

Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Kirklees

February 2003

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What is The Boundary Committee for England?

The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of The Electoral Commission, an independent body set up by Parliament under the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000. The functions of the Local Government Commission for England were transferred to The Electoral Commission and its Boundary Committee on 1 April 2002 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (SI 2001 No. 3692). The Order also transferred to The Electoral Commission the functions of the Secretary of State in relation to taking decisions on recommendations for changes to local authority electoral arrangements and implementing them.

Members of the Committee are:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Professor Michael Clarke CBE
Robin Gray
Joan Jones
Ann M Kelly
Professor Colin Mellors

Archie Gall (Director)

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 and ward names. We can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils.

Summary

We began a review of the electoral arrangements for Kirklees on 8 May 2002.

- **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 Kirklees:

- **in nine of the 24 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the borough and one ward varies by more than 20% from the average;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 11 wards and by more than 20% in two wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 111–112) are that:

- **Kirklees Metropolitan Council should have 69 councillors, three fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 23 wards, instead of 24 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 23 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one, and one ward should retain its existing boundaries;**

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 22 of the proposed 23 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the borough average.**
- **An improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue with the number of electors per councillor in 22 wards expected to vary by no more than 10% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the redistribution of councillors for the parishes of Holme Valley and Kirkburton.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 11 February 2003. 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 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 determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 7 April 2003:

**Team Leader
Kirklees Review
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Large map reference
1	Almondbury	3	Part of Almondbury ward; the proposed Lepton parish ward of Kirkburton parish; part of Newsome ward.	5
2	Ashbrow	3	Part of Birkby ward; part of Deighton ward.	1, 4 and 5
3	Batley East	3	Part of Batley East ward; part of Batley West ward; part of Birstall & Birkenshaw ward; part of Dewsbury East ward.	2
4	Batley West	3	Part of Batley West ward; part of Birstall & Birkenshaw ward.	2
5	Cleckheaton	3	Part of Birstall & Birkenshaw ward; part of Cleckheaton ward; part of Spen ward.	1
6	Colne Valley	3	Part of Colne Valley West ward; part of Golcar ward; part of Lindley ward.	3, 4, 7 and 8
7	Crosland Moor	3	Part of Crosland Moor ward; part of Newsome ward; part of Paddock ward.	4
8	Dalton	3	Part of Almondbury ward; part of Dalton ward; part of Deighton ward; the proposed Kirkheaton parish ward of Kirkburton parish.	5
9	Denby Dale	3	The parish of Denby Dale.	6, 9 and 10
10	Dewsbury East	3	Part of Batley East ward; part of Dewsbury East ward.	2 and 6
11	Dewsbury South	3	<i>Unchanged</i> – the existing Thornhill ward.	2 and 6
12	Dewsbury West	3	Part of Batley West ward; part of Dewsbury East ward; part of Dewsbury West ward.	2 and 6
13	Golcar	3	Part of Colne Valley West ward; part of Crosland Moor ward; part of Golcar ward; part of Lindley ward; part of Paddock ward.	4
14	Greenhead	3	Part of Birkby ward; part of Deighton ward; part of Paddock ward.	4 and 5
15	Heckmondwike	3	Part of Batley West ward; part of Birstall & Birkenshaw ward; part of Heckmondwike ward; part of Spen ward.	1 and 2
16	Holme Valley North	3	The existing Honley West parish ward and the proposed Brockholes, Honley Central & East and Honley South parish wards of Holme Valley parish; the parish of Meltham.	3, 4, 5, 8 and 9
17	Holme Valley South	3	The existing Wooldale parish ward and the proposed Fulstone, Hepworth, Holmfirth Central, Netherthong, Scholes, Upper Holme Valley and Upperthong parish wards of Holme Valley parish.	7, 8, 9 and 11
18	Kirkburton	3	The existing Flockton, Kirkburton, Shelley, Shepley and Thurstonland & Farnley Tyas parish wards and the proposed Lepton & Whitley Upper parish ward of Kirkburton parish.	5, 6, 9 and 10
19	Lindley	3	Part of Birkby ward; part of Golcar ward; part of Lindley ward; part of Paddock ward.	4
20	Liversedge	3	Part of Cleckheaton ward; part of Heckmondwike ward; part of Spen ward.	1, 2 and 5

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Large map reference
21	Mirfield	3	The parish of Mirfield	1, 2, 5 and 6
22	Newsome	3	Part of Almondbury ward; part of Crosland Moor ward; part of Deighton ward; part of Newsome ward; part of Paddock ward.	4 and 5
23	Oakwell	3	Part of Batley West ward; part of Birstall & Birkenshaw ward; part of Cleckheaton ward; part of Spen ward.	1 and 2

Notes:

- 1) *The south of the borough and Mirfield are the only parished parts of the borough and comprise the seven wards indicated above.*
- 2) *The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.*

We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing ward boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.

Table 2: Draft recommendations for Kirklees

	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	Almondbury	3	12,732	4,244	0	12,847	4,282	-3
2	Ashbrow	3	12,802	4,267	1	13,595	4,532	3
3	Batley East	3	12,254	4,085	-3	12,912	4,304	-3
4	Batley West	3	12,818	4,273	1	13,642	4,547	3
5	Cleckheaton	3	12,087	4,029	-5	12,924	4,308	-2
6	Colne Valley	3	12,555	4,185	-1	13,080	4,360	-1
7	Crosland Moor	3	12,627	4,209	0	13,161	4,387	-1
8	Dalton	3	12,548	4,183	-1	12,896	4,299	-3
9	Denby Dale	3	12,082	4,027	-5	12,396	4,132	-6
10	Dewsbury East	3	12,383	4,128	-2	12,794	4,265	-3
11	Dewsbury South	3	12,221	4,074	-4	13,191	4,397	0
12	Dewsbury West	3	11,771	3,924	-7	12,758	4,253	-4
13	Golcar	3	12,884	4,295	2	13,606	4,535	3
14	Greenhead	3	13,305	4,435	5	13,375	4,458	1
15	Heckmondwike	3	12,173	4,058	-4	12,931	4,310	-2
16	Holme Valley North	3	12,423	4,141	-2	13,139	4,380	-1
17	Holme Valley South	3	13,525	4,508	7	14,662	4,887	11
18	Kirkburton	3	12,309	4,103	-3	12,953	4,318	-2
19	Lindley	3	13,182	4,394	4	13,816	4,605	4
20	Liversedge	3	12,885	4,295	2	13,214	4,405	0
21	Mirfield	3	14,707	4,902	16	14,961	4,987	13
22	Newsome	3	12,980	4,327	2	13,058	4,353	-1
23	Oakwell	3	12,178	4,059	-4	12,755	4,252	-4
	Totals	69	291,431	-	-	304,666	-	-
	Averages	-	-	4,224	-	-	4,415	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on Kirklees Metropolitan Council's submission.

Notes: 1) The 'variance from average' columns show 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.

2) There is a small anomaly in the electorate figures supplied between the total electorate data for 2001 and 2006 shown in Table 2 and Table 4. This is due to rounding.

1 Introduction

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for the borough of Kirklees, on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the five metropolitan boroughs in West Yorkshire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. The programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Kirklees. Kirklees' last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in July 1979 (Report no. 344).

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

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
 - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
 - secure effective and convenient local government; and
 - achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Kirklees is being conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews*. This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

5 Our task is to make recommendations to The Electoral Commission 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 and town councils in the borough.

6 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% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

7 We are not prescriptive on council size. However, we believe that any proposals relating to council size, whether these are for an increase, a reduction or no change, should be supported by evidence and argumentation. Given the stage now reached in the introduction of new political management structures under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000, it is important that whatever council size interested parties may propose to us they can demonstrate that their proposals have been fully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of internal political management and the role of councillors in the new structure. 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, nor that changes should be made to the size of a council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other similar councils.

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit on the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very

exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could result in an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

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

Table 3: Stages of the review

Stage	Description
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 Stage One began on 8 May 2002, when we wrote to Kirklees Metropolitan Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified West Yorkshire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Yorkshire Local Councils Association, parish and town councils in the borough, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, Members of the European Parliament for the Yorkshire & Humber Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Kirklees Metropolitan Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 27 August 2002.

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

12 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 11 February 2003 and will end on 7 April 2003, 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.**

13 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. It will then be for it to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If The Electoral Commission accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, it will make an Order. The Electoral Commission will determine when any changes come into effect.

2 Current electoral arrangements

14 Kirklees is bounded by the boroughs of Calderdale to the west, Bradford and Leeds to the north, Wakefield to the east and Oldham, High Peak and Barnsley to the south. It is the largest borough council in England that is not based on a single large town or city. The borough was formed in the local government reorganisation of 1974 from 11 existing urban districts, metropolitan and county boroughs. Over two-thirds of Kirklees is rural, with moorland and valleys of the Peak District and South Pennines. Covering some 41,230 hectares, and with a population of some 395,131, Kirklees has a population density of almost 10 people per hectare. It contains five parishes.

15 The electorate of the borough is 291,434 (December 2001). The Council presently has 72 members who are elected from 24 wards, five of which are relatively rural in the south of the borough and the remainder being predominantly urban. All wards are three-member wards.

16 At present, each councillor represents an average of 4,048 electors, which the Council forecasts will increase to 4,231 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in nine of the 24 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average and one ward by more than 20%. The worst imbalance is in Deighton ward where each councillor represents 30% fewer electors than the borough average.

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

Map 1: Existing wards in Kirklees

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	Almondbury	3	9,907	3,302	-18	9,944	3,315	-22
2	Batley East	3	12,759	4,253	5	13,626	4,542	7
3	Batley West	3	13,304	4,435	10	14,100	4,700	11
4	Birkby	3	11,722	3,907	-3	12,032	4,011	-5
5	Birstall & Birkenshaw	3	13,448	4,483	11	14,101	4,700	11
6	Cleckheaton	3	11,570	3,857	-5	12,406	4,135	-2
7	Colne Valley West	3	10,554	3,518	-13	11,077	3,692	-13
8	Crosland Moor	3	11,757	3,919	-3	12,404	4,135	-2
9	Dalton	3	11,687	3,896	-4	12,099	4,033	-5
10	Deighton	3	8,503	2,834	-30	9,207	3,069	-27
11	Denby Dale	3	14,366	4,789	18	14,661	4,887	15
12	Dewsbury East	3	11,246	3,749	-7	11,723	3,908	-8
13	Dewsbury West	3	12,766	4,255	5	13,479	4,493	6
14	Golcar	3	12,810	4,270	5	13,487	4,496	6
15	Heckmondwike	3	13,469	4,490	11	14,278	4,759	12
16	Holme Valley North	3	12,423	4,141	2	13,139	4,380	4
17	Holme Valley South	3	13,525	4,508	11	14,662	4,887	15
18	Kirkburton	3	13,805	4,602	14	14,294	4,765	13
19	Lindley	3	12,919	4,306	6	13,503	4,501	6
20	Mirfield	3	12,404	4,135	2	12,766	4,255	1
21	Newsome	3	10,760	3,587	-11	10,567	3,522	-17
22	Paddock	3	11,214	3,738	-8	11,255	3,752	-11
23	Spennithorne	3	12,295	4,098	1	12,666	4,222	0
24	Thornhill	3	12,221	4,074	1	13,191	4,397	4
	Totals	72	291,434	-	-	304,667	-	-
	Averages	-	-	4,048	-	-	4,231	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Kirklees Metropolitan Council.

Note: 1) The 'variance from average' columns show 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 Deighton ward were relatively over-represented by 30%, while electors in Denby Dale ward were relatively under-represented by 18%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2) There is a small anomaly in the electorate figures supplied between the total electorate data for 2001 and 2006 shown in Table 2 and Table 4. This is due to rounding.

3 Submissions received

18 At the start of the review members of the public and other interested parties were invited to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Kirklees Metropolitan Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

19 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the BCFE visited the area and met officers and members from the Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 62 representations during Stage One, including a joint borough-wide scheme from the Liberal Democrats, Labour and Green groups on the Council and another from the Conservative Group on the Council, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the Council.

Kirklees Metropolitan Council joint submission

20 Three of the four political groups on the Council (the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups) proposed a council of 69 members, three less than at present. Their scheme was based on keeping parishes within one borough ward wherever possible and on dividing the borough into two; the Heavy Woollen district and south Kirklees. Their scheme resulted in two wards varying by more than 10% from the borough average by 2006; Holme Valley South ward would contain 11% more electors by 2006 and Mirfield ward would contain 13% more electors by 2006. They stated that 'the Joint Proposal has attempted to equalise the projected electorates of the proposed wards but has sought diligently to reflect these strong local ties both to reflect local wishes and to secure effective and participative local governance'.

Kirklees Conservative Group

21 Kirklees Conservative Group proposed retaining the existing council size of 72. It proposed mainly utilising whole polling districts as units to transfer electors. It made amendments to most ward names within the borough. All wards are projected to vary by no more than 2% from the borough average by 2006. It stated that 'the changes that have been put forward have not been done for political advantage, but to equalise electorates, minimise split communities, and to give all parties an open and fair opportunity in future elections'.

Parish and town councils

22 Denby Dale Parish Council proposed that the existing warding arrangements for Denby Dale parish be retained. Holme Valley Parish Council proposed amendments to the existing parish ward boundaries within Holme Valley parish and a reduction in the number of parish councillors. Kirkburton Parish Council objected to the current electoral arrangements whereby Kirkburton parish is divided between three borough wards. It proposed that the parish be divided between only two borough wards, its proposed Kirkburton North and Kirkburton South wards, to avoid confusion for electors.

23 Mirfield Town Council proposed a reduction in council size from 72 to 69 to facilitate the inclusion of Northorpe parish ward of Mirfield parish in Mirfield borough ward. However, it also proposed this transfer if the council size was not reduced to 69, contending that the residents of Northorpe have no affiliation with the remainder of the existing Dewsbury West borough ward.

Local organisations

24 Kirkburton & District Civic Society objected to the current arrangements for Kirkburton parish, proposing that the parish be divided between only two borough wards, Kirkburton North and Kirkburton South, rather than three borough wards under the current arrangements. It also

made proposals for surrounding wards in order to try to improve electoral equality. Longwood Village Group proposed amendments to the existing Colne Valley West, Golcar, Lindley and Paddock wards in order to unite Longwood village in the same borough ward.

25 Mirfield Civic Society objected to the current electoral arrangements for Mirfield parish, proposing that the whole parish be contained within one borough ward, considering Mirfield's circumstances to be 'exceptional grounds' to allow for a higher imbalance of electors than normally accepted. Shelley Community Association proposed that Shelley parish ward of Kirkburton parish (currently in Denby Dale borough ward) be contained in the same borough ward as the remainder of Kirkburton parish.

26 West Yorkshire Police Authority proposed minimal change to avoid disruption of the current policing divisions.

Elected representatives

27 Councillors Bates (Spennings ward), Hemingway (Kirkburton ward), Light (Birstall & Birkenshaw ward), Sims (Holme Valley South ward), Smith (Kirkburton ward), Snelson (Birstall & Birkenshaw ward), Taylor and Warby (both Mirfield ward) supported the Conservative Group's proposals. Councillor May (Deighton ward) broadly supported the Joint Submission, although she made a proposal of her own regarding the Dalton/Deighton area.

28 Councillor Andrews (Mirfield town councillor) objected to the current arrangements for Mirfield parish and proposed that the size of the council be reduced to 60 members to allow the whole parish to be contained in one borough ward. As an alternative, he proposed two Mirfield wards, Mirfield North and Mirfield South, also incorporating polling districts from the existing Dalton, Heckmondwike, Kirkburton and Thornhill wards. Councillor Bowden and Councillor Mrs Bowden (Mirfield town councillors) objected to Mirfield parish being divided between two borough wards. Mayor Hutchinson (Mirfield) forwarded 39 proforma letters from residents objecting to the current arrangements for Northorpe parish ward of Mirfield parish.

Other representations

29 A further 38 representations were received. Of these, 23 submissions were from local residents who objected to Northorpe parish ward forming part of Dewsbury West borough ward. Eighteen of these submissions supported the proposal that the whole of Mirfield parish form one borough ward, three submissions proposed Mirfield North and Mirfield South wards, one resident proposed transferring polling district DW9 only (part of Northorpe parish ward) to Mirfield borough ward, while another local resident proposed reducing the size of the council to 63 in order to transfer Northorpe parish ward to Mirfield borough ward. Four local residents objected to the Conservative Group's proposals that Hopton parish ward be transferred from the existing Mirfield borough ward.

30 Two local residents proposed alternative warding arrangements in the more rural areas in the south of the borough. One scheme involved an increase in council size to 75, while the other scheme was based upon transferring Northorpe parish ward back into a ward with other parts of Mirfield parish. Two submissions from local residents were received which proposed that Shelley parish ward of Kirkburton parish be transferred from the existing Denby Dale borough ward to Kirkburton borough ward.

31 Three local residents proposed that the Kirklees Metropolitan Council area be split into two separate local authority areas. One local resident proposed changes for the structure of central government, regional government and Kirklees Metropolitan Council, and proposed two-

member wards for Kirklees. Another local resident proposed that councillors from lesser populated areas should be transferred to more populous areas instead of moving boundaries. Finally, two other local residents made comments regarding parliamentary boundaries within Kirklees.

4 Analysis and draft recommendations

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

33 As described earlier, the prime aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Kirklees is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended): the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being 'as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough'.

34 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 to maintaining local ties.

35 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.

36 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

37 Since 1975 there has been an increase of approximately 8% in the electorate of Kirklees. The Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 5% from 291,434 to 304,667 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Deighton, Holme Valley South and Thornhill wards, although it predicted a decline in the electorate in Newsome ward. 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 Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

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

Council size

39 Kirklees Metropolitan Council currently has 72 members. The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council jointly proposed a council of 69 members, a reduction of three

councillors. The Joint Submission contended that this reduction in council size respected parish boundaries where possible, while maintaining the division between the Heavy Woollen area of Kirklees and the southern part of the borough, giving each area the correct allocation of councillors and achieving a better reflection of communities in Kirklees. It also argued that a council size of 69 would mean that split decisions in full council meetings would no longer rest on the casting vote of the mayor. This proposed council size was supported by Councillor May, and also by Mirfield Town Council in order to increase the number of electors per ward to facilitate incorporating the whole of Mirfield parish in one borough ward.

40 The Conservative Group proposed retaining the existing council size of 72, arguing that a reduction 'would increase...individual workloads and electorate at a time when workloads are already increasing due to the new Area Committees' and that 'the existing numbers of councillors represented a sufficiently robust number to meet the existing workloads and challenges ahead'. This council size was supported by Councillors Bates, Hemingway, Light, Sims, Smith, Snelson, Taylor and Warby.

41 Councillor Andrews proposed a reduction in council size to 60 councillors. He argued that this would facilitate the creation of two Mirfield borough wards in order to transfer Northorpe parish ward out of the existing Dewsbury West ward. He also contended that this council size would reduce costs and create more space for public attendees at meetings.

42 A local resident proposed a reduction in council size to 63 councillors in order to facilitate the inclusion of the whole of Mirfield parish in one borough ward. Another local resident proposed an increase in council size to 75 as he considered that electors in Kirklees are under-represented in comparison with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. Finally, another local resident proposed a reduction in council size to 36, serving 18 two-member wards.

43 We considered the proposals submitted by Councillor Andrews and the three local residents. However, we were not persuaded that a case had been presented for any of these options with regard to the internal operation of the Council. In addition, we note the reference to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council as a means of justifying an increase in the number of councillors for Kirklees. However, as outlined in the *Guidance*, we do not take this approach when considering council size and are of the view that each area should be considered on its own merits. Furthermore, as detailed earlier, the number of councillors who can be returned or elected from each metropolitan borough ward must be divisible by three. Nor have we received evidence of any support for such a reduction in council size from 72 to 36.

44 We therefore looked closely at the two proposed council sizes of 69 and 72. We considered that while the argumentation and evidence put forward for these proposed council sizes was helpful, it was insufficient to enable us to reach a judgement on the most suitable council size for Kirklees. Therefore we wrote to the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council and to the Conservative Group requesting further evidence and information on why each proposed council size would provide for effective and convenient local government for the electors in Kirklees. Emphasis was placed on the Council's internal political management structure, the representational role of councillors and the Council's role on external bodies.

45 Further evidence was duly received from both sets of respondents. The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council reiterated their view that '23 wards is a better reflection of the communities represented'. They then examined the structure of the council with regard to full council meetings, the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the Area Committees, members' allowances and external bodies. They considered that the existing council size of 72 was broadly sufficient for Kirklees, but that a reduction of three councillors would not significantly impact on the operation of the council (internally or externally) or the representational role of the councillors and would better represent the communities in Kirklees.

46 The Conservative Group also examined the structure of the council with regard to full council meetings, the Cabinet, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, other Committees and Panels and the role of councillors. It referred to the current councillor:elector ratio and stated that, 'It is considered that the pressure created by increasing this ratio is unnecessary and, at a time when workloads for councillors are increasing, not sensible. At the same time it is also seen as an unnecessary expense to increase the number of wards, despite the fact that the population and electorate is increasing.' It further argued that 'if the Council is to be altered in size it [the Conservative Group] can see no justification for doing this by just one ward, and that it may be more appropriate to radically alter the size of the Council to 20 or 28 wards'.

47 We carefully considered all the representations and further evidence received. We note that both the Joint Submission and the Conservative Group's submission carefully examined the structure of the Council in relation to their proposed council sizes and we are grateful for their contributions. We considered that both these submissions had addressed the question of whether their proposed council sizes would provide for convenient and effective local government for Kirklees. We came to the conclusion that they would. We therefore compared the levels of electoral equality under, and community support for, each of the proposals. The Conservative Group's proposals achieved very good levels of electoral equality, with all wards varying by no more than 2% by 2006. The Joint Submission proposals also achieved good levels of electoral equality, notwithstanding the electorates in Holme Valley South and Mirfield wards. However, we note that there was strong local support for the Joint Submission proposals to transfer Northorpe parish ward from Dewsbury West ward to Mirfield ward and to keep the whole parish in the same ward. We also note that there were some objections to the Conservative Group's proposal to transfer Hopton parish ward from Mirfield borough ward to its proposed Kirkheaton & Hopton ward and that the general preference was that the whole parish remain in the same borough ward. We also note that Holme Valley Parish Council's proposals could be accommodated in the Joint Submission proposals, while this would not be possible under the Conservative Group's proposals. In view of these considerations, and the fact that the reduction in council size was supported by the majority of members on the Council, we are satisfied that there is sufficient justification to reduce the existing council size by three members to 69.

48 Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 69 members.

Electoral arrangements

49 We have noted that during our consultation period, we received submissions from a number of local residents making proposals that we are unable to address as part of this review. Two residents made comments relating to the parliamentary constituencies in Kirklees. However, we do not take into account Parliamentary constituency boundaries when carrying out periodic electoral reviews. Three local residents proposed that Kirklees be split into two different local authorities. We are unable to review the administrative boundaries of an authority as part of a periodic electoral review. Another local resident proposed an alternative structure for central, regional and local government, and also proposed a uniform pattern of two-member wards. However, as detailed earlier, the number of councillors who can be returned or elected from each metropolitan borough ward must be divisible by three, and any review of the structure of central, regional and local government is outside the remit of this review. Finally, another local resident proposed that councillors from lesser populated areas should be transferred to more populous areas instead of moving boundaries. However, as this would result in wards being represented by a number of councillors other than three, we could not recommend such a proposal.

50 Having proposed a reduction in council size of three, it has not been possible to adopt any part of the Conservative Group's 72-member scheme. It is therefore not discussed in the

following sections. Also, as detailed earlier, we note that there was significant local support for elements of the Joint Submission proposals. We therefore propose basing our proposals on this scheme.

51 We also received incomplete schemes from two local residents regarding the southern part of the borough. One of these was based on a council size of 75, while the other was based on retaining the existing council size of 72. If these proposed wards were used under our proposed council size of 69, they would be significantly over-represented. We have therefore been unable to utilise any of these proposals.

52 As detailed earlier, we propose basing our draft recommendations on the Joint Submission made by the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance of the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. However, we have decided to move away from the Joint Submission proposals in a number of areas in order to better reflect community identities and provide for stronger boundaries. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- a) Birstall & Birkenshaw, Cleckheaton and Spen wards
- b) Batley East, Batley West and Heckmondwike wards
- c) Dewsbury East, Dewsbury West, Mirfield and Thornhill wards
- d) Almondbury, Dalton, Denby Dale and Kirkburton wards
- e) Birkby, Deighton, Lindley and Paddock wards
- f) Colne Valley West, Crosland Moor, Golcar and Newsome wards
- g) Holme Valley North and Holme Valley South wards

53 As previously indicated, Councillor May expressed support for the Joint Submission, other than in relation to the Dalton/Deighton area, while Councillors Bates, Hemingway, Light, Sims, Smith, Snelson, Taylor and Warby supported the Conservative Group proposal. The West Yorkshire Police Authority proposed minimal change. To avoid repetition, these views are not repeated in the following sections of this report. 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 maps.

Birstall & Birkenshaw, Cleckheaton and Spen wards

54 These three wards are situated in the north of the borough. Birstall & Birkenshaw ward is bounded by Bradford to the north-west and Leeds to the north-east. Cleckheaton ward is bounded by Bradford to the north and the borough of Calderdale to the east, while Spen ward is also bounded by Calderdale to the east. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 11% above the borough average in Birstall & Birkenshaw ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 5% below in Cleckheaton ward (2% below by 2006) and 1% above in Spen ward (equal to the average by 2006).

55 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed modifying the existing Birstall & Birkenshaw ward to form their proposed Oakwell ward. They proposed modifying the existing boundary to follow to the rear of properties on the eastern side of Latham Lane and proposed transferring properties broadly between Dewsbury Road and Oxford Road from the existing Spen ward to their proposed Oakwell ward. They then proposed slightly amending the boundary with Batley West so that it followed the centre of Smithies Moor Lane and proposed transferring the south-eastern part of Birstall & Birkenshaw ward to their proposed Batley East and Batley West wards. The area broadly to the rear of properties on the north side of The Crossings, John Nelson Close, Brownhill Close, Rockhill Close, Hillhead Drive and Ridgeway Drive and to the west of Howden Clough High School, would be transferred to their proposed Batley West ward, from where the

boundary would follow an undefined boundary eastwards as far as the borough boundary. That part of Upper Batley in the existing Birstall & Birkenshaw ward would be transferred to their proposed Batley East ward.

56 They also proposed modifying the existing Cleckheaton ward, as described above, in relation to Latham Lane. They proposed further modifications to this ward; first, they proposed utilising the dismantled railway line in the existing Spen ward as their modified Cleckheaton ward's eastern boundary. They proposed broadly retaining the remainder of Cleckheaton ward's existing boundaries, while transferring part of the existing Spen ward (the area broadly to the north of Quaker Lane) to their modified Cleckheaton ward. As detailed earlier, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups proposed a number of transfers from the existing Spen ward and consequently proposed joining almost all of the remainder of the ward with part of the existing Heckmondwike ward (the area to the west of Huddersfield Road) to form their proposed Liversedge ward. The remaining area (the area to the east of Huddersfield Road and Leeds Road in the existing Spen ward) would be transferred to their modified Heckmondwike ward, to be discussed later.

57 Under the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups' Joint Submission, the number of councillors per elector would be 4% below the borough average in Cleckheaton ward (2% below by 2006), 1% above in Liversedge ward (1% below by 2006) and 2% below in Oakwell ward, both in 2001 and by 2006.

58 We have carefully considered the representations received. We have noted the good levels of electoral equality achieved by the Joint Submission scheme in this area, and that it has broadly sought to keep communities together. We also note that it has utilised strong boundaries, such as the Huddersfield Road/Leeds Road. Although the proposed Cleckheaton and Oakwell wards are dissected by the M62, we consider that the constraints of having three-member wards in metropolitan boroughs means that such wards are sometimes unavoidable. However, we are content that there are sufficient crossing points to allow for convenient and effective local government, and we also note that this reflects the situation under the current arrangements. We therefore propose basing our recommendations in this area on the proposals in the Joint Submission, although we propose a number of minor amendments to tie the boundaries to firm ground detail and to avoid the arbitrary division of some roads.

59 First, we propose tying the boundary between our proposed Oakwell and Cleckheaton wards to the west of Clifford House Farm in order to utilise a more identifiable boundary. We also propose tying the boundary of the proposed Oakwell ward between Latham Lane and Oxford Road to the property boundaries on the eastern side of Latham Lane so that the boundary is not undefined. We propose a further amendment to the southern boundary of the proposed Oakwell ward around Monk Ings so that the boundary would run to the rear of properties on Queen Street, Bradford Road, Monk Ings Avenue, Monk Ings and Church Meadows before meeting Church Lane and following down the centre of Garfit Hill. We also propose a minor amendment to the boundary with the proposed Heckmondwike ward so that it should follow the rear of properties on the north side of White Lee Road so that they have better access to the remainder of the ward. We also propose an amendment to the proposed Oakwell ward boundary around Brown Hill. We propose that the boundary should follow the rear of properties on Castle Close so that properties in these culs-de-sac can have better access to the remainder of the ward. We also propose a minor amendment to their proposed Cleckheaton's south-western boundary so that the boundary would follow the centre of Halifax Road and Windy Bank Lane to avoid the arbitrary division of Windy Bank Lane. Finally, we propose utilising Nann Hall Beck and Spen River as a boundary between our proposed Cleckheaton and Liversedge wards rather than the disused tunnel, as proposed, in order to tie the boundary to identifiable ground detail.

60 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 5% below the borough average in Cleckheaton ward (2% below by 2006), 2% above in Liversedge ward

(equal to the average by 2006) and 4% below in Oakwell ward, both in 2001 and by 2006. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Batley East, Batley West and Heckmondwike wards

61 These three wards are situated in the north of the borough. Batley East ward is bounded by Leeds to the north-east and Wakefield to the south-east. Heckmondwike ward is bounded by Calderdale to the west. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 5% above the borough average in Batley East ward (7% above by 2006), 10% above in Batley West ward (11% above by 2006) and 11% above in Heckmondwike ward (12% above by 2006).

62 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed that the remainder of the existing Heckmondwike ward, not already described earlier, be joined with part of the existing Spen ward (the area to the east of Huddersfield Road and Leeds Road) and part of the existing Batley West ward (the area broadly comprising the roads to the east of White Lee Road as far as Kilpin Hill Lane). They then proposed modifying the existing Batley West ward to transfer the area to their modified Heckmondwike ward described above. They also proposed transferring the area to the east of Clerk Green Street, Mayman Lane and Stocks Lane, and the area to the north of Bradford Road and east of Carlinghow Hill to their modified Batley East ward, to be described below. They also proposed transferring one area to the west of North Lodge Fold, Brewerton Lane and Staincliffe Road to their proposed Dewsbury West ward, to be described later. As detailed earlier, they proposed transferring part of the existing Birstall & Birkenshaw ward to their modified Batley West ward.

63 Their modified Batley East ward would gain those areas from the existing Batley West and Birstall & Birkenshaw wards detailed above. However, the area broadly to the south of Upper Road, Town Street and Jack Lane, and also the area to the south of Grasmere Road and Langdale Road (before rejoining the existing boundary at Guernsey Road) in the settlement of Hanging Heaton would be transferred to their proposed Dewsbury East ward, to be discussed later.

64 Under the Joint Submission proposals, the number of councillors per elector would be equal to the borough average in Batley East ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, equal to the average in Batley West ward (2% above by 2006) and 4% below in Heckmondwike ward (3% below by 2006).

65 We have carefully considered the representations received. We note that the proposals made in the Joint Submission have used strong boundaries such as Huddersfield Road/Leeds Road and have also managed to achieve good levels of electoral equality. However, we note that the proposals for Batley East ward have resulted in the Hanging Heaton settlement being divided between the proposed Batley East and Dewsbury East wards. In the Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups argued that 'this...divides the settlement of Hanging Heaton between the two towns; a situation which is supported and disputed by local residents in equal measure'. They did not, however, add any justification as to why they proposed splitting the settlement as opposed to keeping it together. Having visited the area, we consider the properties on either side of their proposed boundary to be similar, and we have not been persuaded that adopting this proposal would provide a good reflection of the statutory criteria. We therefore propose amending the proposed Batley East ward to unite the Hanging Heaton area and making amendments elsewhere in the proposed Dewsbury East ward, as mentioned later, in order to facilitate this. Notwithstanding this amendment, we consider the proposals for the other two wards in this area to provide good levels of electoral equality, reflect communities and utilise strong boundaries. We therefore propose adopting them with two minor amendments to tie the boundaries to firm ground detail and to ensure better access for electors within the wards.

66 We propose that the whole of the Hanging Heaton settlement be transferred to our proposed Dewsbury East ward, to be discussed later. We also propose an amendment to the proposed boundary between Batley East and Dewsbury East (which follows the existing boundary) in the very east of the ward in order to tie it to firm ground detail. We propose that, from the north of properties on High Street, it would follow a path as far as the B6128, then north along this road, before turning north along Mill Forest Way at the roundabout before turning south-east along Sykes Lane and crossing Leeds Road between numbers 799 and 801, and 930 and 932, before rejoining the existing boundary. We consider that this ties the boundary to firm ground detail and is a less arbitrary division of Leeds Road.

67 In order to facilitate the transfer of Hanging Heaton, we propose transferring part of the proposed Dewsbury East ward to our proposed Batley East ward in order to balance the electorate. We propose that the area to the north of Hope Street, Hartley Street, Meadow Lane, Wood Lane and to the north of properties on Stonehyrst Avenue and Ward Street should be transferred from the existing Dewsbury East ward to our proposed Batley East ward. We consider that this unites the Hanging Heaton settlement while still achieving good levels of electoral equality within the two wards. We also propose amending the boundary between the proposed Heckmondwike and Batley West wards around White Lee Road so that it is tied to the rear boundaries of properties off the eastern side of White Lee Road. We propose a further amendment to the proposed Batley West ward so that the properties to the south of Chinewood Avenue and Wyvern Close be transferred to the proposed Batley West ward to enable those properties to have good access to the remainder of the ward.

68 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 3% below the borough average in Batley East ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 1% above in Batley West ward (3% above by 2006) and 4% below in Heckmondwike ward (2% below by 2006). Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Dewsbury East, Dewsbury West, Mirfield and Thornhill wards

69 These four wards are situated in the east of the borough. Dewsbury East and Thornhill wards are bounded by Wakefield to the east. Dewsbury West ward contains Northorpe parish ward of Mirfield parish. Mirfield ward contains the remainder of Mirfield parish, which comprises Battyeford, Crossley, Easthorpe and Hopton parish wards. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 7% below the borough average in Dewsbury East ward (8% below by 2006), 5% above in Dewsbury West ward (6% above by 2006), 2% above in Mirfield ward (1% above by 2006) and 1% above in Thornhill ward (4% above by 2006).

70 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed that Mirfield parish be coterminous with Mirfield borough ward. They argued that this ward, forecast to be under-represented by 13% by 2006, 'would not have been considered as a complete ward without very strong local support'. In order to compensate for the loss of electors in Northorpe parish ward, they proposed transferring part of the existing Batley West ward (the area broadly to the west of Staincliffe Road, Brewerton Lane and North Lodge Fold) and part of the existing Dewsbury East ward (the area broadly to the south of Oxford Road, to the west of Moorland Avenue and to the west of The Flatts, Halley Street and Vulcan Road) to their modified Dewsbury West ward. Their modified Dewsbury East ward would reflect the amendments between their modified Batley East and Dewsbury West wards as detailed above, while they proposed retaining the existing Thornhill ward but renaming it Dewsbury South ward.

71 Under the Joint Submission proposals, the number of councillors per elector would be 5% below the borough average in Dewsbury East ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 4% below in

Dewsbury South ward (equal to the average by 2006), 7% below in Dewsbury West ward (4% below by 2006) and 16% above in Mirfield ward (13% above by 2006).

72 Mirfield Town Council proposed that the size of the council be reduced from 72 to 69 in order to facilitate the inclusion of Northorpe parish ward of Mirfield parish in Mirfield borough ward. However, if this reduction was not adopted, it requested 'that this area could be given special consideration' and that the area be transferred anyway, as it contended that Northorpe parish ward shares no affinity with the remainder of the existing Dewsbury West ward and that the situation created some confusion amongst residents. Mirfield Civic Society objected to the existing arrangements for Mirfield parish, stating that, 'The Northorpe ward residents, supported by the rest of Mirfield, feel isolated by the current situation whereby they are included in the Dewsbury West ward.' It also proposed that Northorpe parish ward be transferred to Mirfield borough ward. Councillor Bowden and Councillor Mrs Bowden (Town Councillor for Mirfield) and 18 local residents also proposed this transfer, while another three local residents proposed a Mirfield North ward and a Mirfield South ward. One of these residents proposed that Kirkheaton parish ward of Kirkburton parish (currently in Dalton ward) be transferred to her proposed Mirfield South ward, with the remainder of the existing Dalton ward being transferred to the existing Almondbury ward. Councillor Andrews (Town Councillor for Mirfield) also objected to the current arrangements for Mirfield parish and proposed that the council size be reduced by 12 to 60 to allow the parish to be contained within one borough ward that did not contain high levels of electoral inequality. As an alternative, he proposed two Mirfield wards, Mirfield North and Mirfield South, also incorporating polling districts from the existing Dalton, Heckmondwike, Kirkburton and Thornhill wards. Mayor Hutchinson (Mirfield) forwarded 39 pro-forma letters from residents objecting to the current arrangements for Northorpe parish ward, proposing that it be transferred to Mirfield borough ward.

73 Another local resident proposed that the council size be reduced from 72 to 63 to facilitate the proposal of the whole of Mirfield parish being contained in one borough ward, with electors from the Batley wards being transferred to Dewsbury West ward in order to increase the number of electors. One local resident proposed that only polling district DW9 (part of Northorpe parish ward) be transferred to Mirfield borough ward.

74 Four local residents proposed that Hopton parish ward remain in Mirfield borough ward, with one of these residents also proposing that as much of Mirfield parish as possible should be included in the same ward.

75 We have carefully considered the representations received. We have noted the considerable community support for reuniting Mirfield parish in one borough ward, despite the resulting under-representation which is forecast by 2006. We considered the Conservative Group's proposals for Mirfield parish as a possible alternative in order to achieve better electoral equality. This included transferring Northorpe parish ward from the existing Dewsbury West ward to its revised Mirfield ward while transferring Hopton (the area broadly to the south of the railway line) to its proposed Kirkheaton & Hopton ward. However, under our proposed council size of 69, transferring the whole of this area to the proposed Dalton ward as proposed in the Joint Submission (to be discussed later) would result in the ward also being under-represented by 13% by 2006. Therefore a smaller part of Hopton would have to be transferred from the Mirfield ward proposed in the Joint Submission. However, we do not consider this to be a good reflection of community identity as there would have to be an arbitrary boundary drawn within the existing settlement in order to achieve good levels of electoral equality. We also note that, while a small number of respondents proposed two Mirfield wards, the majority of submissions requested that the whole parish remain in the same ward. We therefore propose adopting the Joint Submission's proposed Mirfield ward. Although we would not normally recommend such a high variance in the more urban centre of a borough, we acknowledge the significant local support for this proposal and the preference that the parish and borough ward boundaries be coterminous. We also consider that, as our justification for basing our recommendations on a

council size of 69 is related to the fact that this council size achieves more local support, mainly due to the proposals for Mirfield, this consideration should be taken into account in recommending a higher variance in this instance.

76 As detailed earlier, we propose that the whole of the Hanging Heaton settlement forms part of our proposed Dewsbury East ward and we therefore propose transferring part of the Joint Submission's proposed Dewsbury East ward, as described earlier, to our proposed Batley East ward to balance the number of electors in both wards. However, we propose adopting the Dewsbury South and Dewsbury West wards as proposed in the Joint Submission. We consider that these utilise, in the main, strong boundaries, achieve good levels of electoral equality and acknowledge the local support for the proposals for Mirfield ward.

77 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 2% below the borough average in Dewsbury East ward (3% below by 2006), 4% below in Dewsbury South ward (equal to the average by 2006), 7% below in Dewsbury West ward (4% below by 2006) and 16% above in Mirfield ward (13% above by 2006). Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Almondbury, Dalton, Denby Dale and Kirkburton wards

78 These four wards are situated in the centre and east of the borough. Denby Dale and Kirkburton are each bounded by Wakefield to the east, while Denby Dale ward is also bounded Barnsley to the south. Dalton ward contains Kirkheaton parish ward of Kirkburton parish. Kirkburton ward comprises Flockton, Kirkburton, Lepton, Shepley, Thurstonland & Farnley Tyas and Whitley Upper parish wards of Kirkburton. Denby Dale ward contains the remainder of Kirkburton parish, Shelley parish ward, while also containing Denby Dale parish. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 18% below the borough average in Almondbury ward (22% below by 2006), 4% below in Dalton ward (5% below by 2006), 18% above in Denby Dale ward (15% above by 2006) and 14% above in Kirkburton ward (13% above by 2006).

79 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed that the existing Almondbury ward be modified to transfer the western part of the ward (broadly to the west of Somerset Road) to their proposed Newsome ward, to be discussed later, along with the south-western part of the ward to the west of Wheatroyd Lane and Sharp Lane. They then proposed transferring part of the existing Kirkburton ward (most of the existing Lepton parish ward of Kirkburton parish) to their modified Almondbury ward. They also proposed modifying the existing Dalton ward, extending it westwards as far as the railway line and the area to the west of the industrial estates off Leeds Road from the existing Deighton ward. This ward would continue to contain most of the existing Kirkheaton parish ward of Kirkburton parish, although a small area in the easternmost part of the parish ward would be transferred to their modified Kirkburton ward. This ward would lose most of the existing Lepton parish ward, and gain a small part of the existing Kirkheaton parish ward as detailed above, while gaining Shelley parish ward of Kirkburton parish, currently in Denby Dale ward. The revised Denby Dale ward would be coterminous with Denby Dale parish. The Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council stated that: 'Kirkburton parish is too populous to be considered as a single ward so we have been compelled to put parts of the parish into Dalton and Almondbury. Despite its irregular shape, Kirkburton ward has some community cohesion in that it contains a number of rural villages...which share common problems. However, this cannot disguise that the ward is a compromise forced on us by our desire to respect local support for parish boundaries in the Holme Valley, Denby Dale and Mirfield.'

80 Under the Joint Submission proposals, the number of councillors per elector would be equal to the borough average in Almondbury ward (3% below by 2006), 1% below in Dalton ward (3% below by 2006), 5% below in Denby Dale ward (6% below by 2006) and 3% below in Kirkburton ward (2% below by 2006).

81 Denby Dale Parish Council proposed that the existing warding arrangements for Denby Dale parish be retained. Kirkburton Parish Council objected to the current electoral arrangements whereby Kirkburton parish is divided between three borough wards, contending that this makes it difficult for representation at borough level and that it confuses electors. It proposed that the parish be divided between two borough wards to reduce the confusion for electors. It proposed a Kirkburton North ward comprising the existing Kirkheaton, Lepton, Whitley Upper and Flockton parish wards, and a Kirkburton South ward comprising the remainder of Kirkburton parish. It contended that 'the villages within each of these areas would generally have more in common with one another than with the other area'. This proposal was supported by Kirkburton & District Civic Society although they acknowledged the consequential effect that these proposals would have on other parished areas within Kirklees.

82 Shelley Community Association proposed that Shelley parish ward of Kirkburton parish be part of the same borough ward as the remainder of Kirkburton parish as 'we feel that having parish representatives at Kirkburton with ward representatives at Denby Dale has worked to our disadvantage over many years'. This was also proposed by three local residents. As detailed earlier, one local resident proposed that Kirkheaton parish ward of Kirkburton parish, currently in Dalton ward, be transferred to her proposed Mirfield South ward, with the remainder of the existing Dalton ward being transferred to the existing Almondbury ward.

83 Councillor May, while broadly supporting the proposals made by the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council, proposed that part of the A62 Leeds Road corridor from Huddersfield to Whitacre Street remains in Deighton ward for topographical, community and local identity reasons.

84 We have carefully considered the representations received. We have noted the request by Kirkburton Parish Council and Kirkburton & District Civic Society that Kirkburton parish be divided between two borough wards, rather than between three as under the existing arrangements and as proposed in the Joint Submission. However, such a proposal would significantly impact upon the surrounding area, which was acknowledged by the Parish Council and the Civic Society. Kirkburton & District Civic Society attempted to make proposals to address this but also acknowledged that 'these arrangements would not make for a happy solution' and would, in particular, impact upon Mirfield parish, which it stated it would support in its preference that the parish and borough ward boundaries be coterminous. Therefore, while we do not consider it ideal for Kirkburton parish to be divided between three borough wards, we have been unable to identify a viable alternative which would not impact significantly upon the remainder of the surrounding area, given the size (both geographically and in terms of electorate) of the parish. Furthermore, having visited the area, we consider that the areas of Kirkburton parish which have been joined with more urban, unparished areas as part of the Joint Proposal share good road links and would facilitate convenient and effective local government. We also note that these proposals would be supported by Denby Dale Parish Council, Shelley Community Association and the three local residents who wrote in regarding this issue.

85 We therefore propose adopting all four of these proposed wards, as proposed in the Joint Submission, with a minor amendment between the proposed Almondbury and Kirkburton wards to tie the boundary to firm ground detail around Lepton Great Wood. We noted the proposed amendment by Councillor May in the Dalton area. However, we consider that to transfer the area to the west of Leeds Road to either the proposed Ashbrow or Greenhead ward (to be discussed later) would have a significant impact on the other wards in this area and we therefore do not propose adopting this amendment.

86 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be equal to the borough average in Almondbury ward (3% below by 2006), 1% below in Dalton ward (3% below by 2006), 5% below in Denby Dale ward (6% below by 2006) and 3% below in Kirkburton ward (2% below by 2006). Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Birkby, Deighton, Lindley and Paddock wards

87 These four wards are situated in the west of the borough. Birkby, Deighton and Lindley wards are bounded by Calderdale to the west. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 3% below the borough average in Birkby ward (5% below by 2006), 30% below in Deighton ward (27% below by 2006), 6% above in Lindley ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, and 8% below in Paddock ward (11% below by 2006).

88 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed that approximately half of the existing Birkby ward (the area broadly to the north of Flint Street, Spaines Road, the football ground in Fartown and Coach Road) be joined with the majority of the existing Deighton ward (the area broadly to the west of the Huddersfield Broad Canal) to form their proposed Ashbrow ward. The majority of the remainder of the existing Deighton ward would be transferred to their revised Dalton ward, as detailed earlier. The majority of the remainder of the existing Birkby ward would form part of their proposed Greenhead ward, along with part of the existing Deighton ward (the area to the west of the railway line), most of the existing Paddock ward (the area broadly to the west of Back Wentworth Street, to the rear of properties on Oastler Avenue and to the west of Paddock Viaduct, to the north of Stoney Battery Road and to the east of Luck Lane and Wellfield Road) and a small part of the existing Lindley ward (the properties off Bryan Road). The area to the south of the A629 and the A62 in the existing Deighton ward would be transferred to their proposed Newsome ward, to be described later.

89 Their revised Lindley ward would comprise the majority of the existing Lindley ward, other than the area mentioned above and the area to the south of New Hey Road, as far east as Dunsmore Drive. It would also include part of the existing Birkby ward (the properties off Reap Hurst Road, Wood View and Paget Crescent, along with the largely rural area around Grimescar Wood), part of the existing Paddock ward, as described above, and a small part of the existing Golcar ward (the area to the west of Quarmby Road north of Cliff Close and to the east of Haughs Road). The remainder of the existing Lindley ward would be transferred to their proposed Golcar ward, while the remainder of the existing Paddock ward would be transferred to their proposed Crosland Moor, Golcar and Newsome wards, to be discussed later.

90 Under the Joint Submission proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1% above the borough average in Ashbrow ward (3% above by 2006), 6% above in Greenhead ward (2% above by 2006) and 3% above in Lindley ward, both in 2001 and 2006.

91 Longwood Village Group proposed amendments to the existing Lindley and Paddock wards in order to unite the village of Longwood in one ward, stating that 'Longwood has a long history and a clear sense of identity'. It proposed transferring polling district GO9 from the existing Golcar ward to its revised Paddock ward. It then proposed transferring polling district LI7 and part of polling district LI5 (the area to the south of New Hey Road) from the existing Lindley ward to its revised Golcar ward, which would be named Golcar & Longwood ward.

92 As detailed earlier, Councillor May proposed an amendment to the proposals for Deighton ward.

93 We have carefully considered the representations received. We have noted the alternative suggestion by Longwood Village Group for their proposed Golcar & Longwood ward and

consequential amendments to neighbouring wards. However, we have noted that this proposal would result in Golcar & Lindley ward being a detached ward. Furthermore, under our proposed council size of 69, their proposed Colne West ward would be over-represented by 14% by 2006. We have noted that the proposals of the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups build on the existing communities in this area, and also that their proposed Greenhead ward encompasses the compact urban area of Huddersfield town centre. Furthermore, they achieve good levels of electoral equality. We are therefore basing our draft recommendations on the proposals made in the Joint Submission, subject to three minor amendments to tie the boundaries to firm ground detail and to ensure logical boundaries.

94 First, we propose a minor amendment to the boundary between Ashbrow and Greenhead wards to ensure that the length of Richmond Avenue and Greenhouse Road is used as a boundary. We also propose a minor amendment to the boundary between the proposed Lindley and Golcar wards, transferring the properties on Haughs Lane to the proposed Golcar ward so that they would have convenient access to the remainder of the ward. Finally, we propose an amendment to the boundary between the proposed Greenhead and Lindley wards around Huddersfield Grammar School so that the boundary would follow the western boundary of the school to accommodate properties which have since been built in this area.

95 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would be 1% above the borough average in Ashbrow ward (3% above by 2006), 5% above in Greenhead ward (1% above by 2006) and 4% above in Lindley ward, both in 2001 by 2006. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Colne Valley West, Crosland Moor, Golcar and Newsome wards

96 These four wards are in the west and centre of the borough. Colne Valley West ward is bounded by Calderdale to the north-west and Oldham to the south-west. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 13% below the borough average in Colne Valley West ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, 3% below in Crosland Moor ward (2% below by 2006), 5% above in Golcar ward (6% above by 2006) and 11% below in Newsome ward (17% below by 2006).

97 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed a new Colne Valley ward comprising almost all of the existing Colne Valley West ward (other than the southern end of Manchester Road), the south-westernmost part of the existing Lindley ward (so that the boundary goes south broadly following field edges from the A640) and the western part of the existing Golcar ward (the Nettleton Hill, Whitwam Bank, Haughs Green and Wellhouse areas). Their revised Crosland Moor ward would comprise most of the existing Crosland Moor ward, other than the area comprising properties off Meltham Road around Lockwood Cemetery. It would also comprise properties off Hawkroyd Bank Road around Kestrel Bank, and to the north of Lockwood Road and to the west of Upper Mount Street, and also the roads off Springdale Avenue from the existing Newsome ward. Finally, it would also comprise two small areas from the existing Paddock ward (the area to the south of Huddersfield Narrow Canal as far as Paddock Viaduct, and the area to the south of Longroyd Lane).

98 Their revised Golcar ward would reflect the transfers to their proposed Colne Valley and Lindley wards while reflecting the transfers from the existing Colne Valley West, Lindley and Paddock wards. Their revised Newsome ward would reflect the transfers to and from their proposed Crosland Moor ward and would also gain part of the existing Paddock ward (broadly to the south of the playing fields to the rear of Cambridge Road, to the east of Back Wentworth Street and Springwood Hall Gardens). It would also gain part of the existing Deighton ward (the area to the south of the A629 and the A62) and two parts of the existing Almondbury ward, as detailed earlier.

99 Under the Joint Submission proposals, the number of electors per councillor would be 1% below the borough average in Colne Valley and Crosland Moor wards, both in 2001 and by 2006, 2% above in Golcar ward (3% above by 2006) and 3% above in Newsome ward (1% below by 2006).

100 As detailed earlier, Longwood Village Group submitted proposals intended to unite Longwood village in the same borough ward. It proposed that polling districts GO5 and GO9 be transferred to its revised Colne West and Paddock wards respectively. It also proposed that polling district LI7 and part of polling district LI5 (the area to the south of New Hey Road) be transferred from the existing Lindley ward to its revised Golcar ward, which would be renamed Golcar & Longwood ward.

101 We have carefully considered the representations received. As detailed earlier, we were unable to facilitate the proposals made by Longwood Village Group. Having considered the proposals made by the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council, we propose broadly adopting their proposed wards in this area, subject to a number of minor amendments. In particular, we consider that they have achieved a balance between electoral equality and community identity in their proposed Colne Valley ward as, although it is geographically large, it achieves a good level of electoral equality while retaining a mainly rural composition.

102 We propose that the boundary between Crosland Moor and Newsome wards be amended to follow the boundary of Old Spring Wood, transferring properties at the western end of Wood End Road to our proposed Newsome ward. We also propose utilising Meltham Road as a boundary around Lockwood Cemetery instead of following the rear of properties in order to utilise a stronger boundary. We propose that the boundary between our proposed Crosland Moor and Newsome wards should follow the rear of properties on the eastern side of Mount Street as this would retain Mount Street and Upper Mount Street in the same ward. Finally, we propose that the boundary between Colne Valley and Golcar wards should follow the rear of all properties on Brook Lane to avoid splitting the road between two wards.

103 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be 1% below the borough average in Colne Valley ward, both in 2001 and by 2006, equal to the average in Crosland Moor ward (1% below by 2006), 2% above in Golcar ward (3% above by 2006) and 2% above in Newsome ward (1% below by 2006). Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Holme Valley North and Holme Valley South wards

104 These two wards are situated in the south of the borough. Holme Valley North ward contains Meltham parish and Honley Central, Honley East, Honley South, Honley West and Thurstonland parish wards of Holme Valley parish. Holme Valley South ward contains the remainder of Holme Valley parish, which comprises Austonley, Cartworth, Fulstone, Hepworth, Holme, Netherthong, North Central, Scholes, South Central, Upperthong and Wooldale parish wards. Under the existing arrangements the number of electors per councillor is 2% above the borough average in Holme Valley North ward (4% above by 2006) and 11% above in Holme Valley South ward (15% above by 2006).

105 At Stage One, as part of their Joint Submission, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed retaining the existing Holme Valley North and Holme Valley South wards. Although Holme Valley South ward would be under-represented by 11% by 2006, the Council argued, being at the very south of the borough, alternative options are limited and any transfers would divide the communities of Holme Valley parish.

106 Under the Joint Submission proposals the number of electors per councillor would be 2% below the borough average in Holme Valley North ward (1% below by 2006) and 7% above in Holme Valley South ward (11% above by 2006).

107 Holme Valley Parish Council proposed amendments to the existing parish ward boundaries within Holme Valley parish and a reduction in the number of parish councillors, which will be discussed later. These proposals could be facilitated as part of the Joint Submission scheme.

108 We have carefully considered the representations received. We examined alternative boundaries between the two Holme Valley wards in order to achieve better levels of electoral equality. However, the parish is made up of several distinct settlements which are accommodated by the existing boundary. We considered that amending the boundary between the two wards would result in an arbitrary boundary and would also impact upon the Parish Council's proposals for amendments to its internal parish electoral arrangements which it had submitted. The parish is also at the very south of the borough, bounded to the east by other parishes and to the west by Wessenden Moor, offering few alternatives. Therefore, other than a minor amendment so that the boundary should follow the A6024 as proposed by Holme Valley Parish Council, we propose adopting these two wards as proposed in the Joint Submission.

109 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Holme Valley North and Holme Valley South wards would be the same as under the Joint Submission proposals. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and the large maps.

Electoral cycle

110 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all Metropolitan boroughs have a system of elections by thirds.

Conclusions

111 Having considered all the evidence and representations received during the initial stage of the review, we propose that:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 72 to 69;
- there should be 23 wards;
- the boundaries of 23 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of one ward, and one ward should retain its existing boundaries.

112 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups' proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- we propose that the Hanging Heaton settlement be wholly contained within our proposed Dewsbury East ward;
- we propose minor amendments to another 17 of their proposed wards which involve only a small number of electors and do not significantly change the scheme.

113 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 Electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	72	69	72	69
Number of wards	24	23	24	23
Average number of electors per councillor	4,048	4,224	4,231	4,415
Number of wards with a variance of more than 10% from the average	9	1	11	2
Number of wards with a variance of more than 20% from the average	1	0	2	0

114 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Kirklees Metropolitan Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from nine to one. By 2006 only two wards (Mirfield and Holme Valley South wards) are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10%.

Draft recommendation

Kirklees Metropolitan Council should comprise 69 councillors serving 23 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

Parish and town council electoral arrangements

115 When reviewing electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides 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 parishes of Holme Valley and Kirkburton to reflect the proposed borough wards.

116 The parish of Holme Valley is currently served by 31 councillors representing 16 wards: Honley Central, which is represented by four parish councillors, Fulstone and Wooldale (three), Austonley, Cartworth, Honley East, Netherthong, North Central, Scholes, South Central and Upperthong (two) and Hepworth, Holme, Honley South, Honley West and Thurstonland (one).

117 At Stage One, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed that Holme Valley parish continue to be served by two borough wards, as at present, but made no specific proposals for the internal parishing arrangements.

118 Holme Valley Parish Council proposed alterations to the parish ward boundaries and a reduction in the number of councillors serving the parish from 31 to 23. Honley West parish ward would remain unchanged but would be represented by two parish councillors. Its revised Honley South ward would continue to be represented by one parish councillor. Its new Honley

Central and East parish ward would be represented by three parish councillors. Its new Brockholes parish ward would be represented by one parish councillor. These parish wards would form part of Holme Valley North borough ward.

119 Its revised Netherthong parish ward would continue to be represented by two parish councillors. Wooldale parish ward would remain unchanged and would continue to be represented by three parish councillors. Its revised Fulstone parish ward would be represented by two parish councillors. Its revised Hepworth parish ward would continue to be represented by one parish councillor. Its new Holmfirth Central and Upper Holme Valley parish wards and its revised Upperthong and Scholes parish wards would each be represented by two parish councillors. These parish wards would form Holme Valley South borough ward. The parish council stated that its 'aim was to look at wards in terms of communities and to establish more suitable groupings within the external parish council boundary'. These proposals contained a minor amendment to the two borough wards proposed as part of the Joint Submission, as detailed earlier.

120 Having considered the evidence received and in the light of the fact that our borough warding would be unaffected by these proposals, other than the minor amendment between our proposed Holme Valley North and Holme Valley South wards described earlier, we consider Holme Valley Parish Council's request reasonable and are content to put these forward as part of our draft recommendations. However, we have noted that, in retaining some existing parish wards and in proposing new parish wards, this has resulted in some arbitrary boundaries and the splitting of roads and culs-de-sac between parish wards. We have made a minor amendment to the boundary between Fulstone and Scholes parish wards near Wildspur Wood as the existing boundary runs through a building, so that the properties in Wildspur Grove are transferred to our proposed Fulstone parish ward. However, we have identified other anomalies which could be addressed. We would welcome comments at Stage Three on these internal parish ward boundaries.

Draft recommendation

Holme Valley Parish Council should comprise 23 councillors, eight fewer than at present, representing 12 wards: Brockholes (returning one councillor), Fulstone (two), Hepworth (one), Holmfirth Central (two), Honley Central & East (three), Honley South (one), Honley West (two), Netherthong (two), Scholes (two), Upper Holme Valley (two), Upperthong (two) and Wooldale (three). The parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on the large maps.

121 The parish of Kirkburton is currently served by 25 councillors representing eight wards: Lepton and Kirkburton, which are each represented by five parish councillors, Kirkheaton (four), Shepley (three) and Flockton, Shelley, Thurstonland & Farnley Tyas and Whitley Upper (two).

122 At Stage One, the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Green groups on the Council proposed that Kirkburton parish continue to be served by three borough wards and made no proposals to change the existing Flockton, Kirkburton, Shelley, Shepley and Thurstonland & Farnley Tyas parish wards. However, they proposed that a modified Kirkheaton parish ward form part of their modified Dalton ward. They also proposed that a modified Lepton parish ward form part of their modified Almondbury ward. Finally, these modifications would result in consequential changes to the existing Whitley Upper ward, to be included in their modified Kirkburton borough ward.

123 Kirkburton Parish Council and Kirkburton & District Civic Society made no proposals for change to any of the existing parish wards but proposed that Kirkburton parish be served by two borough wards.

124 Having considered all the evidence received, and in the light of our draft recommendations for the borough warding in Kirkburton parish, reflecting our minor modification to the proposals made to the Joint Submission proposals, we propose amendments to the parish accordingly. We propose modified Kirkheaton and Lepton parish wards, while we

propose a modified Whitley Upper parish ward which we propose naming Lepton & Whitley Upper parish ward to reflect the transfer of part of the existing Lepton parish ward. However, we would welcome comments on this ward name at Stage Three. We do not propose any change in representation. However, we have noted that this more significant transfer between the modified Lepton parish ward and our proposed Lepton & Whitley Upper parish ward improves the ratio of electors per councillor in these two parish wards, while there is more of an imbalance in the other parish wards. We would welcome comments on the distribution of parish councillors within Kirkburton at Stage Three.

Draft recommendation

Kirkburton Parish Council should comprise 25 councillors, as at present, representing eight wards: Flockton (returning two councillors), Kirkburton (five), Kirkheaton (four), Lepton (five), Lepton & Whitley Upper (two), Shelley (two), Shepley (three) and Thurstonland & Farnley Tyas (two). The parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on the large maps.

Map 2: Draft recommendations for Kirklees

5 What happens next?

125 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Kirklees contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 7 April 2003. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

126 Express your views by writing directly to us:

**Team Leader
Kirklees Review
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

127 In the light of representations 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 Kirklees: **Detailed mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Kirklees 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 the large maps.

The **large maps** illustrate the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Kirklees.

Erratum: Please note that on large maps 4, 5, 8 and 9, Honley East & Central parish ward should read Honley Central & East parish wards, as referred to in the text.

Map A1: Draft recommendations for Kirklees: Key map

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, requires all Government Departments and Agencies to adhere to certain criteria, set out below, on the conduct of public consultations. Public bodies, such as The Boundary Committee 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: Boundary Committee for England's compliance with Code criteria

Criteria	Compliance/departure
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.