took into account local evidence that we received, which provided further evidence of community links and locally recognised boundaries. In some areas we considered that the proposals did not provide for the best balance between our statutory criteria and so we identified alternative boundaries.

30 Given the travel restrictions, and the social distancing arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a detailed 'virtual' tour of Blackpool. This helped clarify issues raised in submissions and assisted in the construction of the draft recommendations.

31 Our draft recommendations were for 21 two-councillor wards. We considered that our draft recommendations would provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

Draft recommendations consultation

32 We received 20 submissions during consultation on our draft recommendations. These included a submission from Blackpool Council Labour Group supporting our draft recommendations in their entirety. The majority of the other submissions focused on specific areas, particularly our proposals in Brunswick and Claremont wards

33 Our final recommendations are based on the draft recommendations with modification to the wards in the east of the borough. based on the submissions received.

Final recommendations

34 Our final recommendations are for 21 two-councillor wards. We consider that our final recommendations will provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we received such evidence during consultation.

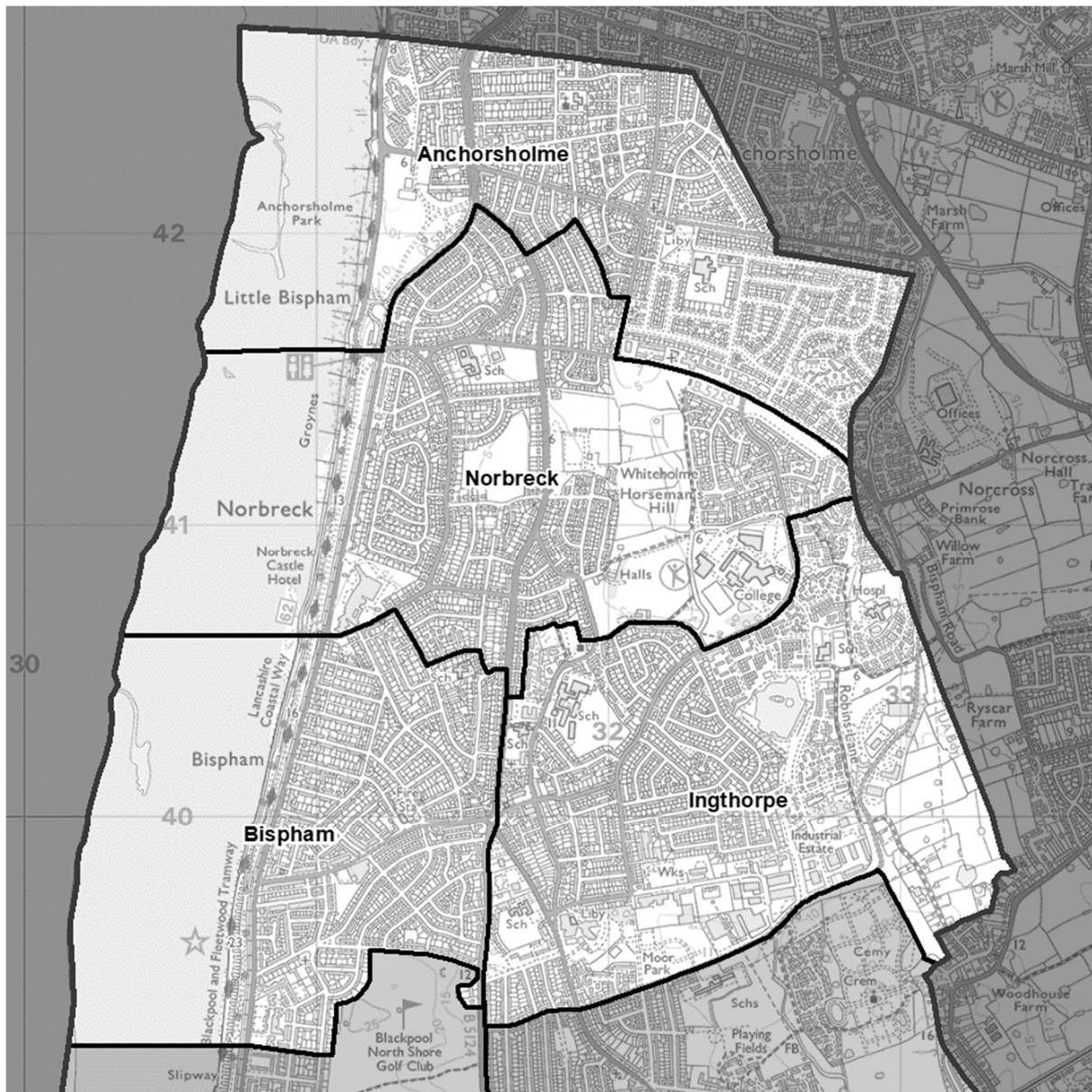
35 The tables and maps on pages 8–16 detail our final recommendations for each area of Blackpool. They detail how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory⁵ criteria of:

- Equality of representation.
- Reflecting community interests and identities.
- Providing for effective and convenient local government.

36 A summary of our proposed new wards is set out in the table starting on page 22 and on the large map accompanying this report.

⁵ Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Northern Blackpool



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Anchorsholme	2	1%
Bispham	2	-10%
Ingthorpe	2	5%
Norbreck	2	1%

Anchorsholme and Norbreck

37 Our draft recommendations for these wards were supported by the Labour Group. We received no other comments and confirm our draft recommendations as final.

Bispham and Ingthorpe

38 A resident provided evidence that the southern section of our draft Bispham ward, from Norfolk Avenue southwards, shared a community identity with the remainder of Warbreck ward. Unifying features such as St Stephen's church and community centre were cited, together with the similarity of housing stock on both sides of our proposed boundary.

39 We have adopted this change and propose a boundary along Norfolk Avenue as part of our final recommendations. This change does not, of itself, affect the electoral equality across Blackpool. A -10% variance, at the limits of good electoral equality, transfers from Warbreck ward to Bispham ward. This change however, in addition to reflecting the evidence of community identity, facilitates other changes to wards further south.

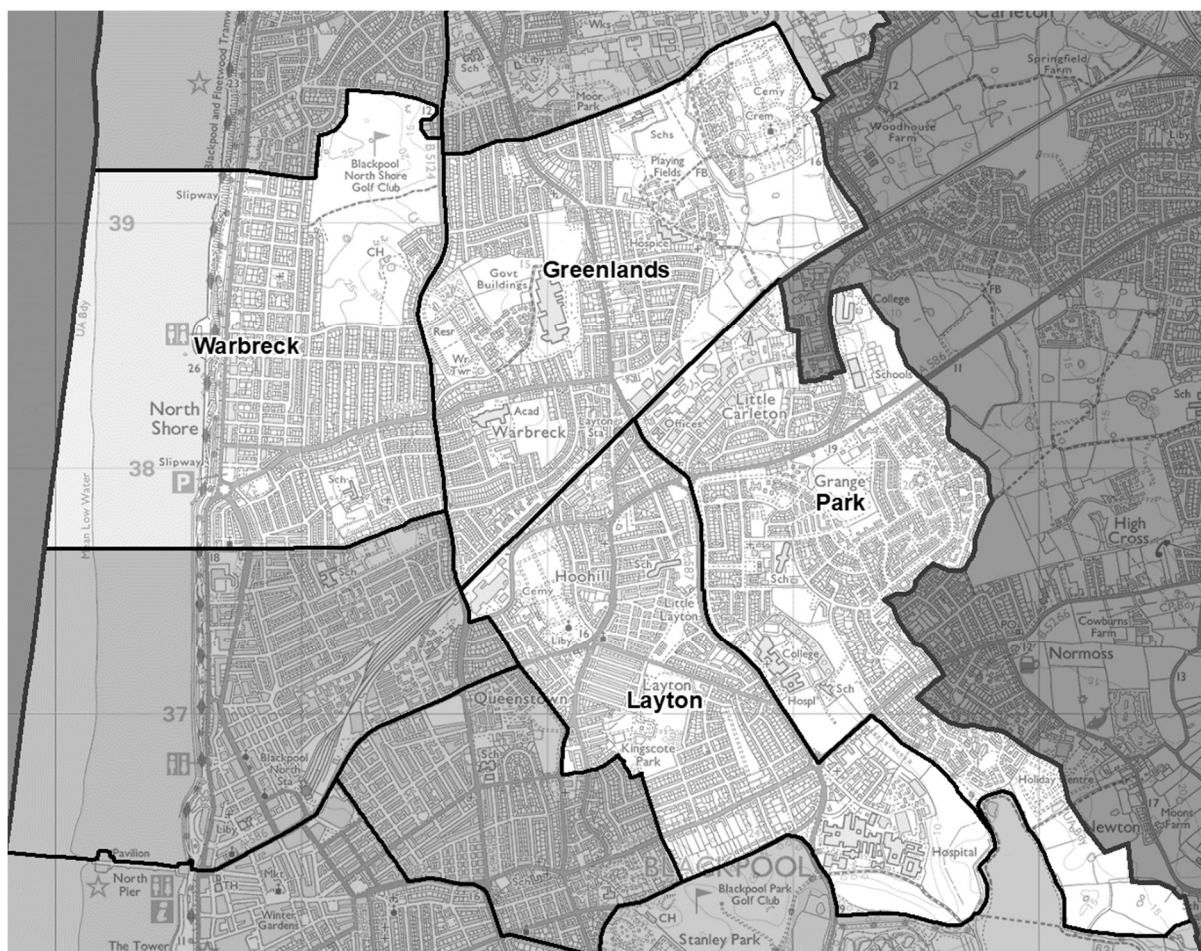
40 The resident who proposed this change noted that it may allow us to revisit the proposal made by the Conservative group in our initial warding pattern consultation, which would place the boundary between Bispham and Ingthorpe wards along All Hallows Road, Blackpool Road and Bispham Road. Purely in terms of electoral equality, this would be possible with the revised southern boundary to Bispham. However, especially in the absence of any fresh evidence regarding the community identity of the area just to the east of Devonshire Road, we do not consider that we would be justified in moving away from the strong and clear boundary offered by Devonshire Road, or in splitting the shopping and leisure facilities in this area between wards. We have therefore not been persuaded to alter our draft recommendations for this boundary, and subject to the southern boundary described above, we confirm our recommendations for Bispham ward as final.

41 A resident suggested that it would be in the interests of those living in the south of Ingthorpe ward to be moved into Greenlands, citing the high levels of social housing in the KinCraig area as requiring much of local councillors' time.

42 We carefully considered this proposal. No precise boundary was proposed, but if, for example, Munster Avenue and streets to the south, together with Winnipeg Place were placed into Greenlands ward, this ward would have an electoral variance of 17% - well beyond the bounds of good electoral equality. We do not consider that the evidence provided justifies this departure from electoral equality, and we have therefore not adopted this proposal.

43 We received no further comments on our proposed Ingthorpe ward, and we confirm our draft recommendations as final.

Greenlands, Layton, Park and Warbreck



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Greenlands	2	8%
Layton	2	2%
Park	2	5%
Warbreck	2	-1%

Greenlands

44 Other than the submission suggesting a change to the northern boundary of Greenlands ward, we received few other suggestions for changes to this ward. Our draft proposals were welcomed by the Labour Group, and a resident.

45 One resident queried the boundary around Meadow Crescent, where a portion of the crescent is in Blackpool, and a portion in the neighbouring authority of Wyre. While we accept that this boundary is illogical almost to the point of absurdity, we do not have the power under the current electoral review process to propose an amendment to the external boundary of the borough of Blackpool. Any such rationalisation of the external boundary would have to be undertaken as a Principal

Area Boundary Review, in conjunction with the councils of all areas concerned, namely Blackpool, Wyre District Council, and Lancashire County Council.

46 We received no other proposals for amendments to our draft recommendations for Greenlands ward, and we confirm them as final.

Layton and Park

47 One resident suggested that the area south of Newton Drive, including the area surrounding Victoria Hospital, was better described as Marton rather than Layton. The resident offered little specific evidence of community links between this area and the bulk of the electors in Marton ward, to the south of Stanley Park.

48 We carefully considered this proposal. In the absence of a consequential change elsewhere in Marton, moving electors south of Newton Drive into Marton ward would leave this ward with 17% more electors than the average across the borough – considerably beyond the limits of good electoral equality. We have therefore not been persuaded to make this change to our draft recommendations.

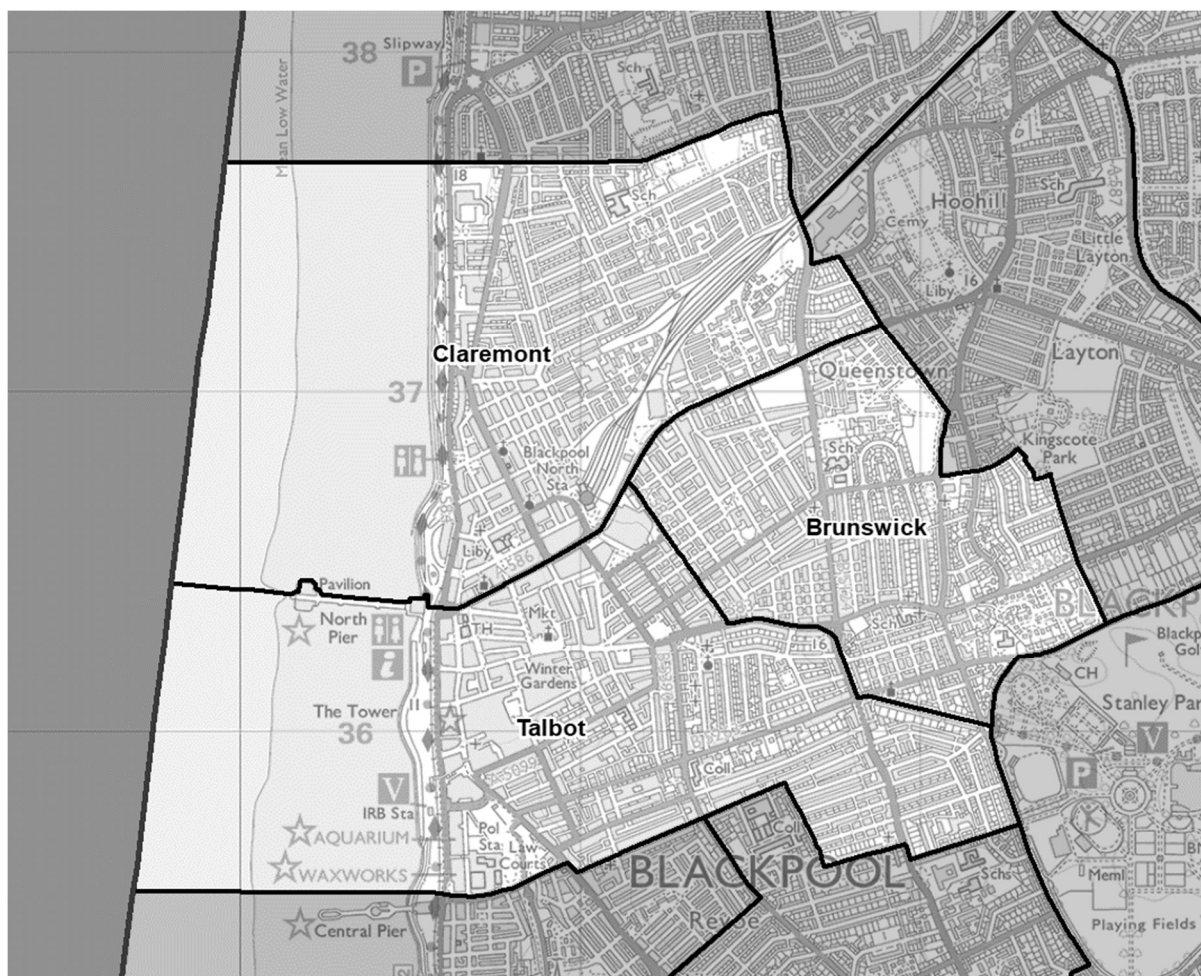
49 We received no proposals for changes to our draft recommendations for Park ward, which were supported by the Labour group. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Layton and Park wards as final.

Warbreck

50 A resident suggested that, in conjunction with the change to the northern boundary of Warbreck ward (para 38-39), an adjustment to the southern boundary, with the boundary running the length of Warley Road west of Devonshire Road would allow for a stronger and clearer boundary, as well as ensuring that homes next to Claremont Park and Claremont Community Primary School were placed in the ward of the same name.

51 This proposal also improves the electoral equality of both Warbreck and Claremont wards, and we have been persuaded to amend our draft recommendations in this respect. We received no other proposals for changes to our draft recommendations, and confirm the amended recommendations as final.

Central Blackpool



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Brunswick	2	-5%
Claremont	2	-6%
Talbot	2	-3%

Brunswick and Claremont

52 In addition to the alteration to the northern boundary of Claremont ward (para 50-51), two residents suggested an amendment to the southern boundary between Claremont and Brunswick wards. These residents suggested that our draft recommendation, which replicated the existing boundary in this area and split Healey Street and Laburnum Street did not reflect the community identity of this area, and that a boundary running the length of Talbot Road would be stronger and clearer.

53 We considered this proposal carefully. While we note that there are differences in the housing stock which broadly follow the existing boundary and our draft proposal, we are persuaded that the community in this area is sufficiently integrated to justify an alteration to our draft recommendations. In addition to the aspects of

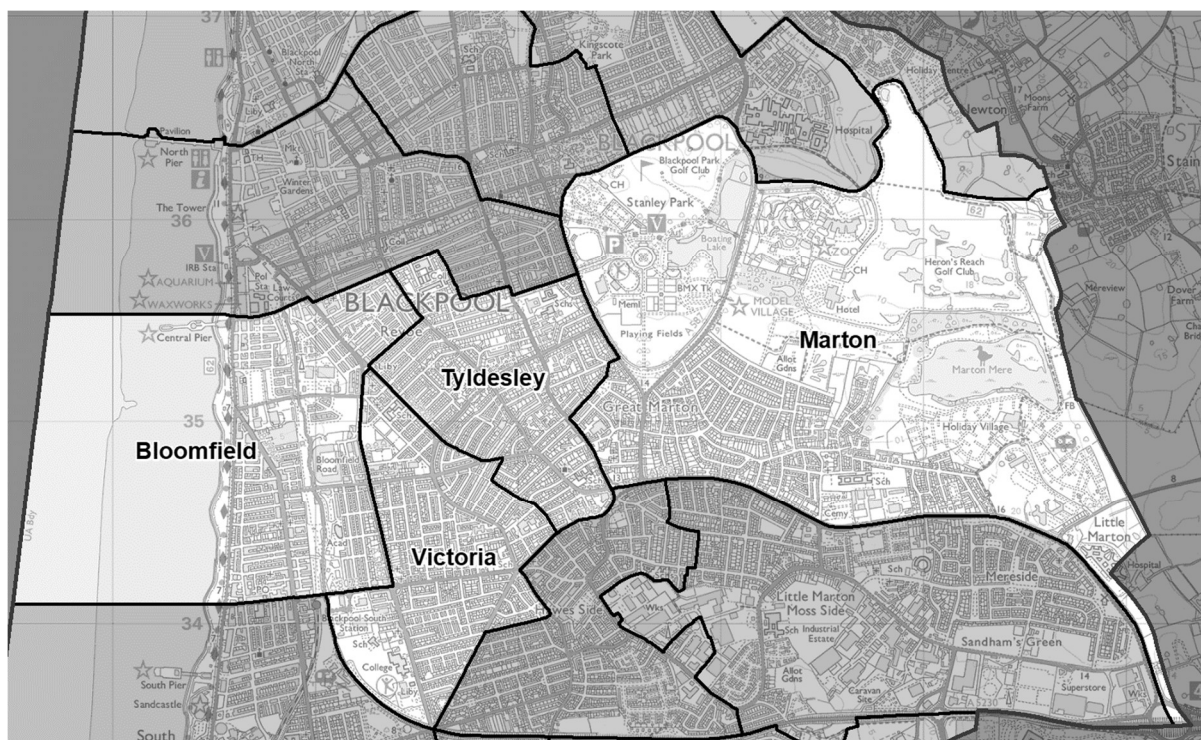
community identity, we note that this change improves the electoral equality of Brunswick ward from -8% variance to -5% and allows the use of Talbot Road as a clear boundary.

54 We received no other proposals for change to Brunswick or Claremont wards, and subject to the alterations detailed above, we confirm our recommendations as final.

Talbot

55 We received no proposals for changes to our draft recommendations, which were supported by the Labour group. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for this ward as final.

Bloomfield, Marton, Tyldesley and Victoria



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Bloomfield	2	-5%
Marton	2	6%
Tyldesley	2	-3%
Victoria	2	-6%

Bloomfield, Tyldesley and Victoria

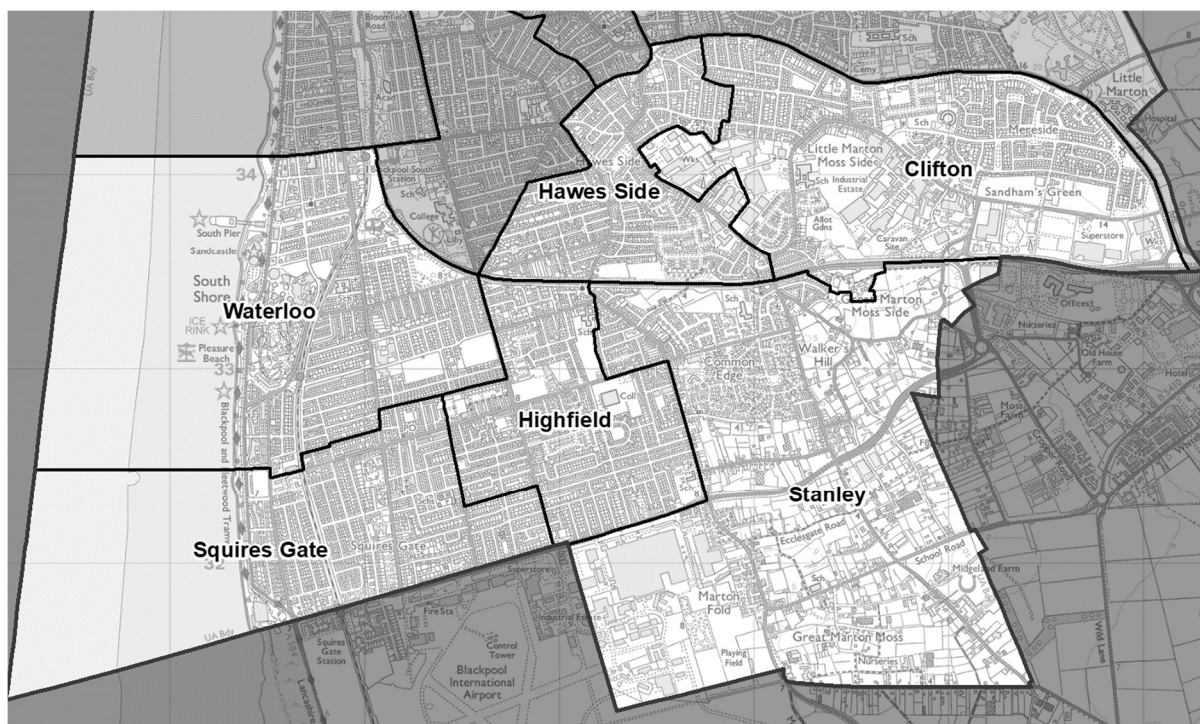
56 One resident suggested that the Revoe / Central Drive area had been overlooked and not mentioned in our draft recommendations. As discussed in the report on our draft recommendations, at paragraph 62-65, we considered but did not adopt a proposal from the Conservative group to adjust the boundaries of Tyldesley ward, and re-name it Revoe. We received no evidence in the consultation on draft recommendations suggesting that we should re-visit this decision.

57 Other than the overall support from the Labour group, we received no other comments on our draft recommendations for these wards. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations as final.

Marton

58 Apart from the proposal to adjust the northern boundary of Marton ward (discussed at para 47-48), and the broad support from the Labour group, we received no comments on the remainder of this ward. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations as final.

Southern Blackpool



Ward name	Number of councillors	Variance 2027
Clifton	2	-1%
Hawes Side	2	0%
Highfield	2	7%
Squires Gate	2	2%
Stanley	2	3%
Waterloo	2	1%

Clifton and Stanley

59 We received no proposals for changes to our draft recommendations for these wards. The draft recommendations were supported by the Labour group, and a resident who welcomed the use of Common Edge Road as a clear boundary between Stanley and Highfield wards. We confirm our draft recommendations as final.

Highfield and Hawes Side

60 One resident proposed, apparently based on the small geographic size of these wards, that they should be merged together. As we base our calculations of electoral equality on the number of forecast electors in a ward rather than geographic size, such a combined ward would need to be represented by four councillors in order to retain good electoral equality. We consider that wards returning more than three members result in a dilution of accountability to the electorate, and will not recommend them in the absence of very compelling evidence.

61 We are not persuaded to alter our draft recommendations for these wards, and confirm them as final.

Squires Gate and Waterloo

62 We received two proposals from residents regarding the boundary between these wards. Both proposed moving our draft recommendation boundary northwards, enlarging Squires Gate and shrinking Waterloo ward.

63 One resident, who did not provide a specific suggestion for a boundary, suggested that there was a distinction between owner-occupied tenure in Squires Gate and 'lots of rental properties' in Waterloo ward. While housing tenure can be a contributing factor to community identity, we do not consider that the evidence provided is strong enough to justify moving away from our draft recommendations and proposing an alternative which would inevitably offer poorer electoral equality.

64 The second resident proposed that all roads south of Woodstock Gardens be placed into Squires Gate ward, suggesting that roads between Woodstock Gardens and the southern boundary of Waterloo had more in common with Squires Gate than with the commercial and industrial areas around Waterloo Road at the northern extremity of the ward.

65 We carefully considered these proposals, and are grateful to the residents who proposed them. Extending the northern boundary of Squires Gate to Woodstock Gardens would mean that roughly 1,500 electors move into Squires Gate ward. In the absence of further consequential changes, this would result in Squires Gate having 33% more electors per councillor than average – well beyond the bounds of good electoral equality. We are therefore not persuaded that altering our draft recommendations would offer a better balance of our statutory criteria, and we confirm the draft recommendations for these wards as final.

Conclusions

66 The table below provides a summary as to the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality in Blackpool, referencing the 2021 and 2027 electorate figures against the proposed number of councillors and wards. A full list of wards, names and their corresponding electoral variances can be found at Appendix A to the back of this report. An outline map of the wards is provided at Appendix B.

Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2021	2027
Number of councillors	42	42
Number of electoral wards	21	21
Average number of electors per councillor	2,437	2,419
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	2	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendations

Blackpool should be made up of 42 councillors serving 21 wards representing 21 two-councillor wards. The details and names are shown in Appendix A and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Mapping

Sheet 1, Map 1 shows the proposed wards for Blackpool Council.

You can also view our final recommendations for Blackpool on our interactive maps at www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk

What happens next?

67 We have now completed our review of Blackpool. The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the local elections in 2023.

Equalities

68 The Commission has looked at how it carries out reviews under the guidelines set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. It has made best endeavours to ensure that people with protected characteristics can participate in the review process and is sufficiently satisfied that no adverse equality impacts will arise as a result of the outcome of the review.

Appendices

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Blackpool

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2027)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Anchorsholme	2	4,977	2,489	2%	4,900	2,450	1%
2	Bispham	2	4,363	2,182	-10%	4,343	2,171	-10%
3	Bloomfield	2	4,436	2,218	-9%	4,619	2,309	-5%
4	Brunswick	2	4,758	2,379	-2%	4,598	2,299	-5%
5	Claremont	2	4,754	2,377	-2%	4,535	2,267	-6%
6	Clifton	2	4,803	2,402	-1%	4,787	2,394	-1%
7	Greenlands	2	5,345	2,673	10%	5,230	2,615	8%
8	Hawes Side	2	5,025	2,513	3%	4,849	2,424	0%
9	Highfield	2	5,453	2,727	12%	5,200	2,600	7%
10	Ingthorpe	2	5,060	2,530	4%	5,061	2,530	5%
11	Layton	2	5,056	2,528	4%	4,925	2,462	2%
12	Marton	2	5,016	2,508	3%	5,136	2,568	6%

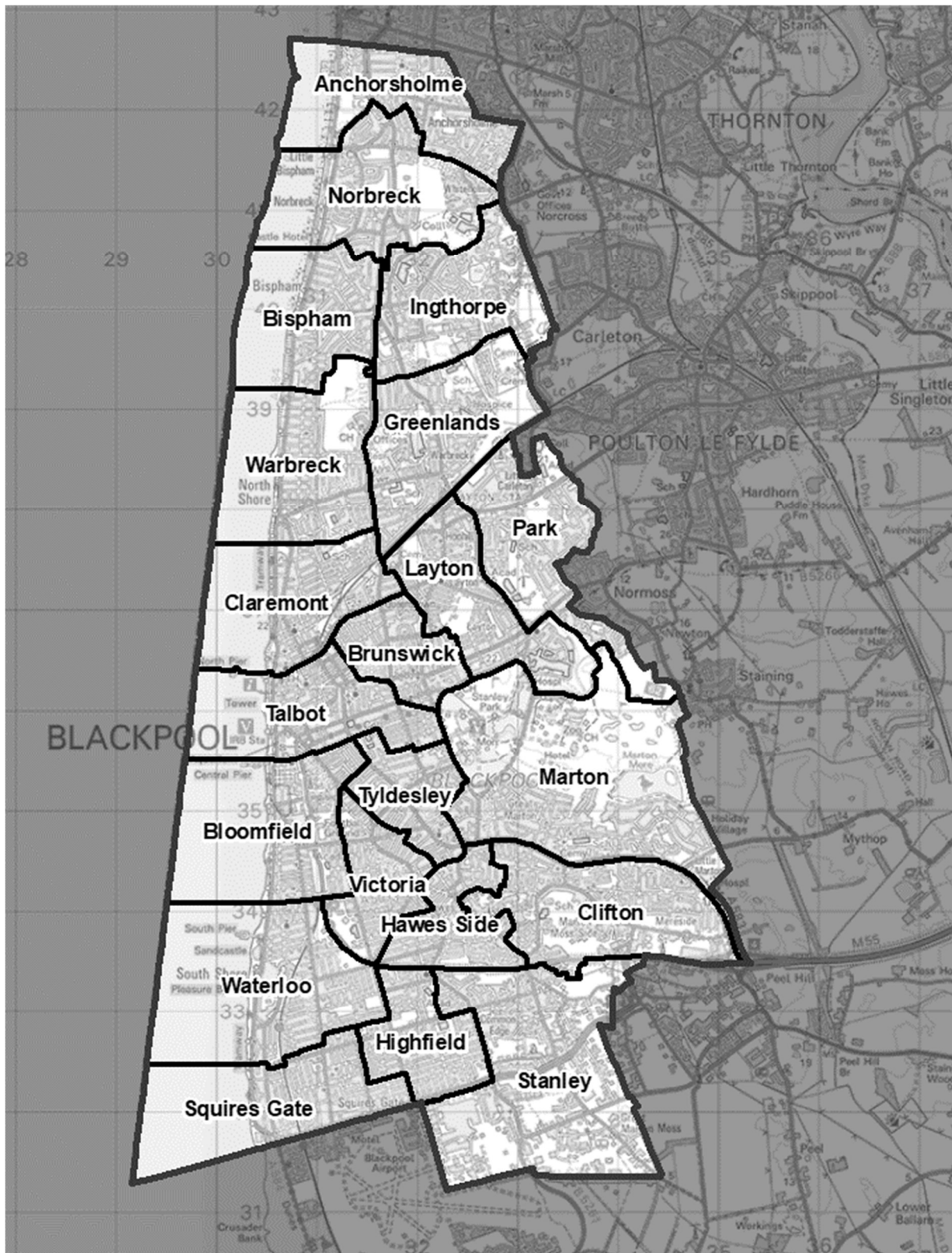
Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2021)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2027)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
13 Norbreck	2	4,890	2,445	0%	4,878	2,439	1%
14 Park	2	4,881	2,441	0%	5,076	2,538	5%
15 Squires Gate	2	4,981	2,491	2%	4,931	2,466	2%
16 Stanley	2	4,152	2,076	-15%	4,964	2,482	3%
17 Talbot	2	4,642	2,321	-5%	4,674	2,337	-3%
18 Tyldesley	2	5,019	2,510	3%	4,668	2,334	-3%
19 Victoria	2	4,585	2,293	-6%	4,541	2,270	-6%
20 Warbreck	2	5,072	2,536	4%	4,768	2,384	-1%
21 Waterloo	2	5,086	2,543	4%	4,904	2,452	1%
Totals	42	102,354	-	-	101,586	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,437	-	-	2,419	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Blackpool Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Outline map



A more detailed version of this map can be seen on the large map accompanying this report, or on our website: <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/north-west/lancashire/blackpool>

Appendix C

Submissions received

All submissions received can also be viewed on our website at:

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/north-west/lancashire/blackpool>

Political Groups

- Blackpool Council Labour group

Local Residents

- 19 local residents

Appendix D

Glossary and abbreviations

Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral inequality	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority.
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. We only take account of electors registered specifically for local elections during our reviews.
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents

Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) was set up by Parliament, independent of Government and political parties. It is directly accountable to Parliament through a committee chaired by the Speaker of the House of Commons. It is responsible for conducting boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government.

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