



**Report to:** Children and Young People's Panel Cabinet

**Date:** 24 May 2007 31 May 2007

**Subject:** Projected Demand for Primary School Places

**Report of:** Director of Children and Young People's Services

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**Purpose/summary:** To inform members about the latest primary school roll projections and the implications for primary school places in certain areas of the borough.

**Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended:** These are discussed within the body of the report.

**Recommendation/decision:** Members are recommended to request that the Director of Children and Young People's Services consults the Governing Bodies of:

- Marus Bridge Primary about the possible temporary increase in the admission number from 45 to 60 for one year in 2008/09;
- Parklee Primary about the temporary increase in the admission number from 30 to 45 for one year only in 2009/10;
- Tyldesley Primary about the permanent increase in the admission number from 30 to 45 with effect from 2009/10; and

that a further report on the outcome of these consultations be brought to a future meeting of Panel and Cabinet.

**Key Decision:**

This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 1.

The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **five working days** have elapsed after that (**making a total of seven working days after the meeting**) i.e. before 5 June 2007

This item is included in the Forward Plan.

**Implications:**

Financial:	To be contained within the existing capital programme
Staffing:	Subject to individual governing body decisions
Policy:	Wigan’s Strategy for School Places and Buildings
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	Legislation requires the LA to promote choice and diversity when planning school place provision. This report aims to do this by taking account of parental preferences for different types of schools.
Wards affected:	Winstanley, Worsley Mesnes and the neighbouring wards of Douglas and Pemberton
Special Interest Members – Which have been consulted	Atherton, Astley, Mosley Common None

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Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution?	<b>Yes</b>
Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget?	<b>Yes</b>
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	<b>No</b>

\* delete which applicable

**For Cabinet reports only :**

Categorisation of the report:		
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Discussion leading to a decision	X
Monitoring	
Sharing for corporate understanding	

Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
24 May 2007		31 May 2007	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings	2006/07		CYPS Progress House Westwood Park Drive Wigan

Proper Officer



Date

May 2007

## **1 Background:**

- 1.1 An annual part of the LA's responsibility for the planning of school place provision involves the calculation of projected pupil numbers for primary and secondary schools.
- 1.2 Officers do this for the primary sector by comparing the take up rate of school places in each area of the borough to the corresponding year's births data in the same area over the most recent three consecutive years. This provides an estimate of the number of school places required in each area for the next four years. Individual school intakes are projected by calculating the first preference applications for the school as a percentage of the total projected intake figure for the area over the most recent three consecutive years.
- 1.3 It should be noted that there are no reliable figures available to the Authority which show the number of children in the borough between birth and starting school, hence the use of birth data, combined with take-up rates.
- 1.4 The Authority also uses a formula for the estimated effect of housing developments in the borough. This formula estimates that, for every 100 houses, up to 3 additional pupils, per academic year group are generated.
- 1.5 Whilst individual school projections need to be treated with a degree of caution, as parental preference is influenced by a number of changeable factors, the projected numbers for clusters of schools tends to be more accurate. The 2006 total projected intakes for the borough were 99.2% accurate (when compared with the actual intakes to schools in September), with the individual areas included in this report being projected at between 96% and 99% accuracy. The 2007 projected intake for Tyldesley and Atherton is 97.5% accurate based on all applications received, and 99.3% accurate for Wigan South.
- 1.6 In addition to alerting the Authority to where there may be declining pupil numbers and the likelihood of surplus places, these projections can highlight where an increase in demand for places in certain areas is expected during the next three to four years.
- 1.7 Increases in demand may be attributed to additional housing developments; an increase in the birth rate in an area; or simply where patterns of parental preference have changed. By comparing the projected figures with the admission numbers for schools, the areas where there may be a need for extra places can be determined.
- 1.9 The projections produced in 2007 have forecast preferences for the 2007/08; 2008/09; 2009/10 and 2010/11 allocations to Reception year.
- 1.10 This year's projections have highlighted a potential shortfall in two areas of the borough, in two separate years.

## **2 Wigan South area- 2008/9 intake**

- 2.1 The Wigan South area in Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings covers parts of the townships of Orrell, Billinge and Winstanley and Wigan South. A map of the area showing the location of the schools is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The births in this area increased dramatically from a fairly consistent 260 to 290 per year to 342 in 2003/04 and drop back down to around 265 in the following two years. For the 2007/08 intake year it is projected that there will be a shortfall of around 31 reception year places across the primary schools in this area.
- 2.3 Places are available in the Wigan West area for all of these pupils – a map of this area is provided at Appendix 2. However, this leaves no places to spare and there is likely to be a lot of displacement away from parental first preferences.
- 2.4 When the housing impact factor is applied there could be an additional 9 pupils, per academic year group, generated by planned housing developments in the area. Only sites where building has commenced are counted in these calculations, as planning permission is not always acted upon immediately.
- 2.5 The total shortfall, therefore, is estimated at 9 places.
- 2.6 It is anticipated that the demand will be felt most keenly in the Community sector, followed by the Catholic sector, and the number of places in the Church of England sector is expected to be sufficient.
- 2.7 It should be noted that a significant proportion of parents in the area have failed to register second or third preferences in recent years, which makes it difficult to assess the true impact of the growth on each individual school.
- 2.8 Officers will be working closely with the schools in the area to ensure that more parents express their three preferences this year, in order that they are able to secure a local school place. The newly appointed Choice Adviser will also be available to help parents.
- 2.9 If the anticipated demand materialises an additional half a form of entry will be required in the area for one year only. As Marus Bridge Primary tends to pick up a significant proportion of second preferences from both the Winstanley and Worsley Mesnes areas, provision of additional places at this school for the year concerned would serve both communities. In addition, as a one and a half form entry school, the building has the additional support spaces to take extra pupils, which one form entry schools do not. One temporary classroom, together with some additional support space, would be required to accommodate the additional pupils.
- 2.10 Other schools in the area are either situated where the additional places would not necessarily fulfil the needs of the Wigan South area, (that is, they

could fill with pupils from other neighbouring areas first); are already large at two forms of entry; or are not as popular with parents.

- 2.11 Consultation on the admission arrangements for 2008/09 academic year have already taken place, prior to the production of this report. The consultation timescale for admissions is set by central government. Because the anticipated demand for places is not conclusive and relies heavily on pupil yield from new housing, it is not appropriate to take action in advance of applications for the 2008/09 year. Urgent remedial action can then be taken to ensure that all children are offered a school place in the area.

### **3 Proposals for Wigan South:**

- 3.1 Given that the excessive demand for places in the Wigan South area is anticipated to be of a one-off nature, due to an unusual increase in the birth rate and local housing developments, it is proposed that:
- the Marus Bridge Primary Governing Body be consulted about the possible need to increase the admission number from 45 to 60 for one year only;
  - the applications for primary places in the area are monitored closely to see whether the projected demand for places transpires; and, if so,
  - an application be made to the schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation on the admission limit at Marus Bridge Primary for one year only.
- 3.2 The proposal will not require statutory notices as it is for a temporary period.

### **4 Atherton and Tyldesley areas- 2009/10 intake**

#### **4.1 Atherton**

- 4.1.1 It is expected that with effect from September 2009, there will be insufficient primary school places in the Atherton and Tyldesley areas, which adjoin each other at the eastern edges of the borough. Maps showing the location of the schools are given at Appendices 3 and 4.
- 4.1.2 Whereas, in many other areas of the borough, there is some movement of pupils between neighbouring areas, the demand for school places in the Atherton and Tyldesley areas combined equates to the total number of births and the school population is fairly self-contained.
- 4.1.3 Generally, Atherton schools (mainly Sacred Heart Catholic Primary and Hindsford CE) tend to import 13% of pupils from the Tyldesley area.
- 4.1.4 In 2004/5 the birth rate increased by 25% in the Atherton area. This has given a projected intake figure for 2009/10 of 284, with only 270 places available.

- 4.1.5 It is inconclusive whether this increased birth rate will continue in future years. In the following year, 2004/05, the birth rate is slightly above the levels usually expected for this area.
- 4.1.6 The complicating factor in Atherton is the large amount of new house building that is occurring in the area. Housing still under construction, coupled with planned housing not yet started, could generate up to 25 additional children per academic year group in the Atherton area.
- 4.1.7 The pupil yield of the housing and births will need be monitored closely in order to ensure that there are sufficient school places in the area. Where it is able to, the Authority will ask developers for a contribution toward the provision of additional places in the area.
- 4.1.8 The greatest shortfall in school places in 2009/10 is likely to be within the Community and Voluntary Controlled sectors.
- 4.1.9 Apart from applications in 2007, Parklee Community Primary has been consistently over-subscribed, having had an admission number of 35 until 2004/05. The overcrowding of the building and poor suitability led to the reduction in the admission number when the numbers in the area fell.
- 4.1.10 Increasing the admission number at the school to 45 for one year only (2009/10 intake) could be achieved by adding a classroom which, if the numbers fall in the longer term, would help to address the suitability problems at the school.
- 4.1.11 The central location of the school, together with levels of parental preference, combine to make it the most suitable school to provide additional places for 2009/10.

## **4.2 Tyldesley**

- 4.2.1 The birth rate in the Tyldesley area has been steadily rising from 2001/02 (these are the children currently in Reception) and, by the 2009 intake, there are projected to be 265 applicants in Tyldesley for 242 school places. For the 2010/11 intake the births continue to rise and 273 Reception applicants are expected.
- 4.2.2 Patterns of parental preference in the area show that it is schools in the central and southern areas of Tyldesley that are experiencing most of the demand.
- 4.2.3 Since Tyldesley Community Primary School was built, the school has been consistently over-subscribed, (by an average of 46% over 4 years) and many parents have been disappointed not to have their first preference met.
- 4.2.4 As all recent government guidance on school organisation stresses the importance of considering parental preference and the new Education and Inspections Act 2006 lays out the responsibility of the Authority as

commissioner of school places, such constant over-subscription needs to be a fundamental factor in the consideration of where the additional places should be provided.

4.2.5 If Tyldesley Primary is to be extended to a one and a half form entry school it will require significant new build and capital investment.

### **4.3 Catholic Provision**

4.3.1 It should be noted that, whilst the increasing numbers in the south of Tyldesley are rising and are expected to lead to the over-subscription of St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary, there should be sufficient available places at Boothstown Holy Family Catholic Primary for those seeking places in a catholic school.

4.3.2 In the Atherton area, Sacred Heart and St. Richard's Catholic Primary Schools have adequate places to meet demand.

## **5 Proposals for Atherton and Tyldesley:**

### **5.1 Atherton**

5.1.1 The increase in pupils in the Atherton area may have been created by additional housing. Indications at this stage is that the need for additional places will be for one year only but this requires careful monitoring.

5.1.1 It is proposed :

- that consultation be carried out on increasing the admission limit at Parklee Community Primary School from 30 to 45, for one year only, in September 2009; and
- to provide an additional permanent classroom at the school for 2009/10, which will then be used to address the school's suitability shortfalls for future years.

5.1.2 The proposal will not require statutory notices as it is for a temporary period.

### **5.2 Tyldesley**

5.2.1 As the increase in pupil numbers in Tyldesley appears to be due to a more permanent increase in demand in the south of that area, and there is evidence that one school is consistently and heavily oversubscribed, it is proposed that:

- the Director of Children and Young People's Services undertakes a consultation exercise to increase the admission number of Tyldesley Community Primary School from 30 to 45.

5.2.2 This consultation will require formal consultation and statutory proposals.

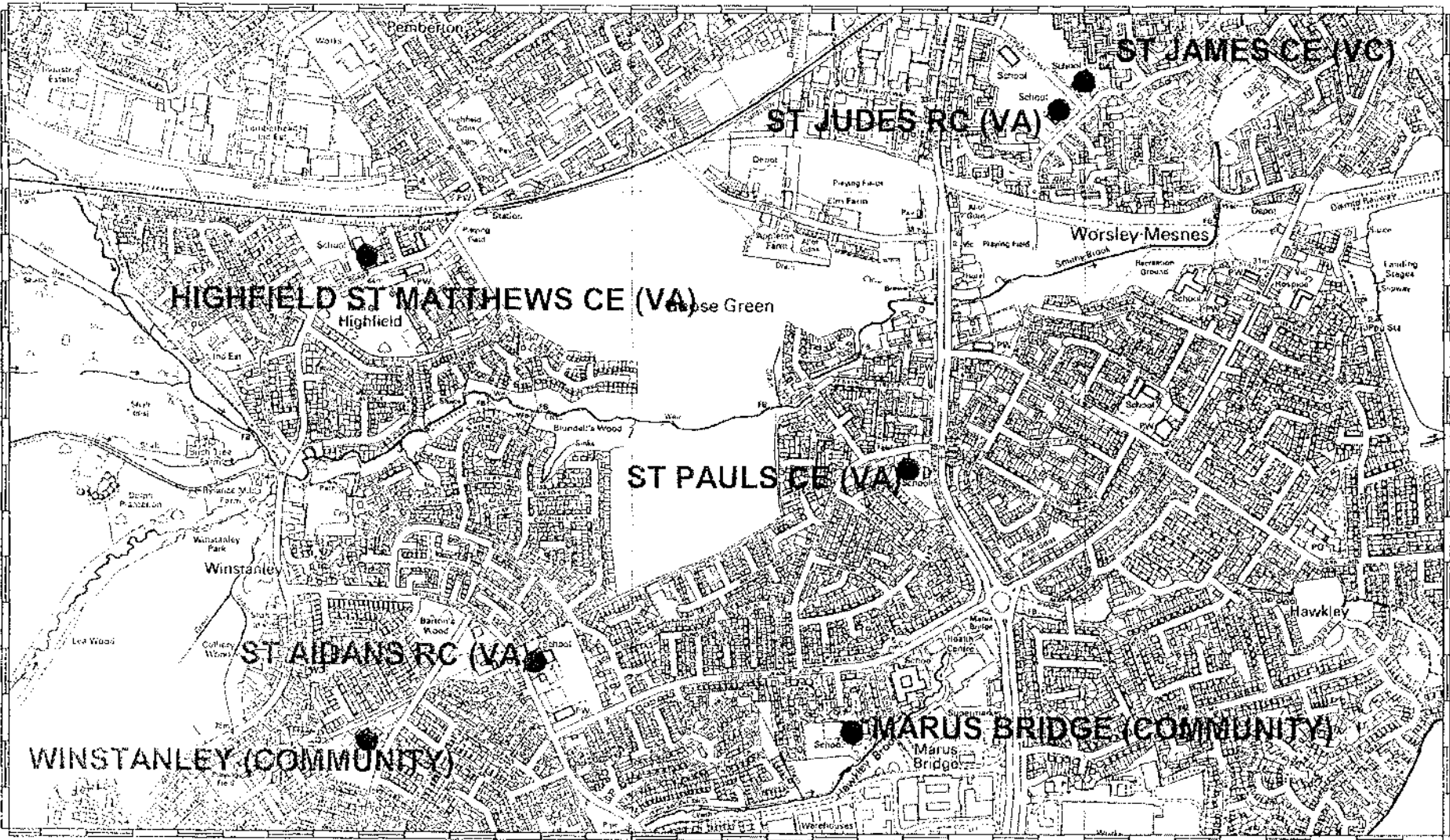
## **6. Availability of Capital**

- 6.1 The cost of installing a temporary classroom unit at Marus Bridge Primary is estimated at £150,000. The funding for this project could be taken from the advance on the formulaic capital that came into the LA in the 2007/08 year, which amounted to £1,343,763..
- 6.2 The formulaic capital allocations for 2008/09 and 2009/10 have not yet been announced by DfES . An estimated £2,600,000 per annum is anticipated and the LA currently has no projects currently approved for this funding. The extension of Parklee and Tyldesley Primary schools, estimated to cost around £1,500,000, could funded from these sources.

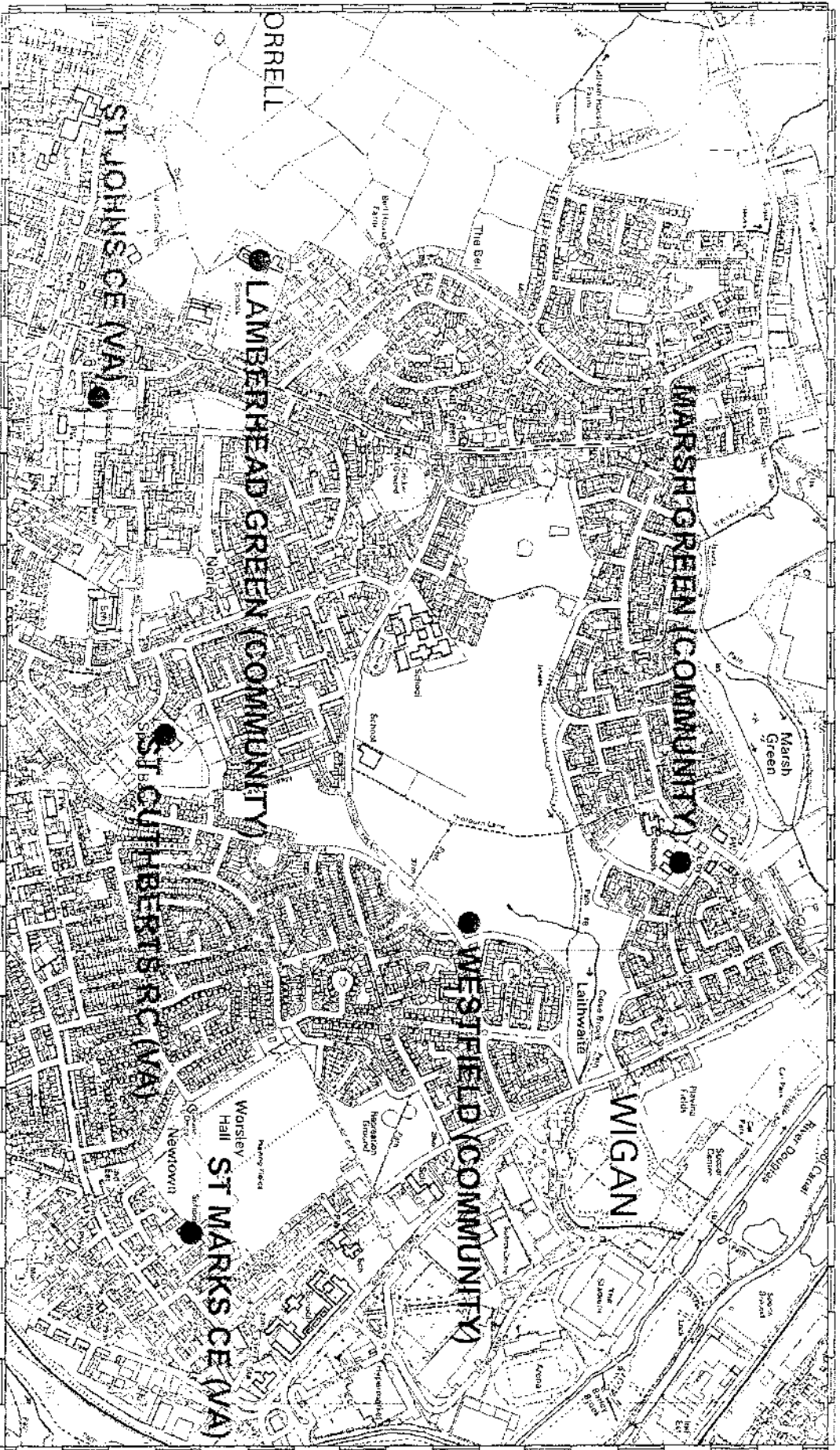
## **7 Recommendations**

- 7.1 Members are recommended to request that the Director of Children and Young People's Services undertakes the consultation exercises on the proposals outlined in paragraphs 3 and 5 of this report and that the results be reported back to Panel and Cabinet in due course.

# WIGAN SOUTH (WN3-5 & WN3-6)



# WIGAN WEST (WN5-0 WN5-9)



# ATHERTON (M46)

