Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing on behalf of the Committee of the Rusholme & Fallowfield Civic Society to make a representation to the independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England regarding the draft proposals for new council ward boundaries: https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/8609.

Please note that the Civic Society has an active committee of nine, a membership database of 161, and works, on behalf of the residents of Rusholme and Fallowfield wards, on objectives that include:

a) To encourage the preservation, development and improvement of the features which go to make pleasing conditions in which to live and work.

b) To encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in the area.

We strongly object to the current proposals regarding the western boundary of the Rusholme Ward on the following grounds:

1. **Failure of the Manchester City Council and Rusholme Ward Councillors to consult with local groups, stakeholders and residents to provide evidence about community interactions, geographical features and local circumstances to help draw up new ward boundaries, to accommodate the 96 councillors.** Whilst we acknowledge that a ‘passive’ approach was used to allow local groups, stakeholders and residents to become aware of the consultation, ie, placing a notification on the Council’s website, no ‘proactive’ approaches were made to consult with local groups, stakeholders and residents to provide evidence about community interactions, geographical features and local circumstances to help draw up new ward boundaries. With regard to the Rusholme Ward, there are at least four local groups representing stakeholders and residents in, or near to, the Rusholme District Centre, not one of which was proactively consulted by the Council or by Rusholme Councillors, during the specified consultation periods, to provide evidence about community interactions, geographical features and local circumstances to help draw up new ward boundaries. These four local groups are: ourselves - the Rusholme and Fallowfield Civic Society, the Rusholme Business Association, the Rusholme Community Traders Association and the Platt Claremont Residents’ Association.

2. **The total inappropriateness of splitting the “world famous” ‘curry mile’, ie, the Rusholme District Centre, right down the middle by moving the western boundary of the Rusholme ward eastwards so it runs down the middle of the Wilmslow Road.** For as long as local people can remember, the whole of the Rusholme District Centre (see attached map) has been included, with a wide margin, within the Rusholme Ward, and has therefore been the responsibility of one Ward’s Councillors, one set of Council Officers, one Greater Manchester Police...
beat area, and, more recently, one NHS Health and Wellbeing Service, and possibly other public services that we, as a Civic Society, aren’t aware of. This geographical coverage has been totally about community interactions, geographical features and local circumstances. The residents living in the area bordering both sides of the Rusholme District Centre enjoy access to the same District Centre and suffer from the same, heightened, challenges of parking, litter, fly-tipping, noise pollution, air pollution and antisocial behaviour, and so it is totally appropriate that just one set of Councillors, one set of Council Officers and one set of Public Sector partners should be responsible for understanding and resolving the problems in and around the Rusholme District Centre.

3. The unique cultural nature of the Rusholme District Centre. The Rusholme District Centre lies at the centre of a wonderfully diverse community, so much so that the Rusholme District Centre plays host to a number of key cultural events such as Eid, Ashura, Pakistani Independence Day, etc. These events involve processions down Wilmslow Road, through the Rusholme District Centre, that attract visitors from Manchester, Greater Manchester, and an even wider area. These cultural events have a significant impact on traffic flows, pedestrian volumes, parking, safety and security issues, etc, on both sides of the Rusholme District Centre, for several streets back from the Wilmslow Road. If ever there were community interactions, geographical features and local circumstances that demanded that a particular area should be contained within one Ward’s boundaries, then these are they.

4. We are aware of, and fully support, the representation made by the Platt Claremont Residents’ Association. That is: “The PCRA has great concerns regarding the recommended proposals to split the District Centre between Moss Side and Rusholme. The mixed commercial and residential precinct presents enormous challenges to local authority managers in terms of poor waste mismanagement, building control infringements, licensing breaches, parking violations, unauthorised street traders, vagrancy, crime and anti social behaviour. We feel that splitting the management of the District Centre between the Rusholme and Moss Side Wards introduces an unnecessary level of confusion and demarcation that undermines effective enforcement and robust management. We recommend that the District Centre remains cohesive and under the supervision one ward management and delivery team.”.

For the above reasons, we request that the Local Government Boundary Commission for England rejects the Rusholme Ward western boundary currently proposed for April 2018 and instead reinstates it to its existing position, ie, south down Wilmslow Road to Great Western Street, west to a line south taking in Parkfield Street to Platt Lane, then east to Wilmslow Road, as per the attached Rusholme Ward Map.

I cannot stress strongly enough how much local feeling there is that the current western Rusholme ward boundary should be retained for 2018 and beyond.

If you require any further information, please contact me via [Contact Information]

Yours faithfully

Sue

Sue Devlin
Hon Secretary, Rusholme and Fallowfield Civic Society

https://rfcivicsociety.wordpress.com/