

Submission of the Conservative Party regarding the Initial Proposals of the Boundary Commission for England for the North West region

1. Introduction

1. This submission represents the views of the Conservative Party representing the current 75 constituencies within the counties and metropolitan counties of Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside within the North West region.
2. We support the reduction of two seats in the North West which results in an allocation of 73 seats compared to the current 75.
3. We support the principle of dividing the Region into sub-regions for the purpose of allocating constituencies. This ensures that it is most likely that the Factors as outlined in Rule 5 – the Rules for the Redistribution of Seats (Schedule 2 to the Act) are met in particular Rule 5 (1) b regarding local government boundaries and Rule 5 (1) c regarding existing constituencies.
4. We support the Commission's division of sub-regions in the North West. We believe this represents the least disruptive way of ensuring an allocation of 73 seats with electorates within the range of 69,724 and 77,062.
5. We support the proposal to combine Cheshire and Merseyside as a sub-region and allocate it twenty-six constituencies as is the current position. We broadly support the composition of constituencies although we will make some minor changes to better reflect local ties and existing constituencies. We will also suggest a number of name changes.
6. We note that despite the sub-regions, one constituency is partly in the Cheshire and Merseyside sub-region and partly in the Cumbria and Lancashire sub-region. We support this approach as we believe it enables a better construction of constituencies and better meets the Rules.
7. We support the proposals to combine Cumbria and Lancashire as a sub-region and allocate it twenty constituencies, two less than at present. We note that Cumbria has to be combined

with another county and the only feasible option is Lancashire. Whilst we broadly support the pattern of constituencies we will suggest a number of changes in Lancashire to move fewer electors from their existing constituency and restore local ties. We note a number of communities are split in Lancashire and we will address them in our proposals which are more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d. We will also suggest some name changes.

8. We support the proposal to review Greater Manchester separately as a sub-region. We support the allocation of twenty-seven constituencies, the same as the current position. We broadly support the proposals but will make a few alterations which overall will reduce the number of electors moving from their current constituency and restore some local ties. Although we will suggest a change to two constituencies in line with a suggested alteration in the North West booklet, we will propose one other no change constituency. Our proposals in Greater Manchester will better meet Rules 5 (1) b and c.
9. We therefore support many of the Commission's proposals for the North West but make a number of changes to better reflect the Factors outlined in Rule 5 of the Rules for the Redistribution of Seats (Schedule 2 to the Act) particularly in relation to Rule 5 (1) c and d.
10. We will now outline our detailed rationale for either supporting the Commission or proposing alternatives.

2. Cumbria and Lancashire

11. We support the combination of Cumbria and Lancashire in a sub-region. Cumbria can only link with Lancashire as it is impossible to allocate it a whole number of constituencies. We note that the two constituencies that the North West is reduced by are both in this sub-region.
12. We note that because the two counties are entitled to 20.49 seats that the electorates are at the higher end of the quota. We also note that because of this it makes sense for four wards from Lancashire to link with Merseyside. We believe that this provides for a better pattern of constituencies throughout Lancashire and Cumbria and better meets the requirements of Rule 5.
13. We strongly support the composition of the five constituencies that are wholly within Cumbria. We believe these are well constructed constituencies which best meet the Rules. Any alternative is likely to produce constituencies where there is more change, less adherence to local government boundaries and a greater breaking of local ties. Any alteration is likely therefore to be worse under Rule 5 (1) b, c and d.
14. We note that the Carlisle City Council area is too big for just one constituency but is within quota by excluding the one ward of Dalston and Burgh. We support the constituency linking Carlisle with the border wards all totally within one council area. It is a very logical constituency which has our full support.
15. We note that Allerdale could have been reviewed as a coterminous council, however we support the decision not to do this as it would have detrimental effects elsewhere.
16. We support the inclusion of the Dalston and Burgh ward in the proposed Workington constituency. This ward on the western side of Carlisle fits most naturally with Allerdale.
17. We support the proposed Workington constituency which includes all of Allerdale except two wards which are currently in the Copeland constituency of which only 289 electors are currently within Workington.

18. We do not however think Workington is an appropriate name for this constituency. We do not believe electors in the Carlisle ward and indeed some of the eastern Allerdale wards would identify with Workington. A better name we believe is to call it Allerdale to better reflect the make-up of the constituency.
19. We strongly support the proposed Copeland and the Western Lakes constituency. We think this is a robust constituency combining the whole of the Copeland local authority with Windermere and Keswick.
20. The current constituency includes all of the Crummock and Derwent Valley ward and well over 90% of the Keswick ward. Including these wards with Ambleside and Grasmere, Windermere and Broughton and Coniston and the Windermere part of the Bowness and Levens ward makes sense, including the vast majority of the Lakes and the majority of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is also well connected by the A591 between Keswick and Windermere. The southern part of the constituency connects Copeland to Ambleside and the Lakes via the A595 and A593.
21. As the vast majority of the Lakes are included in this constituency we would simplify the name to Copeland and the Lakes.
22. We fully support the proposed Barrow and Furness constituency. Broughton and Coniston is a new ward and only 40% of the electorate are currently included in Barrow and Furness and this ward links much better to the proposed Copeland and the Western Lakes constituency. We fully support the inclusion of the Cartmel and Grange wards in the Barrow and Furness constituency. These wards previously were in Lancashire-based constituencies alongside Barrow-in-Furness.
23. We appreciate that these two wards are linked to the rest of the proposed constituency by a railway bridge. Although the road link is through the Broughton and Coniston ward this is because of the size and shape of the ward and this link is a good one into Ulverston and Barrow via the A590. We agree with the Commission when it states in its booklet “we consider this arrangement allows for a more practicable configuration of constituencies across Cumbria, without fundamentally altering the nature of the existing Barrow and Furness constituency.”

24. We fully support the composition of the proposed Westmorland and Eden constituency although we disagree with the name.
25. This constituency rightly includes the whole of the Eden district based on Penrith. We would strongly oppose any proposal to divide the smallest district in Cumbria. It sensibly adds to Eden the six Kendal wards and Sedbergh and Kirkby Lonsdale.
26. The A6 and M6 provide strong transport links between Kendal and Penrith, the two major population centres in the proposed constituency.
27. As Kendal and Penrith are the main population centres and the whole of the Eden district is included, we believe the constituency is better named Penrith, Eden and Kendal rather than Westmorland and Eden.
28. We fully support the Burton and Crooklands ward and Arnside and Milnthorpe ward together with the non-Windermere part of Bowness and Levens being included with a Morecambe-based constituency.
29. We broadly support the Morecambe and South Lakeland constituency but we would make one ward swap to better reflect local ties.
30. We note the Commission acknowledge that the Skerton East ward is west of the River Lune.
31. The Skerton East ward is currently included in the Morecambe and Lunesdale constituency and important local ties are broken by its separation from Skerton West.
32. We would restore these ties by including both wards in their current constituency. Thus 4,912 electors would remain in their existing constituency and local ties would be restored. This is more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d.
33. We acknowledge that this would mean the Morecambe and South Lakeland proposed constituency being above quota. We would therefore include the Halton-with-Aughton ward

within Lancaster. This ward has less ties with other wards within Morecambe so ties are not broken to the same extent as they are between the two Skerton wards.

34. We acknowledge that 2,105 electors will move from their existing constituency but net 2,807 more electors will remain in their existing constituency than under the Commission's proposals.
35. We would therefore exclude Skerton East and include Halton-with-Aughton in the Lancaster seat. We agree with the inclusion of the Upper Lune Valley ward in this constituency which links well with the Lower Lune Valley ward already in Lancaster and Fleetwood.
36. We support the proposal to separate Fleetwood from this constituency and include part of Wyre currently in the Wyre and Preston North seat.
37. We would also include the Elswick and Little Eccleston ward from Fylde in this constituency. We note the strong links between Great Eccleston within Wyre and Little Eccleston in Fylde and we think it makes sense to include them in the same constituency.
38. We also believe the Wyre element within this constituency representing about 36% of the electorate should be recognised in the name. We would therefore name the constituency Lancaster and Wyre which is not dissimilar to a constituency that existed with that name between 1997 and 2010.
39. We support the Blackpool South constituency which sensibly extends further into Blackpool to include four further Blackpool wards.
40. We also support the proposed Blackpool North and Fleetwood constituency which loses the four wards included in Blackpool South but extends further into Wyre so it contains Fleetwood, Cleveleys and Thornton as well as five Blackpool wards. This is a most logical constituency and a much better fit for Fleetwood than Lancaster.
41. As we have explained earlier we would exclude the Elswick and Little Eccleston ward from Fylde. Other than this one minor change we support the Fylde constituency including the three wards of Poulton-le-Fylde.

42. We support the principle of the City of Preston only containing two constituencies as opposed to three currently, this being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
43. However we believe in allocating the wards between the two constituencies there is too much deviation from the existing constituency of Preston.
44. The whole of the Fishwick and Frenchwood ward and all but two electors of the Ribbleton ward are currently included in the Preston constituency and we can see no logical reason to exclude them from the proposed Preston constituency.
45. We would include these two wards meaning 10,850 electors remain in their existing constituency being much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
46. We also note that the Frenchwood part of the Fishwick and Frenchwood ward has strong ties to the City Centre ward and the Fishwick part has strong ties to the St Matthew's ward. We would restore these ties broken by the Commission's proposals thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.
47. Under our proposals only 235 electors currently within the Preston constituency (within the Preston Rural East ward) would be excluded from our proposed Preston constituency. 99.6% of Preston electors would remain in their existing constituency as opposed to 81.1% under the Commission's proposals.
48. We would therefore exclude the Fishwick and Frenchwood and Ribbleton wards from the proposed Ribble Valley constituency.
49. Instead we would include two wards with no electors currently within Preston but currently included in Wyre and Preston North but previously included in a Ribble Valley constituency. These two wards being Greyfriars and Sharoe Green.
50. We note in the Commission's booklet on the North West it says "most of the town of Bamber Bridge is no longer included within a constituency centred on the Ribble Valley." By implication this means some of the town of Bamber Bridge is still included in the proposed

Ribble Valley constituency. We propose to unite the whole of Bamber Bridge in the Ribble Valley constituency by including the two Bamber Bridge wards in their current constituency of Ribble Valley. This means that 6,562 electors remain in their existing constituency and local ties in Bamber Bridge are restored thus improving the factors under Rule 5 (1) c and d.

51. Whilst we have reunited Bamber Bridge we note the Commission has split Walton-le-Dale in a strange geographical way by including Walton-le-Dale East in the more westerly constituency of South Ribble and Walton-le-Dale West in the more easterly constituency of Ribble Valley.
52. We would unite Walton-le-Dale in the South Ribble constituency thus restoring local ties in Walton-le-Dale being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.
53. Other than excluding the two Bamber Bridge wards and including Walton-le-Dale West in South Ribble we would make no further changes to the South Ribble constituency which sensibly is contained within one local authority as opposed to the current constituency which contains parts of three local authorities.
54. We have noted our changes in respect of the Ribble Valley constituency as regards the City of Preston and the Borough of South Ribble.
55. As regards the Ribble Valley Borough part of the constituency, whilst we regret splitting this small borough, we believe it is inevitable because the neighbouring boroughs of Hyndburn, Pendle and Burnley are all too small to be coterminous with a constituency.
56. We support the addition of three Ribble Valley wards to Hyndburn. These have good links to Great Harwood and the rest of Hyndburn. The urban district of Great Harwood was part of the Clitheroe constituency, the predecessor of Ribble Valley, from 1918 to 1983.
57. However we note that in proposing this, the small town of Whalley is split between two constituencies breaking important local ties. We would therefore include the Whalley Nethertown ward as well as the Sabden ward, which has good links to Whalley and Read and Simonstone, in the Hyndburn constituency. This restores ties thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.

58. As we have included the whole of Whalley in our Hyndburn constituency we would recognise the part of Ribble Valley in the name of the constituency which we would call Hyndburn and Whalley.
59. We note that the Pendle constituency which is currently coterminous with the local authority has to increase in size.
60. We note the Commission has proposed increasing the size by including the two Burnley wards of Briercliffe and Lanehead. We support this proposal as these two wards have close links with Pendle and in particular Brierfield.
61. The Burnley constituency which is also currently coterminous is also too small and has therefore to gain electors.
62. We believe the Commission have proposed the best way of increasing the electorate by including Bacup and Whitworth. The A671 provides a direct link between the two areas and we consequently support the proposed Burnley and Bacup constituency.
63. While we regret the division of Rossendale Borough, we believe the proposed division makes more sense than the current linking of two wards with Hyndburn but not including the Helmshore part of Haslingden.
64. We therefore support the inclusion of the remaining part of the Rossendale Borough – Haslingden and Rawtenstall – in a constituency with Darwen and two wards of Chorley.
65. We note that the Blackburn South and Lower Darwen ward is currently split between Blackburn and Rossendale and Darwen.
66. By including the whole of this ward in Blackburn you are breaking important local ties in Darwen.
67. We would therefore split the ward in the same way as it is currently so that the Blackburn South part would be included in Blackburn and the Lower Darwen part in the West Pennine

Moors constituency. Polling districts BSD1 and BSD2 would remain in the West Pennine Moors constituency, and BSD3 in the Blackburn constituency.

68. By doing this you are restoring important local ties in Darwen and retaining 3,878 electors in their existing constituency. Thus improving the factors in Rule 5 (1) c and d.
69. We note that two wards are included in the constituency from Chorley. Whilst we support the inclusion of Chorley North East ward which is a largely rural ward, we do not support the addition of the Adlington and Anderton ward. Adlington has important local ties to Heath Charnock which are broken by the proposals.
70. We believe a better alternative is the Clayton East, Brindle and Hoghton ward. Whilst we accept this ward does break ties within Clayton we believe it is a better fit with the Chorley North East ward, both wards having important rural elements which are linked. In addition the Clayton East, Brindle and Hoghton ward is linked to Darwen by the M65 motorway.
71. Other than these changes to the West Pennine Moors constituency we support the consequently changed constituencies of Blackburn and Chorley both of which are entirely within their respective local authorities.
72. We support no change to the West Lancashire constituency which is compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
73. We note that although Cumbria and Lancashire are reviewed together in a sub-region four wards from West Lancashire are included with a proposed Southport constituency.
74. We support this arrangement. It would have been very difficult to arrange Cumbria and Lancashire as logically as has been suggested if the sub-region had to also include these four wards. We note these four wards are to an extent separated from the rest of Lancashire by the River Ribble to the north and the River Asland/River Douglas to the east and these West Lancashire District wards are currently not part of the West Lancashire constituency.
75. We therefore support the proposed Southport constituency although we do believe the four West Lancashire wards should be reflected in the name of the constituency. We would

propose Southport and Douglas but would welcome any alternatives if they better represented this area.

76. We therefore strongly support the sub-region of Cumbria and Lancashire and believe the proposed Cumbrian constituencies and the broad pattern of Lancashire constituencies are sensible and robust. However in Lancashire we have proposed some minor alterations to move fewer electors from their existing constituencies and break fewer local ties.
77. Net 16,564 fewer electors in Lancashire move constituencies in our proposal than under the Commission's proposals. We also restore ties in Skerton, Bamber Bridge, Walton-le-Dale, Whalley, Darwen and Preston. Therefore our proposals are more compliant under Rules 5 (1) c and d.

3. Cheshire and Merseyside

78. We support the proposal of combining Cheshire and Merseyside in a sub-region with an allocation of 26 constituencies.

79. We have already indicated our support for the proposed Southport constituency including four wards from Lancashire.

80. We support the Sefton Central constituency including the Ainsdale ward and excluding the Molyneux ward.

81. We support the unchanged Bootle constituency which is compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.

82. We support the composition of the Liverpool Norris Green constituency including the Sefton ward of Molyneux. We do not think Norris Green is an appropriate name for this constituency and we would welcome other suggestions. Ours is Liverpool Fazakerley.

83. We support the proposed Liverpool Riverside and Liverpool Wavertree constituencies which are logically adjusted to have them within the electorate range.

84. We support the proposed Liverpool Garston constituency. This no longer contains wards from the Borough of Knowsley but includes the Liverpool ward of Church which is sensible.

85. We accept that one Liverpool constituency must extend into Knowsley and we support the Page Moss and Swanside wards being included within the Liverpool West Derby constituency where there is continuous residential development between the two local authorities.

86. We consequently support the Knowsley constituency which is largely the current constituency less the two wards included in Liverpool West Derby.

87. We support the changes to the St Helens North and St Helens South constituencies in order to bring St Helens South within quota. We support the inclusion of the Knowsley ward of

Prescot South within St Helens South as this ward is currently wholly within this constituency.

88. We support the proposed Widnes and Halewood constituency which sensibly splits the Halton Borough along the River Mersey and adds three Knowsley wards to the Widnes part of that Borough.
89. We support the proposal to include the rest of the Borough of Halton south of the River Mersey in a Runcorn and Helsby constituency.
90. We note this constituency contains four wards from Cheshire West and Chester including Frodsham and Helsby. However we do not believe Helsby represents enough of this area to be included in a name. We would rename this constituency Runcorn and Weaver.
91. We support the proposed Warrington North constituency which is just reconfigured to adjust for ward boundary changes. In fact it is the existing constituency less 165 electors in the Chapelford and Old Hall ward so it is compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
92. With regards to Warrington South we accept that the electorate has to be substantially reduced and note that the proposal is to exclude the two Lymm wards. We accept this is logical except for the fact that the Lymm North ward includes Thelwall which splits the parish of Grapenhall and Thelwall and breaks important local ties with the Grapenhall ward.
93. It is absolutely clear from the study of a map that the area of the Lymm North and Thelwall ward to the west of the M6 sits with Warrington and the area to the east of the M6 sits with Lymm.
94. We would therefore include the four polling districts (SNC, SND, SNE, SNF) which make up the parish of Thelwall with Warrington South. 4,353 electors would be retained in their existing constituency and local ties would be restored. This is an improvement on the Commission's proposals under Rule 5 (1) c and d.

95. We would include the rest of Lymm as proposed within Tatton and support the fact that Dane Valley ward is included in order to bring Congleton within quota. We note and support the fact that Tatton now does not include wards from Cheshire West and Chester.
96. Unfortunately by removing the parish of Thelwall from the Tatton constituency it brings Tatton just below the quota threshold.
97. We would therefore include the polling district 4GN1 from the Gawsforth ward in Tatton. This polling district does look to Knutsford for its services.
98. We therefore support Congleton as proposed and Macclesfield less the one polling district referred to above.
99. We support the proposed Northwich constituency containing 13 wards from the Cheshire West and Chester unitary authority.
100. This is a logical constituency based on Northwich and including wards which have strong local ties to Northwich: Davenham, Moulton and Kingsmead, Hartford and Greenbank, Marbury, Rudheath, Shakerley, and Weaver and Cuddington.
101. It is not possible to include the whole of Winsford in this constituency while keeping all the wards with ties to Northwich together.
102. We therefore support the inclusion of Winsford Over and Verdun in the proposed South Cheshire constituency. As this is the successor seat to Eddisbury 9,764 electors are retained in their current constituency thus being compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
103. We note that the South Cheshire constituency is reconfigured to include the Handbridge Park and Lache wards within Chester.
104. Although this splits Chester we note that the boundary is a good one being the River Dee.

105. We support the rest of the proposed South Cheshire constituency with the exception of the Wybunbury ward.
106. The Wybunbury ward is totally within the Crewe and Nantwich constituency and we would retain it in the constituency. 4,488 electors would be retained within their existing constituency thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
107. We accept that Crewe and Nantwich has to lose electors and note that the Leighton ward is currently split between the Eddisbury and Crewe and Nantwich constituencies.
108. We would therefore include the Leighton ward in the proposed South Cheshire constituency. 3,932 electors move from Crewe and Nantwich and 497 electors are retained within the Eddisbury successor constituency.
109. Net therefore 1,053 fewer electors move constituency than under the Commission's proposals.
110. Apart from these changes we support the Crewe and Nantwich constituency and the composition of the South Cheshire constituency.
111. We would however retain the name Eddisbury for this constituency. We note that over 25% of the electorate is currently within the Chester constituency and therefore we would recognise this by adding South Chester to the name so our name would be Eddisbury and South Chester.
112. We support the Chester North and Neston constituency. We appreciate that this splits Chester but uses the very logical boundary of the River Dee.
113. The northern wards of Chester sensibly link with other Cheshire West and Chester wards going from Chester north-westwards towards Neston.
114. We fully support the proposed Wirral West constituency. This unites Heswall, currently split between Wirral South and Wirral West. We also support dividing the Upton ward between Wirral West and Wallasey.

115. The split of Upton ward ensures that Wallasey can remain unchanged except for the addition of that part-ward. This is most compliant with Rule 5 (1) c. We support this constituency.
116. We support the Birkenhead constituency which again can remain unchanged except with the addition of Bebington ward.
117. The two remaining Wirral wards Bromborough and Eastham can then be added to the urban part of Ellesmere Port which makes sense including wards combined on the south side of the Mersey.
118. We believe the Wirral element of this constituency should be included in the name which we would propose is Ellesmere Port and Bromborough.
119. We therefore broadly support the proposals for Cheshire and Merseyside but make a small number of changes to move fewer electors and restore some local ties. Thus we improve the position in respect of Rule 5 (1) c and d.

4. Greater Manchester

120. We support the sub-region of Greater Manchester and the allocation of 27 constituencies, the same as the current position. We agree with the Commission that Greater Manchester can be reviewed alone and that any crossings into Greater Manchester would cause unnecessary disruption.
121. We support the decision to allocate three constituencies to the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport. This results in minimum change and respects the local authority boundary. Thus these proposals are compliant with Rule 5 (1) b and c.
122. We therefore support the Cheadle constituency which is no change and Hazel Grove gaining the Manor ward and Stockport gaining the two Reddish wards.
123. We fully support no change to the two constituencies totally within Trafford, Altrincham and Sale West and Stretford and Urmston. This is compliant with Rule 5 (1) c. We also support the constituency partly in Trafford and partly in Manchester, Wythenshawe and Sale East being no change also being compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.
124. We support the proposal to consider the four metropolitan boroughs of the City of Salford, Wigan, Bolton and Bury as a group with an allocation of ten constituencies. We note this means that the distinction between the City of Salford and City of Manchester is established which is an improvement on the current position where they are combined.
125. We support the proposed Salford constituency containing nine wards of the City of Salford. We also support the proposed Worsley and Eccles constituency containing seven wards from the City of Salford and the Astley Mosley Common ward of the Metropolitan District of Wigan. We note that there is continuous residential development between the Wigan ward and the Boothstown and Ellenbrook ward. We further note that the Worsley constituency contained this ward between 1983 and 2010.
126. We support the Wigan constituency remaining unchanged, this is compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.

127. We note that the Makerfield constituency could have remained unchanged. We also note that the proposals exclude the Ashton ward which means that Ashton-in-Makerfield is divided between constituencies.
128. We would retain the Ashton ward in Makerfield thus restoring local ties and ensuring 8,902 electors are retained in their existing constituency. Thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d.
129. We also note that the exclusion of the Leigh West ward from the proposed Leigh South and Atherton constituency breaks significant local ties.
130. We would include Leigh West in the Leigh constituency thus restoring local ties and meaning 10,454 electors are retained in their current constituency. Thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d.
131. We note that paragraph 75 of the Commission's booklet on the North West acknowledges the division of the towns of Leigh and Ashton-in-Makerfield between constituencies. We further note that the Commission would welcome alternative arrangements in this area that would result in less disruption without having consequential negative effects on the rest of Greater Manchester.
132. Clearly moving the two wards back to their existing constituency would cause less disruption but we acknowledge that you then have to reduce the electorate in the Leigh constituency so it is within quota.
133. This can clearly be done by splitting wards between Leigh and Makerfield. We have looked at a number of options to do this.
134. We believe the least worst option would be to split the wards of Atherleigh and Leigh West.
135. If the Boundary Commission was insistent that whole polling districts are used this would mean including polling districts LCA and LDA in Makerfield rather than Leigh. This

means 2,178 electors move from Leigh to Makerfield ensuring both constituencies are within quota.

136. However if the Commission were to split these two polling districts it would make a better sense of communities.

137. The community of Dangerous Corner is currently split between the Atherleigh ward and the Hindley Green ward so moving this area in LCA into Makerfield would restore these ties.

138. We would also move the Pickley Green area which is split between the two polling districts we are proposing moving to Makerfield.

139. If it was possible to split these polling districts we could retain West Leigh together in Leigh.

140. On the basis of no split polling districts it is a much less disruptive plan than the Commission's proposals and a significant improvement on them.

141. Net 17,178 electors would be retained within their existing constituency and important ties would be restored in Leigh and in Ashton-in-Makerfield.

142. Other than these changes we would support the proposals in respect of the Makerfield and Leigh South and Atherton constituencies, although clearly we would just leave Leigh in the name. Therefore it would be Leigh and Atherton.

143. We note the existing constituencies of Leigh and Makerfield are county constituencies, but the Commission propose both Leigh South and Atherton and Makerfield as borough constituencies. Both seats contain more than a significant rural element and therefore we propose they retain county constituency status.

144. In proposing this solution we have met the conditions in paragraph 74 of the Commission's booklet on the North West of achieving less disruption without any knock-on effects beyond the two constituencies of Makerfield and Leigh South and Atherton.

145. We fully support the proposed Bolton West constituency which includes the Hulton ward rather than Atherton ward. This means the constituency consists of only wards within one local authority rather than two at the moment. Thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) b.
146. We fully support the Bolton North East proposed constituency as it needs to expand and to do with this with the addition of one Bolton ward of Little Lever and Darcy Lever is very logical.
147. We support the remaining Bolton wards being included with three City of Salford wards in a constituency of Bolton South and Walkden. We note this enables the town of Walkden to be kept together in one constituency.
148. We accept that Bury North needs to have a ward added to it to bring it within quota. On balance we believe that Radcliffe North is the least worst choice. Whilst Radcliffe is split by this proposal we note that Radcliffe North contains Ainsworth, a separate community with ties to the Church ward within Bury North. Any alternative ward would break ties for example Unsworth ward has strong ties to Whitefield. The shape of any alternative constituency would also be worse. We therefore support the proposed Bury North constituency.
149. We also support the proposed Bury South constituency and believe the City of Salford ward of Kersal and Broughton Park is a good fit with Bury South having continuous residential development and strong links to the Sedgley ward.
150. We support the proposal to add one Rochdale ward to the Heywood and Middleton constituency and consequently support the proposed Rochdale constituency.
151. We accept the proposed Heywood constituency although we have concerns over the splitting of Middleton.
152. We therefore accept the Manchester Blackley constituency including two Middleton wards from the Metropolitan Borough of Rochdale.

153. We note with interest in paragraph 79 of the Commission's booklet on the North West the alternative possibility suggested by the Commission in respect of the two Oldham constituencies which are suggested as no change constituencies.
154. We do think there is a good case for a more compact urban seat in the west containing a greater percentage of Oldham town centre. We would therefore include the Alexandra and St Mary's ward in Oldham West and exclude the Royton wards. We would name this constituency Oldham West.
155. We support the concept of the Oldham East constituency having a more suburban and moorland character and would therefore include the Royton wards and exclude Alexandra and St Mary's. We would name this constituency Oldham East, Saddleworth and Royton.
156. We do not support the proposed Ashton-under-Lyne and Denton and Hyde constituencies. We note that the Commission acknowledges that the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency could have remain unchanged.
157. We would propose Stalybridge and Hyde remain as an unchanged constituency. We note that the Ashton-under-Lyne constituency includes three wards from the current Stalybridge and Hyde constituency: Dukinfield Stalybridge, Mossley and Stalybridge North. 27,278 electors move unnecessarily. We also note that Stalybridge is split breaking important local ties.
158. We would include these three wards with the five wards from Stalybridge and Hyde included in the proposed Denton and Hyde constituency. Thus we would restore local ties and have an unchanged constituency. This proposal is much more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c and d.
159. We would therefore include the three Denton wards with the five remaining wards from the Ashton-under-Lyne constituency in an Ashton and Denton constituency.

160. We note that the proposed Failsworth and Droylsden constituency contains part of three Metropolitan Boroughs but we believe in order to achieve robust constituencies in eastern Greater Manchester this is probably the least worst option and we accept it.

161. We support the Manchester Central, Manchester Longsight and Manchester Withington constituencies which are logical combinations of wards in Manchester.

162. We therefore broadly support the proposals in Greater Manchester but make some changes in composition, creating a no change Stalybridge and Hyde, accepting the Commission's alternative proposal in Oldham and restoring Leigh West and Ashton to their respective constituencies.

5. Conclusion

163. We therefore broadly support the Commission's proposals in the North West of England. However we make some changes which move fewer electors from their existing constituency and restore local ties.

164. We have tried to best meet the Factors as outlined in Rule 5 – the Rules for Redistribution of Seats (Schedule 2 to the Act).

165. We move net 33,939 fewer electors than in the Commission's proposals thus we are more compliant with Rule 5 (1) c.

166. We restore local ties in Preston, Bamber Bridge, Walton-le-Dale, Whalley, Darwen, Skerton, Stalybridge, Leigh, Ashton, and Thelwall and Grappenhall thus being more compliant with Rule 5 (1) d.

167. We hope the Commission will adopt our relatively minor adjustments to their proposals and when they publish revised proposals in due course they will be included.

168. We look forward to giving evidence at the North West Public Hearings and commenting on any representations received by the Commission. We reserve our right to adjust our position in the light of these representations.

169. We attach as Appendix A a schedule of the composition of our proposed constituencies in the North West region, as Appendix B a list of our proposed constituencies and maps showing the proposals, and as Appendix C maps of the wards we propose to split between constituencies.