

**ELECTORAL REVIEW OF WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL 2015**  
**PROPOSALS PUBLISHED 25 AUGUST 2015**

**SUBMISSION BY WARRINGTON LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

**Summary**

Warrington Liberal Democrats were part of the all-party consensus that backed the original submission by Warrington Borough Council. This remains our preferred option because it retains community identities and enables the continuation of effective and convenient local government. There is enormous uncertainty about where new housing will be in 2020 following the Core Strategy High Court judgement against the Council. We believe it is premature to make far-reaching and disruptive boundary changes at this stage.

However if there is an over-riding need to ensure there is electoral equality such that no variance exceeds 10% either way, we have an alternative proposal. This transfers a councillor from the north of the town to Lymm in the south and retains the current boundaries for the rest of the wards in the south.

**Community Identity**

The second criterion for making decisions on ward boundaries is the need to consider the interests and identities of local communities. We strongly believe that in the south of the town this has been ignored. For example, Thorn is the oldest part of Appleton and contains the Parish Church and War Memorial. It does not belong to Grappenhall. In the north the clear natural boundary of the Bridgewater Canal has been ignored.

Lymm has been split into two and the northern part has been linked in with Thelwall and part of Grappenhall. Lymm and Thelwall have distinct identities and it makes little sense to combine them together. The submission from Lymm Parish Council goes into detail about Lymm's identity.

The boundaries of Burtonwood & Winwick and Culcheth, Glazebury & Croft have not been changed. These villages are the main areas in the north where there would be issues of community identity if changes had been proposed. We do not believe that there are major issues of community identity elsewhere in the north. It is only in the south where they are important.

**Effective and Convenient Local Government**

The third criterion for deciding on boundaries is effective and convenient local government. The proposals do not take adequate note of this factor. Appleton Parish Council would also cover parts of Grappenhall and Stockton Heath and would have to consult with seven borough councillors. The Appleton Borough Councillors would have to share their time with Hatton, Stretton and Walton Parish Councils.

Lymm North Borough Councillors would need to become familiar with Grappenhall and Thelwall issues and liaise with parish councillors there and attend Parish Council meetings. If resources were limited, Lymm North councillors would be competing for services on behalf of Thelwall residents against Lymm South councillors. The centre of Lymm is in Lymm South, so strictly the Lymm North councillors would have no interest in representing the

heart of the village. There would be five councillors with an interest in Lymm which seems excessive.

### **Housing Numbers**

The Strategic Housing Land Assessment Appraisal (SHLAA) is currently being undertaken by Warrington Council. Some of the assumptions in this are based on out-of-date data. The High Court judgement against Warrington's Core Strategy requires more land for housing to be put forward. It is not clear where this will be and the timing of any new build is even more uncertain. Until there is more clarification, we think it would be wrong to make any major decisions on ward boundaries. This should only be done once we know where the new homes are going to be.

### **Alternative proposal**

This proposal involves the following:

- Transfer of one councillor from Poulton North / Poulton South / Rixton & Woolston to the south
- All other wards to the north of the Ship Canal to be left unchanged as in the Boundary Commission proposal
- Lymm to be given an extra councillor and the two Lymm seats to be co-terminous with the Parish boundary
- All other seats south of the Ship Canal to be on the same boundaries as now.

The attached spreadsheet shows these changes.

### **Poulton North / Poulton South / Rixton & Woolston**

The proposed variances for these three wards are -9%, -7% and -9%. If a councillor is lost from the three wards taken together reducing the total from eight councillors to seven, then the variance changes to +5%. Detailed work has not been carried out to determine the best way to allocate the reduced number of councillors in this area. However it is important to note that the Boundary Commission has already suggested changes here. We do not believe that community identity is an over-riding factor and it is perfectly feasible to make the necessary boundary changes.

### **All other wards in the north**

No other changes are proposed to the wards put forward by the Boundary Commission.

### **Lymm**

The need to create better electoral equality in Lymm is seen as the driving force for widespread changes in the south. If an extra councillor is allocated to Lymm then greater electoral equality can be achieved within the 10% limit, community identity preserved and effective and convenient government retained. If Lymm North is defined as the area north of the Bridgewater Canal then the variance would be -13% and if Lymm South is the area south of the Canal then the variance would be -7%. However if 183 electors were transferred from the South to the North, then the variance in each ward would be -10%. Details of this transfer are given in the spreadsheet. Figures are only available for 2015 from the current electoral register but given the roads being transferred there is no spare land for more homes to be built by 2020. The Bridgewater Canal is no longer the dividing line for its whole length but the slight revision to the boundary makes sense on the ground.

**All other wards in the south**

Community and village identity is very important to residents in the south of the town. With the Lymm adjustment, we do not believe it is necessary to make any changes to the existing wards. Co-terminous borough and parish wards make much more sense than the proposed wards.

We are aware that Grappenhall & Thelwall Parish Council value their own community identity and do not wish to be joined up with Lymm.

**Conclusion**

We believe our proposal is an improvement on the one put forward by the Boundary Commission and is based on local knowledge. It meets the three criteria laid down by the Commission.

11 October 2015

**ELECTORAL REVIEW OF WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL - SUBMISSION BY WARRINGTON LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

26/10/2015

<b>BOUNDARY COMMISSION PROPOSAL</b>					<b>REVISED PROPOSAL</b>				
Name	No Cllrs	2020 Electors	Elec/Cllr	Variance%	Name	No Cllrs	2020 Electors	Elec/Cllr	Variance%
<b>Wards north of the Ship Canal</b>					<b>Wards north of the Ship Canal</b>				
Poulton North	3	7993	2664	-9	Poulton North				
Poulton South	2	5425	2713	-7	Poulton South				
Rixton & Woolston	3	7921	2640	-9	Rixton & Woolston				
Sub-total	8	21339	2667	-8	Sub-total	7	21339	3048	5
All other wards	38	111099	2924	0	All other wards	38	111099	2924	0
Sub-total(north of Canal)	46	132438	2879	-1	Sub-total(north of Canal)	45	132438	2943	1
<b>Wards south of the Ship Canal</b>					<b>Wards south of the Ship Canal</b>				
Lymm North & Thelwall	3	9407	3136	8	Lymm North & Thelwall less Thelwall		5030		
					Lymm North transferred from L South		0		
					Lymm North (revised)	2	5030	2515	-14
Lymm South	2	5401	2701	-7	Lymm South transferred to L North		5401		
					Lymm South (revised)	2	5401.0	2701	-7
Appleton (new)	3	9462	3154	8	Appleton (current)	3	9125	3042	4
Grappenhall (new)	2	6248	3124	7	Grapp&Thelwall(current)	3	8368	2789	-4
Stockton Heath (new)	2	5944	2972	2	Stockton Heath(current)	2	5247	2624	-10
					Hatton, Stretton&Walton	1	3032	3032	4
Sub-total(south of Canal)	12	36462	3039	-4	Sub-total(south of Canal)	13	36203	2785	-4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>168900</b>	<b>2912</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>168641</b>	<b>2908</b>	<b>0</b>

Note that the total electorate for the Revised Proposal differs from that for the Boundary Commission by 259 total due to the calculation method used

<b>The Lymm transfer</b>	
Maltmans Road	20
Brookfield Close	5
Davies Way	2
Henry Street	4
Brookfield Road	66
Bridgewater Street	12
Eagle Brow(south of jn. with Brookfield Road)	72
The Dingle	2
Total	183
NB Dingle Bank Close is excluded from this list because the number of electors would cause the variance to exceed 10%	