

Draft recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements for  
Melton in Leicestershire

*January 2002*

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Melton Mowbray is inserted inside the back cover of this report.



# WHAT IS THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND?

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations on whether there should be changes to local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)  
Professor Michael Clarke CBE (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Brokenshire  
Kru Desai  
Pamela Gordon  
Robin Gray  
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are required by law to review the electoral arrangements of every principal local authority in England. Our aim is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to ward boundaries, the number of councillors, ward names and the frequency of elections. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish councils.

With effect from 1 April 2002, the Electoral Commission has assumed the functions of the Local Government Commission for England and taken over responsibility for making Orders putting in place the new arrangements resulting from periodic electoral reviews (powers which currently reside with the Secretary of State). As part of this transfer the Electoral Commission will set up a Boundary Committee for England which will take over responsibility for the conduct of Periodic Electoral Reviews from the Local Government Commission. The Boundary Committee will conduct electoral reviews following the same rules and in the same manner as the Local Government Commission for England. Its final recommendations on future electoral arrangements will then be presented to the Electoral Commission which will be able to accept, modify or reject the Boundary Committee's findings. Under these new arrangements there will remain a further opportunity to make representations directly to the Electoral Commission after the publication of the final recommendations. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to send comments to the Electoral Commission.



## SUMMARY

We began a review of Melton's electoral arrangements on 12 June 2001.

- **This report summarises the submissions we received during the first stage of the review, and makes draft recommendations for change.**

We found that the current arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Melton:

- **In 12 of the 17 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, and five wards vary by more than 20 per cent.**
- **By 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 12 wards and by more than 20 per cent in six wards.**

Our main proposals for Melton's future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 80-81) are that:

- **Melton Borough Council should have 28 councillors, two more than at present;**
- **there should be 14 wards, instead of 17 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 12 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of three, and five wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections of the whole council should continue to take place every four years.**

The purpose of these proposals is to ensure that, in future, each borough councillor represents approximately the same number of electors, bearing in mind local circumstances.

- **In 12 of the proposed 14 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor in 13 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements for the parish of Sproxtton.**

This report sets out our draft recommendations on which comments are invited.

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 15 January 2002. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**

- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission which, subject to Parliamentary approval, with effect from 1 April 2002 will be responsible for implementing change to local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also decide when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 11 March 2002:

**Review Manager  
Melton Review  
LGCE  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU**

**Fax: 020 7404 6142  
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Website: [www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)**

*Table 1: Draft Recommendations: Summary*

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1	Asfordby	2	<i>Unchanged:</i> the parish of Asfordby	Map 2 and Map A1
2	Bottesford	2	<i>Unchanged:</i> the parish of Bottesford	Map 2 and Map A1
3	Long Clawson & Stathern	2	The parishes of Clawson, Hose & Harby, Stathern and Redmile	Map 2 and Map A1
4	Craven	2	Craven ward; part of Newport ward	Map 2, Map A1 and the large map
5	Croxton Kerrial	1	The parishes of Belvoir, Croxton Kerrial and Eaton; the proposed Saltby & Stonesby parish ward of Sproxton parish	Map 2, Map A1 and Map A2
6	Egerton	2	Egerton ward; part of Sysonby ward	Map 2, Map A1 and the large map
7	Frisby-on-the-Wreake	1	<i>Unchanged:</i> the parishes of Frisby & Kirby, Grimston and Hoby with Rotherby	Map 2 and Map A1
8	Gaddesby & Somerby	2	The parishes of Burton & Dalby, Gaddesby, Knossington & Cold Overton, Somerby and Twyford & Thorpe	Map 2 and Map A1
9	Mowbray	3	<i>Unchanged:</i> Mowbray ward	Map 2, Map A1 and the large map
10	Newport	3	Part of Newport ward	Map 2, Map A1 and the large map
11	Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds	2	The parishes of Ab Kettleby, Broughton & Old Dalby, Scalford and Waltham	Map 2 and Map A1
12	Sysonby	3	Part of Sysonby ward; part of Newport ward	Map 2, Map A1 and the large map
13	Warwick	2	<i>Unchanged:</i> Warwick ward	Map 2, Map A1 and the large map
14	Wyndham	1	The parishes of Buckminster, Freeby, Garthorpe and Wyndham; the proposed Sproxton parish ward of Sproxton parish	Map 2, Map A1 and Map A2

*Notes: 1 Melton Mowbray is the only unparished part of the borough and comprises the six wards of Craven, Egerton, Mowbray, Newport, Sysonby and Warwick.*

*2 The wards in the above table are illustrated on Map 2, Maps A1 and A2 in Appendix A and the large map at the back of the report.*

Table 2: Draft Recommendations for Melton

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Asfordby	2	2,491	1,246	-7	2,578	1,289	-8
2	Bottesford	2	2,835	1,418	5	2,876	1,438	2
3	Long Clawson & Stathern	2	3,042	1,521	13	3,156	1,578	12
4	Craven	2	2,889	1,445	7	2,882	1,441	2
5	Croxton Kerrial	1	1,370	1,370	2	1,425	1,425	1
6	Egerton	2	2,786	1,393	3	2,813	1,407	0
7	Frisby-on-the-Wreake	1	1,406	1,406	4	1,423	1,423	1
8	Gaddesby & Somerby	2	2,750	1,375	2	2,985	1,493	6
9	Mowbray	3	3,726	1,242	-8	4,292	1,431	2
10	Newport	3	4,032	1,344	0	4,006	1,335	-5
11	Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds	2	2,758	1,379	2	2,826	1,413	0
12	Sysonby	3	3,742	1,247	-7	4,077	1,359	-3
13	Warwick	2	2,645	1,323	-2	2,766	1,383	-2
14	Wymondham	1	1,214	1,214	-10	1,278	1,278	-9
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>37,686</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>39,383</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,407</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Melton Borough Council.

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

# 1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for the borough of Melton in Leicestershire, on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the seven two-tier districts in Leicestershire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. We are also conducting a review of Leicester City Council, which has unitary status, on the same timetable as this review. Our programme started in 1996 and is expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Melton. Melton's last review was carried out by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in January 1977 (Report no.177). The electoral arrangements of Leicestershire County Council were last reviewed in March 1983 (Report no. 441). The Boundary Committee for England expects to begin reviewing the County Council's electoral arrangements towards the end of this year.

3 In carrying out these reviews, we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, i.e. the need to:
  - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
  - (b) secure effective and convenient local government;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Full details of the legislation under which we work are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000). This *Guidance* sets out our approach to the reviews.

5 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also propose changes to the electoral arrangements for parish councils in the borough.

6 In our *Guidance* we state that we wish, wherever possible, to build on schemes which have been created locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local people are normally in the best position to judge what council size and ward configurations are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while also reflecting the identities and interests of local communities.

7 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the borough as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

8 We are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the assumption that the size of the existing council already secures effective and convenient local government, but we are willing

to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified. In particular, we do not accept that an increase in electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, or that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

9 The review is in four stages (see Table 3).

*Table 3: Stages of the Review*

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>
One	Submission of proposals to us
Two	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	Final deliberation and report to the Electoral Commission

10 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper called *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the borough and county councils would hold elections every two years, i.e. in year one, half of the borough council would be elected, in year two, half of the county council would be elected, and so on. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral wards in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities. The proposals were taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, states that the Secretary of State may make Orders to change authorities' electoral cycles. However, until such time as the Secretary of State makes any Order under the 2000 Act, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, which provides for elections by thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas, and our current *Guidance*.

11 Stage One began on 12 June 2001, when we wrote to Melton Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Parish and Local Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, the Members of Parliament with constituencies in the borough, the Members of the European Parliament for the East Midlands Region and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Melton Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of submissions (the end of Stage One) was 3 September 2001.

12 At Stage Two we considered all the submissions received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

13 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 15 January 2002 and will end

on 11 March 2002, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

14 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to modify them, and submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Electoral Commission accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, it will make an Order and decide when any changes come into effect.



## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

15 Melton Borough is situated in north-east Leicestershire and is one of seven district and borough councils in Leicestershire. The borough covers an area of 48,134 hectares and comprises a large rural area surrounding the town of Melton Mowbray, which contains one of the largest cattle markets in the country. The main industries in the area are agriculture, food processing, manufacturing, joinery and metal engineering. The district contains 25 civil parishes, but Melton Mowbray town itself is unparished, comprising approximately 52 per cent of the borough's total electorate.

16 The electorate of the borough is 37,686 (February 2001). The Council presently has 26 members who are elected from 17 wards, six of which are urban in Melton Mowbray, with the remainder being mainly rural. One of the wards is represented by three councillors, seven are each represented by two councillors and nine are single-member wards. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

17 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,449 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,515 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic change and migration since the last review, the number of electors per councillor in 12 of the 17 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average and in five wards by more than 20 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Long Clawson ward, where the councillor represents 29 per cent more electors than the borough average.

18 To compare levels of electoral inequality between wards, we calculated, in percentage terms, the extent to which the number of electors per councillor in each ward (the councillor:elector ratio) varies from the borough average. In the text which follows, this figure may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Melton*

Table 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Asfordby	2	2,491	1,246	-14	2,578	1,289	-15
2	Bottesford	2	2,835	1,418	-2	2,876	1,438	-5
3	Craven	2	2,563	1,282	-12	2,556	1,278	-16
4	Croxtan Kerrial	1	1,115	1,115	-23	1,156	1,156	-24
5	Egerton	2	2,313	1,157	-20	2,357	1,179	-22
6	Frisby-on-the-Wreake	1	1,406	1,406	-3	1,423	1,423	-6
7	Gaddesby	1	1,109	1,109	-23	1,131	1,131	-25
8	Long Clawson	1	1,868	1,868	29	1,937	1,937	28
9	Mowbray	2	3,726	1,863	29	4,292	2,146	42
10	Newport	3	5,321	1,774	22	5,295	1,765	17
11	Old Dalby	1	1,505	1,505	4	1,542	1,542	2
12	Somerby	1	1,641	1,641	13	1,854	1,854	22
13	Stathern	1	1,174	1,174	-19	1,222	1,222	-19
14	Sysonby	2	3,252	1,626	12	3,570	1,785	18
15	Waltham-on-the-Wolds	1	1,475	1,475	2	1,510	1,510	0
16	Warwick	2	2,645	1,323	-9	2,766	1,383	-9
17	Wymondham	1	1,247	1,247	-14	1,318	1,318	-13
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>37,686</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>39,383</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,449</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,515</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Melton Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Gaddesby ward were relatively over-represented by 23 per cent, while electors in Mowbray ward were relatively under-represented by 29 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

19 At the start of this review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Melton Borough Council and its constituent parish councils.

20 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the LGCE visited the area and met officers and members from the Borough Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received eight submissions during Stage One, including two borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council and the Melton District Labour Party, and all of these submissions may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council.

#### **Melton Borough Council**

21 Melton Borough Council proposed an increase in council size of one to 27 members, with these members representing 25 mainly single-member wards, an increase of eight wards. The Council proposed that the rural area should be represented by 13 councillors, while the town of Melton Mowbray should be represented by 14 councillors (all representing single-member wards). The Council made no comment on the electoral cycle. The Council's scheme provided a reasonable level of electoral equality, with just two wards having an electoral variance of over 10 per cent by 2006.

#### **Melton District Labour Party**

22 The Melton District Labour Party (hereafter referred to as the Labour Party) also proposed a borough-wide scheme but proposed an increase in council size to 28 members. The 28 members would represent 17 mixed-member wards, comprising 13 councillors for the rural area and 15 councillors for Melton Mowbray. It made no comment on the electoral cycle. The Labour Party's scheme also provided a reasonable level of electoral equality, with just two wards having an electoral variance of over 10 per cent by 2006.

#### **East Midlands Regional Labour Party**

23 The East Midlands Regional Labour Party endorsed the submission by the Melton District Labour Party.

#### **MEPs**

24 Mel Read, an MEP for the East Midlands, considered that a 28-member council, comprising 13 members from the rural area and 15 members from the urban area, would provide the best solution. She supported Consultation Option 1 for the rural area and Consultation Option 2 for the urban area, as outlined in the Council's consultation document.

#### **Parish Councils**

25 We received responses from two parish councils, Burton & Dalby Parish Council and Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council. Burton & Dalby Parish Council supported the Borough Council's Consultation Option No 1 subject to three points: first, that the projected

electorate for Burton & Dalby parish for 2006 be reviewed, second, that the rural and urban areas should be represented by an equal number of borough councillors, and finally, that should planning permission be granted for the New Village, on completion of the development this village should have its own parish council.

26 Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council objected to the scheme proposed by Melton Borough Council and put forward its own scheme for the rural area based on 13 councillors, representing 10 mixed-member wards. The Parish Council considered that the Borough Council's scheme threatened the integrity of the Vale of Belvoir. The scheme for the rural area put forward by the Parish Council provided a reasonable level of electoral equality, with just two wards having an electoral variance of over 10 per cent by 2006.

### **Other Representations**

27 Councillor Anne Dames put forward a very similar rural scheme to that proposed by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council, with the only difference being her proposal to retain the village of Holwell in Old Dalby ward rather than transferring it to Waltham ward, as advocated by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council.

28 A resident considered that the "knock on effect of shifting boundaries is horrendous" and stated that no changes were necessary.

## 4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

**29 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Melton and welcome comments from all those interested relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, ward names and parish council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.**

30 As described earlier, our primary aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Melton is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 – which defines the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests of local communities – and Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

31 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place over the next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and maintaining local ties.

32 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which results in exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every ward of an authority. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum.

33 Our *Guidance* states that we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for an authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be considered, and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

### **Electorate Forecasts**

34 Since 1977 there has been a 26 per cent increase in the electorate of Melton borough. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 4.5 per cent from 37,686 to 39,383 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in the town of Melton Mowbray. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

35 Burton & Dalby Parish Council queried the 2006 projected electorate figures for Burton & Dalby Parish and asked the Council to review its figures. The Borough Council complied but remained “satisfied that it used the best projections available”.

36 We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having looked at the Borough Council's figures, accept that they are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

## **Council Size**

37 As explained earlier, we start by assuming that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case.

38 Melton Borough Council presently has 26 members. The Borough Council proposed a council of 27 members, an increase of one, but did not provide any argumentation or evidence for this increase. The Labour Party proposed an increase in council size to 28 members, an increase of two, and stated that "the 28-member format produces a better fit, in terms of both the maximum deviation from the standard number of electors per councillor, and the weighted average variance". It also stated that while "a 27-member council would best reflect the current population balance...by 2006 a 28-member council would provide a better match".

39 One of the factors that we consider when determining council size is the allocation of councillors between various areas of the borough provided by particular council sizes. We considered three different council sizes for Melton. Retaining the current 26-member council would provide an allocation of councillors between the rural and urban areas which, while reasonable in 2001, would deteriorate by 2006. In addition, we received no representations in support of retaining the existing council size. An increase of one to a 27-member council, as proposed by the Borough Council, would provide a good allocation of councillors between the rural and urban areas in 2001 but a poor allocation by 2006. Although a 27-member council was proposed by the Council, it provided no argumentation or evidence as to why this particular council size was appropriate for Melton borough. A 28-member council, as proposed by the Labour Party, would provide the best allocation of councillors between the rural and urban areas by 2006. The Labour Party argued that "a 28-member format will be an increasingly precise match for the future population balance". We are keen to put in place arrangements that will improve electoral equality over time, and we are of the opinion that a 28-member council is the best option to enable us to achieve this aim. Therefore, in the light of the argument put forward by the Labour Party for a 28-member council and the lack of any argumentation for the Council's proposals for a 27-member council, and having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, we conclude that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 28 members.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

40 We have carefully considered all the representations received, including the borough-wide schemes put forward by Melton Borough Council and the Labour Party. The Council proposed a council size of 27 members (14 urban and 13 rural), representing 25 mainly single-member wards, while the Labour Party proposed a council size of 28 members (15 urban and 13 rural) representing 17 mixed-member wards. Burton & Dalby Parish Council considered that an equal number of councillors should represent the rural and urban areas.

41 The Council stated that "it was considered by the majority of the Councillors that single-

member wards were a better option for the electorate as members became more accountable to their electorate as a result”. It also considered that “single-member wards better reflected the role of councillors in the new political structure of the Council, currently being adopted”. The Council’s scheme would provide a reasonable level of electoral equality, with just two wards having an electoral variance of over 10 per cent above the borough average by 2006.

42 The Labour Party considered that “multi-member wards should be avoided in rural areas where they would need to encompass a huge geographical area” but that “in urban areas a multi-member ward is preferable to single-member ward boundaries that artificially divide communities”. The Labour Party scheme would also provide a reasonable level of electoral equality, with just two wards having an electoral variance of over 10 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

43 Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council proposed a scheme for the rural area consisting of seven single-member wards and three two-member wards. Under this scheme two of the proposed wards would have an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

44 Councillor Anne Dames put forward a very similar rural scheme to that proposed by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council, with the only difference being her proposal to retain the village of Holwell in Old Dalby ward rather than transferring it to Waltham ward, as advocated by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council. This scheme would also have two wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent above the borough average by 2006.

45 As we are not adopting the Council’s proposed council size, we were not able to adopt any of the wards proposed by the Council in the urban area as 14 members is not the correct allocation of councillors for Melton Mowbray under a 28-member council. It proposed a scheme of 14 single-member wards for Melton Mowbray and we considered that its proposed wards did not provide strong, easily identifiable boundaries and split communities unnecessarily. The Labour Party proposed a scheme of six mixed-member wards for Melton Mowbray, largely based on the existing ward structure, and we considered that, in general, its scheme provided a good level of electoral equality while utilising easily identifiable boundaries and recognising community identities. However, in two areas we are moving away from its proposals to provide a better balance between electoral equality and our statutory criteria.

46 We carefully considered the four schemes that we received for the rural area of Melton, all of which proposed 13 councillors representing a mixture of single- and two-member wards. With two amendments, we are proposing to adopt the scheme put forward by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council as we consider that this scheme provides the best balance between electoral equality, strong boundaries and community identities. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Egerton, Newport and Sysonby wards;
- (b) Craven, Mowbray and Warwick wards;
- (c) Bottesford, Long Clawson, Old Dalby and Stathern wards;
- (d) Croxton Kerrial, Waltham-on-the-Wolds and Wymondham wards;
- (e) Asfordby, Frisby-on-the-Wreake, Gaddesby and Somerby wards.

47 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map

2, in Appendix A and on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

## **Egerton, Newport and Sysonby wards**

48 These three wards comprise the northern half of the town of Melton Mowbray. The number of electors per councillor in Newport and Sysonby wards is 22 per cent and 12 per cent above the borough average respectively (17 per cent and 18 per cent by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Egerton ward is 20 per cent below the borough average (22 per cent by 2006).

49 The Borough Council proposed replacing these three wards with seven single-member wards. It proposed splitting the existing Egerton ward into two single-member wards with the northern part of the existing ward forming Egerton 1 ward and the southern part of the existing ward forming Egerton 2 ward. The proposed Egerton 1 ward would also contain all the electors in the area bordered by Nottingham Road, Scalford Road and the estate to the north of The Crescent (formerly part of Sysonby ward). It proposed splitting the existing Newport ward into three single-member wards, with the north-western area becoming Newport 1 ward, the eastern area becoming Newport 2 ward and the south-western area becoming Newport 3 ward. Finally, it proposed splitting the existing Sysonby ward into two single-member wards, with the western part of the existing ward becoming Sysonby 1 ward and part of the eastern area of the existing ward becoming Sysonby 2 ward.

50 The Labour Party proposed an amended two-member Egerton ward including all the electors in the area bordered by Nottingham Road, Scalford Road and the estate to the north of The Crescent (formerly in Sysonby ward). It proposed maintaining the existing boundaries of Newport ward but proposed increasing the number of councillors representing the ward from three to four to improve electoral equality. Finally, it proposed amending the boundaries of the existing Sysonby ward to move all the electors to the south of Drummond Walk and to the east of Nottingham Road from Sysonby ward into Egerton ward.

51 We have carefully considered both representations received regarding these three wards. As already mentioned, given that we are adopting a different council size to that proposed by the Borough Council, we are unable to adopt any of its proposed wards in the urban area in their entirety. In addition to this, we consider that the proposed arrangement of single-member wards does not offer the best reflection of community identities in this area, since it splits existing estates such as the estate to the west of Nottingham Road in the existing Egerton ward.

52 We considered that, in general, the Labour Party's scheme in this area provided a good level of electoral equality while utilising easily identifiable boundaries and recognising community identities. However, in two areas we propose moving away from its scheme. The Labour Party proposed a four-member Newport ward, and we do not believe that the circumstances in this area are so exceptional as to warrant a four-member ward. As stated in our Guidance, we consider that the number of councillors representing a ward should not normally exceed three, as any number greater than this may lead to a dilution of accountability to the electorate. Therefore we propose moving all the electors on the estate centred on Clark Drive and Wymondham Way from Newport ward into Sysonby ward to create two three-member wards of Newport and Sysonby. We are also proposing to move all the electors in the town centre area bordered by Norman Way to the north, Nottingham Street

to the west and Sherrard Street to the south from the proposed Newport ward into the proposed Craven ward to improve electoral equality. We consider that this central area is self-contained, and that combining it with the area to the south-east would not adversely affect community ties. We consider that these proposals offer the best balance between electoral equality, the provision of strong, easily identifiable boundaries and the recognition of community identities.

53 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Egerton, Newport and Sysonby wards would be 3 per cent above, equal to the borough average and 7 per cent below the borough average respectively (equal to the borough average, 5 per cent below and 3 per cent below by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2, Map A1 and the large map at the back of the report.

### **Craven, Mowbray and Warwick wards**

54 These three wards comprise the southern half of the town of Melton Mowbray. The number of electors per councillor in Craven and Warwick wards is 12 per cent and 9 per cent below the borough average respectively (16 per cent and 9 per cent by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Mowbray ward is 29 per cent above the borough average (42 per cent by 2006).

55 The Borough Council proposed splitting the existing two-member Craven ward into two single-member wards, with the northern part of the existing ward becoming Craven 1 ward and the southern part becoming Craven 2 ward. Craven 1 ward would also include an area of the town centre formerly contained in Egerton and Newport wards. The Council proposed splitting the existing two-member Mowbray ward into three single-member wards, with the northern part of the existing ward becoming Mowbray 1 ward, the central part becoming Mowbray 2 ward and the southern part becoming Mowbray 3 ward. Finally, the Council proposed splitting the existing two-member Warwick ward into two single-member wards, with the western part of the existing ward becoming Warwick 1 ward and the eastern part becoming Warwick 2 ward.

56 The Labour Party proposed maintaining the existing boundaries of Craven, Mowbray and Warwick wards but proposed increasing the number of councillors representing Mowbray ward from two to three.

57 We carefully considered both of the representations received regarding these three wards. Again, since we are adopting a different council size to that put forward by the Borough Council it is difficult to adopt any of its proposed wards, and we also consider that its proposals do not offer the best balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities. In particular, we consider that its proposals would split natural communities such as the estate to the south of the railway line in Craven ward.

58 We considered that the Labour Party's proposals offered a good balance between electoral equality, the provision of easily identifiable boundaries and the recognition of community identities and therefore, with one amendment, we propose adopting its proposals in this area. We are proposing an amendment to improve electoral equality, moving all the electors in the area bordered by Norman Way, Nottingham Street and Sherrard Street from Newport ward into Craven ward.

59 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in the proposed Craven, Mowbray and Warwick wards would be 7 per cent above, 8 per cent below and 2 per cent below the borough average respectively (2 per cent above, 2 per cent above and 2 per cent below the borough average by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2, Map A1 and the large map at the back of the report.

### **Bottesford, Long Clawson, Old Dalby and Stathern wards**

60 These four wards are situated in the north-west of the borough. Long Clawson ward (comprising the parish of Clawson, Hose & Harby), Old Dalby ward (comprising the parishes of Ab Kettleby and Broughton & Old Dalby) and Stathern ward (comprising the parishes of Redmile and Stathern) are each represented by one councillor while Bottesford ward (comprising the parish of Bottesford) is represented by two councillors. The number of electors per councillor in Bottesford and Stathern wards is 2 per cent and 19 per cent below the borough average respectively (5 per cent and 19 per cent by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Long Clawson and Old Dalby wards is 29 per cent and 4 per cent above the borough average respectively (28 per cent and 2 per cent by 2006).

61 The Borough Council proposed retaining the existing two-member Bottesford ward. It proposed an amended Stathern ward to be called Redmile & Stathern ward, which would contain Belvoir parish in addition to the existing Stathern ward. It proposed an amended Clawson ward to comprise Long Clawson parish ward of Clawson, Hose & Harby parish and Scalford parish. It proposed a new Harby ward comprising the parish wards of Hose and Harby from Clawson, Hose & Harby parish and Eastwell parish ward from Eaton parish. Finally, the Council proposed retaining the existing single-member Old Dalby ward.

62 With one amendment the Labour Party put forward the same arrangements for these wards as those proposed by the Council. To provide a better level of electoral equality, the Labour Party proposed transferring the village of Holwell from Old Dalby ward to Clawson ward.

63 Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council proposed a two-member Long Clawson & Stathern ward combining the existing wards of Long Clawson and Stathern, stating that this option would preserve the “integrity of the Vale”. It stated that the Vale of Belvoir had a number of “community relationships and links” formed over a number of years. In addition to the geographical links, the Parish Council also pointed to factors such as the existence of bus services such as the “Vale Runner”, the Vale of Belvoir Ministry Team which links schools as well as churches, and the fact that Long Clawson Medical Practice serves all of the villages in the vale. None of these factors linked the village of Long Clawson and the village of Scalford. Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council also proposed retaining the existing two-member Bottesford ward. It proposed an amendment to the existing Old Dalby ward to move the village of Holwell from Old Dalby ward into its proposed Waltham ward.

64 Councillor Anne Dames supported the proposals put forward by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council but proposed retaining the existing Old Dalby ward.

65 We have carefully considered all the representations received regarding this area. We consider that the Council’s proposed Clawson ward offers little access from the northern part

of the ward to the southern part of the ward. The proposed ward is almost a detached ward and, we consider, does not provide for convenient and effective local government or recognise community identities. Although Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council's proposed Long Clawson & Stathern ward would have an electoral variance of 12 per cent above the borough average by 2006, we consider that this option is the best available, and have been convinced by the argumentation and evidence put forward by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council. The proposed Long Clawson & Stathern ward would preserve the strong community links in this area, and would allow the adoption of a scheme for the rest of the rural area which provides a generally good level of electoral equality while causing minimal disruption to community identities. We propose retaining the existing two-member Bottesford ward, as this ward would continue to provide a good level of electoral equality. In the Old Dalby area we are proposing a two-member Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward comprising the existing Old Dalby ward and the parishes of Scalford and Waltham. We considered the option proposed by the Council and by Councillor Dames of retaining the current Old Dalby ward, but consider that this would provide an unduly high level of electoral inequality (10 per cent above the borough average by 2006) and was not supported by strong enough argumentation to justify this inequality. We would, however, welcome views at Stage Three.

66 We also carefully considered the proposal put forward by the Labour Party and Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council to ward Ab Kettleby parish and remove the village of Holwell from Old Dalby ward. Under Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council's scheme, Holwell would become part of an amended Waltham ward and, while this would provide a good level of electoral equality (2 per cent above the borough average in Old Dalby ward by 2006 and 2 per cent below the borough average in Waltham ward by 2006), we do not consider that there is sufficient evidence of local support for the proposal to ward this parish. We therefore consider that our proposed two-member Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward would provide the best balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities in this area. We would, however, welcome local comment on our proposals at Stage Three.

67 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Bottesford ward (comprising the parish of Bottesford), Long Clawson & Stathern ward (comprising the parishes of Clawson, Hose & Harby, Redmile and Stathern) and Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward (comprising the parishes of Ab Kettleby, Broughton & Old Dalby, Scalford and Waltham) would be 5 per cent above, 13 per cent above and 2 per cent above the borough average respectively (2 per cent above, 12 per cent above and equal to the borough average by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A1.

### **Croxton Kerrial, Waltham-on-the-Wolds and Wymondham wards**

68 These three wards are situated in the east of the borough. Croxton Kerrial ward (comprising the parishes of Belvoir, Croxton Kerrial and Eaton), Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward (comprising the parishes of Freeby, Scalford and Waltham) and Wymondham ward (comprising the parishes of Buckminster, Garthorpe, Sproxton and Wymondham) are each represented by one councillor. The number of electors per councillor in Croxton Kerrial and Wymondham wards is currently 23 per cent and 14 per cent below the borough average respectively (24 per cent and 13 per cent below by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward is 2 per cent above the borough average at present (equal to the borough average by 2006).

69 The Borough Council proposed a new single-member Croxton & Waltham ward comprising the parishes of Croxton Kerrial and Waltham and the village of Eaton from Eaton parish. It also proposed an amended single-member Wymondham ward comprising the existing Wymondham ward and the parish of Freeby.

70 The Labour Party proposed the same warding arrangements in this area as those put forward by the Council.

71 Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council proposed an amended Croxton Kerrial ward, comprising the existing Croxton Kerrial ward and the villages of Saltby and Stonesby from Sproxton parish. It also proposed an amended Waltham ward, comprising the parishes of Scalford and Waltham and the village of Holwell from Ab Kettleby parish. Finally it proposed an amended Wymondham ward, comprising the parishes of Buckminster, Freeby, Garthorpe and Wymondham, as well as the village of Sproxton from Sproxton parish. Councillor Dames supported the proposals from Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council.

72 We carefully considered all the representations received regarding this area but, given the rural nature of the area and that we have adopted the proposals put forward by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council in the Clawson area, we are restricted in our options for the existing wards of Croxton Kerrial, Waltham-on-the-Wolds and Wymondham. The rural nature of the area means that any warding arrangement in one area has a knock-on effect in other parts of the borough and, since we are adopting Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council's proposed Long Clawson & Stathern ward, it is difficult for us to consider the proposals put forward by the Borough Council and the Labour Party in this area as they form part of a scheme based on a different warding arrangement to that which we are adopting in other areas. We consider that the wards proposed by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council provide the best balance between electoral equality and the recognition of community identities and so, with one amendment, we propose adopting the Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council's scheme for this area. We propose a two-member Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward, as discussed in the previous section.

73 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Croxton Kerrial ward (comprising the parishes of Belvoir, Croxton Kerrial and Eaton as well as the parish ward of Saltby & Stonesby from Sproxton parish), Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward (comprising the parishes of Ab Kettleby, Broughton & Old Dalby, Scalford and Waltham) and Wymondham ward (comprising the parishes of Buckminster, Freeby, Garthorpe and Wymondham as well as the parish ward of Sproxton from Sproxton parish) would be 2 per cent above, 2 per cent above and 10 per cent below the borough average respectively (1 per cent above, equal to the borough average and 9 per cent below the borough average by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Maps A1 and A2.

### **Asfordby, Frisby-on-the-Wreake, Gaddesby and Somerby wards**

74 These four wards are situated in the south of the borough. Frisby-on-the-Wreake ward (comprising the parishes of Frisby & Kirby, Grimston and Hoby with Rotherby), Gaddesby ward (comprising the parishes of Gaddesby and Twyford & Thorpe) and Somerby ward (comprising the parishes of Burton & Dalby, Knossington & Cold Overton and Somerby) are each represented by one councillor while Asfordby ward (comprising the parish of Asfordby)

is represented by two councillors. The number of electors per councillor in Asfordby, Frisby-on-the-Wreake and Gaddesby wards is 14 per cent, 3 per cent and 23 per cent below the borough average respectively (15 per cent, 6 per cent and 25 per cent by 2006). The number of electors per councillor in Somerby ward is 13 per cent above the borough average (22 per cent by 2006).

75 The Borough Council, the Labour Party, Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council and Councillor Dames all proposed retaining the existing two-member ward of Asfordby and the existing single-member ward of Frisby-on-the-Wreake. The Council stated that the proposal to retain the current two-member Asfordby ward was based on “the strong community identity of Asfordby”. The Borough Council, the Labour Party, Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council and Councillor Dames also proposed an amended single-member Gaddesby & Burton ward comprising the parishes of Burton & Dalby and Gaddesby with an electoral variance of 11 per cent above the borough average by 2006. They also proposed an amended single-member Somerby ward, comprising the parishes of Knossington & Cold Overton, Somerby and Twyford & Thorpe, with an electoral variance of 2 per cent above the borough average by 2006.

76 Burton & Dalby Parish Council stated that it supported the Council’s proposals subject to the Council reviewing its 2006 projected electorate for Burton & Dalby parish, and the proposed new village of Kettleby Magna having its own parish council. The Borough Council reviewed its projected electorate in the light of this representation and stated that it “is satisfied that it used the best projections available”.

77 We have carefully considered the representations received regarding the warding arrangements in this area. In the light of the cross-party support for, and reasonable levels of electoral equality provided by, the proposal to retain the existing wards of Asfordby and Frisby-on-the-Wreake, we are proposing to retain these two existing wards. However, we consider that the proposed single-member Gaddesby & Burton ward not only has an unduly high level of electoral inequality (11 per cent above the borough average by 2006) but also fails to provide for effective and convenient local government. The proposed ward is almost a detached ward with little, if any, road access from the northern part of the proposed ward to the southern part. Therefore electors in the north of the ward may have to leave the ward in order to access the southern part of the ward. In the light of this, we are proposing our own two-member Gaddesby & Somerby ward comprising the existing wards of Gaddesby and Somerby. Our proposed ward would have an electoral variance of 6 per cent above the borough average by 2006 and would, we consider, provide for both more effective and more convenient local government. We would, however, welcome local comment on our proposals at Stage Three.

78 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in our proposed Asfordby ward (comprising the parish of Asfordby), Frisby-on-the-Wreake ward (comprising the parishes of Frisby & Kirby, Grimston and Hoby with Rotherby) and Gaddesby & Somerby ward (comprising the parishes of Burton & Dalby, Gaddesby, Knossington & Cold Overton, Somerby and Twyford & Thorpe) would be 7 per cent below, 4 per cent above and 2 per cent above the borough average respectively (8 per cent below, 1 per cent above and 6 per cent above the borough average by 2006). Our draft proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and Map A1.

## **Electoral Cycle**

79 At Stage One we did not receive any comments relating to the electoral cycle of the borough. We therefore make no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

## **Conclusions**

80 Having considered all the evidence and submissions received during the first stage of the review, we propose that:

- there should be an increase in council size from 26 to 28;
- there should be 14 wards;
- the boundaries of 12 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of three, and five wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- elections should continue to be held for the whole council.

81 Our draft recommendations would involve modifying all but five of the existing wards in Melton borough, as summarised below:

- We propose adopting the Labour Party's proposed wards of Egerton, Mowbray and Warwick.
- We propose amendments to the Labour Party's proposed wards of Craven, Newport and Sysonby.
- In the rural wards of Asfordby, Bottesford, Croxton Kerrial, Frisby-on-the-Wreake, Long Clawson and Wymondham, we propose adopting the scheme put forward by Clawson, Hose & Harby Parish Council.
- We propose our own two-member Gaddesby & Somerby ward and our own two-member Old Dalby & Waltham-on-the-Wolds ward.

82 Table 5 shows how our draft recommendations will affect electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements (based on 2001 electorate figures) and with forecast electorates for the year 2006.

Table 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	26	28	26	28
Number of wards	17	14	17	14
Average number of electors per councillor	1,449	1,346	1,515	1,407
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	12	1	12	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	5	0	6	0

83 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Melton Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from 12 to one. By 2006 only one ward is forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent.

**Draft Recommendation**  
 Melton Borough Council should comprise 28 councillors serving 14 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A, including the large map inside the back cover. The Council should continue to hold whole-council elections every four years.

**Parish Council Electoral Arrangements**

84 When reviewing electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Local Government Act. The Schedule states that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parish of Sproxtton to reflect the proposed borough wards.

85 The parish of Sproxtton is currently served by six councillors. We are proposing that, to improve electoral equality, the villages of Saltby and Stonesby should be included in Croxton Kerrial ward, while the village of Sproxtton should remain in Wymondham ward. To facilitate the scheme that we have adopted for borough warding in the area, we are proposing to ward the parish of Sproxtton to create the parish wards of Saltby & Stonesby (represented by three councillors) and Sproxtton (represented by three councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area.

**Draft Recommendation**

Sproxton Parish Council should comprise six councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Saltby & Stonesby (returning three councillors) and Sproxton (returning three councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Maps A1 and A2 in Appendix A.

86 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish councils in the borough.

**Draft Recommendation**

Parish council elections should continue to take place every four years, at the same time as elections for the borough ward of which they are part.

*Map 2: Draft Recommendations for Melton*



## 5 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

87 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Melton contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 11 March 2002. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

88 Express your views by writing directly to us:

Review Manager  
Melton Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 020 7404 6142

E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)

[www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)

89 In the light of responses received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Electoral Commission, which cannot make the Order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after it receives them.



## APPENDIX A

### **Draft Recommendations for Melton: Detailed Mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Melton area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on Map A2 and the large map at the back of this report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed warding of Sproxton parish.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Melton Mowbray.

*Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Melton: Key Map*

*Map A2: Proposed Warding of Sproxton Parish*



## APPENDIX B

### Code of Practice on Written Consultation

The Cabinet Office's November 2000 *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, [www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/index/consultation.htm](http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/index/consultation.htm), requires all Government departments and agencies to adhere to certain criteria, set out below, on the conduct of public consultations. Non-departmental public bodies, such as the Local Government Commission for England, are encouraged to follow the Code.

The Code of Practice applies to consultation documents published after 1 January 2001, which should reproduce the criteria, give explanations of any departures, and confirm that the criteria have otherwise been followed.

*Table B1: LGCE Compliance with Code Criteria*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Compliance/departure</b>
Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.	We comply with this requirement.
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.	We comply with this requirement.
A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.	We comply with this requirement.
Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.	We comply with this requirement.
Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.	We consult on draft recommendations for a minimum of eight weeks, but may extend the period if consultations take place over holiday periods.
Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.	We comply with this requirement.
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.	We comply with this requirement.