

LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON THE FUTURE  
ELECTORAL  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR  
CHESTER  
IN CHESHIRE

*Report to the Secretary of State for the  
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

*March 1998*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Chester in Cheshire.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)

Helena Shovelton (Deputy Chairman)

Peter Brokenshire

Professor Michael Clarke

Robin Gray

Bob Scruton

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Mike Bailey (Acting Chief Executive)

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## Local Government Commission for England

31 March 1998

Dear Secretary of State

On 3 June 1997, the Commission began a periodic electoral review of the City of Chester under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in December 1997 and undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraph 90) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in Chester.

We recommend that Chester City Council should be served by 60 councillors representing 31 wards, and that changes should be made to ward boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria. We recommend that elections should continue to take place by thirds.

I would like to thank members and officers of the City Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT  
Chairman



# SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Chester on 3 June 1997. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 2 December 1997, after which we undertook a nine-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we have received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Chester because:

- **in 15 of the 27 wards, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the district, and six wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **there is unlikely to be any improvement in electoral equality by 2002.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figure 1 and paragraph 95) are that:

- **Chester City Council should continue to be served by 60 councillors;**
- **there should be 31 wards, compared with 27 at present;**
- **the boundaries of 25 wards should be modified, while two wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

These recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each district councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In all but four of the 31 wards, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the district average, with no wards varying by more than 20 per cent.**
- **This improved electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in 27 of the 31 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the district by 2002.**

Recommendations are also made for changes to parish council electoral arrangements. They provide for:

- **revised warding arrangements for Upton-by-Chester Parish Council.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an Order implementing the Commission's recommendations before 12 May 1998:

**The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Review  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU**

*Figure 1:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1 Barrow	1	Barrow ward (part – the parishes of Barrow, Horton-cum-Peel and Mouldsworth); Elton ward (part – the parishes of Dunham-on-the-Hill and Hapsford)	Map 2
2 Blacon Hall (in Chester)	3	Blacon Hall ward; Dee Point ward (part)	Large map
3 Blacon Lodge (in Chester)	3	Dee Point ward (part); Sealand ward (part)	Large map
4 Boughton (in Chester)	2	Boughton ward (part); College ward (part)	Large map
5 Boughton Heath (in Chester)	2	Boughton ward (part); Boughton Heath ward (part – South ward of Great Boughton parish)	Large map
6 Christleton	2	Christleton ward (part – the parishes of Christleton, Guilden Sutton and Littleton)	Map 2
7 City & St Anne's (in Chester)	2	College ward (part); Curzon ward (part – including Chester Castle parish); Grosvenor ward (part); Sealand ward (part)	Large map
8 Curzon & Westminster (in Chester)	2	Curzon ward (part); Westminster ward (part)	Large map
9 Dodleston	1	Dodleston ward (part – the parishes of Aldford, Buerton, Churton Heath, Dodleston, Eaton, Eccleston, Lea Newbold, Lower Kinnerton, Poulton and Pulford); Grosvenor ward (part – the parish of Claverton); Westminster ward (part – the parish of Marlston-cum-Lache)	Map 2
10 Elton	2	Elton ward (part – the parishes of Elton and Thornton-le-Moors); Mollington ward (part – the parishes of Croughton, Little Stanney, Stoke and Wervin)	Map 2
11 Farndon	1	Farndon ward (part – the parishes of Churton by Aldford, Churton by Farndon, Crewe, Edgerley, Farndon and Kings Marsh)	Map 2
12 Handbridge & St Mary's (in Chester)	2	Grosvenor ward (part)	Large map

Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
13	Hoole All Saints (in Chester)	2	Hoole ward (part)	Large map
14	Hoole Groves (in Chester)	2	Hoole ward (part); Plas Newton ward (part)	Large map
15	Huntington (in Chester)	1	Boughton Heath ward (part – the parish of Huntington)	Large map
16	Kelsall	2	Barrow ward (part – the parishes of Ashton and Kelsall)	Map 2
17	Malpas	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Agden, Bickley, Bradley, Chorlton, Chidlow, Cuddington, Edge, Hampton, Larkton, Macefen, Malpas, Newton-by-Malpas, Oldcastle, Overton, Stockton, Threapwood, Tushingham-cum-Grindley, Wigland and Wychough)	Map 2
18	Mickle Trafford	1	Elton ward (part – the parishes of Bridge Trafford, Hoole Village, Mickle Trafford, Picton and Wimbolds Trafford)	Map 2
19	Mollington	1	Mollington ward (part – the parishes of Backford, Capenhurst, Caughall, Chorlton-by-Backford, Lea, Ledsham, Mollington and Moston)	Map 2
20	Newton Brook (in Chester)	2	Newton ward (part)	Large map
21	Park (in Chester)	3	Curzon ward (part); Westminster ward (part)	Large map
22	Plas Newton (in Chester)	2	Newton ward (part); Plas Newton ward (part)	Large map
23	Saughall	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Puddington, Saughall, Shotwick, Shotwick Park and Woodbank)	Map 2
24	Sealand (in Chester)	3	College ward (part); Curzon ward (part); Dee Point ward (part); Sealand ward (part)	Large map

*continued overleaf*

*Figure 1 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
25 Tarvin	2	Barrow ward (part – the parish of Willington); Tarvin ward (the parishes of Bruen Stapleford, Burton, Clotton, Cotton Edmunds, Duddon, Foulk Stapleford, Hockenhull, Huxley, Iddinshall, Prior's Hey and Tarvin)	Map 2
26 Tattenhall	2	Dodleston ward (part – the parish of Saighton); Tattenhall ward (part - the parishes of Beeston, Burwardsley, Chowley, Golborne David, Golborne Bellow, Handley, Newton-by-Tattenhall, Tattenhall, Tilstone Fearnall and Tiverton); Waverton ward (part – the parish of Hatton)	Map 2
27 Tilston	1	Farndon ward (part – the parishes of Barton and Coddington); Tattenhall ward (part – the parish of Aldersey); Tilston ward (the parishes of Broxton, Caldecott, Carden, Church Stocklach, Clutton, Duckington, Grafton, Harthill, Horton, Shocklach Oviatt, Stretton and Tilston)	Map 2
28 Upton Grange (in Chester)	3	Upton Grange ward (including the parish of Bache; Upton Grange and Upton Heath wards (part) of Upton-by-Chester parish); Newton ward (part – including Upton Park ward of Upton-by-Chester parish)	Large map
29 Upton Westlea (in Chester)	2	Upton Heath ward (part – Upton Heath ward of Upton-by-Chester parish (part))	Large map
30 Vicars Cross (in Chester)	3	Boughton ward (part); Vicars Cross ward (North ward of Great Boughton parish)	Large map
31 Waverton	1	Christleton ward (part – the parish of Rowton); Waverton ward (part – the parishes of Cotton Abbots and Waverton)	Map 2

*Note: The urban area of Chester is the only part of the district that is unparished (except Chester Castle).*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Chester City in Cheshire.

2 In undertaking these reviews, we have had regard to:

- the statutory criteria in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992; and
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

3 We have also had regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (published in March 1996 and supplemented in September 1996), which sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 3 June 1997, when we invited proposals for the future electoral arrangements from Chester City Council, and copied the letter to Cheshire County Council, Cheshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, the County Palatine of Chester Association of Parish Councils, parish councils in the district, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the district, and the headquarters of the main political parties. At the start of the review and following publication of our draft recommendations, we published a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the City Council to publicise the review more widely. The closing date for receipt of representations was 1 September 1997. At Stage Two, we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

5 Stage Three began on 2 December 1997 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Chester in Cheshire* and ended on 2 February 1998. Comments

were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.



## 2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

6 Chester City covers much of the west of Cheshire, encompassing an area of some 45,000 hectares. It is bounded by Wales to the west, the county of Shropshire to the south and the districts of Vale Royal, Crewe & Nantwich and Ellesmere Port & Neston to the north and east. The historic city of Chester, which originated as a Roman fortress almost 2,000 years ago, is the principal settlement and main administrative centre, and is surrounded by a substantial and predominantly rural hinterland. The district has a population in excess of 120,000, and a total of 119 parishes.

7 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards 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 has been calculated. In the report this calculation may also be described as 'electoral variance'.

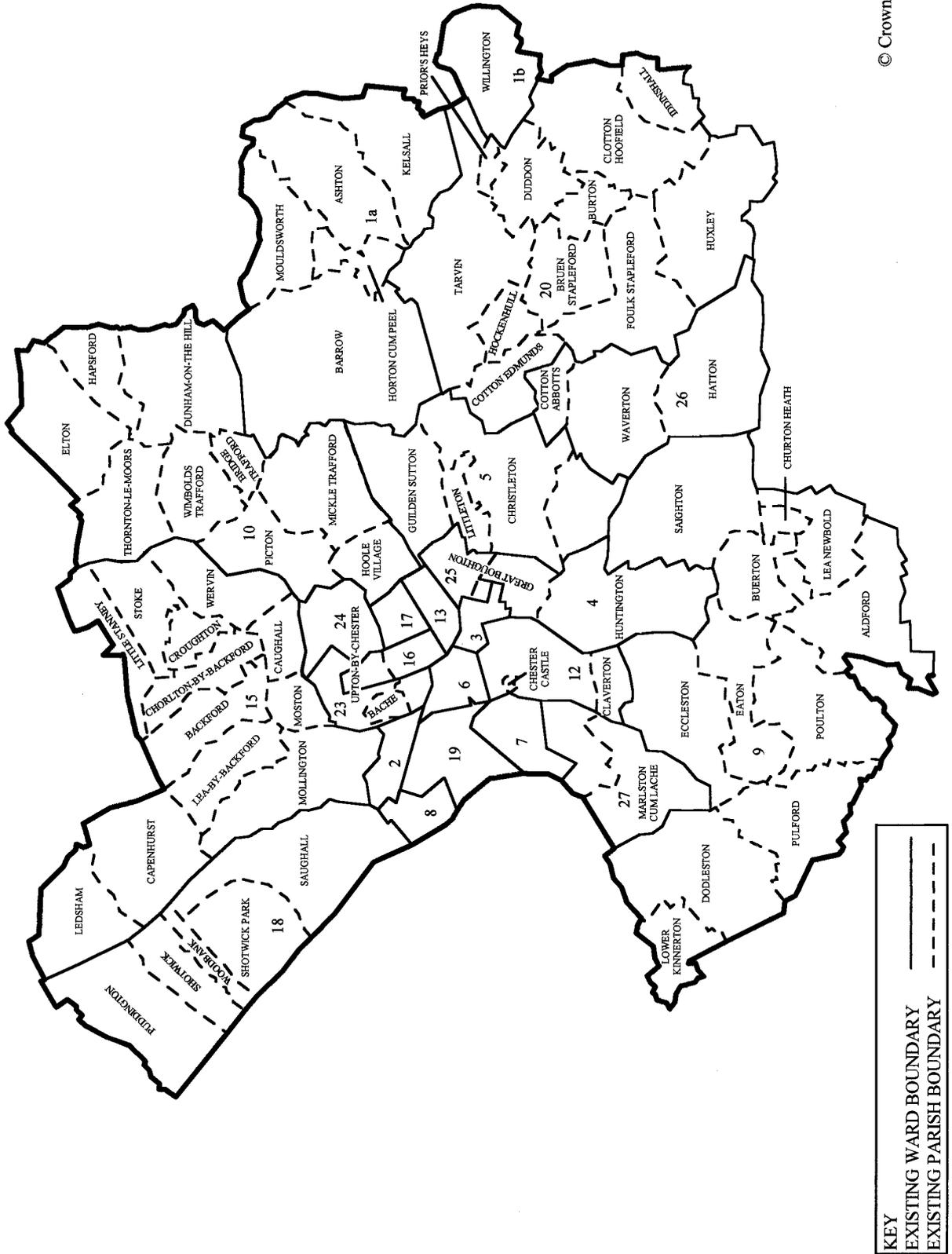
8 The electorate of the district (February 1997) is 95,588. The Council presently has 60 councillors who are elected from 27 wards, 15 of whom represent the urban area and 12 the rural area (Map 1 and Figure 2). Eleven of the 27 wards are represented by three councillors, 11 wards are represented by two councillors, while the remaining five are represented by a single councillor. The Council is elected by thirds.

9 Since the last electoral review was completed in 1980, there has been an increase in population in the district, with around 11 per cent more electors than two decades ago. There has been significant growth over the last 20 years, in particular the Great Boughton area of Chester, and the villages of Kelsall and Elton. In the next five years, growth is expected in the centre and the west of the city.

10 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,593 electors, which the City Council forecasts will increase to 1,617 by the year 2002. However, due to demographic and other changes

over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 15 of the 27 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average and in six wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Elton ward in which the number of electors per councillor is 57 per cent more than the district average.

Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Chester



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Map 1:  
Existing Wards in Chester



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Key to Wards

- 1a Barrow
- 1b Barrow (det)
- 2 Blacon Hall
- 3 Boughton
- 4 Boughton Heath
- 5 Christleton
- 6 College
- 7 Curzon
- 8 Dee Point
- 9 Dodleston
- 10 Elton
- 11 Farndon
- 12 Grosvenor
- 13 Hoole
- 14 Malpas
- 15 Mollington
- 16 Newton
- 17 Plas Newton
- 18 Saughall
- 19 Sealand
- 20 Tarvin
- 21 Tattenhall
- 22 Tilston
- 23 Upton Grange
- 24 Upton Heath
- 25 Vicars Cross
- 26 Waverton
- 27 Westminster

Figure 2:  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Barrow	2	3,983	1,992	25	4,010	2,005	24
2 Blacon Hall (in Chester)	3	4,130	1,377	-14	4,113	1,371	-15
3 Boughton (in Chester)	2	2,710	1,355	-15	2,706	1,353	-16
4 Boughton Heath (in Chester)	2	4,621	2,311	45	4,624	2,312	43
5 Christleton	2	3,867	1,934	21	3,859	1,930	19
6 College (in Chester)	3	5,421	1,807	13	5,748	1,916	19
7 Curzon (in Chester)	2	2,955	1,478	-7	2,951	1,476	-9
8 Dee Point (in Chester)	3	4,283	1,428	-10	4,257	1,419	-12
9 Dodleston	1	1,683	1,683	6	1,748	1,748	8
10 Elton	2	4,996	2,498	57	5,143	2,572	59
11 Farndon	1	1,734	1,734	9	1,751	1,751	8
12 Grosvenor (in Chester)	3	4,412	1,471	-8	4,423	1,474	-9
13 Hoole (in Chester)	3	4,870	1,623	2	4,846	1,615	0
14 Malpas	2	3,187	1,594	0	3,239	1,620	0
15 Mollington	1	1,995	1,995	25	2,024	2,024	25
16 Newton (in Chester)	3	4,106	1,369	-14	4,083	1,361	-16
17 Plas Newton (in Chester)	3	3,657	1,219	-23	3,694	1,231	-24
18 Saughall	2	3,018	1,509	-5	3,042	1,521	-6
19 Sealand (in Chester)	3	4,014	1,338	-16	4,188	1,396	-14

Figure 2 (continued):  
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
20 Tarvin	2	3,363	1,682	6	3,377	1,689	4
21 Tattenhall	2	2,687	1,344	-16	2,736	1,368	-15
22 Tilston	1	1,423	1,423	-11	1,461	1,461	-10
23 Upton Grange (in Chester)	2	3,316	1,658	4	3,625	1,813	12
24 Upton Heath (in Chester)	3	4,056	1,352	-15	4,062	1,354	-16
25 Vicars Cross (in Chester)	3	4,282	1,427	-10	4,424	1,475	-9
26 Waverton	1	1,472	1,472	-8	1,466	1,466	-9
27 Westminster (in Chester)	3	5,347	1,782	12	5,396	1,799	11
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>95,588</b>	—	—	<b>96,998</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,593</b>	—	—	<b>1,617</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Chester City Council's submission.

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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, electors in Plas Newton ward were relatively over-represented by 23 per cent, while electors in Elton ward were relatively under-represented by 57 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

<sup>11</sup> During Stage One, we received a representation from Chester City Council on electoral arrangements for the whole city. We also received <sup>22</sup> other representations, including submissions from the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups on the City Council and seven parish councils. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in the report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Chester in Cheshire*. We proposed that:

- (a) Chester City Council should be served by 60 councillors representing 31 wards;
- (b) the boundaries of 25 of the existing wards should be modified, while two wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- (c) there should be revised warding arrangements for Upton-by-Chester Parish Council.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Chester City Council should comprise 60 councillors, serving 31 wards. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

<sup>12</sup> Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 28 of the 31 wards varying by no more than 10 per cent from the city average. This level of electoral equality was expected to be maintained over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average in 27 wards by 2002.

<sup>13</sup> Our draft recommendations are summarised at Appendix B.



## 4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

14 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report, 210 representations were received. In addition, we received a petition with a total of 497 signatures. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission's offices.

### **Chester City Council**

15 The City Council accepted the majority of the Commission's recommendations, although it proposed modifications in certain cases. The Council proposed modifications to boundaries in three areas in the urban area of Chester. Firstly, it proposed to modify the boundaries of our proposed City & St Anne's and Sealand wards, arguing that properties in the triangle formed by Parkgate Road, Liverpool Road and the Shotton to Mickle Trafford railway line have only limited access from Parkgate Road, and may become isolated as a result of their inclusion in the City & St Anne's ward. The Council argued that Victoria Road would be a more appropriate boundary in this case. Secondly, the Council proposed a modification to the boundary between Boughton and Boughton Heath wards, stating that this alteration to the Commission's recommendation would make the ward boundary more identifiable, while at the same time improving the level of electoral equality in both wards. Thirdly, it proposed a minor modification between Newton and Upton Mill wards, to ensure that all the properties on Upton Park are contained within the same district ward.

16 The City Council also considered that modifications should be made to three of our proposed wards in the rural area of the district. The Council considered that as a result of the close community ties between the parish of Huxley and the other parishes in the existing Tarvin ward, the parish should remain part of Tarvin ward, rather than be included in Tattenhall ward as we proposed in our draft recommendations. Although, as the Council pointed out, this modification would lead to a slightly worse level of electoral equality in both

wards, it argued that local views and community identity were adequate justification. Similarly, the Council also proposed that the parish of Cotton Abbots should remain in Waverton ward, rather than be transferred to Tarvin ward as proposed in our draft recommendations.

17 The Council also supported the alternative proposals for changes to parish council electoral arrangements as submitted by Upton-by-Chester Parish Council, and also supported the parish council's proposals that the district wards of Upton Mill and Upton St James be known as Upton Grange and Upton Westlea instead. The Council also proposed a name change for our proposed ward of Hoole East to Hoole Groves, and Hoole Park to Hoole All Saints.

### **Chester City Council Conservative Group**

18 Chester City Council Conservative Group ('the Conservatives') also accepted the majority of the Commission's recommendations for the district. However, as with the City Council's submission, they also proposed a number of modifications. In relation to the urban area of Chester, the Conservatives also argued that Liverpool Road was not the most suitable boundary between our proposed wards of City & St Anne's and Sealand, stating that to use Liverpool Road "would divide a community and a Conservation Area". The Conservatives supported the use of Parkgate Road as this boundary, as proposed by the City Council at Stage One.

19 The Conservatives also objected to our proposals for the area of the district currently covered by the Curzon and Westminster wards. In particular, they argued that the Lache estate and Boundary Park areas are physically separate from one another, that there are few, if any, community ties between the two areas, and that they share few of the same characteristics. In view of these factors, in addition to the high level of response to our

proposals, the Conservatives objected to our draft recommendations. They proposed that a new Lache Park ward should be represented by two councillors and that a new Curzon Park & Westminster ward should include the Boundary Park area and be represented by three councillors, although they did not detail the boundaries of the proposed wards.

20 In addition to these modifications in the urban area, the Conservatives also proposed different arrangements for the rural area. They argued that the parish of Huxley should remain in Tarvin ward, so ensuring the maintenance of the close links the parish has with the existing ward, and in particular with the neighbouring parish of Foulk Stapleford. The Conservatives also objected to the transfer of the parishes of Aldersey and Coddington from Tattenhall and Farndon wards respectively. They argued that the transfer of Aldersey from Tattenhall to Tilston ward would “further reduce the population of Tattenhall [ward] to undesirable levels”, while also stating the transfer of Coddington parish from Farndon to Tilston ward would “achieve no desirable end without the transfer of Aldersey parish”.

## **Chester City Council Labour Group**

21 Chester City Council Labour Group accepted “almost entirely” the modifications to the City Council’s proposals which we had introduced in our draft recommendations report. However, in supporting our recommendations for the new ward of Lache Park, the Labour Group expressed concern at the alternative proposal for the area, and argued that adding the Boundary Park area to our Curzon Park & Westminster ward (as proposed by the petition we received from the area) would “reinforce the isolation and stigma of the Lache estate”. The Labour Group also expressed reservations as to the level of information provided to local residents with regard to the survey carried out in the area during Stage Three.

## **Chester City Council Liberal Democrat Group**

22 Chester City Council Liberal Democrat Group (‘the Liberal Democrats’) stated that they generally supported the Commission’s draft recommendations,

but also proposed some minor modifications to ward boundaries as part of their submission. In relation to Chester itself, the Liberal Democrats proposed modifications to our proposed City & St Anne’s and Sealand wards. They proposed that the part of the proposed City & St Anne’s ward which lies to the north of the Shotton to Mickle Trafford railway line should form a single-member Abbot’s Park ward, and that the remainder should form a two-member City & St Anne’s ward. The Liberal Democrats argued that there is no community of interest between these two areas of our proposed ward, and that their proposed boundaries would make it easier for the wards to reflect natural communities.

23 The Liberal Democrats supported the City Council’s proposal that Victoria Road should form the boundary between Sealand and City & St Anne’s wards rather than Liverpool Road. They argued that this would mean that the whole of the Liverpool Road Conservation Area would be contained within Sealand ward and would “maintain the integrity of the natural communities”. The Liberal Democrats also proposed that Hoole East, Hoole Park, Newton, Plas Newton, Sealand and Upton Mill be renamed as Hoole Groves, Hoole All Saints, Newton Brook, Newton St Michaels, College and Upton Grange wards respectively. They also supported the City Council’s proposal for a boundary modification between Boughton and Boughton Heath wards.

24 In the rural area of the district, the Liberal Democrats largely supported our draft recommendations, although they proposed that the parishes of Coddington and Barton should remain in Farndon ward rather than be transferred to Tilston ward, and that the parish of Cotton Abbots, as an integral part of the Waverton community, should remain part of a revised Waverton ward.

## **Parish Councils**

25 We received a total of six representations from parish councils. Coddington & District Parish Council expressed concern that our recommendation that the parishes of Coddington and Aldersey be transferred from Farndon and Tattenhall wards to Tilston ward may mean that the councillor for the ward would have a very large area

to cover. Kelsall Parish Council welcomed the creation of a two-member ward for the parishes of Kelsall and Ashton, although it also supported the inclusion of Willington parish in the new ward.

<sup>26</sup> Both Huxley and Foulk Stapleford parish councils opposed our recommendation to transfer Huxley parish from Tarvin ward to Tattenhall ward. Huxley Parish Council, in a submission echoed by Foulk Stapleford Parish Council, argued that the community ties of the two parishes lay with each other, and that not transferring the parish would have a negligible impact on the level of electoral equality in both wards. Tarvin Parish Council expressed support for no change in relation to Tarvin ward, stating that the present electorate of the ward made any change unnecessary.

<sup>27</sup> Upton-by-Chester Parish Council supported our recommendations for changes to the two city wards in the area, although it proposed that Upton Mill and Upton St James wards should be known as Upton Grange and Upton Westlea instead. The Parish Council also proposed alternative electoral arrangements for the parish itself. The Chester Area Meeting of the Cheshire Association of Town & Parish Councils supported the additional seats allocated to the rural area and the creation of new single-member wards for Huntington and Mickle Trafford.

## **Other Representations**

<sup>28</sup> We received almost 200 submissions from local groups, councillors and residents. Of those, the large majority commented on the warding structure for the south-west corner of the urban area of Chester. We received a joint submission from the five district councillors who currently represent the two wards that cover this area (Curzon and Westminster wards). This submission argued that the Lache area's community ties cover a wider area than just the council estate, and that our draft recommendations would not only recognise this, but also unite the whole of the Lache area in the same district ward for the first time. We also received four representations from residents of the area in support of our recommendation for a new ward of Lache Park, as well as one from County Councillor David Robinson.

<sup>29</sup> We also received a further 140 representations from residents of this area, who were opposed to our recommendations for new wards of Lache Park and Curzon Park & Westminster. Opinion among these respondents was divided as to the most appropriate alternative to our draft recommendations between those who wished for no change in this area of the district, those who supported a single-member ward for the 'Boundary Park' area, those who supported the inclusion of the Boundary Park area in a new Curzon Park & Westminster ward, and those who gave no preference. Many respondents argued that there was little or no shared identity between the Lache estate and other areas proposed to be included in the new Lache Park ward, while others stated that the needs of the two areas were very different and that this should be reflected in the warding arrangements. We also received the results of a survey carried out in the Boundary Park area, in which 460 signatories wished to be included in the Curzon Park & Westminster ward, nine in the Lache Park ward and six in a single-member ward (although no precise boundaries were defined as part of this survey).

<sup>30</sup> Elsewhere in the urban area of the district, we received a total of 18 representations, including from County Councillors Mrs Sue Proctor and Colin Bain and the Newry Park Residents' Association, supporting the division of our proposed City & St Anne's ward. As with the Liberal Democrats' submission, these respondents argued that the Abbot's Park area north of the Shotton to Mickle Trafford railway line should form a single-member ward, as it is separate and distinct from the city centre, and has few community ties with it. Some respondents also argued that the demands of the city centre area may come to dominate the proposed ward at the expense of the Abbot's Park area.

<sup>31</sup> We also received four representations in support of a realignment of the boundary between Vicars Cross and Boughton wards, arguing that the area of Vicars Cross ward south of the Shropshire Union Canal more properly belongs with the Boughton area. Councillor Mrs Sue Proctor, the county councillor for Boughton & Vicars Cross division, proposed modifications to the boundaries to Vicars Cross, Boughton and Boughton Heath wards.

32 Chester Community Ratepayers' Party argued against wholesale changes to ward boundaries. It argued that College ward should remain unchanged but be renamed St Oswalds, and that this area had no affinity with Sealand ward. It also opposed combining Abbot's Park with part of College ward, and suggested no change to the current Upton Grange ward. It also suggested that we should consider increasing the number of councillors for the district.

33 We received six further representations opposing our draft recommendation to separate the parishes of Huxley and Foulk Stapleford, which contains the village of Hargrave, arguing that to separate the parishes would endanger the community ties that exist between them. Elsewhere in the rural area of the district, County Councillor Neil Fitton proposed that the parishes of Mouldsworth and Horton-cum-Peel should be included in the new Kelsall ward, while the city councillor for Farndon ward, Paul Roberts, proposed that the parishes of Coddington and Barton should remain part of Tilston ward. A resident of Dunham-on-the-Hill parish wrote to propose that the inequality of representation on the parish council should be corrected, while a total of 21 residents of Tarvin parish wrote with a similar proposal for the parish wards for Tarvin Parish Council. Finally, a resident of Wervin wrote to support our draft recommendation for Elton ward.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

34 As indicated previously, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Chester is to achieve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the ratio of electors to councillors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

35 However, our function is not merely arithmetical. First, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the ensuing five years. Second, we must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries, and to maintaining local ties which might otherwise be broken. Third, we must consider the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities.

36 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for 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.

37 In our March 1996 *Guidance*, we expressed the view that “proposals for changes in electoral arrangements should therefore be based on variations in each ward of no more than plus or minus 10 per cent from the average councillor:elector ratio for the authority, having regard to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. Imbalances in excess of plus or minus 20 per cent may be acceptable, but only in highly exceptional circumstances ... and will have to be justified in full.” However, as emphasised in our September 1996 supplement to the *Guidance*, while we accept that absolute equality of representation is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, such equality should be the starting point in any electoral review.

### Electorate Projections

38 Chester City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the period 1997 to 2002, projecting an increase in the electorate of 1,410 (around 1 per cent) over the five-year period from 95,588 to 96,998. The City Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, and the expected rate of building over the five-year period. Advice from the City Council on the likely effect on electorates of ward boundary changes has been obtained. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this was an inexact science and, having given consideration to projected electorates, were persuaded that the City Council’s figures represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at that time.

39 We did not receive any further comments on electorate projections during Stage Three and remain satisfied that they provide the best estimates presently available.

### Council Size

40 Our March 1996 *Guidance* indicated that we would normally expect the number of councillors serving a district or borough council to be in the range of 30 to 60.

41 At present, Chester City is represented by 60 councillors. The City Council, supported by the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrats, proposed no change to council size during Stage One of the review, while the Conservatives supported a reduction of one. In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the statutory criteria and the achievement of electoral equality would best be met by a council size of 60 members and invited further comments.

42 During Stage Three, the City Council confirmed its support for a council size of 60. The Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat Groups on the City Council made no further comment on council size in their Stage Three submissions. Chester Community Ratepayers' Party argued that there should be more councillors for the authority. Having further considered the evidence surrounding the issue of council size, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendation for a council size of 60 as final.

## Electoral Arrangements

43 Having considered all representations received during Stage Three of the review, we have reviewed our draft recommendations. While we are endorsing the major part of our draft recommendations in the light of those views expressed at Stage Three, we consider that some changes are required in order to provide for a scheme which would secure a better balance between the achievement of electoral equality and the need to reflect community identities in the area.

44 The following sections outline the Commission's analysis and final recommendations for the future electoral arrangements for Chester, which are summarised in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on Map 2 and at Appendix A. The large map at the back of the report illustrates the final recommendations for the city of Chester. The following wards, based on existing City Council wards, are considered in turn:

### The Rural Area

- (a) Farndon, Malpas and Tilston wards;
- (b) Dodleston and Tattenhall wards;
- (c) Christleton, Tarvin and Waverton wards;
- (d) Barrow, Elton, Mollington and Saughall wards;

### The Urban Area

- (e) Blacon Hall, Dee Point and Sealand wards;
- (f) Curzon and Westminster wards;
- (g) Grosvenor ward;
- (h) Hoole, Newton and Plas Newton wards;
- (i) Boughton, Boughton Heath, College and Vicars Cross wards;
- (j) Upton Grange and Upton Heath wards.

## The Rural Area

### Farndon, Malpas and Tilston wards

45 Currently, Farndon, Malpas and Tilston wards contain 9 per cent more, approximately equal to and 11 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average. At Stage One, the City Council proposed minimal change for this area, proposing only that the parish of Barton should be transferred from Farndon ward to Tilston ward.

46 In our draft recommendations report, we concurred with the City Council's proposals for Malpas ward, given the good level of electoral equality that exists. However, at present, the constituent parishes of the Coddington Group Parish Council are split between several district wards, and we considered that this review offered an opportunity to ensure that they were united within the same district ward for the first time. Consequently, we recommended that the parishes of Coddington and Aldersey be transferred to Tilston ward from Farndon and Tattenhall wards respectively. Our draft recommendations would mean that the wards of Farndon, Malpas and Tilston would contain electoral variances of no more than 1 per cent from the district average.

47 At Stage Three, the City Council and the Labour Group accepted our proposals, and the Chester Area Meeting of the Cheshire Association of Town & Parish Councils raised no objections. Coddington & District Parish Council, while not opposing our draft recommendation for Tilston ward, expressed concern as to the large geographical area to be covered by the councillor for the revised ward. The Conservatives opposed our recommendation for the transfer of the parishes of Aldersey and Coddington into Tilston ward, arguing that the transfer of Aldersey parish would lead to a worse level of electoral equality in the revised Tattenhall ward, while there would be no purpose behind the transfer of Coddington parish if Aldersey were to remain in its present ward. The Liberal Democrats and the district councillor for Farndon ward, Councillor Paul Roberts, also opposed our draft recommendation to transfer Coddington parish from Farndon ward to Tilston ward.

48 We recognise the concern raised by Coddington & District Parish Council that the revised Tilston ward may become too large and unwieldy.

However, we note that the area covered by the revised ward would only increase from 4,324 to 5,437 hectares and that there are a number of larger and more diverse wards elsewhere in the country. Our recommendations have the support of the City Council and the Labour Group and would, in our view, better reflect community ties in the area by grouping together the constituent parishes of the Coddington & District Parish Council, which are currently divided between three wards. In addition, our draft recommendations provide a good level of electoral equality, with none of the three wards varying by more than 1 per cent from the average number of electors per councillor for the district, either now or in 2002. Consequently, we are content to confirm as final our draft recommendations for the wards of Farndon, Malpas and Tilston. These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated on Map 2.

### **Dodleston and Tattenhall wards**

49 Under existing arrangements, Dodleston ward, which lies immediately to the south of the urban area of Chester itself, contains 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average, while Tattenhall ward contains 16 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average. At Stage One, the City Council proposed that the parishes of Claverton and Marlston-cum-Lache, currently contained in the predominantly urban Grosvenor and Westminster wards respectively, should be transferred to Dodleston ward, while the parishes of Hatton and Huxley should be transferred to Tattenhall ward from Waverton and Tarvin wards.

50 In our draft recommendations report, we concurred with the City Council's proposals for these modifications to existing arrangements. However, we considered that further improvements to the level of electoral equality in Dodleston ward could be achieved, and as a result we recommended that the parish of Saighton should be transferred from Dodleston ward to Tattenhall ward. Under these draft recommendations, the wards of Dodleston and Tattenhall would contain 1 per cent more and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (4 per cent more and 3 per cent fewer by 2002).

51 At Stage Three, our draft recommendations for this area were supported by the Liberal Democrats and the Labour Group. However, our recommendation that Huxley parish should be

transferred from Tattenhall ward to Tarvin ward provoked a certain amount of opposition. Chester City Council, the Conservative Group, Foulk Stapleford, Tarvin and Huxley parish councils and six further respondents from the area all opposed this transfer. These respondents argued that the villages of Huxley and Hargrave (which are the main settlements in Huxley and Foulk Stapleford parishes) share many community ties, and that dividing the two communities would put joint community working at risk. Huxley Parish Council stated "the proposed Huxley transfer has negligible numerical impact on the electoral ratios and cannot be justified on the grounds of any historical connection with Tattenhall".

52 Given the level of support for our recommendation for a revised Dodleston ward, we are content to confirm this as our final recommendation for the area. However, in relation to Tattenhall ward, we recognise the concerns raised over the transfer of Huxley parish from Tarvin ward. Specifically, we have noted the comments of respondents and interested parties who have expressed concern that the close ties between the parishes of Huxley and its neighbour Foulk Stapleford, and in particular the village of Hargrave, may be impaired by the two being placed in separate district wards. We have therefore decided that in this area the current arrangements should be retained, with both parishes remaining part of Tarvin ward. While such a change would lead to a small deterioration in the level of electoral equality, we consider that such a change would best reflect the community identities and interests of the two parishes in question. This would result in our proposed Dodleston and Tattenhall wards containing 1 per cent more and 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the average for the district (4 per cent more and 9 per cent fewer by 2002).

### **Christleton, Tarvin and Waverton wards**

53 Christleton, Tarvin and Waverton wards cover the area of the district to the east of the urban area of Chester. Under existing arrangements, Christleton and Tarvin wards contain 21 per cent and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively, while Waverton ward has 8 per cent fewer than average.

54 At Stage One, as with the other rural wards already discussed, the City Council proposed minimal change to the wards in this area. The Council proposed that the parishes of Hatton and

Huxley be transferred from Waverton and Tarvin wards to Tattenhall ward, and that the parish of Rowton should be transferred from Christleton ward to Waverton ward. In our draft recommendations report, we concurred with the City Council's proposals, but also suggested one further minor modification. We proposed that the parish of Cotton Abbots should be transferred from Waverton ward to Tarvin ward, with which we considered it may have a greater affinity.

55 At Stage Three, our draft recommendation for a revised Christleton ward was supported by the City Council, the Conservative Group, the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group. The City Council and the Liberal Democrats both opposed our proposal to transfer Cotton Abbots parish to Tarvin ward, arguing that the parish is an integral part of the current Waverton ward. Also, as indicated above, the City Council, the Conservative Group, Foulk Stapleford, Tarvin and Huxley parish councils and six further respondents opposed the transfer of Huxley parish from Tarvin ward to Tattenhall ward. Kelsall and Tarvin parish councils proposed that the parish of Willington should be retained in a ward with Kelsall parish, rather than transferred to the revised Tarvin ward.

56 As already indicated, we have decided to retain Huxley parish within a revised Tarvin ward. Having considered further evidence submitted to us during Stage Three, we are persuaded that the parish of Cotton Abbots should be retained as part of Waverton ward rather than be transferred to Tarvin ward, on the basis that the parish would appear to have a greater affinity with Waverton. However, we have reached a different conclusion in relation to the proposal by Tarvin and Kelsall parish councils that the parish of Willington should become part of the new Kelsall ward. Although the parishes of Kelsall and Willington are both currently part of Barrow ward, they are not contiguous and their retention within the same ward could only be achieved by forming a detached ward. We consider that such a situation would only offer effective and convenient local government in exceptional circumstances, and have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendation that Willington parish should be included in a revised Tarvin ward.

57 These modifications to our draft recommendations would mean that the wards of Christleton, Tarvin and Waverton would contain 9

per cent, 9 per cent and 11 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average (improving to 8 per cent more than average in all three wards by 2002). These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on Map 2.

### **Barrow, Elton, Mollington and Saughall wards**

58 Barrow, Elton, Mollington and Saughall wards cover the rural area to the north and east of the city of Chester. Barrow, Elton and Saughall wards are represented by two councillors, while Mollington ward is represented by one councillor. This area has seen some of the largest growth in the district, and as a result Barrow, Elton and Mollington wards contain some 25 per cent, 57 per cent and 25 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average respectively, while Saughall ward has 5 per cent fewer than average.

59 In order to address the level of electoral inequality that has arisen in this part of the district, the City Council proposed significant changes to the existing arrangements at Stage One. It proposed that the existing Barrow ward, in addition to the parishes of Dunham-on-the-Hill and Hapsford (currently in Elton ward), should be divided between two wards, Barrow and Kelsall, and be represented by one and two councillors respectively. Additionally, the Council proposed that the parishes of Croughton, Little Stanney, Stoke and Wervin, which are currently in Mollington ward, together with the parishes of Elton and Thornton-le-Moors, should form a revised Elton ward represented by two councillors. The remaining parishes of Bridge Trafford, Hoole Village, Mickle Trafford, Picton and Wimbolds Trafford would form a new ward of Mickle Trafford, represented by one councillor. We considered that the City Council's proposals would combine communities with a degree of shared identity and would provide significantly improved electoral equality, and put them forward as our draft recommendations.

60 At Stage Three, these recommendations drew the support of Chester City Council, the Conservatives, the Labour Group, the Liberal Democrats and one resident. Kelsall Parish Council supported the creation of the new two-member Kelsall ward, subject to its proposal to include the parish of Willington, as discussed above. Given this level of support for our draft recommendations, we are satisfied that they properly reflect the pattern of

community ties in this area of the district. This factor, allied to the reasonable level of electoral equality provided, has led us to confirm them as final.

61 These recommendations would mean that Barrow, Elton, Kelsall and Saughall wards would contain 6 per cent, 2 per cent, 10 per cent and 5 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively (5 per cent fewer, 1 per cent more, 11 per cent fewer and 6 per cent fewer by 2002). Mollington ward would contain 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average now, and 1 per cent more than average by 2002. These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on Map 2.

## **The Urban Area**

### **Blacon Hall, Dee Point and Sealand wards**

62 Blacon Hall, Dee Point and Sealand wards cover the Blacon estate and the western fringes of the city of Chester. At present, they contain 14 per cent, 10 per cent and 16 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively, and are each represented by three councillors.

63 At Stage One, the City Council proposed addressing the over-representation of the area by adjusting the boundaries of all three wards, and expanding Sealand ward to include part of the city to the east of the Shropshire Union Canal. In addition, it proposed that Dee Point ward be renamed Blacon Lodge ward. These proposals were supported by all three groups on the Council. We recognised that there was considerable merit in the City Council's proposals and put them forward as our draft recommendations subject to one modification. We considered that in order to improve electoral equality in the neighbouring proposed City & St Anne's ward, the eastern boundary of Sealand ward should be Liverpool Road rather than Parkgate Road.

64 At Stage Three, our draft recommendations for Blacon Hall and Blacon Lodge wards gained support from the City Council, the Conservatives, the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrats. However, Councillor Mrs Sue Proctor (who represents Boughton and Vicars Cross on the County Council), argued that the creation of two three-member wards for the Blacon area, with a total of 10,000 electors, would limit the ability of

the County Council to increase council size at a future electoral review. She argued that subdividing the two Blacon wards may increase flexibility. The City Council, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats supported our proposed Sealand ward with the exception of the ward's eastern boundary. As discussed below, in paragraph 90, we have decided on balance that we should amend this boundary.

65 We recognise the concerns of County Councillor Mrs Sue Proctor that the creation of three-member wards in this part of Chester may constrain a future County Council electoral review. However, the two Blacon wards combined would have close to the average number of electors per county division currently, and we consider it would be inappropriate to make a change to our draft recommendations on the basis of a possible future change to County Council size.

66 Other than the modification indicated above to Sealand ward, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations as final for this area of the district. Under these proposals the wards of Blacon Hall, Blacon Lodge and Sealand would contain 8 per cent, 3 per cent and 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average and 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 7 per cent more than average by 2002. These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Curzon and Westminster wards**

67 Curzon and Westminster wards lie in the south-western corner of the urban area of Chester, and were one of three areas where the City Council was unable to reach a consensus at Stage One. In these areas, each of the three main political groups on the Council put forward their own proposals. Under existing arrangements, Curzon ward contains 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, while Westminster ward contains 12 per cent more than average.

68 At Stage One, the Conservatives proposed four wards for this area. Its proposed Boundary, Curzon Park and Westminster wards would each be represented by one councillor, while Lache ward would be represented by two councillors. The Labour Group proposed that the area be divided into two wards, Curzon Park & Westminster (represented by two councillors), and Lache Park

ward (represented by three councillors) The Liberal Democrats also proposed two wards for the area, Curzon & Lache and Westminster, albeit on different boundaries.

69 After careful consideration of each of the three schemes put forward for this area, we decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as our draft recommendations for public consultation. Although we considered that the Boundary Park and Stanley Park areas are somewhat different in character to the Lache, we considered that the two areas had a greater degree of shared community identity and ties than the alternatives put forward by other interested parties, and we considered that there may be considerable advantages to be gained by uniting the whole of the Lache estate in the same district ward for the first time.

70 At Stage Three, our recommendations gained the support of the City Council, the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrats, in addition to the five city councillors who currently represent the area, four local residents and County Councillor David Robinson. The councillors argued that the catchment area for the Lache schools includes Boundary Park, and that a footbridge was constructed between the two areas "so as not to isolate the new houses and allow them safe access to schools, shops (and) the community centre". They also expressed reservations about "scare-mongering" by those undertaking a petition of residents.

71 The Conservatives and 140 local residents wrote to us to oppose the recommendations. The Conservatives argued that the Boundary Park area is separate from the remainder of the proposed ward, that the social characteristics of the two areas are very different, and that there are little or no community ties between them. Many residents who wrote to us echoed these arguments, and contended that the different requirements of the Boundary Park and Stanley Park area should be reflected at district ward level, while others expressed concern about the effect on house prices should the area be combined with the Lache estate in a new ward. Support for alternative proposals among these respondents was divided between the creation of a single-member ward for Boundary Park and Stanley Park, the area's inclusion in our Curzon Park & Westminster ward and the status quo.

72 This particular part of Chester has proved to be the major area of contention in the district, and has

necessitated careful analysis of the evidence available to us. It is clear that there is a body of opinion locally that believes our draft recommendations for the area to be inappropriate, and that we should move away from this position as part of our final recommendations. In addition, it is also clear that some residents were under the misapprehension that combining the Boundary Park area with the Lache estate would affect house prices, and failed to realise that the two areas are already in the same district ward and have been since the last electoral review of the district.

73 Although none of the representations we received during Stage Three of the review defined the boundaries of a possible single-member ward, there was some support for this option amongst respondents from the Boundary Park and Stanley Park areas. However, were we to recommend a single-member ward comprising these areas and the streets between Circular Drive and Green Lane, it would contain around 19 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, while the revised Lache Park ward would contain around 13 per cent more electors per councillor than the average, a level of electoral inequality we consider would need to be addressed. Given the nature of the boundaries in the area, the only solution to this problem would be to include part of the Lache estate in the proposed ward. On this basis therefore, such a solution would fail to provide separate representation for this area, but would also continue to divide the Lache estate which is a clearly defined community. In addition, with the exception of our proposed Huntington ward on the fringes of the urban area, the rest of the city contains either two or three-member wards.

74 The Conservatives, together with a number of local residents, preferred a two-member Lache Park ward, with the Boundary Park and Stanley Park area forming part of a three-member Curzon Park & Westminster ward. However, including the Boundary Park area in our proposed Curzon Park & Westminster ward would lead to a somewhat large and unwieldy 'horseshoe' shaped ward, and we remain convinced that there would be little or no shared community identity between areas at either extreme. The Labour Group argued that such an option "would reinforce the isolation and stigma of [the] Lache estate". It would also provide poorer electoral equality than our draft recommendation.

75 We are concerned that the residents of Boundary Park and Stanley Park have been

misinformed about our proposals. While Boundary Park would be linked to the Lache estate for district ward purposes, this is a continuation of the current situation, albeit on altered boundaries. We do not consider that house prices are likely to be affected by a proposal to alter ward boundaries, and we consider that it would be inappropriate to 'socially engineer' wards. That a polling station, schools and a community centre in the Lache estate are already used by Boundary Park residents point to some effective links which are already in place.

76 This combination of factors has persuaded us to confirm our draft recommendations as final, subject to modifying the names of the two proposed wards. We have concluded that, if possible, the whole of the Lache estate should be united within the same district ward for the first time, provided a good level of electoral equality can be achieved both now and in 2002. We consider that our recommendations would achieve this and constitute the best balance available between the statutory criteria and our goal of electoral equality. However, we recognise that there are two separate areas contained within our proposed Lache Park ward. In order to reflect this, we propose that this ward should be known as Park, and that Curzon Park & Westminster ward should be known as Curzon & Westminster ward. Under these recommendations, Curzon & Westminster ward would contain 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average now, and 4 per cent fewer by 2002. Park ward would contain 7 per cent more electors per councillor now, and 8 per cent by 2002. These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

#### **Grosvenor ward**

77 At present, Grosvenor ward covers the area of Chester to the east of the A483 Wrexham Road and west of the River Dee, in addition to the southern part of the city centre. It is represented by three councillors and contains 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average.

78 At Stage One, the City Council proposed that the mainly rural parish of Claverton, in the south of the ward, should be transferred to a revised Dodleston ward (as indicated earlier), and that the part of the ward covering the city centre should be merged with a new ward north of the river. Although the revised ward of Handbridge & St Mary's would contain 16 per cent more electors

per councillor than the district average (13 per cent by 2002), in our draft recommendations report we considered that this was balanced by the strong boundaries (the River Dee and the main Chester to Wrexham trunk road) utilised.

79 At Stage Three, our draft recommendations drew the support of the City Council, the Conservatives, the Labour Group, the Liberal Democrats and County Councillor David Robinson. Given this level of support, we are content to confirm them as final. This proposal is detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

#### **Hoole, Newton and Plas Newton wards**

80 At present, the wards of Hoole, Newton and Plas Newton are each represented by three councillors, and contain 2 per cent more, 14 per cent fewer and 23 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average respectively. This part of Chester was one of the three areas where the City Council was unable to reach a consensus, and each of the three groups on the City Council put forward their own proposals, although all three supported no change for Hoole ward. The Labour Group proposed that Upton Park ward of Upton-by-Chester Parish Council should be transferred out of Newton ward, which should be expanded eastwards to include part of Plas Newton ward, and be represented by one fewer councillor. The Liberal Democrats also proposed revised arrangements for this area, although they proposed enlarging both Newton and Plas Newton wards to address the electoral inequality that exists. The Conservatives proposed reducing the representation for the 'Newtons' area to four councillors, and to transfer part of Plas Newton ward to Newton ward.

81 In our draft recommendations report we considered that, while there was some merit in each of the three proposals for this area of the city, an alternative arrangement would provide a better balance between the statutory criteria and the need for electoral equality. We proposed dividing Hoole ward into two, with the area east of Canadian Avenue together with that part of Plas Newton ward that lies to the south of the Shotton to Mickle Trafford railway line forming a new Hoole East ward represented by two councillors. The remainder of the current ward would form a new Hoole Park ward, also represented by two councillors. A revised Newton ward would cover

the area of the current ward less the Upton Park area. In addition Horrocks Road, Milbourne Close and Whitton Drive would be transferred to a revised Plas Newton ward. The revised Plas Newton ward would be represented by two councillors and would cover the area of the current ward, less the area transferred to Hoole East ward but with the addition of the area transferred from Newton ward.

82 During Stage Three, our proposals were accepted by Chester City Council, and the three political groups. However, the City Council and the Liberal Democrats proposed that the proposed Hoole East ward should be known as Hoole Groves ward. The Liberal Democrats also proposed that Hoole Park ward should be known as Hoole All Saints, in order to more properly reflect communities in the area. In addition, as outlined below, we have proposed a minor boundary amendment with Upton Grange ward.

83 Given the degree of support for our draft recommendations, we are content to confirm them as final. We also consider the proposed ward names to be sensible, and put them forward as our final recommendations. These recommendations would mean that the wards of Hoole All Saints, Hoole Groves and Plas Newton (each represented by two councillors) would contain 10 per cent, 12 per cent and 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (12 per cent, 13 per cent and 7 per cent fewer by 2002). Newton ward, also represented by two councillors, would contain 2 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average currently and have approximately equal to the average by 2002. These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

#### **Boughton, Boughton Heath, College and Vicars Cross wards**

84 At present, the wards of Boughton and Boughton Heath are both represented by two councillors, while College and Vicars Cross wards are both represented by three councillors. While Boughton and Vicars Cross wards are over-represented with 15 per cent and 10 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average, Boughton Heath and College wards are under-represented with 45 per cent and 13 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average.

85 In our draft recommendations report, we concurred with the City Council's proposals to divide Boughton Heath ward and create a new single-member Huntington ward, covering the parish of the same name, in order to reflect the growth that has occurred in the area. We also concurred with the City Council's proposals for the revised wards of Boughton, Boughton Heath and Vicars Cross, including the transfer of the section of Boughton ward which lies to the north of the Chester to Crewe railway line to Vicars Cross ward. We also decided to combine the City Council's proposed single-member City ward, covering the city centre, with the St Anne's area to the north (on which there had been no consensus submission) to create a new three-member City & St Anne's ward. We also introduced one further modification to the boundary with Sealand ward in the interests of electoral equality, by proposing that the eastern boundary of the ward should run down Liverpool Road rather than Parkgate Road.

86 At Stage Three, our recommendations for Huntington and Vicars Cross wards were accepted by the City Council, the Conservatives, the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrats, while the Labour Group also accepted our recommendations for Boughton, Boughton Heath and City & St Anne's wards. However, other respondents, while largely accepting our recommendations for the warding structure, proposed modifications to boundaries in this area. The City Council and Councillor Mrs Sue Proctor proposed a minor modification to the boundary between Boughton and Boughton Heath wards, in order to create a more identifiable boundary while also improving the level of electoral equality in both of the revised wards. The City Council, in a proposal supported by both the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, also proposed an alternative boundary between the proposed City & St Anne's ward and Sealand ward. The Council argued that if their original proposal to use Parkgate Road was unacceptable, then Victoria Road should be used as an alternative, rather than Liverpool Road as in our draft recommendations. The Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives also contended that this modification would unite the whole of the Liverpool Road Conservation Area within one district ward.

87 The Liberal Democrats and a total of 18 other respondents opposed the inclusion of the Abbot's Park area in a new City & St Anne's ward. These respondents argued that the Abbot's Park area is

distinct from the city centre, being essentially suburban in nature, while several expressed concern that the city centre may come to dominate the proposed ward at the expense of other areas. County Councillor Colin Bain argued that the area “is distinctively different from the City Centre and is the only part of the outer zone around the City Centre to be included in it”. Four respondents, including County Councillor David Robinson, also argued for the transfer of the section of Vicars Cross ward south of the Shropshire Union Canal to Boughton ward. In addition, County Councillor Mrs Sue Proctor argued that the properties in Stamford Court and Broadmead should be transferred from Christleton ward (and Littleton parish) to Vicars Cross ward. The Chester Community Ratepayers’ Party proposed that the city centre area should remain in Grosvenor ward.

88 Given the level of support for our recommendations for Huntington and Vicars Cross wards, we are content to confirm them as final. While we recognise the concerns of those respondents who proposed that part of Vicars Cross ward be transferred to Boughton ward, we consider that the level of electoral inequality that would result in both wards would outweigh the benefits in community identity terms. In addition, we consider there to be some merit in the proposal to transfer some of the properties in Stamford Court and Broadmead to Vicars Cross, but have not put such a proposal forward as we consider that the issue would more appropriately be dealt with as part of a future parishing review. The wards of Huntington and Vicars Cross, under these recommendations, would contain 3 per cent more and 7 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average currently, and 1 per cent more and 5 per cent fewer by 2002. These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

89 We consider there is some merit in the proposal to modify the boundary between Boughton and Boughton Heath wards. The current boundary between the two wards, while following the parish boundary, divides Dee Banks and Private Walk. County Councillor Mrs Sue Proctor proposed the use of Stocks Lane and Dee Banks as a new ward boundary, while the City Council proposed the use of Stocks Lane and Walmoor Hill. We have concluded that using Stocks Lane and Walmoor Hill, as proposed by the Council, would provide the better boundary between the two wards as it would be more readily identifiable, while at the

same time improving the level of electoral equality. With this modification, the revised Boughton and Boughton Heath wards, both represented by two councillors, would contain approximately equal to and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (2 per cent and 5 per cent fewer by 2002). These recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

90 We have given careful consideration to the representations received in regard to our proposed ward of City & St Anne’s. We are persuaded that the Abbot’s Park area is somewhat different in character to the city centre, and may have differing requirements, and recognise that the Shotton to Mickle Trafford railway line provides a strong physical boundary between the Abbot’s Park area and the rest of the ward. However, while a single-member ward for the Abbot’s Park area would provide a reasonable level of electoral equality, it would be the only single-member ward in the city, with the exception of Huntington on the south-eastern fringe. In addition, we note that the Abbot’s Park area is currently linked with the area to its north. By including the area in the revised Upton Grange ward to the north, we can create a three-member ward with 4 per cent more electors per councillor than the district average which would retain existing ties. We have also decided to concur with the proposal to modify the boundary between City & St Anne’s ward and Sealand ward, both in order to reflect communities more properly and ensure the whole of the Liverpool Road Conservation Area is within one district ward. We consider that electoral equality would be best served by making Victoria Road the new eastern boundary of Sealand ward. This recommendation would mean that City & St Anne’s ward, represented by two members, would contain 9 per cent fewer electors per councillor currently, but would improve to 4 per cent more than average by 2002. These proposals are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Upton Grange and Upton Heath wards**

91 Upton Grange and Upton Heath wards (currently represented by two and three councillors respectively) cover the Upton-by-Chester parish area, in addition to the parish of Bache and part of the St Anne’s area, and currently contain 4 per cent more and 15 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average. In our draft recommendations

report, we put forward the City Council's proposals for this area. This involved transferring the unparished area of Upton Grange ward to a new ward to the south, while merging the northern part of Newton ward with Upton Grange ward, and also revising the boundary between Upton Grange and Upton Heath wards (which would be renamed Upton Mill and Upton St James).

92 At Stage Three, the City Council, the Conservatives and the Labour Group all accepted our draft recommendations. The Liberal Democrats stated that they "strongly support the Commission's proposals for Upton Mill and Upton St James wards", while Upton-by-Chester Parish Council also agreed with our proposals. The City Council and Upton-by-Chester Parish Council, however, proposed revised ward names of Upton Grange and Upton Westlea for Upton Mill and Upton St James wards respectively. One resident of the area supported our recommendations for the area, while the Chester Community Ratepayers' Party argued that the Upton wards should remain as at present.

93 We have decided to amend our recommendations in this area. Firstly, we concur with the City Council and Upton-by-Chester Parish Council that the new wards should be named Upton Grange and Upton Westlea. As outlined above, we have concluded that the northern boundary of City & St Anne's ward should be the Shotton to Mickle Trafford railway line, and that the Abbot's Park area should form part of a revised Upton Grange ward. We have also decided to slightly modify the boundary between Upton Grange and Newton wards, so that the whole of the street of Upton Park is contained within Upton Grange ward. This modification only involves two electors and has a negligible impact on the level of electoral equality. These recommendations, which are detailed in Figures 1 and 4 and are illustrated in the large map at the back of the report, would mean that the wards of Upton Grange and Upton Westlea would be represented by three and two councillors, and would contain 4 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the district average (4 per cent more and 2 per cent fewer by 2002).

## Electoral Cycle

94 In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that the present system of elections by thirds should be maintained. No representations were received on this issue during Stage Three. We

have therefore decided to confirm our draft recommendation as final.

## Conclusions

95 Having considered carefully all the evidence and representations received in response to our consultation report, we have concluded that there should be no change in the council size of 60; that there should be 31 wards, rather than 27 as at present; that the boundaries of 25 of the existing wards should be modified; and that elections should continue to be held by thirds. We have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the amendments indicated in the following areas:

- (a) the Abbot's Park area should form part of a revised Upton Grange ward, rather than part of City & St Anne's ward;
- (b) the boundary between Boughton and Boughton Heath wards should be amended;
- (c) the boundary between Sealand and City & St Anne's wards should be modified;
- (d) the parish of Huxley should be retained as part of Tarvin ward, while Cotton Abbots parish should be retained as part of Waverton ward.

96 Figure 3 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1997 and 2002 electorate figures.

97 As Figure 3 shows, our recommendations would reduce the number of wards with electoral variances of more than 10 per cent from the district average from 15 to four. This improved level of electoral equality is expected to be retained over the next five-year period. Under these proposals, the average number of electors per councillor would remain at 1,593. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the need for electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

### Final Recommendation

Chester City Council should comprise 60 councillors, serving 31 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 4, and illustrated in Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report. The City Council should continue to be elected by thirds.

Figure 3:  
Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1997 electorate		2002 projected electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	60	60	60	60
Number of wards	27	31	27	31
Average number of electors per councillor	1,593	1,593	1,617	1,617
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	15	4	16	4
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	6	0	5	0

## Parish Council Electoral Arrangements

<sup>98</sup> In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different city wards, it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the city. Accordingly, we propose a number of consequential parish ward changes, as detailed below.

<sup>99</sup> In our draft recommendations report, we proposed that Upton-by-Chester Parish Council should continue to comprise 16 parish councillors representing three wards. We further proposed that the boundaries of the parish wards should be modified to reflect proposed changes to district ward boundaries. Upton-by-Chester Parish Council agreed with the majority of draft recommendations, although they proposed that the parish ward of Upton Grange should be divided into two wards, Upton Grange and Upton Heath, returning a total of five councillors, rather than a single ward as in our draft recommendations. However, the Parish Council also proposed that the parish of Moston should be transferred out of the parish. This proposal is outside our terms of reference, and we consider that it would more properly be dealt with as part of

a parish review of the district, as would the Parish Council's proposal for further modifications to its electoral arrangements.

### Final Recommendation

Upton-by-Chester Parish Council should comprise 16 parish councillors representing five wards. Upton Grange ward should return five parish councillors; Upton Heath ward should return seven parish councillors; Upton Park ward should return two parish councillors; and Bache and Moston wards should each return one parish councillor. Upton Grange parish ward should be modified to reflect the revised district ward of that name. Upton Heath parish should be modified to reflect the proposed district ward of Upton Westlea less that area contained within Upton Park parish ward. The proposed boundaries are illustrated in the large map at the back of the report.

<sup>100</sup> During Stage Three of the review, we received a total of 21 representations proposing a modification to the electoral arrangements to Tarvin Parish Council. However, neither the City Council or Tarvin Parish Council have endorsed this proposal, and we understand that the City Council wishes to address this issue in a forthcoming parish review. We consider that it

would be counterproductive for the Commission to introduce new arrangements for them to be possibly superceded within a short period of time. Accordingly, we have decided to make no recommendation for change.

<sup>101</sup>In our draft recommendations report we proposed that there should be no change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the district.

### **Final Recommendation**

Elections for parish councils should continue to be held at the same time as elections for principal authorities.





Figure 4:  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Chester

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Barrow	1	1,499	1,499	-6	1,529	1,529	-5
2 Blacon Hall (in Chester)	3	5,165	1,722	8	5,141	1,714	6
3 Blacon Lodge (in Chester)	3	4,925	1,642	3	4,895	1,632	1
4 Boughton (in Chester)	2	3,185	1,593	0	3,177	1,589	-2
5 Boughton Heath (in Chester)	2	3,055	1,528	-4	3,068	1,534	-5
6 Christleton	2	3,484	1,742	9	3,479	1,740	8
7 City & St Anne's (in Chester)	2	2,885	1,443	-9	3,371	1,686	4
8 Curzon & Westminster (in Chester)	2	3,103	1,552	-3	3,100	1,550	-4
9 Dodleston	1	1,613	1,613	1	1,679	1,679	4
10 Elton	2	3,129	1,565	-2	3,275	1,638	1
11 Farndon	1	1,612	1,612	1	1,628	1,628	1
12 Handbridge & St Mary's (in Chester)	2	3,681	1,841	16	3,657	1,829	13
13 Hoole All Saints (in Chester)	2	2,861	1,431	-10	2,849	1,425	-12
14 Hoole Groves (in Chester)	2	2,815	1,408	-12	2,807	1,404	-13
15 Huntington (in Chester)	1	1,640	1,640	3	1,629	1,629	1
16 Kelsall	2	2,867	1,434	-10	2,873	1,437	-11
17 Malpas	2	3,187	1,594	0	3,239	1,620	0
18 Mickle Trafford	1	1,762	1,762	11	1,764	1,764	9

*continued overleaf*

Figure 4 (continued):  
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Chester

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
19 Mollington	1	1,618	1,618	2	1,638	1,638	1
20 Newton Brook (in Chester)	2	3,261	1,631	2	3,245	1,623	0
21 Park (in Chester)	3	5,102	1,701	7	5,151	1,717	8
22 Plas Newton (in Chester)	2	2,963	1,482	-7	2,994	1,497	-7
23 Saughall	2	3,018	1,509	-5	3,042	1,521	-6
24 Sealand (in Chester)	3	4,882	1,627	2	5,181	1,727	7
25 Tarvin	2	3,462	1,731	9	3,476	1,738	8
26 Tattenhall	2	2,891	1,446	-9	2,938	1,469	-9
27 Tilston	1	1,598	1,598	0	1,638	1,638	1
28 Upton Grange (in Chester)	3	4,957	1,652	4	5,022	1,674	4
29 Upton Westlea (in Chester)	2	3,148	1,574	-1	3,160	1,580	-2
30 Vicars Cross (in Chester)	3	4,458	1,486	-7	4,599	1,533	-5
31 Waverton	1	1,762	1,762	11	1,754	1,754	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>95,588</b>	—	—	<b>96,998</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,593</b>	—	—	<b>1,617</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Chester City Council's submission.

Notes: 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. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

## 6. NEXT STEPS

102 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Chester and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

103 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

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

The Secretary of State  
Department of the Environment,  
Transport and the Regions  
Local Government Review  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU



# APPENDIX A

## Final Recommendations for Chester: Detailed Mapping

The **large map** inserted at the back of the report illustrates the proposed ward boundaries in Chester.



# APPENDIX B

## Draft Recommendations for Chester:

*Figure B1:*

*The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
1 Barrow	1	Barrow ward (part – the parishes of Barrow, Horton-cum-Peel and Mouldsworth); Elton ward (part – the parishes of Dunham-on-the-Hill and Hapsford)
2 Blacon Hall (in Chester)	3	Blacon Hall ward; Dee Point ward (part)
3 Blacon Lodge (in Chester)	3	Dee Point ward (part); Sealand ward (part)
4 Boughton (in Chester)	2	Boughton ward (part); College ward (part)
5 Boughton Heath (in Chester)	2	Boughton ward (part); Boughton Heath ward (part – South ward of Great Boughton parish)
6 Christleton	2	Christleton ward (part – the parishes of Christleton, Guilden Sutton and Littleton)
7 City & St Anne's (in Chester)	3	College ward (part); Grosvenor ward (part); Upton Grange ward (part)
8 Curzon Park & Westminster (in Chester)	2	Curzon ward (part); Westminster ward (part)
9 Dodleston	1	Dodleston ward (part – the parishes of Aldford, Buerton, Churton Heath, Dodleston, Eaton, Eccleston, Lea Newbold, Lower Kinnerton, Poulton and Pulford); Grosvenor ward (part – the parish of Claverton); Westminster ward (part – the parish of Marlston-cum-Lache)
10 Elton	2	Elton ward (part – the parishes of Elton and Thornton-le-Moors); Mollington ward (part - the parishes of Croughton, Little Stanney, Stoke and Wervin)
11 Farndon	1	Farndon ward (part – the parishes of Churton by Aldford, Churton by Farndon, Crewe, Edgerley, Farndon and Kings Marsh)

*continued overleaf*

Figure B1 (continued):  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas
12 Handbridge & St Mary's (in Chester)	2	Grosvenor ward (part)
13 Hoole East (in Chester)	2	Hoole ward (part); Plas Newton ward (part)
14 Hoole Park (in Chester)	2	Hoole ward (part)
15 Huntington (in Chester)	1	Boughton Heath ward (part – the parish of Huntington)
16 Kelsall	2	Barrow ward (part – the parishes of Ashton and Kelsall)
17 Lache Park (in Chester)	3	Curzon ward (part); Westminster (part)
18 Malpas	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Agden, Bickley, Bradley, Chorlton, Chidlow, Cuddington, Edge, Hampton, Larkton, Macefen, Malpas, Newton-by-Malpas, Oldcastle, Overton, Stockton, Threadwood, Tushingham-cum-Grindley and Wychough)
19 Mickle Trafford	1	Elton ward (part – the parishes of Bridge Trafford, Hoole Village, Mickle Trafford, Picton and Wimbolds Trafford)
20 Mollington	1	Mollington ward (part – the parishes of Backford, Capenhurst, Caughall, Chorlton-by-Backford, Lea, Ledsham, Mollington and Moston)
21 Newton (in Chester)	2	Newton ward (part)
22 Plas Newton (in Chester)	2	Newton ward (part); Plas Newton ward (part)
23 Saughall	2	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Puddington, Saughall, Shotwick, Shotwick Park and Woodbank)
24 Sealand (in Chester)	3	College ward (part); Curzon ward (part); Dee Point ward (part); Sealand ward (part)
25 Tarvin	2	Barrow ward (part – the parish of Willington); Tarvin ward (part – the parishes of Bruen Stapleford, Burton, Clotton, Cotton Edmunds, Duddon, Foulk Stapleford, Hockenhull, Iddinshall, Prior's Hey and Tarvin); Waverton ward (part – the parish of Cotton Abbots)

Figure B1 (continued):

*The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Constituent Areas*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
26 Tattenhall	2	Dodleston ward (part – the parish of Saughton); Tarvin ward (part – the parish of Huxley); Tattenhall (part – the parishes of Beesley, Burwardsley, Chowley, Golborne David, Golborne Bellow, Handley, Newton-by-Tattenhall, Tattenhall, Tilstone Fearnall and Tiverton); Waverton ward (part – the parish of Hatton)
27 Tilston	1	Farndon ward (part – the parishes of Barton and Coddington); Tattenhall ward (part – the parish of Aldersey); Tilston ward (the parishes of Broxton, Caldecotte, Carden, Church Stocklach, Clutton, Duckington, Grafton, Harthill, Hornton, Shocklach Oviatt, Stretton and Tilston)
28 Upton Mill (in Chester)	2	Upton Grange ward (part – Upton Grange and Upton Park wards and Upton Heath ward (part) of Upton-by-Chester parish)
29 Upton St James (in Chester)	2	Upton Heath ward (part – Upton Heath ward of Upton-by-Chester parish (part))
30 Vicars Cross (in Chester)	3	Boughton ward (part); Vicars Cross ward (North ward of Great Boughton parish)
31 Waverton	1	Christleton ward (part – the parish of Rowton); Waverton ward (part – the parish of Waverton)

Figure B2:  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Chester

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Barrow	1	1,499	1,499	-6	1,529	1,529	-5
2 Blacon Hall (in Chester)	3	5,165	1,722	8	5,141	1,714	6
3 Blacon Lodge (in Chester)	3	4,925	1,642	3	4,895	1,632	1
4 Boughton (in Chester)	2	3,259	1,630	2	3,251	1,626	1
5 Boughton Heath (in Chester)	2	2,981	1,491	-6	2,994	1,497	-7
6 Christleton	2	3,484	1,742	9	3,479	1,740	8
7 City & St Anne's (in Chester)	3	4,633	1,544	-3	5,186	1,729	7
8 Curzon Park & Westminster (in Chester)	2	3,103	1,552	-3	3,100	1,550	-4
9 Dodleston	1	1,613	1,613	1	1,679	1,679	4
10 Elton	2	3,129	1,565	-2	3,275	1,638	1
11 Farndon	1	1,612	1,612	1	1,628	1,628	1
12 Handbridge & St Mary's (in Chester)	2	3,681	1,841	16	3,657	1,829	13
13 Hoole East (in Chester)	2	2,815	1,408	-12	2,807	1,404	-13
14 Hoole Park (in Chester)	2	2,861	1,431	-10	2,849	1,425	-12
15 Huntington (in Chester)	1	1,640	1,640	3	1,629	1,629	1
16 Kelsall	2	2,867	1,434	-10	2,873	1,437	-11
17 Lache Park (in Chester)	3	5,102	1,701	7	5,151	1,717	6

Figure B2 (continued):  
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Chester

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1997)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
17 Lache Park (in Chester)	3	5,102	1,701	7	5,151	1,717	6
18 Malpas	2	3,187	1,594	0	3,239	1,620	0
19 Mickle Trafford	1	1,762	1,762	11	1,764	1,764	9
20 Mollington	1	1,618	1,618	2	1,638	1,638	1
21 Newton (in Chester)	2	3,265	1,633	2	3,249	1,625	0
22 Plas Newton (in Chester)	2	2,963	1,482	-7	2,994	1,497	-7
23 Saughall	2	3,018	1,509	-5	3,042	1,521	-6
24 Sealand (in Chester)	3	4,831	1,610	1	5,130	1,710	6
25 Tarvin	2	3,283	1,642	3	3,294	1,647	2
26 Tattenhall	2	3,078	1,539	-3	3,128	1,564	-3
27 Tilston	1	1,598	1,598	0	1,638	1,638	1
28 Upton Mill (in Chester)	2	3,256	1,628	2	3,254	1,627	1
29 Upton St James (in Chester)	2	3,148	1,574	-1	3,160	1,580	-2
30 Vicars Cross (in Chester)	3	4,458	1,486	-7	4,599	1,533	-5
31 Waverton	1	1,754	1,754	10	1,746	1,746	8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>95,588</b>	—	—	<b>96,998</b>	—	—
<b>Averages</b>	—	—	<b>1,593</b>	—	—	<b>1,617</b>	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Chester City Council's submission.

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





