

Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Manchester

Report to The Electoral Commission

September 2003

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What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to The Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No. 3692). The Order also transferred to The Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Professor Michael Clarke CBE
Robin Gray
Joan Jones CBE
Ann M Kelly
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

We are required by law to review the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England. Our aim is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors and ward names. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish councils.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the city of Manchester.

Summary

We began a review of Manchester's electoral arrangements on 14 May 2002. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 25 February 2003, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation. We now submit final recommendations to The Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations that we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission.**

We found that the existing arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Manchester:

- **in 19 of the 33 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the city and 10 wards vary by more than 20%;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 22 wards and by more than 20% in 12 wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 91 – 92 are that:

- **Manchester City Council should have 96 councillors, three less than at present;**
- **there should be 32 wards, instead of 33 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 32 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one, and one ward should retain their existing boundaries.**

The purpose of these proposals is to ensure that, in future, each city councillor represents approximately the same number of electors, bearing in mind local circumstances.

- **In 27 of the proposed 32 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the city average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 10% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to The Electoral Commission, which will not make an Order implementing them before 11 November 2003. The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

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(This address should only be used for this purpose.)**

Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Large map reference
1	Ancoats & Clayton	3	Part of Beswick & Clayton ward; part of Central ward; part of Newton Heath ward	Map 1
2	Ardwick	3	Part of Ardwick ward; part of Longsight ward; part of Rusholme ward	Map 2
3	Baguley	3	Part of Baguley ward; part of Brooklands ward	Map 3
4	Barlow Moor	3	Part of Barlow Moor ward; part of Chorlton ward; part of Old Moat ward	Map 2
5	Bradford	3	Part of Beswick & Clayton ward; Bradford ward	Maps 1 and 2
6	Brooklands	3	Part of Baguley ward; part of Brooklands ward; part of Northenden ward	Maps 2 and 3
7	Burnage	3	<i>Unchanged</i> (Burnage ward)	Map 2
8	Charlestown	3	Part of Charlestown ward; part of Lightbowne ward; part of Moston ward	Map 1
9	Cheetham	3	Cheetham ward; part of Crumpsall ward; part of Harpurhey ward	Map 1
10	Chorlton	3	Part of Chorlton ward; part of Whalley Range ward	Map 2
11	City Centre	3	Part of Central ward	Maps 1 and 2
12	Crumpsall	3	Part of Charlestown ward; part of Crumpsall ward	Map 1
13	Didsbury East	3	Part of Didsbury ward; part of Withington ward	Maps 2 and 3
14	Didsbury West	3	Part of Barlow Moor ward; part of Didsbury ward; part of Old Moat ward	Maps 2 and 3
15	Fallowfield	3	Part of Fallowfield ward; part of Moss Side ward	Map 2
16	Gorton North	3	Part of Ardwick ward; part of Gorton North ward; part of Gorton South ward; part of Longsight ward	Map 2
17	Gorton South	3	Part of Gorton North ward; part of Gorton South ward; part of Levenshulme ward	Map 2
18	Harpurhey	3	Part of Charlestown ward; part of Harpurhey ward; part of Lightbowne ward	Map 1
19	Higher Blackley	3	Part of Blackley ward; part of Charlestown ward; part of Crumpsall ward	Map 1
20	Hulme	3	Part of Hulme ward	Map 2
21	Levenshulme	3	Part of Levenshulme ward; part of Rusholme ward	Map 2
22	Longsight	3	Part of Gorton South ward; part of Longsight ward	Map 2
23	Miles Platting & Newton Heath	3	Part of Newton Heath ward; part of Central ward	Map 1
24	Moss Side	3	Part of Fallowfield ward; part of Hulme ward; part of Moss Side ward	Map 2
25	Moston	3	Part of Lightbowne ward; part of Moston ward	Map 1

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Large map reference
26	Northenden	3	Part of Benchill ward; part of Northenden ward; part of Sharston ward	Map 2 and 3
27	Old Moat	3	Part of Old Moat ward	Map 2
28	Rusholme	3	Part of Rusholme ward	Map 2
29	Sharston	3	Part of Benchill ward; part of Sharston ward	Map 3
30	Whalley Range	3	Part of Fallowfield ward; part of Moss Side ward; part of Whalley Range ward	Map 2
31	Withington	3	Part of Old Moat ward; part of Withington ward	Map 2
32	Woodhouse Park	3	The parish of Ringway, Part of Benchill ward; part of Sharston ward; Woodhouse Park ward	Map 3

Notes:

- 1) *Ringway is the only parish in the city.*
- 2) *The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.*

Table 2: Final recommendations for Manchester

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Ancoats & Clayton	3	7,821	2,607	-21	10,022	3,341	0
2 Ardwick	3	10,522	3,507	7	10,620	3,540	6
3 Baguley	3	10,057	3,352	2	9,964	3,321	-1
4 Barlow Moor	3	9,323	3,108	-5	10,304	3,435	2
5 Bradford	3	8,826	2,942	-10	9,616	3,205	-4
6 Brooklands	3	9,894	3,298	0	10,180	3,393	1
7 Burnage	3	10,008	3,336	2	9,742	3,247	-3
8 Charlestown	3	9,134	3,045	-7	9,057	3,019	-10
9 Cheetham	3	9,499	3,166	-4	9,478	3,159	-6
10 Chorlton	3	10,281	3,427	4	9,973	3,324	-1
11 City Centre	3	5,471	1,824	-44	10,531	3,510	5
12 Crumpsall	3	10,002	3,334	2	10,110	3,370	1
13 Didsbury East	3	10,268	3,423	4	10,023	3,341	0
14 Didsbury West	3	10,087	3,362	2	10,101	3,367	0
15 Fallowfield	3	10,222	3,407	4	10,223	3,408	2
16 Gorton North	3	10,603	3,534	8	10,195	3,398	1
17 Gorton South	3	10,864	3,621	10	10,656	3,552	6
18 Harpurhey	3	11,446	3,815	16	10,287	3,429	2
19 Higher Blackley	3	10,057	3,352	2	9,659	3,220	-4
20 Hulme	3	7,962	2,654	-19	10,024	3,341	0
21 Levenshulme	3	10,578	3,526	7	10,361	3,454	3
22 Longsight	3	10,355	3,452	5	10,005	3,335	-1
23 Miles Platting & Newton Heath	3	10,425	3,475	6	9,779	3,260	-3
24 Moss Side	3	10,171	3,390	3	10,278	3,426	2
25 Moston	3	10,913	3,638	11	10,619	3,540	6
26 Northenden	3	10,136	3,379	3	9,881	3,294	-2
27 Old Moat	3	10,496	3,499	7	10,254	3,418	2
28 Rusholme	3	9,940	3,313	1	10,200	3,400	1
29 Sharston	3	9,941	3,314	1	9,996	3,332	-1
30 Whalley Range	3	10,117	3,372	3	10,169	3,390	1
31 Withington	3	10,116	3,372	3	9,916	3,305	-1
32 Woodhouse Park	3	9,685	3,228	-2	9,676	3,225	-4
Totals	96	315,220	-	-	321,899	-	-
Averages	-	-	3,284	-	-	3,353	-

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor 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.

1 Introduction

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for the city of Manchester, on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the 10 metropolitan boroughs in Greater Manchester as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. The programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Manchester. Manchester's last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1980 (Report no. 393).

3 In making final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
 - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
 - secure effective and convenient local government; and
 - achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.
- The general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1996 and the Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to:
 - Eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
 - Promote equality of opportunity; and
 - Promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Manchester was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews*. This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

5 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also propose changes to the electoral arrangements for parish councils in the city.

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the district as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

7 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or no change, should be supported by evidence and argumentation. Given the stage now reached in the introduction of new political management structures under the provisions of the local Government Act 2000, it is important that whatever council size interested parties may propose to us they can demonstrate that their proposals have been fully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of internal political management and the role of councillors in the new structure. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of the council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit to the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough/city ward. However, the figure

must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough/city wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could lead to an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

9 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 14 May 2002, when we wrote to Manchester City Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Greater Manchester Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Greater Manchester Local Councils Association, the parish council in the city, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the city, Members of the European Parliament for the North West Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the City Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 16 September 2002. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

10 Stage Three began on 25 February 2003 with the publication of the report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Manchester*, and ended on 22 April 2003. During this period comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

2 Current electoral arrangements

11 The city of Manchester, as a regional capital, stands at the centre of the North West, an area with seven million residents. The city grew from the bedrock of innovation and manufacturing strength, dating back to the industrial revolution and built on the inventions of Crompton's Mule and Arkwright's Spinning Jenny, to lead the world in textiles. The decline in the manufacturing industry led to a decline in the fortunes of the city and region. However, over the last 10 years Manchester has re-emerged as a vibrant, modern and successful regional capital and a concerted programme of regeneration has seen the city transformed.

12 The city contains only one parish, that of Ringway, which was included within the city in 1974 as part of local government reorganisation and thus brought Manchester International Airport within the boundary of a single local authority.

13 The electorate of the city is 315,220 (December 2001). The Council presently has 99 members who are elected from 33 wards. All wards are three-member wards.

14 At present, each councillor represents an average of 3,184 electors, which the City Council forecasts will increase to 3,252 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 19 of the 33 wards varies by more than 10% from the city average, 10 wards by more than 20% and two wards by more than 30%. The worst imbalance is in Longsight ward where the councillor represents 40% more electors than the city average.

15 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated, in percentage terms, the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the city average in percentage terms. In the text which follows this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

Map 1: Existing wards in Manchester

Table 3: Existing electoral arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Ardwick	3	8,396	2,799	-12	7,531	2,510	-23
2 Baguley	3	8,684	2,895	-9	8,548	2,849	-12
3 Barlow Moor	3	10,631	3,544	11	11,432	3,811	17
4 Benchill	3	7,046	2,349	-26	6,862	2,287	-30
5 Beswick & Clayton	3	6,976	2,325	-27	7,155	2,385	-27
6 Blackley	3	8,231	2,744	-14	7,931	2,644	-19
7 Bradford	3	6,863	2,288	-28	7,809	2,603	-20
8 Brooklands	3	8,489	2,830	-11	8,740	2,913	-10
9 Burnage	3	10,008	3,336	5	9,781	3,260	0
10 Central	3	10,530	3,510	10	17,305	5,768	77
11 Charlestown	3	8,799	2,933	-8	9,187	3,062	-6
12 Cheetham	3	9,278	3,093	-3	9,341	3,114	-4
13 Chorlton	3	11,752	3,917	23	11,488	3,829	18
14 Crumpsall	3	9,354	3,118	-2	9,127	3,042	-6
15 Didsbury	3	11,601	3,867	21	11,443	3,814	17
16 Fallowfield	3	11,837	3,946	24	12,132	4,044	24
17 Gorton North	3	9,766	3,255	2	9,411	3,137	-4
18 Gorton South	3	8,828	2,943	-8	8,583	2,861	-12
19 Harpurhey	3	7,687	2,562	-20	7,219	2,406	-26
20 Hulme	3	9,101	3,034	-5	11,252	3,751	15
21 Levenshulme	3	10,245	3,415	7	10,235	3,412	5
22 Lightbowne	3	8,211	2,737	-14	7,014	2,338	-28
23 Longsight	3	13,410	4,470	40	13,073	4,358	34
24 Moss Side	3	8,778	2,926	-8	8,748	2,916	-10
25 Moston	3	9,491	3,164	-1	9,655	3,218	-1
26 Newton Heath	3	8,174	2,725	-14	7,833	2,611	-20
27 Northenden	3	9,825	3,275	3	9,707	3,236	0
28 Old Moat	3	12,776	4,259	34	12,885	4,295	32
29 Rusholme	3	12,217	4,072	28	12,438	4,146	28
30 Sharston	3	7,604	2,535	-20	7,744	2,581	-21
31 Whalley Range	3	10,238	3,413	7	10,040	3,347	3

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
32 Withington	3	12,329	4,110	29	12,105	4,035	24
33 Woodhouse Park	3	8,065	2,688	-16	8,145	2,715	-17
Totals	99	315,220	-	-	321,899	-	-
Averages	-	-	3,184	-	-	3,252	-

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Bradford ward were relatively over-represented by 28%, while electors in Longsight ward were relatively under-represented by 40%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 Draft recommendations

16 During Stage One 17 representations were received, including city-wide schemes from Manchester City Council and the Liberal Democrat Group on Manchester City Council & the City of Manchester Liberal Democrats. We also received representations from the a Member of Parliament, five local political parties and residents groups, two city councillors and seven local residents. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Manchester*.

17 Our draft recommendations were based on the City Council's proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality. However, we moved away from the City Council's scheme in a number of areas using some of our own proposals. We proposed that:

- Manchester City Council should be served by 96 councillors, compared with the current 99, representing 32 wards, one fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 32 of the existing wards should be modified, while one ward should retain its existing boundaries.

Draft recommendation

Manchester City Council should comprise 96 councillors, serving 32 wards.

18 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 27 of the 32 wards varying by no more than 10% from the city average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further with no ward varying by more than 10% from the average in 2006.

4 Responses to consultation

19 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 30 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Manchester City Council.

Manchester City Council

20 The City Council generally supported our draft recommendations but reiterated its Stage One proposals for the City Centre area.

Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats

21 Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats proposed a number of amendments to our proposals across the city.

Other representations

22 A further 28 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from nine local political groups, four local organisations, three councillors and 12 local residents.

23 Manchester Blackley Liberal Democrats, Manchester Blackley Liberal Association and Crumpsall Liberal Democrats made a number of proposals in the north of the city. Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives commented on our proposals across the city. Levenshulme Liberal Democrats, Withington Liberal Democrats, Rusholme Liberal Democrats, Barlow Moor Liberal Democrats and Liberal Democrats Chorlton Ward commented on our proposals in the south central area of the city.

24 The Community Network objected to our proposals in the Miles Platting area. Moston Fields Residents Association objected to our proposals in the Moston area. Newton Heath Partnership supported our proposed Newton Heath ward. Smithfields Tenants & Residents Association objected to our proposed Beswick & Clayton ward. Councillors Ramsbottom and Clayton proposed a boundary amendment in the city centre area. Councillors Morrison, Reid and Royle made an alternative proposal in the Fallowfield area. Councillor Whitmore supported the proposals of Levenshulme Liberal Democrats. Ten local residents commented on our proposals in the south central area of the city while another local resident objected to the proposed Newton Heath ward and another commented on our proposals across the city.

5 Analysis and final recommendations

25 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Manchester is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended): the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

26 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the next five years. We also must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

27 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which results in exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

28 We accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be considered and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

29 The recommendations do not affect county, district or parish external boundaries, local taxes, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that these recommendations will have an adverse effect on house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Electorate forecasts

30 Since 1975 there has been a 15% decrease in the electorate of Manchester city. Development instigated by regeneration has resulted in a shift of electors towards the regenerated areas, with the knock-on effect of many wards being substantially under-represented. The City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 2% from 315,220 to 321,899 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expected most of the growth to be in the city centre area, although a significant amount was also expected in Hulme ward. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates.

31 We received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

Council size

32 Manchester City Council presently has 99 members. The City Council proposed a council of 96 members, a reduction of three. It argued that there are critical factors that shape the current

and future size of the Council and that they are determined by the modernisation of the Council's decision-making structures and processes; strategic and community leadership; the City's role as the regional capital of the North West; and the development and implementation of the Manchester Community Strategy. It provided details of the responsibilities of members on the Council and argued that its new constitutional arrangements had demanded very high levels of political leadership from Executive members; a greater degree of challenge from Scrutiny members and a strengthened capacity for policy development; enhanced levels of stewardship from those members responsible for regulatory and statutory functions; and increased cross-party working. It argued further that the ward co-ordination process in Manchester had intensified the role of members as elected local representatives, that their active involvement was fundamental to its future success and that a significant reduction in the number of elected representatives would limit its effectiveness. It stated that the strategic leadership and advocacy role of elected members and the mixture of cultures, customs and lifestyles in the city generate an additional level of complexity and representation. It also stated that an Independent Remuneration Panel which advises the council on allowances payable to members concluded that, although there had been a reduction in the time spent in meetings, this had been more than compensated for by an increase in work at a community level.

33 The Liberal Democrats proposed a council size of 81, a reduction of 18 councillors. They compared the responsibilities of councillors with regard to their commitments to a variety of council meetings under the former traditional committee system and concluded that, under this system, councillors were able to attend an average of 36 meetings per year in addition to their duties to their constituents, sub-committee attendance and appointment panel attendance. In comparison, they argued that under the new management arrangements, Executive members would attend an average of 27 meetings a year and non-executive members somewhere in the range of 17 to 27. It concluded that 67 councillors could service the committee structure but proposed an additional 14 councillors to give a 36% cushion in the number of non-executive councillors.

34 We carefully considered the evidence provided at Stage One in respect of the most appropriate council size for Manchester. We noted that the primary argument put forward by the Liberal Democrats was that, under the new management structures, fewer councillors were needed to fulfil the council's obligations in comparison with the former traditional committee system. However, we also noted the City Council's assertion that the representational role of councillors had significantly changed and that they play a key strategic role in the city. Given the wide responsibilities of councillors, we were not sufficiently convinced by the Liberal Democrats' argumentation for a reduction in council size of 18 councillors.

35 During Stage Three the City Council supported our proposal for a 96-member council. Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats stated that their original preference for a 27 ward system gave superior warding arrangements but accepted that the chances for this to be adopted were low. Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives agreed with our proposed council size. Manchester Blackley Liberal Democrats supported our proposed council size.

36 Given the general support for our proposed council size of 96 members we propose confirming our draft recommendations as final.

Electoral arrangements

37 Given our proposal to adopt the City Council's proposals for a council size of 96 and in view of the degree of consensus behind elements of the Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we based our recommendations on the City Council's scheme. We considered that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. Unfortunately, while we acknowledged that there is much to

recommend the warding pattern put forward by the Liberal Democrats, given the difference in proposed council size between the schemes of the City Council and the Liberal Democrats we were unable to recommend any of the Liberal Democrats' proposals. However, we noted objections to the City Council's proposals in a number of areas and where possible sought to improve electoral equality further and better improve local community identities and interests. We decided to move away from the City Council's proposals in a number of areas across the city. We proposed boundary amendments to its proposals in the Northenden, Moss Side/Fallowfield, Longsight/Ardwick, Cheetham/Harpurhey and Moston/Charlestown areas and proposed reconfiguring its proposals in the central area of the city.

38 At Stage Three, in response to our draft recommendations report, we received submissions regarding areas across the city. We received a number of proposed amendments to our proposals in the north of the city, around the city centre area and in the Chorlton area. As a result we propose adopting a number of these amendments in order to better reflect the statutory criteria, particularly in the north of the city where we consider the alternative proposals to better reflect local communities without significantly impacting on electoral equality in the area.

39 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. For city warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- I. Baguley, Benchill, Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Woodhouse Park wards (pages 23 – 25);
- II. Ardwick, Barlow Moor, Burnage, Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Gorton North, Gorton South, Hulme, Levenshulme, Longsight, Moss Side, Old Moat, Rusholme, Whalley Range and Withington wards (pages 25 – 29);
- III. Beswick & Clayton, Bradford, Central and Newton Heath wards (pages 29 – 31);
- IV. Blackley, Charlestown, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Lightbowne and Moston wards (pages 31 – 33).

40 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large maps.

Baguley, Benchill, Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Woodhouse Park wards

41 These six wards are situated in the south of the city. The wards of Baguley, Benchill, Brooklands, Northenden and Sharston are all urban in nature and are unparished. Woodhouse Park ward comprises the city's only parish, Ringway, and an unparished area to its north. Under the existing arrangements Baguley, Benchill, Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Woodhouse Park wards currently have 9% fewer, 26% fewer, 11% fewer, 3% more, 20% fewer and 16% fewer electors per councillor than the city average (12% fewer, 30% fewer, 10% fewer, equal to, 21% fewer and 17% fewer in 2006).

42 At Stage One the City Council proposed that the area be made up of five wards. It proposed that the area to the north of Ledson Road and to the west of Southmoor Road in the current Baguley ward be transferred to its proposed Brooklands ward while the area to the east of Southmoor and Moor Road to the north of and including Bideford Drive and Parkwood Road be transferred from the current Brooklands ward to its proposed Baguley ward. In addition it proposed that the area to the west of Orton Road, Fellgate Road and to the west of and including Tipton Drive as far as the M60 be transferred from the current Northenden ward to the proposed Brooklands ward while the area to the east of Wythenshawe Horticultural Centre and Fir Coppice be transferred from the current Brooklands ward to the proposed Northenden ward. Its proposed Northenden ward would also comprise the majority of the current ward and that part

of the current Benchill ward to the north of Hollyhedge Road and to the west of Brownley Road. It also proposed that the area to the west of Sharston Road in the current Sharston ward be transferred to its proposed Northenden ward. It proposed that the remainder of the current Benchill and Sharston wards with the exception of the area to the south of Gladeside Road and to the west of Rowlandsway form a new Sharston ward. It proposed that the areas to the south of Gladeside Road and to the west of Rowlandsway be transferred to an enlarged Woodhouse Park ward.

43 The Liberal Democrats proposed an arrangement of four wards for this area. However, these warding arrangements were based on an overall reduction in council size which were incompatible with our proposals for a council size of 96. While we gave careful consideration to their proposed ward boundaries, it did not prove possible to accommodate any part of their proposals for this area as part of our draft recommendations. Paul Goggins MP supported the City Council's proposals for the area arguing that they accurately reflected local communities and dealt with natural boundaries such as the River Mersey and M56 Motorway in a practical way. Wythenshawe & Sale East Conservative Association objected to the City Council's proposals in this area. It objected to the proposals to divide the Northern Moor area, arguing that there was strong community identity between the Brooklands and Northenden areas. It argued that the Bideford Lane area would be divided from the remainder of the proposed Baguley ward by Altrincham Road and had no common interest with the community on the other side of the road. It also argued that the area currently within Benchill ward that the City Council proposed transferring to its proposed Northenden ward was separate from the remainder of the ward and proposed that polling districts SHA, SHK, SHC and SHJ in the current Sharston ward be transferred instead as they are better in terms of 'accessibility and common interests'. It also proposed that more radical arrangements be created in the area and Wythenshawe North and South or East and West wards be created.

44 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We noted the objections of Wythenshawe & Sale East Conservative Association and their proposal that areas of the current Sharston ward be combined with Northenden rather than areas of the current Benchill ward. However, although we noted that these proposals would secure an acceptable level of electoral equality by 2006, we were not convinced that the links between these areas would any better reflect community ties than under the City Council's proposed Northenden ward. We also noted their proposals for the Bideford Lane area and noted that the area is currently within the same ward as properties on the southern side of Altrincham Road and were therefore not convinced that this would better reflect community identity than the proposals of the City Council. We acknowledged that the City Council's proposals in the area were not ideal and carefully considered alternative configurations for the area. However, we noted that the City Council's proposals secured a good level of electoral equality and that the M56 Motorway had been adhered to as a strong boundary between the eastern and western areas where possible and that the River Mersey provided a very strong boundary in the north. We were therefore not minded to breach these boundaries unless necessary and considered that the City Council's proposals would provide for the best balance of the statutory criteria in the area.

45 We therefore proposed adopting the majority of the City Council's proposals for the area. However, we proposed a minor amendment in order to utilise further the M56 as a boundary. We proposed that the boundary between the proposed Brooklands and Northenden wards be extended northwards along the M56 and then westwards along Wythenshawe Road. We also note that this proposal would result in the whole of Wythenshawe Park being contained within a single ward.

46 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Baguley, Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Woodhouse Park wards would initially have 2% more, equal to, 3% more, 1% more and 2% fewer electors per councillor than the city average (1% fewer, 1% more, 2% fewer, 1% fewer and 4% fewer in 2006).

47 At Stage Three the City Council supported our proposals in the area. Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats stated that they had no suggestions for this area.

48 Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives stated that they had concerns regarding the proposed Brooklands ward. They argued that our proposals would place together areas with no strong common identity and would split the Northern Moor area between Brooklands and Northenden wards. They supported the inclusion of polling district BAA in the proposed Brooklands ward. They proposed further that Sharston ward be renamed Wythenshawe North ward and that Woodhouse Park ward be renamed Wythenshawe South & Ringway ward, arguing that the two wards contain electors that do not consider that they live in these areas.

49 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We note that our proposals have received some support. We note the concerns of Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives. However, we also note that their submission did not actually propose any alternative arrangements for this area. In addition, we did not receive any other comments regarding this area. Therefore, given the evidence, we consider that our draft recommendations still provide the best balance between the statutory criteria. We have also considered their ward name change proposals but are not convinced that they would secure local support. Therefore we are content to confirm our draft recommendations in the area as final.

50 Under our final recommendations the proposed Baguley, Brooklands, Northenden, Sharston and Woodhouse Park wards would initially have 2% more, equal to, 3% more, 1% more and 2% fewer electors per councillor than the city average (1% fewer, 1% more, 2% fewer, 1% fewer and 4% fewer in 2006).

Ardwick, Barlow Moor, Burnage, Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Gorton North, Gorton South, Hulme, Levenshulme, Longsight, Moss Side, Old Moat, Rusholme, Whalley Range and Withington wards

51 These sixteen wards are located to the south of the city centre area. The wards of Ardwick, Barlow Moor, Burnage, Chorlton, Didsbury, Fallowfield, Gorton North and Gorton South currently have 12% fewer, 11% more, 5% more, 23% more, 21% more, 24% more, 2% more and 8% fewer electors per councillor than the city average (23% fewer, 17% more, equal to, 18% more, 17% more, 24% more, 4% fewer and 12% fewer in 2006).

52 The wards of Hulme, Levenshulme, Longsight, Moss Side, Old Moat, Rusholme, Whalley Range and Withington currently have 5% fewer, 7% more, 40% more, 8% fewer, 34% more, 28% more, 7% more and 29% more electors per councillor than the city average (15% more, 5% more, 34% more, 10% fewer, 32% more, 28% more, 3% more and 24% more in 2006).

53 At Stage One the City Council proposed new Didsbury East and Didsbury West wards. Its proposed Didsbury East ward would comprise the area of the current Didsbury ward to the east of Wilmslow Road and to the south of Stenner Lane and the area to the south of Cotton Lane, Heathside Road and Heyscroft Road in the current Withington ward. Its proposed Didsbury West ward would comprise the remainder of the current Didsbury ward, that part of the current Barlow Moor ward to the east of Princess Road, to the south of Barlow Moor Road and to the east of Burton Road and that part of the current Old Moat ward to the south of Goulden Road and Oak Road. It proposed that the existing Burnage ward be maintained on its current boundaries. Its proposed Chorlton Park ward would comprise the remainder of the current Barlow Moor ward, the area of the current Old Moat ward to the west of Princess Road, and that part of the current Chorlton ward to the east of and including Cundiff Road, Hurstville Road and Redland Crescent, to the east of Barlow Moor Lane, and south of Wilbraham Road. It proposed that the remainder of the current Chorlton ward be combined with that part of the current Whalley Range ward to the west of Egerton Road North to form a new Chorlton ward. Its proposed Whalley Range ward

would comprise the remainder of the current ward combined with that area of Fallowfield ward to the west of Princess Road, north of Brantingham Road and to the west of Alexandra Road South to the north of Gowan Road and Alexandra Park in the current Moss Side ward.

54 It proposed that the remainder of the current Withington ward be combined with that part of the current Old Moat ward north of Oak Road and east of Palatine Road to form a revised Withington ward, while the remainder of the current Old Moat ward would form a new Old Moat ward. Its proposed Fallowfield ward would comprise the current Fallowfield ward less that area to be transferred to its proposed Whalley Range ward. Its proposed Moss Side ward would comprise the existing Moss Side ward, part of the current Hulme ward to the south of Dilworth Street and east of Lloyd Street North, less the area to be transferred to the proposed Whalley Range ward. Its proposed Hulme ward would comprise the remainder of the current Hulme ward. Its proposed Ardwick ward would comprise the majority of the current Ardwick ward less the area to the east of Pottery Lane which it proposed be transferred to its proposed Gorton North ward. It proposed that it would additionally include the area to the north of Oxford Place in the current Rusholme ward and the areas to the north of Daisy Bank, Richmond Grove, Britnall Avenue and Kirkmanshulme Lane in the current Longsight ward.

55 Its proposed Rusholme ward would comprise the majority of the current Rusholme ward less the area to be transferred to its proposed Ardwick ward and an area to the south of and including Manchester University Athletic Ground and to the south of Kingsway Avenue which it proposed be included within its proposed Levenshulme ward. Its proposed Longsight ward would comprise parts of the current Longsight ward less the area to be transferred to the proposed Ardwick ward and the area to the north of Kirkmanshulme Lane and east of Pink Bank Lane which it proposed be transferred to its proposed Gorton North ward. It also proposed that the properties on Pink Bank Lane and between Woodhill Close and Butterwick Lane in the current Gorton South ward be transferred to its proposed Longsight ward. Its proposed Levenshulme ward would be based on the existing ward subject to the transfer from the current Rusholme ward (previously detailed) and subject to the transfer of the electors to the north of the railway line, Broom Lane and Chapel Street to its proposed Gorton South ward. In addition to the proposals already mentioned, its proposed Gorton South ward would include that part of the existing Gorton North ward to the south of Gorton Lower Reservoir, while electors to the north of Maiden's Bridge, Sunny Brow Park, Haworth Road and Buckley Road would be transferred to its proposed Gorton North ward. The northern boundary of its proposed Gorton North ward would remain unchanged.

56 The Liberal Democrats proposed a pattern of 15 wards for this area. However, these warding arrangements were based on an overall reduction in council size which were incompatible with our proposals for a council size of 96. Abbey Hey Residents Association argued that Gorton North ward would be best served by a boundary running along Hyde Road and that its northern boundary should take in the properties north of the Manchester-Leeds railway line, run to, and then along Alan Turing Way to its junction with Wenlock Way and take in the estate on either side of Wenlock Way and Hyde Road. It argued that the Gorton North area has community ties with the Openshaw area and that there would be many advantages to placing the areas in the same ward. It also argued that Hyde Road formed a barrier with the area to the south. Gorton Community Forum proposed that the current Gorton North and Gorton South wards be maintained, arguing that the A57 is a dividing line between the two communities. It further proposed that, under a 31-ward pattern for the city, this could be achieved by splitting the current Benchill and Beswick & Clayton wards. Three local residents objected to the City Council's proposed Chorlton Park and Didsbury West wards, arguing that they did not want to be part of a Chorlton ward.

57 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We noted the proposals for the Gorton area from Abbey Hey Residents Association and Gorton Community Forum. However, while we had some sympathy with their views, we noted that their proposals would greatly impact across the city and that we must consider the appropriate warding pattern for the area as a whole. We also carefully considered the objections to the City Council's proposals in

the Didsbury area. However, in order to secure improved levels of electoral equality in the area, it was not possible to accommodate these views. Therefore we proposed adopting the City Council's proposals in the area subject to a number of boundary amendments in order to improve community identity. We proposed a boundary amendment between the proposed Fallowfield and Moss Side wards in order to better reflect community identity in the area. We proposed that the boundary be amended to run north to the rear of the properties on Bidston Avenue, then proceed west to the south of the properties on Horton Road and then north along Lloyd Street South. We also proposed a boundary amendment between the proposed Ardwick and Longsight wards to better reflect the local community and provide for a more identifiable boundary in the area. We proposed that the boundary be amended so that it ran along the centre of Kirkmanshulme.

58 Under our draft proposals the proposed Ardwick, Burnage, Chorlton, Chorlton Park, Didsbury East, Didsbury West, Fallowfield, Gorton North, Gorton South, Hulme and Withington wards would initially have 7% more, 2% more, 4% more, 5% fewer, 4% more, 2% more, 4% more, 8% more, 11% more, 19% less and 3% more electors per councillor than the city average (6% more, 3% fewer, 1% fewer, 2% more, equal to, equal to, 2% more, 1% more, 7% more, equal to and 1% less than the city average in 2006).

59 At Stage Three the City Council supported our proposals in the area. Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats proposed that the boundary between the proposed Chorlton and Chorlton Park wards be amended to run along Chorlton Brook, north along Barlow Moor Road, south-east along Sandy Lane and north along St Werburgh's Road. They argued that this would not divide the Chorlton district centre. They also proposed that the Ladybarn Council Housing Estate be transferred from the proposed Didsbury East ward to the proposed Withington ward, arguing that the estate identifies with the Withington area. They proposed that the boundary between the proposed Gorton South and Longsight wards be amended to run along the southern boundary of Crowcroft Park and Crowcroft Park School, along Stovell Road and Bickerdale Avenue, along the eastern boundary of the cricket ground and east along East Road. They argued that local residents regard the park, cricket ground and school as being part of the Longsight area.

60 Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives supported the majority of our proposals in the area. However, they proposed that Moorfield Road be included within the proposed Didsbury West ward, proposing that the boundary be modified to run along Princess Road and along the centre of Nell Lane to Burton Road. They argued that this would improve community identity and provide for a stronger ward boundary. Withington Liberal Democrats objected to our proposals in the Chorlton area arguing that our proposals split the area and proposed that the boundary between the proposed Chorlton and Chorlton Park wards be amended. Their proposals were identical to those of the Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats. They proposed that Chorlton Park ward be renamed Barlow Moor ward, arguing that it is an historic area of city. They also made identical proposals for the Ladybarn estate as Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats. Chorlton Liberal Democrats ward also proposed the same boundary amendment between the proposed Chorlton and Chorlton Park wards and proposed that Chorlton Park ward be renamed Barlow Moor ward.

61 Barlow Moor Liberal Democrats supported the proposals of Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats and proposed that Chorlton Park ward be renamed Barlow Moor ward. They argued that Barlow Moor Road runs through the whole ward, that the majority of the Barlow Moor area remains in the ward and that local residents can associate with the name. Three local residents objected to our proposals in the area and proposed that the current Chorlton ward be maintained. Another local resident argued that our proposals combined an affluent area of West Didsbury in the proposed Chorlton Park ward with two council estates and that the two areas did not have the same needs or aspirations. The local resident also proposed that Chorlton Park ward be renamed Barlow Moor ward. A local resident argued that the community of Chorlton was centred around the crossroads of Barlow Moor Road and

Wilbraham Road, north to Upper Chorlton Road, south to Hardy Lane, east to Withington Road and west to Longford Park. Another local resident proposed that the Chorlton area be maintained while another argued that the Bradwell Avenue area was part of the Didsbury area and not the Chorlton Park area. Another local resident objected to our proposed Chorlton and Chorlton Park wards and proposed that Chorlton Park ward be renamed Barlow Moor ward.

62 Levenshulme Liberal Democrats proposed an amendment to our proposed boundary between the proposed Levenshulme and Rusholme wards. They proposed that polling district RUF be transferred to Levenshulme ward rather than polling district RUG arguing that part of this general area, known as West Point, is already in Levenshulme, that it has an active Residents Association and that the area forms an essential part of the Levenshulme community. They also argued that polling district RUG bears little community identity with Levenshulme. Councillor Whitmore stated that he supported the submission of Levenshulme Liberal Democrats.

63 Rusholme Liberal Democrats stated that they fully supported the submission of Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats. They also supported the proposed Rusholme ward. Councillor Morrison, in a submission co-signed by councillors Reid and Royle proposed that polling district FAE be transferred to the proposed Whalley Range ward rather than polling district FAF. He argued that polling district FAE was the most remote from Fallowfield, both geographically and with regard to local feeling.

64 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We note the proposal to amend the boundary between the proposed Chorlton and Chorlton Park wards. However, we also note that under these proposals, while the properties to the south of the brook would be in the proposed Chorlton Park ward, their only access route would be into the proposed Chorlton ward. Therefore we have not been persuaded that the alternative proposals in the area would better reflect the statutory criteria than under our draft recommendations. We also note the proposal that the current Chorlton ward be maintained. However, adopting this proposal would have a knock-on effect for our proposals for the surrounding area and we cannot view any area in isolation and must consider our recommendations for the area as a whole. We also note the proposals to transfer the Ladybarn Council Housing Estate from Didsbury East ward to Withington ward. While we acknowledge that there is some community identity argument, we do not consider this sufficient given the worsened levels of electoral equality that result. We do however consider that its proposals for the Crowcroft Park area have some merit. We consider that the Crowcroft Primary School and Longsight Cricket Club should fall within Longsight ward. Therefore, we propose adopting this amendment. We also propose adopting the proposal to change the name of Chorlton Park ward to Barlow Moor. We concur with the view that the names put forward in our draft recommendations could create local confusion. We also note that the Barlow Moor Road runs through the centre of the proposed ward.

65 We note the proposals put forward by Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives to transfer Moorfield Road to the proposed Didsbury West ward. However, while this does not significantly worsen electoral equality, we do not consider that this proposal was supported by sufficient evidence of community identity, or that it would receive local support. Therefore, we do not propose adopting this amendment. We have also given consideration to the proposals put forward by a local resident arguing about the area that covers the centre of Chorlton. However, we do not consider that they provide sufficient evidence of community identity to persuade us to adopt this proposal. The same is broadly true of the proposal put forward by a local resident who argued that the Bradwell Road area should form part of the Didsbury area, and not Chorlton Park. Therefore, we have not been persuaded to adopt either of these proposals.

66 We note the proposals put forward by Levenshulme Liberal Democrats to modify the boundary between Levenshulme and Rusholme wards. However, while there is some community identity argument, these proposals would significantly worsen electoral equality in the proposed Rusholme ward. In addition, we note that the arrangements for the proposed

Rusholme ward are supported by the Rusholme Liberal Democrats. Therefore, we do not propose adopting this amendment. We also note the proposal put forward by Councillor Reid, but were not sufficiently convinced by the level of argumentation to adopt this proposal.

67 Under our final recommendations the proposed Ardwick, Burnage, Chorlton, Barlow Moor, Didsbury East, Didsbury West, Fallowfield, Gorton North, Gorton South, Hulme and Withington wards would initially have 7% more, 2% more, 4% more, 5% fewer, 4% more, 2% more, 4% more, 8% more, 10% more, 19% less and 3% more electors per councillor than the city average (6% more, 3% fewer, 1% fewer, 2% more, equal to, equal to, 2% more, 1% more, 6% more, equal to and 1% less electors per councillor than the city average in 2006).

Beswick & Clayton, Bradford, Central and Newton Heath wards

68 These four wards are located in the centre of the city. Beswick & Clayton, Bradford, Central and Newton Heath wards currently have 27% fewer, 28% fewer, 10% more and 14% fewer electors per councillor than the city average (27% fewer, 20% fewer, 77% more and 20% fewer in 2006).

69 At Stage One the City Council proposed that the current Bradford ward be maintained with the addition of the area of the current Beswick & Clayton ward to the south of Bradford Road and Alan Turing Way. It proposed that the current Newton Heath ward be divided between two new wards, its proposed Clayton Bridge and Miles Platting wards. Its proposed Clayton Bridge ward would comprise the current Beswick & Clayton ward less the area to be transferred to its proposed Bradford ward and an area of the current Newton Heath ward east of Scotland Hall Road, South of Briscoe Lane and Leng Road. It proposed that the remainder of the current Newton Heath ward be combined with that part of the current Central ward to the east of Miller Street and Great Ancoats Street. Its proposed City Centre ward would comprise the remainder of the current Central ward. It acknowledges that its proposed City Centre ward would vary from the city average by 15% by 2006 but argued that it was well defined and that the true nature of occupancy, given a significant business presence and second-home use, would result in a much lower variance.

70 The Liberal Democrats proposed a pattern of four wards in this area. However, these warding arrangements were based on an overall reduction in council size which were incompatible with our proposals for a council size of 96. At Stage One Councillor O'Connor, member for Newton Heath ward, submitted a petition from 530 members of the public who objected to the City Council's proposals to split the Newton Heath ward. It proposed maintaining the Newton Heath area and claimed that the proposals did not take into consideration natural boundaries surrounding the area. It also proposed maintaining the Newton Heath ward name. The Newton Heath Partnership also objected to the City Council's proposals, arguing that they did not maintain the cultural and social identity of the Newton Heath area. We also received four representations from local residents objecting to the City Council's proposals for the Newton Heath area.

71 We noted that the City Council's proposals would secure an improved level of electoral equality in the area. However, we also noted that the City Council's proposed City Centre ward would have 15% more electors per councillor than the city average by 2006 and that there had been a significant objection to its proposals for the Newton Heath area. Therefore we proposed an alternative configuration for the area. We proposed a modified Newton Heath ward and a new Clayton Bridge ward. We proposed that the majority of the current Newton Heath ward less the area bounded by the Rochdale Canal, Alan Turing Way, the River Medlock and Bank Bridge Road be combined with polling districts CEB, CEC and CED from the current Central ward to form a revised Newton Heath ward. We noted that this proposal would maintain the entire Newton Heath community within a single ward while securing a good level of electoral equality. As a result of this proposal, it was necessary to combine the current Beswick & Clayton ward,

less the area to be transferred to the proposed Bradford ward, with polling districts CEA, CEH, CEG, CEE and CEF in the current Central ward. We also proposed transferring an area of the proposed City Centre ward to the east of Ballon Street, Bradshaw Street, Thomas Street, Hilton Street, Ashton Canal and Store Street, to the proposed Clayton Bridge ward in order to improve electoral equality in the area. While we noted the argumentation of the City Council regarding the high electoral variance of its proposed City Centre ward we were of the view that we could not justify such a high variance in such a densely populated area.

72 Under our draft proposals the proposed Bradford, City Centre, Clayton Bridge and Newton Heath wards would have 10% fewer, 44% fewer, 21% fewer and 6% more electors per councillor than the city average (4% fewer, 10% more, 6% fewer and 3% fewer in 2006).

73 At Stage Three the City Council expressed disappointment that we had not adopted its proposed City Centre ward and reiterated its Stage One arguments. It stated further that if The Committee were not to accept its arguments then the boundary of the City Centre ward should be amended so that the whole of the Piccadilly Village area be transferred into the proposed Clayton Bridge ward (which it proposed be renamed Ancoats & Clayton ward). It argued that the boundary along the Ashton Canal was a focus for the community rather than a barrier. It also proposed that the proposed Newton Heath ward be renamed Miles Platting & Newton Heath arguing that both of its ward name changes would better reflect the composite communities.

74 It proposed a number of boundary amendments across the area but did not provide detailed argumentation. However, it stated that its alternative proposals would not divide the Miles Platting area. Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats supported the proposed Clayton Bridge and Newton Heath wards.

75 Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives supported our proposals in this area. Councillor Ramsbottom, in a submission co-signed by Councillor Clayton, stated that they were concerned that our proposals split the Miles Platting area. They also proposed that the boundary between the proposed Clayton Bridge and City Centre wards be amended so that the whole of the Piccadilly Village be contained within the proposed Clayton Bridge ward. The Community Network objected to our proposals in the area and proposed a ward that would include the whole of the Miles Platting and Ancoats areas. They also stated that the proposed Clayton Bridge ward should include the name Ancoats and that the proposed Newton Heath ward name should also include the names Ancoats and Miles Platting. The Newton Heath Partnership supported our proposals for the Newton Heath area. Smithfields Tenants & Residents Association objected to our proposals in the area and proposed that the area remain as part of a city centre ward. They also stated that the proposed Clayton Bridge ward name did not include the name Ancoats. A local resident fully supported the City Council's Stage One proposals for the area.

76 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We have again considered the City Council's original proposal for the city centre area and the objections of Smithfields Tenants & residents Association but remain of the view that we could not justify an electoral variance of 15% by 2006 and can only have regard for electoral projections up to this point. However, we note the proposals of the City Council and of Councillor Ramsbottom for the Piccadilly Village area and have been convinced by the argumentation received that the canal is a focus for the community rather than dividing it. Therefore we propose that the Piccadilly area be wholly contained within the proposed Clayton Bridge ward. We have also considered the City Council's proposals in the remainder of the area but note that it did not provide any detailed argumentation as to why we should amend our draft recommendations. We have considered the proposal of The Community Network in the area for a ward that would include the whole of the Miles Platting and Ancoats areas. However, we cannot view any area in isolation and must consider our proposals for the area as a whole. We do however propose adopting a number of the proposed ward name changes, as we consider that these better reflect the areas that the wards cover. Under these proposals, Newton Heath ward would become Miles Platting & Newton Heath ward and Clayton Bridge ward would become Ancoats & Clayton ward.

77 Under our final recommendations the proposed Ancoats & Clayton, Bradford, City Centre, and Miles Platting & Newton Heath wards would have 21% fewer, 10% fewer, 44% fewer and 6% more electors per councillor than the city average (equal to, 4% fewer, 5% more and 3% fewer electors per councillor than the city average in 2006).

Blackley, Charlestown, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Lightbowne and Moston wards

78 These seven wards are located in the north of the city. Blackley, Charlestown, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Lightbowne and Moston wards currently have 14% fewer, 8% fewer, 3% fewer, 2% fewer, 20% fewer, 14% fewer and 1% fewer electors per councillor than the city average (19% fewer, 6% fewer, 4% fewer, 6% fewer, 26% fewer, 28% fewer and 1% fewer in 2006).

79 At Stage One the City Council proposed a reconfigured Cheetham ward with the addition of the area of the current Harpurhey ward west of Rochdale Road, south of Harpurhey Road. It proposed that the remainder of the current Harpurhey ward be combined with that area of the current Lightbowne ward to the west of Thorp Road, Kenyon Lane and Worseley Avenue to form a revised Harpurhey ward. Its proposed Moston ward would comprise the remainder of the current Harpurhey ward and that part of the current Moston ward to the south of Nuthurst Road and east of Broadway. It proposed that the remainder of the current Moston ward be combined with that part of the current Charlestown ward to the east of Rochdale Road to form a revised Charlestown ward. It proposed that the area to the west of Rochdale Road and to the north of Old Market Street in the current Charlestown ward be combined with the current Blackley ward and an area of the current Crumpsall ward to the north and east of the river to form a new Higher Blackley ward. It proposed that the majority of the current Crumpsall ward less the area to be transferred to the proposed Higher Blackley ward be maintained with the addition of the area of the current Charlestown ward to the south of Old Market Street to form a revised Crumpsall ward.

80 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We noted the good levels of electoral equality secured under the City Council's proposals and therefore proposed basing our draft recommendations upon them. However, we proposed a number of amendments to its scheme in order to better reflect local community identity. We noted the similarities in the proposals of the City Council and Councillor Lyons for the proposed Higher Blackley ward and considered that the City Council's proposals in the south of the ward slightly better reflected community identity in the area than those of Councillor Lyons. Therefore we proposed to adopt the City Council's proposed Higher Blackley ward as part of our draft recommendations. We also propose adopting the City Council's proposed Crumpsall ward as we consider that it better reflects the statutory criteria than the current arrangements.

81 We proposed to largely adopt the City Council's proposed Cheetham and Harpurhey wards. However, we proposed transferring the area to the west of Rochdale Road, south of Harpurhey ward, from its proposed Cheetham ward to its proposed Harpurhey ward as we considered the area to have better links with the proposed Harpurhey ward. We also noted that under the City Council's proposals the area to the east of the railway line in its proposed Charlestown ward would be isolated from the remainder of the ward. Therefore we proposed that the area be transferred to its proposed Moston ward with which we considered it to share better community links. However, in order to facilitate this proposal, it was necessary to transfer an area of the proposed Moston ward to the proposed Charlestown ward. Therefore we proposed that the area to the north of Moston Lane and Brookside Road be transferred to the proposed Charlestown ward as we considered that this would better reflect the statutory criteria in the area.

82 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Charlestown, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Higher Blackley and Moston wards would have 2% fewer, 4% fewer, equal to, 16% more, 4% more and 6% more electors per councillor than the city average (5% fewer, 6% fewer, 1% fewer, 2% more, 2% fewer and 1% more in 2006).

83 At Stage Three the City Council stated that it had no objections or representations to make regarding the area. Manchester Liberal Democrat Group & Manchester City Liberal Democrats supported the submission of Blackley Constituency Liberal Democrats. Greater Manchester (West) Conservatives supported our proposals in this area.

84 Manchester Blackley Liberal Democrats supported our proposed Charlestown, Harpurhey and Moston wards. However, they argued that the Collyhurst area remained divided and proposed that the area to the north of the railway line and south of Rochdale Road and Collyhurst Road in the current Central ward be transferred to the proposed Cheetham ward. They proposed that the revised ward be renamed Cheetham & Collyhurst. They also proposed that the whole of Blackley Village be contained within the proposed Crumpsall ward arguing that our proposals would divide a distinct community. They proposed that the boundary be amended to run from the junction of Rochdale Road and Lion Brow, along the properties in Ridge Walk to the junction of Hill Lane and Lion Fold Lane. The boundary would then run along the centre of Hill Lane and between the properties numbered 43 and 45, then along the rear of the properties in Fotherby Drive and along the side of properties 2 – 4 on French Barn Lane. They proposed that it should then run to the rear of Chapel Lane, Pike Fold school and Chapelhill Drive, along Surrey Street and finally to the River Irk. It stated that, in order to compensate for the electors being transferred to the proposed Crumpsall ward, the electors in the Bowker Vale area to the north of the railway station be transferred to the proposed Higher Blackley ward. They argued that its main links were with the Higher Blackley area and that the Metrolink line divided the area from the remainder of the proposed Crumpsall ward.

85 Manchester Blackley Liberal Association also proposed that the whole of Blackley Village be included within the proposed Crumpsall ward and proposed that the boundary between the proposed Higher Blackley and Crumpsall wards follow the River Irk, then along the centre of Blackley New Road to Middleton Road and the city boundary. They also made identical proposals as those of Manchester Blackley Liberal Democrats for the Collyhurst area but stated that the ward should be renamed Cheetham & Collyhurst whether we adopted their proposals or not. Crumpsall Liberal Democrats made identical proposals to those of Manchester Blackley Liberal Democrats.

86 Moston Fields Residents Association objected to our proposals to transfer the area from Nunfield Road to Brookside Road to the proposed Charlestown ward. They argued that the area formed a homogenous community and that the two residents associations in the area often co-operate on issues such as bids for area improvement. They also stated that the area shares an identity with Upper Moston. They therefore proposed that the area remain as part of Moston ward.

87 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three and note the general consensus that Blackley Village be wholly contained within the proposed Crumpsall ward. We also note that this proposal has received local support and are therefore content to adopt this proposal as part of our final recommendations. We also note the support for the transfer of the Bowker Vale area to the proposed Higher Blackley ward and support the proposals of the Manchester Blackley Liberal Democrats which we consider to best maintain the local community area. We have also considered the proposals received regarding the Collyhurst area but have not been convinced by the argumentation received and note that the area is physically separate from the remainder of the proposed Cheetham ward. We have also considered the proposed ward name change but have not been sufficiently convinced that it would better reflect the ward or that it would receive local support.

88 We have also looked carefully at the proposals of Moston Fields Residents Association and note that transferring the area in question back to the proposed Charlestown ward would result in a poorer level of electoral equality in the proposed Charlestown ward by 2006. However, we have been sufficiently persuaded that the proposal would best reflect the statutory criteria as a whole and specifically would better reflect community identity in the area. Therefore we propose adopting their proposals in the area.

89 Under our final recommendations the proposed Charlestown, Cheetham, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Higher Blackley and Moston wards would have 7% fewer, 4% fewer, 2% more, 16% more, 2% more and 11% more electors per councillor than the city average (10% fewer, 6% fewer, 1% more, 2% more, 4% fewer and 6% more in 2006).

Electoral cycle

90 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all Metropolitan borough/cities have a system of elections by thirds.

Conclusions

91 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse those draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- We propose a boundary amendment between Higher Blackley and Crumpsall wards;
- We also propose boundary amendments between Charlestown ward to Moston ward and between Gorton South and Longsight wards;
- We also propose a number of ward name changes.

92 We conclude that, in Manchester:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 99 to 96;
- there should be 32 wards, one fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 32 of the existing wards should be modified.

93 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2001 and 2006 electorate figures.

Table 4: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	99	96	99	96
Number of wards	33	32	33	32
Average number of electors per councillor	3,184	3,284	3,252	3,353
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	19	5	22	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	10	2	12	0

94 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 19 to five, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the city average. This level of electoral equality would improve further by 2006, with no ward varying by more than 10% from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

Final recommendation

Manchester City Council should comprise 96 councillors serving 32 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

Map 2: Final recommendations for Manchester

6 What happens next?

95 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Manchester and submitted our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692).

96 It is now up to The Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 11 November 2003, and The Electoral Commission will normally consider all written representations made to them by that date. They particularly welcome any comments on the first draft of the Order, which will implement the new arrangements.

97 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

**The Secretary
The Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

Fax: 020 7271 0667

**Email: implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk
(This address should only be used for this purpose.)**

Appendix A

Final recommendations for Manchester: **Detailed mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Manchester area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the city.

The **large maps** illustrate the proposed warding arrangements for Manchester.

Map A1: Final recommendations for Manchester: Key map

Appendix B

Guide to interpreting the first draft of the electoral change Order

Preamble

This describes the process by which the Order will be made, and under which powers. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decide not to modify the Final recommendations.

Citation and commencement

This establishes the name of the Order and when it will come into force.

Interpretation

This defines terms that are used in the Order.

Wards of the city of Manchester

This abolishes the existing wards, and defines the names and areas of the new wards, in conjunction with the map and the schedule.

Elections of the council of the city of Manchester

This sets the date on which a whole council election will be held to implement the new wards, and the dates on which councillors will retire.

Maps

This requires Manchester City Council to make a print of the map available for public inspection.

Electoral registers

This requires the Council to adapt the electoral register to reflect the new wards.

Revocation

This revokes the Order that defines the existing wards, with the exception of the articles that established the system of election by thirds.

Explanatory Note

This explains the purpose of each article. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decide not to modify the Final recommendations.

Appendix C

First draft of electoral change Order for Manchester

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2003 No.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENGLAND

The City of Manchester (Electoral Changes) Order 2003

Made - - - - *2003*

Coming into force in accordance with article 1(2)

Whereas the Boundary Committee for England(**a**), acting pursuant to section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 1992(**b**), has submitted to the Electoral Commission(**c**) recommendations dated September 2003 on its review of the city(**d**) of Manchester:

And whereas the Electoral Commission have decided to give effect [with modifications] to those recommendations:

And whereas a period of not less than six weeks has expired since the receipt of those recommendations:

Now, therefore, the Electoral Commission, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by sections 17(**e**) and 26(**f**) of the Local Government Act 1992, and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby make the following Order:

Citation and commencement

- 1.—(1) This Order may be cited as the City of Manchester (Electoral Changes) Order 2003.
- (2) This Order shall come into force –
 - (a) for the purpose of proceedings preliminary or relating to any election to be held on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004, on the day after that on which it is made;

-
- (a) The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, established by the Electoral Commission in accordance with section 14 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (S.I. 2001/3962) transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Local Government Commission for England.
- (b) 1992 c.19. This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.
- (c) The Electoral Commission was established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The functions of the Secretary of State, under sections 13 to 15 and 17 of the Local Government Act 1992 (c.19), to the extent that they relate to electoral changes within the meaning of that Act, were transferred with modifications to the Electoral Commission on 1st April 2002 (S.I. 2001/3962).
- (d) The metropolitan district of Manchester has the status of a city.
- (e) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962 and also otherwise in ways not relevant to this Order.
- (f) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.

(b) for all other purposes, on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004.

Interpretation

2. In this Order –

“city” means the city of Manchester;

“existing”, in relation to a ward, means the ward as it exists on the date this Order is made; and

any reference to the map is a reference to the map marked “Map referred to in the City of Manchester (Electoral Changes) Order 2003”, of which prints are available for inspection at –

- (a) the principal office of the Electoral Commission; and
- (b) the offices of Manchester City Council.

Wards of the city of Manchester

3.—(1) The existing wards of the city(a) shall be abolished.

(2) The city shall be divided into thirty-two wards which shall bear the names set out in the Schedule.

(3) Each ward shall comprise the area designated on the map by reference to the name of the ward and demarcated by red lines; and the number of councillors to be elected for each ward shall be three.

(4) Where a boundary is shown on the map as running along a road, railway line, footway, watercourse or similar geographical feature, it shall be treated as running along the centre line of the feature.

Elections of the council of the city of Manchester

4.—(1) Elections of all councillors for all wards of the city shall be held simultaneously on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004(b)(c).

(2) The councillors holding office for any ward of the city immediately before the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004 shall retire on that date and the newly elected councillors for those wards shall come into office on that date.

(3) Of the councillors elected in 2004 one shall retire in 2006, one in 2007 and one in 2008.

(4) Of the councillors elected in 2004 –

- (a) the first to retire shall, subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), be the councillor elected by the smallest number of votes; and
- (b) the second to retire shall, subject to those paragraphs, be the councillor elected by the next smallest number of votes.

(5) In the case of an equality of votes between any persons elected which makes it uncertain which of them is to retire in any year, the person to retire in that year shall be determined by lot.

(6) If an election of councillors for any ward is not contested, the person to retire in each year shall be determined by lot.

(7) Where under this article any question is to be determined by lot, the lot shall be drawn at the next practicable meeting of the council after the question has arisen and the drawing shall be conducted under the direction of the person presiding at the meeting.

(a) See the City of Manchester (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1981 (S.I. 1981/284).

(b) Article 4 provides for a single election of all the councillors and for reversion to the system of election by thirds, as established by section 7 of the Local Government Act 1972 (c.70).

(c) For the ordinary day of election of councillors of local government areas, see section 37 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c.2), amended by section 18(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c.50) and section 17 of, and paragraphs 1 and 5 of Schedule 3 to, the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (c.29).

Maps

5. Manchester City Council shall make a print of the map marked “Map referred to in the City of Manchester (Electoral Changes) Order 2003” available for inspection at its offices by any member of the public at any reasonable time.

Electoral registers

6. The Electoral Registration Officer(a) for the city shall make such rearrangement of, or adaptation of, the register of local government electors as may be necessary for the purposes of, and in consequence of, this Order.

Revocation

7. The City of Manchester (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1981(b) is revoked, save for articles 8 and 9(7).

Sealed with the seal of the Electoral Commission on the day of 2003

Date

Name
Chairman of the Commission

Date

Name
Secretary to the Commission

SCHEDULE

article 3

NAMES OF WARDS

Ancoats and Clayton	Crumpsall	Miles Platting and Newton Heath
Ardwick	Didsbury East	Moss Side
Baguley	Didsbury West	Moston
Barlow Moor	Fallowfield	Northenden
Bradford	Gorton North	Old Moat
Brooklands	Gorton South	Rusholme
Burnage	Harpurhey	Sharston
Charlestown	Higher Blackley	Whalley Range
Cheetham	Hulme	Withington
Chorlton	Levenshulme	Woodhouse Park
City Centre	Longsight	

(a) As to electoral registration officers and the register of local government electors, *see* sections 8 to 13 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c.2).

(b) S.I. 1981/284.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order gives effect, [with modifications], to recommendations by the Boundary Committee for England, a committee of the Electoral Commission, for electoral changes in the city of Manchester.

The modifications are *indicate the modifications*.

The changes have effect in relation to local government elections to be held on and after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004.

Article 3 abolishes the existing wards of the city and provides for the creation of 32 new wards. That article and the Schedule also make provision for the names and areas of, and numbers of councillors for, the new wards.

Article 4 makes provision for a whole council election in 2004 and for reversion to the established system of election by thirds in subsequent years.

Article 6 obliges the Electoral Registration Officer to make any necessary amendments to the electoral register to reflect the new electoral arrangements.

Article 7 revokes the City of Manchester (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1981, with the exception of articles 8 and 9(7).

The areas of the new city wards are demarcated on the map described in article 2. Prints of the map may be inspected at all reasonable times at the offices of Manchester City Council and at the principal office of the Electoral Commission at Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW.