



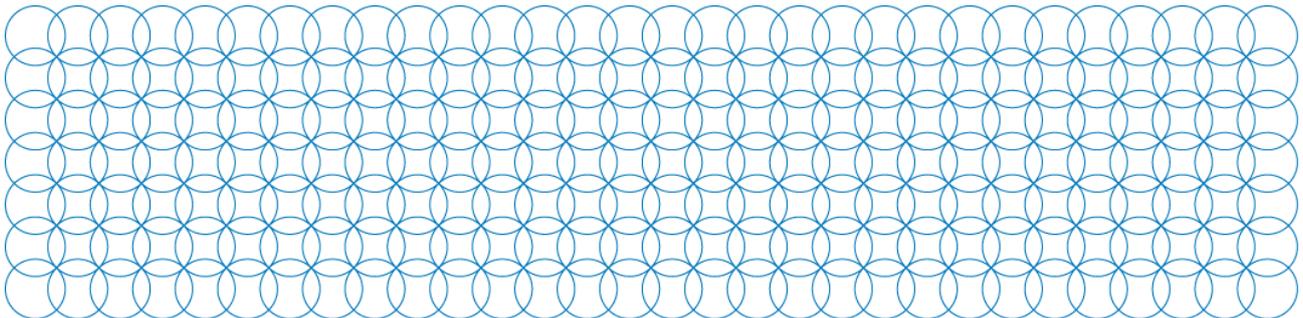
JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES



HM Courts &
Tribunals Service

Consultation on the merger of the Local Justice Areas in Greater Manchester

**A consultation undertaken on behalf of the Greater Manchester Judicial
Business Group and HM Courts and Tribunals Service**



Consultation Paper

This consultation begins on 3rd August 2015

This consultation ends on 14th September 2015

**A consultation produced by HM Courts & Tribunals Service,
part of the Ministry of Justice, on behalf of the Greater Manchester Judicial
Business Group.**

About this consultation

This consultation is being undertaken on behalf of the Greater Manchester Judicial Business Group (JBG) and the North-West Region of HMCTS. The JBG is the judicial body responsible for ensuring that, at clerkship level, there are appropriate arrangements in place for the conduct of the judicial business of the area and that there is consultation on a regular basis with the Cluster Managers in relation to the operation of the courts.

[NB: the JBGs membership includes representatives of the Circuit Bench, the District Bench, the Bench Chairmen and the Magistrates' Association and the Justices' Clerk and Cluster Manager.]

The consultation follows the decision of the eight Bench Chairmen in Greater Manchester to invite HMCTS to consult on the establishment of a single bench.

To:

Magistrates in Greater Manchester, Magistrates' Association Bench Chairman, District Judge's (Magistrates' Courts) within Greater Manchester, Resident Judge and Liaison Judges in Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Constabulary, Crown Prosecution Service, the ten Metropolitan Councils in Greater Manchester, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Defence Solicitors, National Probation Service, Youth Offending Teams, Witness Service, Prisoner Escort and Custody Services, HMCTS staff in Greater Manchester and individuals interested in the listing arrangements in Greater Manchester

Duration:

From 3rd August 2015 to 14th September 2015

Enquiries (including requests for the paper in an alternative format) to:

Jane Hodgkiss
Wigan & Leigh Courthouse,
Darlington Street, Wigan, WN1 1DW
Tel: 01942 405478
Email: GM-JusticesClerk@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

How to respond:

Please email your response by the 14th September 2015 to:

Norman Draper
Wigan & Leigh Courthouse,
Darlington Street, Wigan, WN1 1DW
Tel: 01942 405478
Email: GM-JusticesClerk@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Response paper:

A response to this consultation exercise is due to be published in October 2015

Contents

Executive Summary	6
Introduction	7
Background	7
Relevant Statutory Provisions	9
Current Arrangements.....	10
The Proposal	12
Summary	13
Questions for Consultation	14
The Consultation Process and How to Respond	15
About You	24
Response Form	25
Contact Details	26
Consultation Criteria	27

Annexes

Annex A – List of Persons Consulted	16
Annex B 1 – Serving Magistrates by LJA	18
Annex B 2 – Local Justice Areas by number of Magistrates	21

Executive Summary

The Judicial Business Group (JBG) for Greater Manchester is responsible for ensuring that, at clerkship level, there are appropriate arrangements in place for the conduct of the judicial business of the area and that consultation is undertaken with those affected by any proposed changes to the operation of the courts and, in particular, to the way in which cases are listed.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) has a responsibility to ensure the efficient and effective administration of justice within the area.

This paper, issued on behalf of the JBG and HMCTS sets out for consultation the proposed merger of the eight Local Justice Areas (LJAs, also known as Benches) in Greater Manchester into a single Local Justice Area, to be known as the Greater Manchester LJA.

At present the business of magistrates' courts in Greater Manchester is split between eight LJAs:

- Bolton
- Bury and Rochdale
- Manchester and Salford
- Oldham
- Stockport
- Tameside
- Trafford
- Wigan and Leigh

With courthouses in, respectively,

- Bolton
- Bury
- Manchester
- Oldham
- Stockport
- Tameside
- Trafford
- Wigan

The court estate is the subject of a separate national consultation exercise commenced on 16th July 2015; this consultation is not dependent on the outcome the national consultation.

A reduction in the number of LJAs will improve the effectiveness of the delivery of justice by improving flexibility in dealing with cases in magistrates' courts in Greater Manchester and by increasing the opportunities for magistrates to retain experience and competence. It also enables best use of resources by more effective listing and by streamlining out of court activities of magistrates such as meetings, training and the work of Bench Chairmen and other Bench officers.

There are clear benefits to be gained from a reduction in relation to the deployment of magistrates across Greater Manchester and the experience which they will gain through dealing with a variety of business and offence type.

Consideration of merger of benches is not linked to buildings usage and this paper is independent of the proposal which HMCTS has for the court estate.

This consultation seeks the wider views of those people or groups who may be affected by a change including magistrates, other members of the judiciary, court users, stakeholders and public authorities within the immediate areas concerned.

Introduction

This paper sets out a proposal concerning the future arrangements for Local Justice Areas in Greater Manchester.

There are three key reasons for considering merger of the current eight LJA's:

- to improve the effectiveness of the delivery of justice by improving flexibility in dealing with cases;
- to make better use of reduced resources and
- to increase the opportunities for magistrates to retain experience and thus competence.

The JBG must address the question of magistrates' sittings against the background of falling court sittings in criminal jurisdiction. The JBG must also consider the resources available to HMCTS and criminal justice agencies to ensure that justice can be delivered as effectively as possible with reduced resources. Staffing within HMCTS and other organisations is determined by the workload and has therefore reduced over recent years.

Background

HMCTS was created on 1st April 2011 and is an agency of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). It is responsible for the efficient and effective administration of the Magistrates' Courts in Greater Manchester.

The JBG for the Greater Manchester cluster was introduced in 2014 and is responsible for ensuring that, at cluster level, there are appropriate arrangements in place for the conduct of the judicial business of the area and that there is consultation on a regular basis with the Cluster Manager in relation to the operation of the courts.

The Courts Act 2003 requires England and Wales to be divided into Local Justice Areas. The Lord Chancellor may alter LJAs by order, including combining them, and section 8 of that Act requires him to consult any Justices assigned to the area(s) and any local authority whose area includes the LJA, before doing so.

Magistrates have national jurisdiction therefore they can deal with most cases irrespective of where the offence is alleged to have been committed. However, cases should usually be listed in the LJA where the offence takes place or where the defendant lives. Magistrates are assigned to a Local Justice Area (or Bench) for organisational purposes and generally sit only in the LJA to which they are assigned – subject to the exceptions contained within Section 10 of the Courts Act 2003.

At present there are eight LJAs in Greater Manchester, each with its own courthouse. Family magistrates from each LJA already sit together on family work within the county.

The final decision to change a LJA is taken by the Lord Chancellor following statutory consultation. The decision must be made primarily on the need to ensure access to justice and to deal effectively with the business of magistrates' courts, taking into account the needs of local communities and the wider criminal justice system infrastructure, the deployment of magistrates and their need for support and the workload and deployment of HMCTS staff (in accordance with HMCTS Guidance on the Alteration of Local Justice Areas 2012).

Over recent years LJAs have been increasing in size in Greater Manchester as Benches have merged. This reflects a national trend under which a number of County Benches have been established , including

- Bedfordshire
- Berkshire

- Buckinghamshire
- Cambridgeshire
- Cornwall
- Gloucestershire
- Herefordshire
- Lincolnshire
- Norfolk
- Nottinghamshire
- Oxfordshire
- Shropshire
- Suffolk
- Wiltshire
- Worcestershire.

The County of Warwickshire has also merged with the City of Coventry to produce one LJA.

Changes towards a County LJA/Bench are also pending in

- Dorset
- North Yorkshire
- Lancashire

While a consultation has recently closed to reduce the current 7 LJAs in Northumbria to 2.

The size of the individual Benches within Greater Manchester varies as shown in the table below which gives the number of magistrates on the active list on the 1st July 2015 being shown below:

Bench/Local Justice Area	Number of magistrates assigned
Bolton	112
Bury and Rochdale	174
Manchester and Salford	306
Oldham	96
Stockport	102
Tameside	94
Trafford	87
Wigan and Leigh	129
Greater Manchester Total	1100

Caseload of magistrates' courts in Greater Manchester

Magistrates courts both nationally and within Greater Manchester have been faced with a falling caseload in criminal and civil business combined with an increase in family business.

The distribution of the business within the eight LJAs means that the work has to be listed not according to efficiency and the needs of individual cases but by the LJA boundaries. The result of LJA restrictions means that it is difficult for HMCTS to make best use of its resources and placing a burden on criminal justice agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service, National Probation Service, Youth Offending Teams and defence practitioners. One key factor which affects the ability of all these agencies to manage within their resources is the number of court sessions that they are required to cover. Additionally, the low level of business at some courts reduces the experience of magistrates, with a risk to their competence. The current listing also fosters delay since courts have to be held at longer intervals than would be the case if all the work was organised within a single LJA. This impacts negatively on victims, witnesses, defendants and, where defendants are held in custody, the Prison Service.

The existence of eight LJAs means that the number of meetings which have to be serviced by managers and support staff is at an unacceptable level given the reducing resources available to HMCTS.

Courthouses

Consideration of a merger of the LJAs in Greater Manchester by the JBG is not linked to the usage of buildings. However, it is highly likely that the distribution of work between neighbouring courthouses would be reviewed as a result of any merger.

Relevant Statutory Provisions

Local Justice Areas are governed by section 8 of the Courts Act 2003:

- (1) *England and Wales is to be divided into areas to be known as Local Justice Areas.*
- (2) *The areas are to be those specified by an order made by the Lord Chancellor.*
- (3) *Each local justice area established by order under section (2) is to be known by such name as is specified in the order (but subject to section (4)).*
- (4) *The Lord Chancellor may make orders altering local justice areas.*
- (5) *“Altering”, in relation to a local justice area, includes (as well as changing its boundaries)-*
 - (a) *Combining it with one or more local justice areas,*
 - (b) *Dividing it between two or more other local justice areas, and*
 - (c) *Changing its name.*
- (5A) *Before making any order under section (2) or (4), the Lord Chancellor must consult the Lord Chief Justice*
- (6) *Before making an order under subsection (4) in relation to a local justice area the Lord Chancellor must consult –*
 - (a) *The justices of the peace assigned to the local justice area....*
...and
 - (b) *Unless the alteration consists only of a change of name, any local authorities whose area includes the local justice area or a part of the local justice area.*

The provisions for LJA mergers are different to the rules for Panel combinations. While Panels have to make an application themselves for combination it is a local decision for the JBG or HMCTS to determine whether or not to make a recommendation to the Lord Chancellor for merger of LJAs: Benches therefore do not need to vote on their dissolution.

Section 21 of the Courts Act is also relevant: it is key to a successful merger that magistrates are fully consulted in compliance with that section:

The Lord Chancellor must take all reasonable and practical steps –

- (a) *For ensuring that lay justices acting in a local justice area are kept informed of matters affecting them in the performance of their duties, and*
- (b) *For ascertaining their views on such matters.*

This consultation complies with the requirements of Section 8(6) of the Courts Act 2003 and with the HMCTS Guidance on the Alteration of Local Justice Areas issued in 2012.

Changes of this nature require a statutory consultation process to be undertaken. On this occasion, in addition to the statutory consultees, a wide range of court users are being consulted in the hope that there will be widespread support for a reduction in the number of Local Justice Areas and a shared understanding of the advantages which will be achieved by a merger of Local Justice Areas. However, this list is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive and responses are welcomed from anyone with an interest in or views on the subject covered by this paper.

Current arrangements

Greater Manchester is sub-divided, for the purposes of the administration of summary justice, into three sub-clusters made up of the eight local justice areas. The sub-clusters are

BBW (Bolton, Bury & Rochdale and Wigan & Leigh)
M&S (Manchester & Salford)
TOTS (Oldham, Stockport, Tameside and Trafford)

With regard to criminal offences committed within the county, the venue for a court hearing is determined, in the main, according to the LJA in which the offence takes place – the exceptions are minor motoring (all listed at Manchester and Salford), TV Licensing cases (listed at Stockport and Wigan & Leigh) and DVLA prosecutions (listed at Trafford). For most parts of the county this means that adult criminal proceedings are heard at the courthouse which is closest to where the offence occurred. No other criminal justice agency splits the county into eight areas, but all have had to adapt their operating practices to the distribution of resources to fit this structure.

By contrast, a ‘whole county’ approach is taken in relation to Family Court cases with Family hearing taking place at the Bolton Combined Court, Manchester Civil Justice Centre, Oldham County Court, Stockport Court and Wigan & Leigh Court.

The Need to Consider Change

- **Courthouses and workload**

A key factor in the operation of magistrates’ courts is the number of legal advisers; as a matter of law, magistrates cannot sit without one. Budget allocation for legal advisers is determined principally by caseload, irrespective of the number of courts which operate. Caseload for magistrates’ courts, in general (other than the family court) has been falling and this is likely to continue. The current arrangement of LJAs in Greater Manchester means that the caseload cannot be arranged in the most efficient way in order to match the total staffing allocation. Cases are split between eight LJAs, resulting in more courts overall being held than the workload requires. This division into eight limits the flexibility to apply resources according to the needs of the case. This has a direct impact on court users and the wider public interest, as it generates delay.

- **Magistrates**

As detailed above, there are currently 1100 magistrates in Greater Manchester assigned to each of the eight LJAs as shown. Although they have nationwide jurisdiction, they are assigned to one LJA/Bench and therefore for adult court purposes can sit only at the courthouse that deals with the work from their LJA. For many of them, given the geography, distance and number of venues, travel to another courthouse may be as convenient and in some cases easier than the travelling currently undertaken to sit in the LJA to which they are assigned.

The consequence of sitting at only one courthouse is that magistrates on all the Benches (to a greater or lesser degree) no longer have the opportunity to experience the full range of work in the adult court.

Merger of the eight LJAs will help to redress this. While geographic or other constraints may preclude some from sitting at another courthouse, those magistrates able and willing to sit at all or a number of the eight courthouses will have the opportunity to do so and so undertake a broader cross section of the adult court business. Merging LJAs is not a complete solution to the problem of magistrates sittings but it does remove an artificial barrier to more effective deployment of magistrates and ensures that disparities in work are evened out to ensure the maximum experience for all the magistrates in the county.

If the proposal were taken forward, allocation of magistrates' sittings will be based on preferences expressed by individual magistrates. **No one would be expected or required to sit at a location that is inconvenient to them.** Many justices' home or work base is, however, of equal distance to more than one court location. Others already have a positive experience of sitting across sites in family courts.

- **Service provision by HMCTS to court users before, during and after court hearings**

A more flexible deployment of the judiciary would, as discussed above, enable more flexible listing, and should reduce delays, which have an enormous impact on defendants, witnesses and victims.

A single LJA would enable more effective listing arrangements to be introduced so enabling public bodies to better cope within their available resources. The most significant of these is the Crown Prosecution Service, which is the largest single agency bringing cases to court, and which has experienced (and continues to experience) very significant pressures on its budget.

A larger LJA would enable work to be brigaded within the county, leading to more efficient use of the resources of other prosecutors and supporting agencies such as Probation and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs). This can be done at present by centralising business at a specific LJA, as it is to some extent, but that restricts the experience to members of one Bench, and there is less flexibility to move the work to another courthouse. On the other hand, some defendants, witnesses and other users may be expected to travel further. This can be mitigated by listing flexibly, for example moving trials to the most appropriate venue as well as by increased use of technologies such as remote live-links, enabling witnesses to give evidence from places other than in courthouses.

Greater Manchester has a good system of public transport and if it was possible to review the listing on a countywide basis within a single LJA is not likely that court users would have excessive travel (using public transport) to courts within the county – indeed there may be many that would travel less. Justice would continue to be delivered by magistrates who have a local connection with the county of Greater Manchester, within national laws and guidelines.

Rationalising sittings across Greater Manchester could impact solicitors both positively and negatively; some solicitors may be obliged to travel further and may find they have business in several courthouses, although that can already happen now. Since merger could reduce court sittings for different types of business there may conversely be benefits for solicitors firms who would not have to assign advocates to be in as many places at once.

- **Administrative support provided to Benches by HMCTS**

The Justices' Clerk and his team will be more easily able to support fully a reduced number of LJAs. The experience in areas that have undergone a similar exercise is that the number of meetings and consequential administration has been greatly reduced. Indeed this is the experience in Greater Manchester following recent mergers. The current arrangements require the Justices' Clerk and his

team to support Bench meetings, Training and Development Committees, Judicial Leadership Groups and other committees for each of the seven Benches (or for groupings of the current seven Benches). A reduced number of LJAs will mean that the administration will be able to maintain and deliver a consistent level of support across the county and avoid the levels of duplication of work involved in the current arrangements.

The proposal

- The JBG and HMCTS propose to combine the Local Justice Areas of Bolton, Bury & Rochdale, Manchester & Salford, Oldham, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan & Leigh into a single LJA and to name the new area the Greater Manchester Local Justice Area.

However, it is recognised that there are other options for merger between the current seven LJAs and the following tables summarise the potential advantages and disadvantages of a range of different options:

Option 1 – Merge to form one Local Justice Area

Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Better able to operate and make best use of available staffing resources• Maximises flexibility of listing and rota• Shorter waiting times• Consistency of services in the county (e.g. DV)• Fairer distribution of work between magistrates and improved competence• More frequent sittings of some categories of work• Reduction in demand for support requirements for Bench• Support more focused• Some magistrates and users will have a shorter distance to travel (depending on listing arrangements)• Better management of resources for other agencies• Opportunity for a more defined role for bench Deputy Chairmen• Ability to better manage a bench with more focussed, longer and productive sessions/sittings
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased demand on Chairman and Deputy Chairmen to provide pastoral support and general administration• Travel for some users and magistrates potentially greater• Magistrates travel expenses may increase• Size of Bench• Reduced social/team aspect for magistrates

Option 2 – No Change

Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintains local identify and social/team aspect of smaller benches• Shorter distance to travel for some parties, witnesses and magistrates
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inefficient use of staffing resources• Will require cancellation of some more court sessions• Long delays between hearings• Less flexibility for magistrates sitting arrangements• Not all magistrates can maintain competence• Inconsistent provision in a large number of areas (e.g. DV, youth)• Less flexibility in moving work

- Other agencies struggling to cope with the number of courts – impact on their operations and the public
- Large number of meetings to be serviced and seven sets of annual elections

Option 3 – Merge LJAs in the three sub-clusters to form three LJAs (3 LJAs)

- Advantages**
- Maintains identity and social/team aspect of smaller benches, though to a lesser extent
 - Shorter distance to travel for some parties, witnesses and magistrates
- Disadvantages**
- Inefficient use of staffing resources
 - Greater Manchester travel links focus on the city of Manchester & Salford
 - Will require cancellation of some court sessions
 - Long delays between hearings
 - Less flexibility for the magistrates sitting arrangements
 - Not all magistrates can maintain competence
 - Inconsistent provision in a large number of areas (e.g. youth and DV)
 - Less flexibility in moving work
 - Other agencies struggling to cope with the number of courts – impact on their operations and the public
 - Many meetings still duplicated
 - Does not fully address the issues arising from the falling caseload
 - Number of meetings still to be serviced and three sets of annual elections
 - Merger will probably fall to be addressed again in due course because of falling workload or sittings

Impact Assessment

Full consideration has been given to the need for an Impact Assessment of this proposal. No risks or adverse consequences have been identified and it has therefore been concluded that no Impact Assessment is required. If required, however, this decision will be reviewed during the consultation and an Impact Assessment undertaken following consideration of consultation responses.

Summary

The JBG has a responsibility to ensure that there are appropriate arrangements in place for the conduct of the judicial business of the area and HMCTS has a responsibility to ensure the efficient and effective administration of justice. Both jointly invite responses on whether the number of Local Justice Areas in Greater Manchester should be reduced to one; they therefore welcome views on any aspect of the paper and on the questions set out below.

Questions for Consultation

We would welcome responses to the following questions set out in this consultation paper.

- Q1:** Do you agree with the proposal to merge the LJAs in Greater Manchester into one Local Justice Area to be known as the “Greater Manchester Local Justice Area”? If not, why not?
- Q2:** Please describe any particular impacts the document has not already considered that should be taken into account and why?
- Q3:** Please indicate any viable alternative options for merger which you would like to put forward with a brief explanation of the reasons why you consider this to be more appropriate than a single Local Justice Area.
- Q4:** Do you have any other observations or comments about any of the issues raised in this Consultation Paper?

The Consultation Process and How to Respond

This consultation process concludes on 14th September 2015.

Please email your response by 14th September 2015 to:

Norman Draper
Wigan & Leigh Courthouse,
Darlington Street, Wigan, WN1 1DW

Tel: 01942 405478

Email: GM-JusticesClerk@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

If the preferred model is taken forward HMCTS will notify the Chairmen of the Benches, by letter, by 5th October 2015. Any such decision will also be published by way of public notice in each courthouse.

Thank you for participating in this consultation exercise.

List of Persons, Groups or Organisations Consulted

- Magistrates in Greater Manchester;
- District Judge (Magistrates' Court) Carr;
- District Judge (Magistrates' Court) Hadfield;
- District Judge (Magistrates' Court) Prowse;
- District Judge (Magistrates' Court) Qureshi;
- District Judge (Magistrates' Court) Sanders;
- Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester;
- Resident Judge HHJ Stockdale QC,
- Liaison Judge HHJ Clayson;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Greene;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Hull;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Khokhar;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Leeming;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Mort;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Neild;
- Liaison Judge HHJ Watson
- High Sheriff Greater Manchester;
- Greater Manchester Magistrates' Association Branch Chairman;
- Gill Hague, North West Regional Delivery Director HMCTS;
- Paul McGladrigan, Head of Crime, NW Region HMCTS;
- Clare Beech, Greater Manchester Crime Cluster Manager HMCTS ;
- Norman Draper, Justices' Clerk Greater Manchester;
- Deputy Justices' Clerks for Greater Manchester;
- HMCTS Greater Manchester staff;
- Police and Crime Commissioner and Interim Mayor for Greater Manchester;
- Greater Manchester Constabulary;
- Crown Prosecution Service (Greater Manchester);
- National Probation Service;
- Youth Offending Teams in Greater Manchester;
- HM Prison Service;
- GEOamey;
- Contracts Delivery Manager, Prisoner Escort Custody Services;
- Defence Solicitors in Greater Manchester;
- Legal Aid Agency;
- PCS Trade Union;
- Witness Services;
- Greater Manchester MPs
 - Graham Brady Member of Parliament for Altrincham and Sale West;
 - Angela Rayner Member of Parliament for Ashton under Lyne;
 - Graham Stringer Member of Parliament for Blackley and Broughton;
 - David Crausby Member of Parliament for Manchester Bolton North East;
 - Yasmin Qureshi Member of Parliament for Bolton South East;
 - Chris Green Member of Parliament for Bolton West;
 - David Nuttall Member of Parliament for Bury North;
 - Ivan Lewis Member of Parliament for Bury South;
 - Mary Robinson Member of Parliament for Cheadle;
 - Andrew Gwynne Member of Parliament for Denton and Reddish;

- William Wragg Member of Parliament for Hazel Grove;
 - Liz McInnes Member of Parliament for Heywood and Middleton;
 - Andy Burham Member of Parliament for Leigh;
 - Yvonne Fovarhue Member of Parliament for Makerfield;
 - Lucy Powell Member of Parliament for Manchester, Central;
 - Sir Gerald Kaufman Member of Parliament for Manchester, Gorton;
 - Jeff Smith Member of Parliament for Manchester, Withington;
 - Debbie Abrahams Member of Parliament for Oldham East and Saddleworth;
 - Michael Meacher Member of Parliament for Oldham West and Royton;
 - Simon Danczuck Member of Parliament for Rochdale;
 - Rebecca Long-Bailey Member of Parliament for Salford and Eccles;
 - Jonathan Reynolds Member of Parliament for Stalybridge and Hyde;
 - Ann Coffey Member of Parliament for Stockport;
 - Kate Green Member of Parliament for Stretford and Urmston;
 - Lisa Nandy Member of Parliament for Wigan;
 - Barbara Keeley Member of Parliament for Worsley and Eccles South;
 - Mike Kane Member of Parliament for Wythenshawe and Sale East.
- Local Law Societies in Greater Manchester:
- Bolton Law Society
 - Manchester Law Society
 - Wigan Law Society
- Local Authorities in Greater Manchester
- Bolton Borough Council
 - Bury Borough Council
 - Manchester City Council
 - Oldham Borough Council
 - Rochdale Borough Council
 - Salford Borough Council
 - Stockport Borough Council
 - Tameside Borough Council
 - Trafford Borough Council
 - Wigan Borough Council

However, this list is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive and responses are welcomed from anyone with an interest in or views on the subject covered by this paper.

**Serving Magistrates by Local Justice Area as at February
2015**

Advisory Committee	Local Justice Area	Total
Avon & Somerset	Bristol	234
	North Avon	83
	Somerset	318
Bedfordshire	Bedfordshire	195
Birmingham & Solihull	Birmingham & Solihull	458
Black Country	Black Country	416
Cambridgeshire	Cambridgeshire	213
Central and South London	Central London	314
	South East London	236
	South London	264
Cheshire	North Cheshire	138
	West Cheshire	131
	South & East Cheshire	129
Cities of Westminster and London	Family Proceedings Court	20
	Central London Youth Court	67
City of Westminster	North Westminster	0
Cleveland	Hartlepool	56
	Teesside	228
Coventry & Warwickshire	Coventry & Warwickshire	324
Cumbria	North and West Cumbria	102
	South Cumbria	62
Derbyshire	Southern Derbyshire	210
	Northern Derbyshire	112
Devon & Cornwall	North and East Devon	148
	South & West Devon	205
	Cornwall	124
Dorset	East Dorset	163
	West Dorset	64
Durham	County Durham & Darlington	218
Dyfed Powys	Carmarthenshire	81
	Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire	82
	Montgomeryshire	33
	Brecknock and Radnorshire	33
Essex	South Essex	187
	North Essex	225
Gloucestershire	Gloucestershire	174
Greater Manchester	Bolton	118
	Bury and Rochdale	198
	Manchester and Salford	314
	Oldham	102
	Stockport	111
	Tameside	98
	Trafford	96
Wigan & Leigh	133	
Gwent	Gwent	233
Hampshire & Isle of Wight	West Hampshire	185
	North Hampshire	151
	South East Hampshire	125
	South Hampshire	61
	Isle of Wight	48
Hertfordshire	West & Central Hertfordshire	235
	North & East Hertfordshire	149

Annex B1 cont

Advisory Committee	Local Justice Area	Total
Humber	North Lincolnshire	64
	Grimsby and Cleethorpes	75
	Hull and Holderness	99
	East Yorkshire	70
Kent	North Kent	181
	East Kent	249
	Central Kent	211
Lancashire	East Lancashire	174
	Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale	159
	Chorley	61
	Fylde Coast	186
	Lancaster	79
	Ormskirk	52
	Wyre	0
Leicestershire and Rutland	Preston & South Ribble	166
	Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Market Bosworth	44
	Leicester, Market Harborough and Lutterworth	211
	Loughborough, Melton, Belvior and Rutland	73
Lincolnshire	East Lincolnshire	57
	South Lincolnshire	68
	West Lincolnshire	100
London West	South West London	260
	North West London	272
	West London	325
Merseyside	Liverpool and Knowsley	251
	Sefton	125
	St. Helens	86
	Wirral	151
Mid & South Glamorgan	Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan	211
	Glamorgan Valleys	107
	Newcastle and Ogmore	63
Norfolk	Norfolk	276
North and East London	East London	321
	North East London	250
	North London	279
North Wales	Denbighshire	54
	Gwynedd	54
	Ynys Mon/Anglesey	29
	Conwy	54
	North East Wales	116
North Yorkshire	Harrogate and Skipton	62
	Northallerton and Richmond	47
	Scarborough	52
	York and Selby	100
Northamptonshire	Corby	32
	Kettering	42
	Northampton, Daventry and Towcester	143
	Wellingborough	54
Northumbria	Berwick-Upon-Tweed	15
	Mid and South East Northumberland	86
	Gateshead District	86
	Newcastle and Tynedale	181
	North Tyneside District	98
	South Tyneside District	87

Annex B1 cont

Advisory Committee	Local Justice Area	Total
	City of Sunderland	127
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire	442
South Yorkshire	Barnsley	71
	Doncaster	112
	Rotherham	75
	Sheffield	197
Staffordshire	Central/South West Staffordshire	114
	North Staffordshire	144
	South East Staffordshire	89
Suffolk	Suffolk	162
Surrey	North Surrey	72
	South East Surrey	84
	South West Surrey	102
Sussex	Sussex (Northern)	112
	Sussex (Western)	128
	Sussex (Central)	146
	Sussex (Eastern)	118
Thames Valley	Buckinghamshire	226
	Oxfordshire	200
	Berkshire	268
West Glamorgan	West Glamorgan	159
West Mercia	Herefordshire	85
	Worcestershire	226
	Shropshire	148
West Yorkshire	Bradford and Keighley	257
	Calderdale	108
	Kirklees	134
	Leeds	318
	Wakefield and Pontefract	129
Wiltshire	County of Wiltshire	180
Total		19885

Annex B2

Local Justice Area by magistrates' numbers as at February 2015

Local Justice Area	
Birmingham & Solihull	458
Nottinghamshire	442
Black County	416
West London	325
Coventry & Warwickshire	324
East London	321
Somerset	318
Leeds	318
Central London	314
Manchester and Salford	314
North London	279
Norfolk	276
North West London	272
Berkshire	268
South London	264
South West London	260
Bradford and Keighley	257
Liverpool and Knowsley	251
North East London	250
East Kent	249
South East London	236
West & Central Hertfordshire	235
Bristol	234
Gwent	233
Teesside	228
Buckinghamshire	226
Worcestershire	226
North Essex	225
County Durham & Darlington	218
Cambridgeshire	213
Central Kent	211
Leicester, Market Harborough and Lutterworth	211
Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan	211
Southern Derbyshire	210
South & West Devon	205
Oxfordshire	200
Bury and Rochdale	198
Sheffield	197
Bedfordshire	195
South Essex	187
West Hampshire	185
North Kent	181
Newcastle and Tynedale	181
County of Wiltshire	180
Gloucestershire	174
Fylde Coast	173
East Dorset	163
Suffolk	162
West Glamorgan	159
Preston & South Ribble	151
North Hampshire	151
Wirral	151
East Lancashire	150
North & East Hertfordshire	149
North and East Devon	148

Local Justice Area	
Shropshire	148
Sussex (Central)	146
North Staffordshire	144
Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale	143
Northampton, Daventry and Towcester	143
North Cheshire	138
Kirklees	134
Wigan & Leigh	133
West Cheshire	131
South & East Cheshire	129
Wakefield and Pontefract	129
Sussex (Western)	128
City of Sunderland	127
South East Hampshire	125
Sefton	125
Cornwall	124
Bolton	118
Sussex (Eastern)	118
North East Wales	116
Central/South West Staffordshire	114
Northern Derbyshire	112
Doncaster	112
Sussex (Northern)	112
Stockport	111
Calderdale	108
Glamorgan Valleys	107
North and West Cumbria	102
Oldham	102
South West Surrey	102
West Lincolnshire	100
York and Selby	100
Hull and Holderness	99
Tameside	98
North Tyneside District	98
Trafford	96
South East Staffordshire	89
South Tyneside District	87
St. Helens	86
Mid and South East Northumberland	86
Gateshead District	86
Herefordshire	85
South East Surrey	84
North Avon	83
Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire	82
Carmarthenshire	81
Grimsby and Cleethorpes	75
Rotherham	75
Loughborough, Melton, Belvoir and Rutland	73
North Surrey	72
Lancaster	71
Barnsley	71
East Yorkshire	70

Local Justice Area	
South Lincolnshire	68
Central London Youth Court	67
West Dorset	64
North Lincolnshire	64
Newcastle and Ogmores	63
South Cumbria	62
Harrogate and Skipton	62
South Hampshire	61
Chorley	57
East Lincolnshire	57
Hartlepool	56
Denbighshire	54
Gwynedd	54
Conwy	54
Wellingbrough	54
Scarborough	52
Isle of Wight	48
Ormskirk	47
Northallerton and Richmond	47
Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Market Bosworth	44
Kettering	42
Montgomeryshire	33
Brecknock and Radnorshire	33
Corby	33
Ynys Mon/Anglesey	29
Westminster Family Proceedings Court	20
Berwick-Upon Tweed	15

About you - please use this section to tell us about yourself

Full name	
Job title or capacity in which you are responding to this consultation exercise	
Date	
Address	
Postcode	
If you would like us to acknowledge receipt of your response, please tick this box	<input type="checkbox"/> (please tick box)
Address or email to which the acknowledgement should be sent, if different from above	

If you are a representative of a group, please tell use the name of the group and give a summary of the people or organisations that you represent.

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Response Form

If you wish to, you may use the space below to provide your comments and/or response to the Consultation. Please email this page along with the information about you to:

GM-JusticesClerk@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Q1: Do you agree with the proposal to merge the LJAs in Greater Manchester into one Local Justice Area to be known as the “Greater Manchester Local Justice Area”? If not, why not?

Q2: Please describe any particular impacts the document has not already considered that should be taken into account and why?

Q3: Please indicate any viable alternative options for merger which you would like to put forward with a brief explanation of the reasons why you consider this to be more appropriate than a single Local Justice Area.

Q4: Do you have any other observations or comments about any of the issues raised in this Consultation Paper?

Contact details

Please send your response by 14th September 2015 to:

Norman Draper
Wigan & Leigh Courthouse,
Darlington Street, Wigan, WN1 1DW

Tel: 01942 405478

Email: GM-JusticesClerk@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Extra copies

Further paper copies of this consultation can be obtained from this address.

Alternative format versions of this publication can be requested by emailing

GM-JusticesClerk@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Publication of response

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in October 2015.

Representative groups

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent when they respond.

Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances; this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

The consultation criteria

The seven consultation criteria are as follows

1. **When to consult** – Formal consultations should take place at a stage where there is scope to influence the policy outcome.
2. **Duration of consultation exercises** – Consultations should normally last for at least 6 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.
3. **Clarity of scope and impact** – Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of proposals.
4. **Accessibility of consultation exercises** – Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.
5. **The burden of consultation** – Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.
6. **Responsiveness of consultation exercises** – Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.
7. **Capacity to consult** – Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience

These criteria must be reproduced within all consultation documents.

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