

**TRAFFORD COUNCIL**

**Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**Referendum – 12 February 2026**

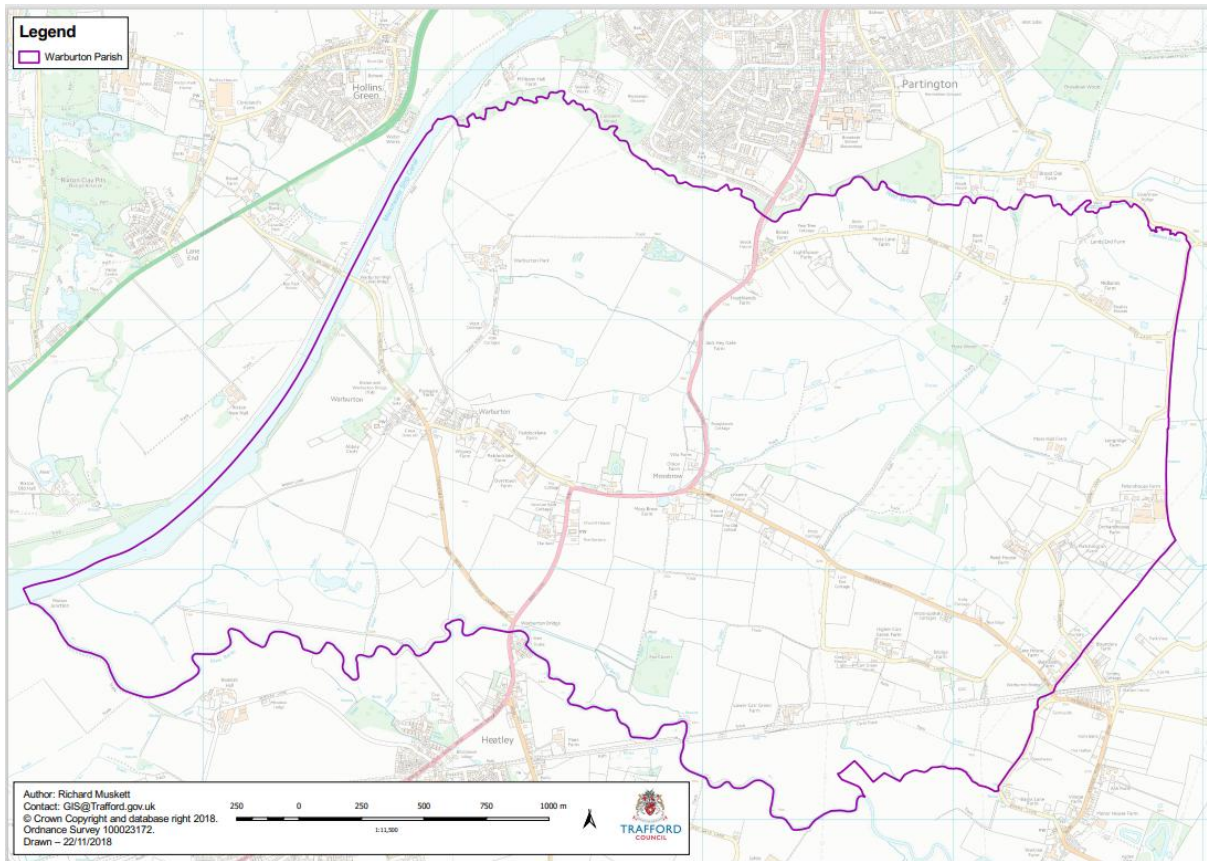
**Information Statement (including information on Town and Country Planning and the referendum)**

**1. About this document**

- 1.1. On 12 February 2026 there will be a referendum for residents in Warburton on the Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP).
- 1.2. This document explains more about the referendum that will take place and how you can take part. It also gives you information about the Town and Country Planning system.

**2. The Referendum**

- 2.1. A referendum on the Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan (WNDP) will be held on Thursday 12 February 2026.
- 2.2. The ballot paper for the referendum will ask you to vote “Yes” or No” on the following question:
  - “Do you want Trafford Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Warburton to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”
- 2.3. The referendum area (see below) is the same as:
  - The neighbourhood area, which was designated by Trafford Council on 4 March 2019; and
  - The parish of Warburton.



- 2.4. You should show your vote by putting a cross (X) in the ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ box on your ballot paper. Your vote will not be counted if you put a cross in more than one box.
- 2.5. If more people vote **“YES”** in the referendum:
- The Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the borough.
  - Trafford Council will use the Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan to help determine applications for planning permission within the neighbourhood area.
- 2.6. If more people vote **“NO”** in the referendum:
- The Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan will not become part of the Development Plan for the borough.
  - Trafford Council will not use the Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan to help determine applications for planning permission within the neighbourhood area.

### **3. Frequently Asked Questions**

## **Neighbourhood Plans**

### **What are Neighbourhood Plans?**

- 3.1. Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act in 2011. It aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work by showing how a community wants land to be used and developed in its area.
- 3.2. Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet certain “Basic Conditions” by having regard to national planning policy, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, being in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the area (i.e. Places for Everyone) and being compatible with EU obligations (under retained EU law) and human rights requirements. They should not promote less development than is set out in the Development Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

### **Who prepares Neighbourhood Plans?**

- 3.3. Neighbourhood plans are prepared by parish councils or neighbourhood forums (known as a “qualifying body”) and there is a statutory process that must be followed to make a plan.

### **How are Neighbourhood Plans made?**

- 3.4. The plan must be prepared through a process of consultation with local residents and businesses before an independent examiner reviews the plan and checks whether it meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements. The examiner then reports whether any changes should be made to the plan and whether it should proceed to the next stage in the process which is the referendum stage.
- 3.5. The referendum asks those voting whether they want the Neighbourhood Plan to be used by the Local Planning Authority to help it decide planning applications in the area covered by the Plan. For residents to be able to vote they need to be included on the electoral roll.

### **What status do Neighbourhood Plans have?**

- 3.6. If more than half of those voting in a referendum have voted “yes”, in favour of the neighbourhood plan, the local planning authority must make it part of the statutory development plan and use it when making decisions on planning applications in the Plan area.

## **The Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan**

3.7. The Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan has been produced by Warburton Parish Council. It has been produced in accordance with the statutory requirements and following a recent independent examination has, subject to modifications, been recommended to proceed to referendum.

3.8. Additional information in relation to neighbourhood planning is available via the following link:

- <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-strategy/neighbourhood-planning>

3.9. A copy of the Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan is available to view at all libraries and is also available to view online at:

- <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-strategy/neighbourhood-planning/warburton-neighbourhood-plan>

### **Who can vote?**

3.10. You can vote in the referendum if:

- you are 18 years or over on 12 February 2026;
- you live in the parish of Warburton; and
- you are registered to vote in the local government elections.
- If you are not registered in the referendum. You can register to vote online at <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>
- If you don't have access to the internet please contact Electoral Services on 0800 0234 206 to request an application form.
- You must register by midnight Tuesday 27 January 2026 to be eligible to vote in the referendum on the Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

### **How can I vote?**

3.11. There are three ways of voting:

#### 1. In Person

- On Thursday 12 February at your local polling station:
- The Parish Room, Bent Lane, Warburton, WA13 9TQ

- You will receive a poll card confirming your polling station for this referendum.
- Polling stations are open from 7:00am to 10:00pm.
- You will need to bring your photo ID with you in order to vote.
- If you do not possess a valid photo ID you can apply to your local Electoral Registration Office for a free Voter Authority Certificate. Completed applications must reach us before 5pm Wednesday 04 February 2026.
- If you do not receive your ballot paper by 10:00pm on the day of the referendum you won't be able to vote.

## 2. By Post

- If you are already registered to vote by post, you will receive a poll card confirming this.
- If you are not registered to vote by post, you will need to complete an application form.
- Application forms are available on the Council's website, or by contacting Electoral Services, using the details below:
- Website: <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/about-your-council/elections/postal-voting.aspx>
- Online Contact Form: <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/contact-us/Elections-team.aspx>
- Post: Electoral Registration Office, Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 0TH
- Telephone: 0800 0234 206
- Email [elections@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:elections@trafford.gov.uk)
- Your completed application form must be received by Electoral Services no later than 5pm on Wednesday 28 January 2026.
- You should receive your postal vote approximately 10 days before polling day. If it doesn't arrive in time you can request a replacement up to 5pm on Thursday 12 February 2026 by phoning Electoral Services using the telephone number above.

## 3. By Proxy

- If you already have a proxy vote, you will receive a poll card confirming this.
- If you are unable to attend the polling station on polling day, it may be possible to allow somebody that you trust to vote on your behalf. This person is called a “proxy” and you must tell them how you intend to vote.
- You can only apply for a proxy vote under specific circumstances, including: - being away on polling day (e.g. holiday or educational course)
- New applications to vote by proxy at this election must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, M32 0TH by 5 pm on Wednesday 4th February 2026. You can find information and dependent upon your proxy type apply online at <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/voting-by-proxy>
- Applications to vote by emergency proxy at this election applied for on grounds of physical incapacity, where that physical incapacity occurred after 5 pm on Wednesday 4th February 2026, must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, M32 0TH by 5 pm on Thursday 12th February 2026.

#### **4. The Town and Country Planning System**

##### Planning system

- 4.1. The planning system helps manage the use and development of land and buildings. The aim of the system is to support economic growth, improve people’s quality of life, and protect the natural and historic environment.
- 4.2. The planning system has two main functions:
  - Plan-making – setting out a plan for how an area will develop over time as a guide to future development
  - Managing development – most new buildings, major changes to existing buildings or major changes to the local environment need planning permission.
- 4.3. Without a planning system everyone could construct buildings or use land in any way they wanted, no matter what effect this would have on other people who live and work in their area.
- 4.4. Trafford Council, as the Local Planning Authority, is responsible for deciding whether most forms of development (anything from an extension on a house to a new leisure centre) should go ahead within the borough. Decisions are

based on national policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the Local Plan and any relevant neighbourhood plan.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.5. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be taken into account by communities when preparing neighbourhood plans and by local planning authorities when preparing local plans and making decisions on planning applications. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and this has to be reflected in plans, both at a district level and a neighbourhood level.
- 4.6. The NPPF is accompanied by guidance – the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which expands on the NPPF policies and helps in their interpretation and application.

#### Local Plan

- 4.7. Trafford Council must prepare a local plan which sets planning policies within the local authority area. Local plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. They must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.8. The Local Development Plan for Trafford includes the Places for Everyone (Adopted January 2024), the remaining 'saved' policies of the Core Strategy (Adopted on 25th January 2012) and Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2006), the GM Joint Waste Plan (April 2012), the GM Joint Minerals Plan (April 2013), as well as Civic Quarter Area Action Plan and Altrincham Town Centre Neighbourhood Business Plan, where relevant. Further information is available on the website:  
<https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning/planning-policy-and-strategy/development-plan-trafford>
- 4.9. The above documents guide the day-to-day decisions on planning applications in Trafford.

#### Places for Everyone (PfE)

- 4.10. PfE is a joint Development Plan Document produced by nine Greater Manchester authorities and was formally adopted on 21 March 2024. It identifies the quantum of new housing and employment development, supports the delivery of key infrastructure, and protects environmental assets.

## Emerging Local Plan

- 4.11. Trafford Council is preparing a new Local Plan and recently consulted on the Trafford Local Plan: Policies (which included the draft vision, strategic objectives, and thematic policies) and Trafford Local Plan: Site Allocations and Designations. Ultimately, the policies, site allocations and designations will be combined into one document and will replace the remaining saved policies of the Core Strategy and UDP.

### **5. Referendum expenses**

- 5.1. As part of the referendum process individuals or bodies may choose to campaign for either a 'Yes' or a 'No' vote.
- 5.2. Section 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 specifies a limit on the amount that can be spent on campaigning for the referendum. This limit is set out below:
- The referendum expenses limit that will apply to this referendum is £2,377.22 – based on the calculation £2,362 plus 5.9p for each entry in the relevant register of electors.
  - The number of persons entitled to vote in the referendum, by reference to which this limit has been calculated, is 258.
- 5.3. The Referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

### **6. Specified documents**

- 6.1. The documents listed below are available to view ahead of the referendum:
- The Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan.
  - The report of the Independent Examiner.
  - A summary of the representations submitted to the Independent Examiner.
  - A statement by the local planning authority (Trafford Council) stating that the draft plan is considered to meet the basic conditions and relevant legislation (the "Basic Conditions and Compliance Statement").
  - This statement, providing general information about neighbourhood planning and the public referendum (the "Information Statement").

6.2. These documents can be inspected at the following venues during their normal opening hours:

- Partington Library and Wellbeing Centre, 91 Central Road, Partington, M31 4FY (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday – 10am – 5pm, Saturday 10am – 4pm, Wednesday & Sunday Closed)
- In hard copy on request at Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, M32 0TH

6.3. You can also view or download copies of these documents on the Trafford Council's website at: <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-strategy/neighbourhood-planning/warburton-neighbourhood-plan>

6.4. Further Information

- Further information on neighbourhood planning in Trafford can be found on the Trafford Council website at <https://www.trafford.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-strategy/neighbourhood-planning> or by contacting the Planning Policy team:
- Email: [strategic.planning@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:strategic.planning@trafford.gov.uk)
- Telephone: 0161 912 3149