

Final recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements  
for Redcar & Cleveland

Report to The Electoral Commission

*October 2002*

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A large map illustrating the proposed ward boundaries for Redcar and the Western Urban Core is inserted inside the back cover of this report.



# 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.

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Redcar & Cleveland.



## SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of Redcar & Cleveland's electoral arrangements on 16 October 2001. We took over the review following the transfer of functions on 1 April 2002. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 14 May 2001, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation. We now submit final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations that we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission.**

We found that the existing arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Redcar & Cleveland:

- **In seven of the 22 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the district.**
- **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 eight wards and by more than 20% in two wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 102-103) are that:

- **Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council should have 59 councillors, the same as at present.**
- **There should be 22 wards, as at present.**
- **The boundaries of 18 of the existing wards should be modified, and 4 wards should retain their 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 20 of the proposed 22 wards the number of electors per councillor would not vary by more than 10% from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in only one ward, Saltburn, expected to vary by more than 10% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **new warding arrangements for Guisborough, Lockwood, Saltburn, Marske & New Marske and Skelton & Brotton parishes.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Electoral Commission, which will not make an Order implementing them before 26 November 2002.

**The Secretary  
Electoral Commission  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Belmont (Guisborough)	2	The proposed Belmont parish ward of Guisborough parish; Charltons and Margrove ward and proposed Boosbeck parish ward of Lockwood parish	Maps A2 and A4
2	Brotton	3	The Brotton East parish ward and Brotton West parish wards of Skelton & Brotton parish; the Skinningrove parish ward of Loftus parish	Map A3
3	Coatham (Redcar)	2	Coatham ward; part of Redcar ward; part of West Dyke ward	Large Map
4	Dormanstown	3	Part of Dormanstown ward; part of Kirkleatham ward; part of West Dyke ward	Large Map
5	Eston (Western Urban Core)	3	Part of Dormanstown ward; part of Eston ward	Large Map
6	Grangetown (Western Urban Core)	2	Part of Dormanstown ward; part of Grangetown ward	Large Map
7	Guisborough (Guisborough)	3	The proposed Guisborough parish ward of Guisborough parish	Map A2 and Large Map
8	Hutton (Guisborough)	3	The proposed Hutton parish ward of Guisborough parish	Map A2 and Large Map
9	Kirkleatham (Redcar)	3	Part of Kirkleatham ward; part of West Dyke ward	Large Map
10	Lockwood	1	The Lingdale & Stanghow and Moorsholm parish wards of Lockwood parish	Maps A4 and A3
11	Loftus	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Map 2
12	Longbeck	3	The proposed Longbeck parish ward of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish; part of West Dyke ward	Large Map
13	Newcomen (Redcar)	2	<i>Unchanged</i>	Large Map
14	Normanby (Western Urban Core)	3	Normanby ward; part of Eston ward	Large Map
15	Ormesby (Western Urban Core)	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Large Map
16	St Germain's	3	The proposed St Germain's parish ward of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish	Large Map
17	Saltburn	3	The proposed Saltburn parish ward of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish	Map 2 and Large Map
18	Skelton	3	<i>Unchanged</i>	Maps 2 and A4
19	South Bank (Western Urban Core)	3	South Bank ward; part of Dormanstown ward; part of Normanby ward; part of Teesville ward	Large Map

20	Teesville (Western Urban Core)	3	Part of Grangetown ward; part of Teesville ward	Large Map
21	West Dyke (Redcar)	3	Part of West Dyke ward	Large Map
22	Zetland (Redcar)	2	Part of Redcar ward	Large Map

*Notes: 1 The Western urban core and Redcar town are unparished and comprise the wards indicated above.*

*2 Map 2 and Appendix A, including the large map in the back of the report, illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.*

Table 2: Final recommendations for Redcar & Cleveland

	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	Belmont (Guisborough)	2	3,863	1,932	9	3,861	1,931	8
2	Brotton	3	5,404	1,801	1	5,298	1,766	-2
3	Coatham (Redcar)	2	3,808	1,904	7	3,670	1,835	2
4	Dormanstown	3	5,330	1,777	0	5,196	1,732	-3
5	Eston (Western Urban Core)	3	5,567	1,856	4	5,420	1,807	1
6	Grangetown (Western Urban Core)	2	3,639	1,820	2	3,541	1,771	-1
7	Guisborough (Guisborough)	3	5,544	1,848	4	5,936	1,979	10
8	Hutton (Guisborough)	3	6,006	2,002	12	5,897	1,966	10
9	Kirkleatham (Redcar)	3	5,255	1,752	-2	5,584	1,861	4
10	Lockwood	1	1,669	1,669	-6	1,637	1,637	-9
11	Loftus	3	5,195	1,732	-3	5,071	1,690	-6
12	Longbeck	3	4,414	1,471	-17	5,362	1,787	0
13	Newcomen (Redcar)	2	3,466	1,733	-3	3,489	1,745	-3
14	Normanby (Western Urban Core)	3	5,547	1,849	4	5,414	1,805	1
15	Ormesby (Western Urban Core)	3	5,097	1,699	-5	4,989	1,663	-7
16	St Germain's	3	5,311	1,770	-1	5,264	1,755	-2
17	Saltburn	3	4,842	1,614	-9	4,763	1,588	-12
18	Skelton	3	4,864	1,621	-9	5,437	1,812	1
19	South Bank (Western Urban Core)	3	5,362	1,787	0	5,315	1,772	-1
20	Teesville (Western Urban Core)	3	5,530	1,843	4	5,413	1,804	1
21	West Dyke (Redcar)	3	5,631	1,877	5	5,737	1,912	7
22	Zetland (Redcar)	2	3,662	1,831	3	3,567	1,784	-1
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>105,006</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>105,861</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,780</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council.

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



# 1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Redcar & Cleveland. We are reviewing Redcar & Cleveland as part of the programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England started by the LGCE in 1996. We have inherited that programme, which we currently expect to complete in 2004.

2 Redcar & Cleveland's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in September 1975 (Report no. 43). Since that review was undertaken, Redcar & Cleveland became a unitary authority.

3 In making final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have had 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:
  - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
  - (b) secure effective and convenient local government; and
  - (c) achieve equality of representation;
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government 1972.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of Redcar & Cleveland was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (LGCE, fifth edition published in October 2001). This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

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

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the district 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 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 16 October 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements, Cleveland Police Authority, the Local Government Association, parish and town councils in the borough, the Member of Parliament with a constituency in the district, the Members of the European Parliament for the Yorkshire & Humber region, and the

headquarters of the main political parties. It placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 7 January 2002. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

9 Stage Three began on 14 May 2002 with the publication of our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Redcar & Cleveland*. A number of inaccuracies were found in the Draft Recommendations report and as a result the consultation period was extended to 29 July 2002. During this further period, comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four, the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

10 The borough of Redcar & Cleveland is a unitary authority covering an area of 24,050 hectares and serving a population of 137,900. It lies to the north east of the country, with the boroughs of Scarborough and Hambleton to the south, and Middlesbrough to the west. The borough comprises the main urban settlements of Guisborough and Redcar and some overspill from Middlesbrough to the west. The remainder of the borough is relatively rural. The landscape is one of contrasts, with sea cliffs and sweeping bays, busy urban shopping centres and ancient market towns, heather moorlands and rural acres. The name Cleveland derives from the Viking name of "Cliff land".

11 Redcar & Cleveland borough's industrial base was steel, chemicals and heavy engineering industries, although tourism is now a fast growing source of revenue. The borough has good transport links with Middlesbrough and Scarborough, and lies along the Cleveland Way footpath. The borough contains five parishes in the more rural area, while Redcar and the Western Urban Core of Middlesbrough are all unparished, and between them comprise 69% of the borough's total electorate.

12 The electorate of the borough is 104,991 (February 2001). The Council presently has 59 members who are elected from 22 wards, five of which are in Redcar, three in Guisborough, six in the Western Urban Core and the remainder predominantly rural. Of the 22 wards, 15 wards are each represented by the three councillors and seven are each represented by two councillors. The Council is elected as a whole every four years.

13 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'.

14 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,780 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,794 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 seven of the 22 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average. The worst imbalance is in West Dyke ward where each councillor represents 20% more electors than the borough average.

*Map 1: Existing wards in Redcar & Cleveland*

Table 3: 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	Belmont	3	5,436	1,812	2	5,279	1,760	-2
2	Brotton	2	4,229	2,115	19	4,157	2,079	16
3	Coatham	2	3,233	1,617	-9	3,095	1,548	-14
4	Dormanstown	3	5,396	1,799	1	5,260	1,753	-2
5	Eston	3	5,526	1,842	4	5,381	1,794	0
6	Grangetown	3	4,556	1,519	-15	4,458	1,486	-17
7	Guisborough	3	4,830	1,610	-10	5,222	1,741	-3
8	Hutton	2	4,004	2,002	13	3,964	1,982	10
9	Kirkleatham	3	5,042	1,681	-6	5,371	1,790	0
10	Lockwood & Skinningrove	2	3,972	1,986	12	3,993	1,997	11
11	Loftus	3	5,195	1,732	-3	5,071	1,690	-6
12	Longbeck	3	6,203	2,068	16	7,144	2,381	33
13	Newcomen	2	3,465	1,733	-3	3,489	1,745	-3
14	Normanby	3	5,522	1,841	3	5,389	1,796	0
15	Ormesby	3	5,097	1,699	-5	4,989	1,663	-7
16	Redcar	2	3,691	1,846	4	3,594	1,797	0
17	Saltburn	3	4,842	1,614	-9	4,763	1,588	-12
18	Skelton	3	4,864	1,621	-9	5,437	1,812	1
19	South Bank	3	4,385	1,462	-18	4,340	1,447	-19
20	St Germain's	2	3,522	1,761	-1	3,482	1,741	-3
21	Teesville	3	5,588	1,863	5	5,471	1,824	2
22	West Dyke	3	6,393	2,131	20	6,498	2,166	21
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>104,991</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>105,847</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,780</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in South Bank ward were relatively over-represented by 18%, while electors in West Dyke ward were significantly under-represented by 20%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

15 During Stage One nine representations were received, including a borough-wide scheme from Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council, and representations from South Cleveland Conservative Association (hereafter referred to as the Conservatives), the Labour Group on Redcar & Cleveland Council (hereafter referred to as the Labour Group), Redcar & Cleveland Liberal Democrat Group (hereafter referred to as the Liberal Democrats) and the East Cleveland Independence Party, two parish councils, a local councillor, and a local resident. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Redcar & Cleveland*.

16 Our draft recommendations were a mixture of the Borough Council's and our own proposals, which achieved some improvement in electoral equality, and provided a pattern of two- and three-member wards throughout the borough, with one single-member ward. However, we moved away from the Borough Council's scheme in a number of areas, affecting 15 wards, using options generated by Council officers during the early stages of the review process, together with some of our own proposals. We proposed that:

- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council should be served by 59 councillors, as at present, representing 22 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of 19 existing wards should be modified, while three wards should retain their existing boundaries;
- there should be new warding arrangements for the parishes of Guisborough, Lockwood, Saltburn, Marske & New Markse and Skelton & Brotton.

**Draft recommendation**

Redcar Borough Council should comprise 59 councillors, serving 22 wards. The whole council should continue to be elected every four years.

17 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in three of the 22 wards varying by no more than 10% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with only Lockwood ward varying by more than 10% from the average by 2006.



## 4 RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

18 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 269 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council.

### **Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council**

19 Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council responded using a council size of 59 as the base for its proposal. It supported the draft recommendations in some instances, but proposed amendments throughout the borough. It objected to our proposals for Saltburn and Sketon wards, proposing that they be retained on their existing boundaries. It also proposed that the Mickledales development be included in a Redcar town ward rather than in Longbeck ward.

### **Political parties**

20 South Cleveland and Redcar Conservative Associations (hereafter referred to as the Conservatives) put forward a joint submission, based on 59 councillors. They restricted their comments to the “most equitable distribution of electors to councillors” in Redcar, Marske, New Marske, Saltburn and East Cleveland. They objected to the draft recommendations for Saltburn and Skelton, putting forward alternative warding arrangements for the eastern area of the borough. They proposed only minor amendments to the draft recommendations in Redcar town, and proposed retaining the Mickledales development in Longbeck ward.

21 East Cleveland Independence Party proposed amendments to the proposed Loftus and Lockwood wards and argued that Brotton ward should remain unchanged.

### **Parish councils**

22 We received responses from three parish councils. Guisborough Town Council proposed that the town be represented by eight councillors representing one ward. Alternatively it proposed creating a fourth ward, Kemplah, with all wards being represented by two councillors. Skelton & Brotton Parish Council objected “strongly” to the creation of a new Triangle parish ward, its inclusion in Saltburn borough ward, and the resulting increase of parish councillors to 19. Saltburn, Marske & New Marske Parish Council welcomed the proposal to keep Mickledales in Longbeck ward and opposed the transfer of part of Skelton ward to Saltburn ward. It supported the proposal that the parish council should comprise 18 councillors with each ward returning six parish councillors.

### **Other representations**

23 A further 263 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from local organisations, councillors and residents.

24 We received four representations from councillors. Three opposed the draft proposal placing part of Skelton ward into Saltburn ward. A councillor for West Dyke ward opposed the proposals transferring Wheatlands Park into Kirkleatham ward, and arguing that residents of Mickledales will have more links with Redcar than with Marske.

25 We received a letter from a resident proposing that Coatham ward be renamed Coatham/Central ward, and a letter from another resident arguing that Mickledales is in Redcar and she did not wish to pay parish rates.

26 We received responses from three residents and a petition comprising 136 signatures opposing our recommendation to place Boosbeck in Skelton ward.

27 We received responses from 71 residents and the Diamond Street Residents' Association opposing our proposal to place part of Skelton in a ward with Saltburn. We also received responses from a further 182 residents as part of four separate write-in campaigns in opposition to this proposal.

## 5 ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

28 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Redcar & Cleveland 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”.

29 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 within the next five years. We also must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

30 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.

31 We accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the 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**

32 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 1% from 104,991 to 105,847 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Longbeck and Skelton wards, although a significant amount is also expected in Guisborough ward. Throughout the majority of the wards, the Council predicted a decrease in the number of electors over the next five years. 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. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, we stated in our draft recommendations report that we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

33 We received no comments on the Council’s electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and we remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

### **Council Size**

34 Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council presently has 59 members. At Stage One the Borough Council and the Conservatives proposed an increase of two in the council size to 61 members, but initially provided no argumentation to justify this. The Labour Party also supported this proposed increase. We therefore requested that both the Borough Council and the Conservatives provide argumentation justifying their proposed increase in council size, with particular reference to the new political management structure that has been adopted. Both justified the council size increase on the basis of over-representation in particular areas.

35 We were not convinced by the argumentation put forward by either the Council or the Conservatives for an increase of two councillors. We considered the allocation of councillors across the borough, given that both the Council and the Conservatives had failed to provide the correct allocation of councillors between Redcar town, the Western Urban Core area and the rural area. After the analysis of a number of council sizes, we concluded that the existing council size of 59 councillors resulted in the best allocation of councillors throughout the borough as a whole. Having not been persuaded by the argumentation to adopt a council size of 61, and in the light of the existing council size giving the best allocation of councillors across the borough, we based our draft recommendations on a council size of 59.

36 During Stage Three the Borough Council “noted” the proposal for 59 members. It considered that we had “taken insufficient notice of the diverse nature of the borough”, but used a council size of 59 members as the basis for its response to our draft recommendations. The Conservatives also based their proposals on a council size of 59 members. One resident queried why the Council still needed so many councillors in the light of the new political management structures, but did not provide any detailed proposals.

37 In the light of the responses received at Stage Three, and having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, we are content to confirm a council size of 59 members as final.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

38 The geography of this area has made the review of Redcar & Cleveland particularly difficult. With the urban areas of Redcar town and the Western Urban Core, the towns flowing along the coast and rural hinterlands towards the North Yorkshire Moors, there is little perceived community identity between the different areas of population.

39 In our draft recommendations, we were unable to adopt the submissions from the Borough Council, the Conservatives or the Labour Group in their entirety as we had retained the existing council size of 59 members and, under this different council size, some of the proposed wards would have resulted in high levels of electoral equality. However, a number of the wards put forward by the Council utilised strong, easily identifiable boundaries, provided good levels of electoral equality and strengthened community links. We therefore adopted some of the Council’s warding arrangements in the Western Urban Core and the rural eastern area. Elsewhere, we proposed our own boundary amendments in order to provide a better balance between electoral equality and community identity.

40 Soon after the publication of our draft recommendations, a number of errors were identified in the draft recommendations report. These were rectified and new summary information and Tables 2, 4 and 5 were produced and sent out to all recipients of the draft recommendations report. This resulted in the Stage Three consultation period being extended by three weeks. We did not consider that these mistakes resulted in our draft recommendations being fundamentally flawed, and we therefore did not consider it necessary to formulate new draft recommendations. We are particularly grateful to the Council for drawing these errors to our attention, and for its assistance throughout the extended consultation period.

41 During Stage Three we received a large number of representations. Most objected to our draft proposal placing part of Skelton in a ward with Saltburn. No support was received for this proposal. Many of these objections mentioned concerns regarding house prices, school catchment areas, post code areas and the need to change doctor’s surgeries if the ward boundaries were changed. However, these particular issues would not be affected as a direct consequence of our proposals and we were unable to consider them as part of this review. None the less, we were persuaded by some of the argumentation with regard to community identity and ties to reconsider our draft recommendations in this area. As a result, we propose

retaining largely the existing Saltburn and Skelton wards, and are accepting a variance of 12% below the average in 2006 in Saltburn ward in the light of the strength of these arguments.

42 The Borough Council proposed amendments across the borough, with changes in Redcar town, in order to incorporate the Mickledales development within a town ward, and in the Western Urban Core area. It also proposed changes to the rural eastern area in order to retain Saltburn and Skelton wards largely on their existing boundaries. However, in order to accommodate these warding arrangements, the Council had misallocated the number of councillors to Redcar town and to the eastern rural area. This resulted in Redcar being under-represented and the eastern area being over-represented under the Council's scheme. None the less, we considered that its proposal reflected well the community identity in this eastern area, largely retaining the existing Saltburn and Skelton wards and accepting the draft recommendations for Brotton and Loftus wards. The Conservatives' scheme also addressed the Saltburn/Skelton issue by keeping the Saltburn ward on its existing boundaries, but resulted in extensive ward changes throughout the rest of the eastern area. These proposals would have resulted in the creation of a number of parish wards that had not been consulted on. We are therefore proposing final recommendations for the eastern area which are based on both the draft recommendations and the proposals submitted by the Council, allocating the correct number of councillors to both Redcar and the eastern rural area.

43 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. We have largely endorsed our draft recommendations in the Redcar town and Western Urban Core area, but have made minor changes to a boundary and a ward name in each. We have also made changes in the rural eastern area and Guisborough. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- a) Eston, Grangetown, Normanby, Ormesby, South Bank and Teesville wards;
- b) Coatham, Dormanstown, Kirkleatham, Newcomen, Redcar and West Dyke wards;
- c) Longbeck, St Germain's, Saltburn and Skelton wards;
- d) Brotton, Lockwood & Skinningrove and Loftus wards;
- e) Belmont, Guisborough and Hutton wards.

44 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

### **Eston, Grangetown, Normanby, Ormesby, South Bank and Teesville wards**

45 These six wards cover the unparished Middlesbrough urban overspill area, to the west of the borough known as the Western Urban Core, and are each currently represented by three members. Under the current council size of 59 members Eston, Normanby and Teesville have a councillor:elector ratio of 4%, 3% and 5% above the borough average respectively. Grangetown, Ormesby and South Bank have councillor:elector ratios of 15%, 5% and 18% below the borough average. By 2006 Eston, Normanby and Teesville wards would have councillor:elector ratios equal to, equal to and 2% above the borough average. Grangetown, Ormesby and South Bank wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 17%, 7% and 19% below the borough average.

46 During Stage One, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council proposed a 61-member council. It proposed amending the boundary between the existing South Bank and Teesville wards. It also proposed amending the boundaries of Dormanstown, Eston and Grangetown wards to create three amended wards of the same names, extending the boundary of Eston ward to include Wilton village and amending the boundary between Dormanstown and Grangetown so that the Wilton chemical works are warded with Grangetown. The Conservatives proposed that South Bank and Grangetown should be represented by two councillors, Normanby, Teesville and Ormesby by three councillors, and the Eston area by five including a new Whale Hill & Lazenby ward. The Labour Group expressed its support for the Borough Council's proposals in

this area stating that they accurately reflect local communities. The Liberal Democrats proposed an amendment to the boundary between the existing Guisbrough and Normanby wards.

47 Under a council size of 59 this particular area of the borough is entitled to 16.7 councillors. In the Borough Council's submission it was allocated 18 councillors. Therefore, in order to provide the correct allocation of councillors, we proposed that 17 councillors represent this area of the borough, leaving us unable to adopt the Borough Council's or Conservatives' proposals. However, we attempted to base our draft recommendations on those put forward by the Borough Council and the Conservatives. Under the draft recommendations, the wards of Normanby and Ormesby remained largely unchanged, albeit for a minor boundary amendment that we proposed to the south-eastern boundary of Normanby ward. We proposed uniting the whole of Woodlands Drive in Normanby ward rather than continuing the present division of the road between the existing Eston and Normanby wards, and adopted the Council's proposed three-member Eston ward. We decided to create a two-member Grangetown ward by amending the boundary between Grangetown and Teesville wards, moving the boundary north-eastwards to run to the rear of Cheddar Close and Carnaevon Close and then to follow the existing boundary along the middle of Church Road. We were of the opinion that our proposed boundary between Grangetown and Teesville wards is easily identifiable and removes an area from the existing Grangetown ward to the north of Fabian Road and to the west of the school that does not have community links with Grangetown. We also proposed creating a three-member Teesville ward and a three-member South Bank ward, based on the existing wards. In order to provide good levels of electoral equality we proposed moving the boundary between these two wards southwards.

48 Under our draft recommendations, Eston, Grangetown, Normanby, Ormesby, South Bank and Teesville wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 4%, 2% and 4% above, 5% below, equal to and 4% above the borough average respectively (1% above, 1% below, 1% above, 7% below, 1% below, and 1% above by 2006).

49 At Stage Three we received only one representation regarding this Western Urban Core area. The Borough Council proposed that the existing South Bank ward be reduced in size and represented by two councillors while Grangetown ward be enlarged and represented by three councillors. It also proposed consequential boundary amendments to Teesville ward. It argued that the "rate of decline" as a result of the strategy for renewing the Greater Eston Area means that South Bank ward should be reduced. It did, however, state that "it is not possible to predict accurately the shape of future strategy". The Council also proposed that Smith's Dock Park be united within Normanby ward, a proposal that does not affect any electors. The Council agreed with our proposals for Ormesby and Eston, stating that "they better reflect community identity". These proposals resulted in Grangetown and South Bank wards being over-represented and under-represented respectively by 7%, though they "achieve much better community alignments ... and reflect likely trends".

50 We carefully considered the Council's proposals. However, we have not been persuaded to change our draft recommendations in the light of its proposals for Teesville, Grangetown and South Bank. We base our recommendations on existing and five-year forecast electorate figures. We are therefore unable to consider levels of decline beyond this, particularly those that are based on a renewal strategy that is not yet underway. Nor can we consider deprivation and renewal strategies when considering electoral arrangements as we only have regard to our statutory criteria of electoral equality, community identity and ties, and effective and convenient local government. In light of the worse levels of electoral equality that result from the Council's proposals, we have not been persuaded that its proposals should be adopted. We are therefore confirming the draft recommendations for these three wards as final.

51 We have been persuaded that Smith's Dock Park should be reunited in Normanby ward, and are putting forward this slight amendment that affects no electors between Normanby and Teesville ward as part of our final recommendations. We also propose correcting a spelling

mistake on the large map at the back of the draft report for Normanby ward. We propose confirming our draft recommendations for Ormesby and Eston wards as final in the light of the support from the Borough Council.

52 Under our final recommendations, the number of electors per councillor would be the same as our draft recommendations. Our proposals are illustrated on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

### **Coatham, Dormanstown, Kirkleatham, Newcomen, Redcar and West Dyke wards**

53 These six wards comprise the unparished town of Redcar in the north of the borough. The two-member wards of Coatham, Newcomen and Redcar have councillor:elector ratios of 9% below, 3% below and 4% above the borough average. The existing three-member Dormanstown, Kirkleatham and West Dyke wards have councillor:elector ratios of 1% above, 6% below and 20% above the borough average. By 2006 Coatham, Newcomen and Redcar wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 14% below, 3% below and equal to the borough average. Dormanstown, Kirkleatham and West Dyke wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 2% below, equal to and 21% above the borough average.

54 At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating two new wards and amending the boundaries of two of the existing wards in the area. It proposed creating new two-member Race Course Redcar and West Dyke & Mickledales wards in the Redcar area. It also proposed amending the boundary between the existing Dormanstown and Eston wards and between Coatham and Newcomen wards. The Conservatives proposed creating two new two-member wards from the area of the existing West Dyke area: a Redcar East and a Turners ward and also amending the boundary between the existing Kirkleatham and Dormanstown wards in order to better reflect community identity in the area.

55 The Labour Group expressed its support for the proposals put forward by the Borough Council at this stage. The Liberal Democrats proposed a number of boundary amendments in the Redcar area in order to improve levels of electoral equality.

56 We carefully considered all the representations received during Stage One and formulated our own warding arrangements for the town of Redcar. This was because, under a council size of 59, the area is entitled to 15.2 councillors. We were therefore unable to adopt the Council's or the Conservatives' proposals as they had allocated 16 councillors. At draft recommendation stage, we proposed that Redcar be represented by 15 councillors representing three three-member wards and two two-member wards based on the existing six wards. We proposed enlarging Coatham ward by including an area of the existing West Dyke ward to the south of the railway and to the north of the racecourse, and amending the boundary between Coatham and Redcar wards to unite the properties to the east of the Esplanade in Coatham ward. Also to improve electoral equality, we proposed amending the boundary between the existing Kirkleatham and West Dyke wards to include Wheatlands Park in the former ward. Finally, we proposed moving the southernmost boundary of West Dyke ward northwards to run along Redcar Lane to enable all the electors in the Mickledales housing development to be united in the same ward, Longbeck ward, and utilise a more easily identifiable boundary.

57 Under the draft recommendations Coatham, Redcar and West Dyke wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 7%, 3% and 5% above the borough average respectively (2% above, 1% below and 7% above the borough average by 2006). Kirkleatham and Newcomen would have councillor:elector ratios of 2% and 3% below the borough average (4% above and 3% below the borough average by 2006) and Dormanstown ward would have a ratio equal to the borough average (3% below by 2006).

58 At Stage Three the Council stated that it "agrees with the BCFE that the Mickledales development should be united in one ward, the choices being either West Dyke or Longbeck". As part of our draft recommendations we had proposed that the Mickledales housing

development area be united in Longbeck ward. However, at Stage Three the Council proposed that it be included in West Dyke ward. It argued that the development does not relate to Marske, and that it is structurally part of Redcar, with which it has links. As a result of including the Mickledales development in West Dyke ward, the Council proposed a number of changes to the remaining wards in the area. It proposed that Coatham ward be extended southwards to incorporate the cemetery and Borough Park, and that Redcar ward be enlarged slightly, incorporating an area to the south of the railway line. It proposed that Newcomen ward be extended southwards and that Redcar Lane be used as the boundary between Kirkleatham and West Dyke wards, thereby including the race course in Kirkleatham ward as “access arrangements for the Racecourse dictate that it is included with the east and south of the town and so is included in Kirkleatham”. As a result of the Council’s proposals for Redcar, the town would be under-represented by one councillor.

59 The Conservatives proposed little change to the draft recommendations for this area. They stated that the Mickledales development is part of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish and should be left there. They argued that the obvious dividing line between Redcar and New Marske has always been the Redcar Road (to the north of the Mickledales development), and that children from the development use the facilities at Marske and New Marske. As a result, they proposed only two minor changes to the draft recommendations for this area. They proposed that both sides of Aske Road should be united within Aske Road, and that Redcar ward should be renamed Zetland ward as “the whole Town is Redcar, not a strip along the coast”. They also agreed that West Dyke ward should “lose” Wheatlands Park Estate.

60 We received a representation from a Borough Councillor stating that Wheatlands Park should remain in West Dyke ward, and that the Mickledales development should be included in a Redcar town ward rather than with Marske. She also proposed that West Dyke ward plus the Mickledales development be divided between two smaller wards, but did not provide any details.

61 Saltburn, Marske and New Marske Parish Council supported the proposal to keep Mickledales in Longbeck ward and the proposed parish electoral arrangements. A resident of Mickledales stated that the deeds to her property state that it is in Redcar, and that she objects to the parish rates. Another resident queried the name of Coatham ward and proposed that it be renamed Coatham/Central.

62 We have given careful consideration to the evidence and representations received at Stage Three. The initial issue that had to be considered before the internal warding arrangements of Redcar town was whether the Mickledales development, in the parish of Saltburn, Marske & New Marske, should be included in West Dyke ward in Redcar town. In our draft recommendations we included the development with the New Marske area of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish, in Longbeck ward. At Stage Three we received a number of representations stating that this area should be included with Redcar town instead. However, only the Council provided detailed warding arrangements for the remainder of Redcar as a consequence of this proposal. This resulted in the Council’s proposals under-representing the Redcar area by one councillor, which we would not be willing to endorse as part of our final recommendations. We also received a proposal that Wheatlands Park should be retained in West Dyke ward. However, we have not been convinced that the argumentation provided justifies the resulting deterioration in electoral equality. In the light of the lack of detailed alternative warding arrangements, and given the support that we received for our proposals for the Mickledales area from the Conservatives and Saltburn, Marske & New Marske Parish Council we propose basing our final recommendations on our draft recommendations. We have not been persuaded that we should rename Coatham ward, as there was no argumentation in support of this proposal.

63 While we are content to confirm the majority of our draft proposals, we are proposing one minor amendment and a ward name change. We concur with the Conservatives’ view that Aske Road should be united within Coatham ward, and the electorate figures already reflect

this amendment. We also propose that Redcar ward be renamed Zetland to avoid confusion with the Redcar town.

64 Under our final recommendations, Coatham, Dormanstown, Kirkleatham, Newcomen, Zetland and West Dyke wards have the same number of electors per councillor as at draft. These wards are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

### **Longbeck, St Germain's, Saltburn and Skelton wards**

65 These four wards are situated to the south-east of Redcar town. Longbeck, Saltburn and Skelton wards are currently three-member wards, while St Germain's ward is currently represented by two councillors. Longbeck and Saltburn wards currently have councillor:elector ratios of 16% above and 9% below the borough average respectively. St Germain's and Skelton wards currently have a councillor:elector ratio of 1% and 9% below the borough average respectively. By 2006 Longbeck and Saltburn wards will both have councillor:elector ratios of 33% above and 12% below the borough average respectively. St Germain's ward would have a councillor: elector ratio of 3% below the borough average and Skelton ward would have a councillor:elector ratio of 1% above the borough average.

66 The Borough Council proposed a boundary amendment between the existing wards of Longbeck ward and West Dyke ward in order to include the planned Mickledales development in its proposed West Dyke & Mickledales ward, arguing that the proposed new Mickledales development would develop stronger community links with the Redcar area than with the Markse area. It created a new three-member West & New Marske ward from the remainder of the existing Longbeck ward, and proposed that the warding arrangements in the remainder of the area remain unchanged. The Conservatives proposed creating two new two-member wards: New Markse & Mickledales and Marske wards and retaining the existing St Germain's ward. They argued in contrast to the Borough Council that the new proposed development at Mickledales should be placed in a district ward with Marske and their proposed New Marske & Mickledales and Markse wards would ensure that these distinct communities are warded separately. They also argued that the existing Saltburn ward should remain unchanged as the ward is a self-contained community.

67 The Labour Group expressed support for the Borough Council's proposals for Mickledales and proposed a slight realignment of the boundary between the existing Longbeck and St Germain's wards. The Liberal Democrats proposed that the boundary between Longbeck ward and St Germain's ward should be amended to run along the middle of Coast Road, while Saltburn, New Marske and Marske Parish Council proposed that the area of new development in Mickledales should not be incorporated in West Dyke ward as it would have far stronger community links with the Marske/New Marske parish. It also argued that the existing Longbeck ward should be divided into two wards.

68 In order to provide the correct allocations under a council size of 59, we proposed in our draft recommendations report that six councillors represent the Marske area and that six councillors represent Saltburn and Skelton. Consequently, we were unable to adopt the Council's or the Conservatives' proposals for this area.

69 In our draft report, we proposed moving the boundary between the existing St Germain's and Longbeck wards to secure a good balance between electoral equality and community identity in the area. We were persuaded by the representations of the local parish council and the Conservatives and were of the opinion that the Mickledales area should be warded in the Marske area rather than Redcar town. We therefore proposed that the southern boundary of West Dyke ward be moved northwards to run along Redcar Road, thereby enabling all the electors in the Mickledales housing development to be united in Longbeck ward. We also proposed amending the boundaries between Longbeck and St Germain's wards to create two three-member wards and were of the opinion that this would minimise the level of disruption to warding arrangements in the area.

70 We noted the Council's proposal to leave the existing electoral arrangements of Saltburn ward unchanged, but this would leave the area over-represented by 12% by 2006. Therefore, in our draft report, we proposed including an area of the neighbouring Skelton ward in Saltburn ward. We proposed creating a new Triangle parish ward in Skelton parish and warding this area at borough level with the existing Saltburn ward. We were aware that this breaks the boundaries of the self-contained community of Saltburn but considered it necessary to achieve reasonable levels of electoral equality. By transferring this area, both the proposed Saltburn ward and the remainder of Skelton are entitled to three councillors. We also suggested moving the proposed Boosbeck parish ward of Lockwood parish to the proposed Skelton ward to improve electoral equality in Lockwood ward.

71 Under the draft recommendations, the councillor:elector ratio in our proposed St Germain's, Longbeck and Skelton wards would be 1%, 17% and 11% below the borough average respectively (2% below, equal to and 1% above the borough average by 2006). Our proposed Saltburn ward (including the proposed Triangle parish ward of Skelton parish) would be 7% above the borough average (4% above by 2006).

72 At Stage Three the Borough Council proposed that the Mickledales development be included in with the ward of Redcar town, rather than in Longbeck ward as proposed in our draft recommendations, as described earlier. It proposed largely retaining the existing Longbeck and St Germain's wards, but proposed utilising the "clear" boundary of Marske High Street until it meets Coast Road. This would result in a variance of 10% in Longbeck ward by 2006. It stated that "this was recognised as a significant divide between the communities of east and west Marske". The Council also proposed retaining the existing three-member Saltburn ward as a result of the opposition that was voiced to our draft recommendations which proposed combining part of Skelton in a ward with Saltburn. It argued that Saltburn has a "highly developed sense of community and is clearly [separate]" and that a variance of 12% in this ward is justified. It also proposed that the existing Skelton ward be retained as the draft recommendations for this ward are "absurd as the very strong public reaction ... already testifies".

73 The Conservatives also argued that Saltburn ward should be retained on its existing boundaries as it is a self-contained town, and that no other community with any historical, social or community ties is near enough to be joined with it. They argued that adding part of Skelton is an "anathema to the townfolk of both Skelton and Saltburn". They agreed, however, with the draft recommendations placing Boosbeck in Skelton ward, while creating a new North Skelton parish ward which would be included in Brotton ward. They argued that Mickledales should be retained with the remainder of the parish of Saltburn, Marske & New Marske, as described earlier. However, they proposed that instead of the two three-member wards of Longbeck and St Germain's that we put forward in our draft recommendations, there should be three two-member wards. They proposed a new New Marske & Mickledales ward combining the two areas of the same name. They proposed that St Germain's ward retain its existing boundary, and that Longbeck ward comprise that area of the existing Longbeck ward less the New Marske area.

74 We also received representations from Skelton & Brotton Parish Council, three borough councillors and 254 residents objecting to our proposal placing the proposed Triangle parish ward of Skelton parish in Saltburn ward. It was argued that "Skelton has no affinity with either Saltburn or Boosbeck", that there is no physical, social or cultural bond between Saltburn and Skelton with Saltburn being a Victorian seaside town and Skelton being an ex-mining village, and that Skelton is an established community that should not be changed.

75 The representations received during the consultation period have been carefully considered. We received no support for our draft recommendation placing the proposed Triangle parish ward of Skelton parish in Saltburn ward. In the light of the argumentation against our proposal we have been persuaded to retain the existing Saltburn ward, subject to a

number of minor amendments that tie the boundary to ground detail. We are content, in this instance, to accept a variance of 12% by 2006 in the proposed Saltburn ward due to the level of argumentation that we received for Saltburn and Skelton being separate communities with very few links between them. We are not proposing to adopt the Conservatives' proposal to create a new Skelton North parish ward of Skelton parish as we have not been persuaded that this would receive local support. We therefore propose retaining Skelton ward on its existing boundaries.

76 Having not accepted the proposal to include the Mickledales development in West Dyke ward of Redcar town, as discussed earlier, we were not persuaded to adopt the Council's proposals for Longbeck and St Germain's wards as these would have resulted in unacceptably high levels of electoral equality of over 20% by 2006. We carefully considered the Conservatives' proposals, creating three two-member wards in place of the two three-member wards that we had proposed in our draft recommendations. However, we were not persuaded by the limited argumentation in support of the proposal to move away from our draft recommendations. We therefore propose confirming our draft recommendations for Longbeck and St Germain's wards as final.

77 Under our final recommendations, our three-member Longbeck ward (comprising the Longbeck parish ward of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish) and three-member St Germain's ward (comprising the St Germain's parish ward of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish) have councillor:elector ratios of 17% and 1% below the borough average respectively (equal to the average and 2% below by 2006). Our three-member Saltburn ward (comprising the Saltburn parish ward of Saltburn, Marske and New Marske parish) and three-member Skelton ward (comprising the Old Skelton, Skelton Green, North Skelton and Layland and New Skelton and Hollybush parish wards of Skelton and Brotton parish) would have councillor:elector ratios of 9% below the borough average (12% below and 1% above respectively by 2006).

### **Brotton, Lockwood & Skinningrove and Loftus wards;**

78 These three wards are situated in the east of the borough. Brotton and Lockwood & Skinningrove wards are each currently represented by two councillors, and have councillor:elector ratios of 19% and 12% above the borough average respectively. Loftus ward is a three-member ward and has a councillor:elector ratio of 3% below the borough average. By 2006 Brotton and Lockwood & Skinningrove wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 16% and 11% above the borough average. Loftus ward would have a councillor:elector ratio of 6% below the borough average.

79 During Stage One, the Borough Council proposed creating a new three-member ward by amending the boundary between Brotton and Lockwood & Skinningrove wards to include the Skinningrove and Carlin How settlements in an enlarged Brotton ward. It argued that the two settlements are within easy reach of Brotton and that the communities share a common mining heritage. It also contended that the high level of over-representation in its proposed two-member Lockwood ward was preferable to under-representation. They stated that there should be no change to the existing warding arrangements in the rest of the area.

80 The Conservatives argued that the villages of Carlin How and Skinningrove should not be included in the same ward as Brotton as they had stronger community links with other villages in the area. They also commented that they were opposed to any proposal to allocate the remainder of Lockwood & Skinningrove ward one councillor and proposed that all the wards in the area remain unchanged. The East Cleveland Independence Party also stated that wards in this area of the borough should remain unchanged, as did the Liberal Democrats who stated that they did "not see the necessity of switching Skinningrove and Carlin How into Brotton ward".

81 The Labour Group supported the Council's proposals in the area, commenting that the two villages of Carlin How and Skinningrove share "natural geography" with Brotton. However, it also suggested a possible way to rectify the high level of electoral inequality in the Council's Lockwood ward, proposing that the area of Slapewath, Margrove and Charltons in the south-west of the ward be warded with Guisborough and making the resultant Lockwood ward a single-member ward. A submission was also received from Loftus Town Council, arguing that the boundaries of Loftus ward should remain unchanged. Councillor Kay supported the request of two residents of Slapewath, who argued that their house be included in Lockwood & Skinningrove ward with the rest of the hamlet; an issue which could be addressed as part of a parish review by the Borough Council at a later date as we are unable to create a parish ward for only three electors. Lastly, a resident proposed no change to the existing Lockwood & Skinningrove ward.

82 Having carefully considered the representations we received in Stage One, we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposed Brotton ward. Having visited the area, we were of the opinion that there are sufficient transport links between the villages of Carlin How, Skinningrove and Brotton to justify the Council's proposals to place them together in a ward. In order to address the high level of electoral inequality that occurs when these two villages are removed from the existing Lockwood & Skinningrove ward, we proposed reducing the level of representation from two councillors to one and transferring Boosbeck parish ward from the existing Lockwood & Skinningrove ward into our proposed three-member Skelton ward. Finally, we proposed leaving Loftus ward unchanged as we considered that the existing ward has good boundaries and level of electoral equality.

83 Under the draft recommendations, Brotton and Lockwood wards would have councillor:elector ratios of 1% and 14% above the borough average respectively (2% below and 11% above by 2006). Loftus ward would have a ratio of 3% below the average (6% below by 2006).

84 At Stage Three the Council supported our proposals for Brotton and Loftus wards. However, it stated that it considered Lockwood ward as being the most difficult to resolve "in balancing the dilemma between electoral equality and geographical reality". The Council stated a preference for retaining Boosbeck within a ward with its neighbouring villages which would result in variances of 20% and 15% for Lockwood and Belmont wards respectively. It argued that these variances were justified in terms of common identity and problems, issues and affinities. Alternatively, it put forward a Base Proposal, which it considered to be better than the draft recommendations. This Base Proposal involved including Boosbeck, Margrove Park and Charltons in Belmont ward resulting in a single-member Lockwood ward with an electoral variance of 9% by 2006.

85 The Conservatives proposed extensive re-warding for these wards. They proposed removing Skinningrove from our proposed Brotton ward, arguing that Skinningrove "gravitates to Loftus for shopping". The resultant three-member Brotton ward would incorporate the proposed North Skelton parish ward of Skelton parish. They commented that they "totally disagree" with the proposal for a single-member Lockwood ward, arguing that it would diminish the importance of Lockwood ward in the borough. They proposed a two-member Lockwood ward comprising Charltons, Lingdale and Moorsholm, plus Easington and Liverton from the existing Loftus ward. Their proposed two-member Loftus ward would then comprise the village of Loftus in a ward with Skinningrove, arguing that Skinningrove is an integral part of Loftus.

86 The East Cleveland Independent Party proposed retaining Brotton ward on its existing boundaries, and transferring Skinningrove to Loftus ward.

87 We received a submission from a resident who proposed retaining Lockwood on its existing boundaries. He argued that the electoral imbalances of the existing Skelton and Brotton wards and the existing Longbeck, St Germain's and Saltburn wards can be addressed without "meddling" with the boundaries of neighbouring wards. We also received responses from two

residents objecting to Boosbeck being placed in Skelton ward, and a petition with 136 signatures stating that “Boosbeck is not, in any respect, part of Skelton and should remain part of the Lockwood ward”.

88 We carefully considered the representations received during Stage Three for these four wards. While we have some sympathy for those respondents who argue for Lockwood ward retaining its existing boundaries, we are unable to consider this ward in isolation from the wards that surround it, which would have very high electoral variances, illustrated by the alternative proposals considered by the Council. Given the alternative warding arrangements available, we do not consider that electoral variances of 15% and 20% are justified. Warding patterns that improve levels of electoral equality in these surrounding wards would require established, distinct communities, such as Brotton, to be split and placed in wards with areas with which they have few links and that are not geographically close. We carefully considered the Conservatives’ proposals in this area. However, we are concerned that the extensive parish warding of Skelton, Lockwood, Loftus and Guisborough parishes that results from their proposals has not been consulted on locally. At this late stage of the review, we would prefer not to put forward parish warding arrangements for which there is no evidence of local support.

89 We have considered the East Cleveland Independent Party’s proposals for this area, but have not been persuaded to adopt the 16% variance that would result from retaining the existing Brotton ward. We also consider it inadvisable to retain Boosbeck in Lockwood ward due to the resulting level of electoral inequality of 50% as a single-member ward, or of 20% as a two-member ward. We therefore propose amending the boundaries of Boosbeck parish ward and Charltons & Margrove Park parish ward of Lockwood parish in order to tie them to ground detail. These two parish wards would both be included in Belmont ward, basing our final recommendations for Lockwood ward on the scheme put forward by the Borough Council. This scheme has been created locally, and facilitates the retention of Skelton and Saltburn wards on their existing boundaries. We propose confirming Loftus and Brotton wards as put forward in our draft recommendations as final, as they received support from the Borough Council.

90 Our final recommendations result in our three-member Brotton ward (comprising the Brotton East and Brotton West parish wards of Skelton and Brotton parish and the Skinningrove parish ward of Loftus parish) and three-member Loftus ward (comprising the Loftus, Liverton and Easington parish wards of Loftus parish) having the same councillor:elector ratio as at draft. However, our single-member Lockwood ward (comprising the Lingdale and Stanhow & Moorsholm parish wards of Lockwood parish) would have a councillor:elector ratio of 6% below the borough average (9% below by 2006).

### **Belmont, Guisbrough and Hutton wards.**

91 These three wards lie in the centre of the borough and cover the town of Guisborough. The three-member wards of Belmont and Guisborough currently have councillor:elector ratios of 2% above and 10% below the borough average respectively. Hutton ward, a two-member ward, has a councillor:elector ratio of 13% above the borough average. By 2006 Belmont and Guisborough wards are projected to have councillor:elector ratios of 2% and 3% below the borough average respectively, while Hutton ward would have a councillor:elector ratio of 10% above the borough average.

92 During Stage One, the Borough Council proposed that the existing wards in this area remain unchanged, as did the Conservatives. The Labour Group put forward a suggestion that part of the existing Lockwood ward be warded with the existing Guisborough ward in order to address the high level of electoral inequality which resulted from the Council’s proposed Lockwood ward. As an alternative, they suggested leaving the three wards unchanged.

93 Under a council size of 59, this area is entitled to eight councillors. In its Stage One submission, the Council had allocated the area eight councillors and we based our draft proposals upon their scheme. However, we did propose a number of boundary amendments to help secure good levels of electoral equality and make the best use of the natural boundaries between different residential areas.

94 Under the draft recommendations Belmont and Hutton wards would have a councillor:elector ratio of 10% and 2% above the borough average respectively (5% above and equal to the average by 2006). Our proposed Guisborough ward would have a ratio of 8% below the borough average (1% below by 2006).

95 At Stage Three the Borough Council proposed that these three wards remain largely as they currently are, but with an enlarged three-member Belmont ward, taking in the Boosbeck and Charltons & Margrove Park parish wards currently in Lockwood ward. It argued that our draft proposals did not take into account existing communities, keeping together the identifiable communities to the north of Middlesbrough Road in a three-member Guisborough ward, while transferring polling district MC and part of polling district MD from the existing Belmont ward to a three-member Hutton ward.

96 The Conservatives considered the draft recommendations to “constitute a major, unnecessary upheaval in Guisborough”. They argued that Belmont and Hutton are made up primarily of newer housing estates. Guisborough ward is based around the town centre, comprising older properties. They also argued that adding Charltons, with its mining heritage, to the recently built Belmont “would diminish Charlton’s identity”. The Conservatives proposed largely retaining the existing wards, suggesting a boundary change between Guisborough and Hutton wards which would “cause least disruption to already established, accepted, logical boundaries”.

97 We also received a representation from Guisborough Town Council. It proposed one ward with eight members, or the creation of a fourth ward, Kemplah ward, with each ward being represented by two councillors. It did not provide any detailed warding arrangements or argumentation to support these proposals.

98 Each of the representations that we received at Stage Three was carefully considered. The warding arrangements that we have adopted elsewhere in the eastern part of the borough influence what we are able to propose for Guisborough town. We are unable to adopt an eight-member ward as proposed by Guisborough Town Council as we consider that more than three councillors representing a ward could lead to an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate. We are also unable to consider its proposals for a fourth two-member ward as it did not provide any detailed proposals. We are unable to adopt the Conservatives’ proposals for a boundary change between Guisborough and Hutton wards as this would not incorporate Boosbeck parish ward in with these Guisborough town wards. As a result of our proposals for a single-member Lockwood ward, we are proposing to include Boosbeck and Charltons & Margrove parish wards in Belmont ward, as proposed by the Borough Council. However, as mentioned earlier, we noted that the Council had allocated the eastern rural area an extra councillor. Therefore, in order to address this misallocation and allocate Guisborough town the eight councillors to which it is entitled, we are proposing that Belmont become a two-member ward. We are therefore amending the boundaries between Belmont and Guisborough wards so that it runs along the dismantled railway. The boundary between Belmont and Hutton wards would run to the rear of the properties on the western side Engfield Road, along the centre of Aldenham Road and then to the south of Ilkley Grove, Goathland Grove and Wykeham Way, before joining the existing boundary running south. Between Guisborough and Hutton wards we propose that the boundary run to the west of the Allotments, taking the Rectory area, the West End area and Roseberry Mount into the proposed Hutton ward. We consider that all these properties have good access to Hutton ward, and that transferring them would not have a detrimental effect on community identity while providing a good balance of electoral equality.

99 Our final recommendations result in relatively high levels of under-representation in the three wards of Guisborough town as a result of allocating the eastern area the correct number of councillors and balancing the levels of over-representation in the proposed Loftus, Saltburn, Lockwood and Brotton wards.

100 Under our final recommendations, our two-member Belmont ward (comprising Belmont parish ward of Guisborough parish and the Boosbeck and Charltons & Margrove parish wards of Lockwood parish), the three-member Guisbrough ward (comprising the Guisborough parish ward of Guisborough parish) and three-member Hutton ward (comprising the Hutton parish ward of Guisborough parish) have councillor:elector ratios of 9% above, 4% above and 12% above the borough average respectively (8%, 10% and 10% above the borough average respectively by 2006).

## **Electoral cycle**

101 By virtue of the amendments made to the Local Government Act 1992 by the Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001, we have no powers to make recommendations concerning electoral cycle.

## **Conclusions**

102 Having considered carefully all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- We propose that Saltburn and Skelton wards be retained largely on their existing boundaries, with only minor amendments to tie the boundaries to ground detail.
- We propose new warding arrangements for Guisborough town.
- In Redcar town we propose a minor boundary amendment and a ward name change.
- In Western Urban Core we propose a minor boundary amendment.

103 We conclude that, in Redcar & Cleveland:

- Council size should remain the same, at 59 councillors.
- There should be 22 wards, the same as at present.
- The boundaries of 18 of the existing wards should be modified.

104 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2001 and 2006 electorate figures.

Table 4: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	59	59	59	59
Number of wards	22	22	22	22
Average number of electors per councillor	1,780	1,780	1,794	1,794
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	7	2	8	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	0	0	2	0

105 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 7 to 2, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would improve further in 2006, with only one ward, Saltburn, varying by more than 10% from the average, at 12% below. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

**Final recommendation**

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council should comprise 59 councillors serving 22 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A including the large map inside the back cover.

**Parish and town council electoral arrangements**

106 When reviewing parish electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule states that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards, it should also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. In our draft recommendations report we proposed consequential changes to the warding arrangements for Guisborough, Lockwood, Saltburn, Marske & New Marske and Skelton & Brotton to reflect the proposed borough wards.

107 The parish of Guisborough is currently served by 16 councillors and is divided into five parish wards: Belmont, Hutton, Kemplah, Park and Tocketts (returning three, four, three, three and three councillors respectively). In our draft recommendations we proposed amending the parish ward boundaries of Belmont, Hutton and Tocketts with the proposed Hutton parish ward reflecting the boundaries of the proposed Hutton borough ward, Kemplah parish ward and the proposed Belmont parish ward reflecting the boundaries of the proposed Belmont borough ward, and Park and Tocketts and the proposed Guisborough parish ward reflecting the boundaries of the proposed Guisborough borough ward.

108 At Stage Three we received no comments regarding the electoral arrangements for Guisborough town. However, as a result of the changes to the borough warding arrangements that have been proposed between draft and final recommendations, we propose that Guisborough town comprise three parish wards. We propose that Guisborough parish ward reflect the boundaries of Guisborough borough ward, Hutton parish ward reflect the boundaries of Hutton borough ward, and that Belmont parish ward reflect that area of Guisborough parish

that lies within the proposed Belmont borough ward.

**Final recommendation**

Guisborough Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing three parish wards: Belmont (returning four councillors), Hutton (returning six councillors) and Guisborough (returning six councillors). The parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map A2 in Appendix A and the large map at the back of the report.

109 Lockwood parish currently comprises 12 councillors representing four parish wards: Charltons & Margrove Park represented by two councillors, Boosbeck represented by three councillors, Lingdale & Stanhow represented by five councillors and Moorsholm represented by two councillors. In our draft recommendations, we proposed slightly amending the parish ward boundary of Boosbeck parish ward in order to tie it to ground detail, and including it in Skelton borough ward.

110 At Stage Three we received a large amount of opposition to this proposal. As a result of the argumentation against this proposal we are amending our draft recommendations at a borough level. We propose adopting the Borough Council's proposal so that the boundaries of Boosbeck and Charltons & Margrove parish wards are amended to tie them to ground detail, and that these two parish wards are included in Belmont borough ward. Lingdale & Stanhow and Moorsholm parish wards would be included in Lockwood ward. We do not propose any amendments to the allocations of parish councillors for these four parish wards.

**Final recommendation**

Lockwood Parish Council should comprise 12 councillors, as at present, representing four parish wards: Boosbeck (returning three councillors), Lingdale & Stanhow (returning five councillors), Moorsholm (returning two councillors) and Charltons & Margrove Park (returning two councillors). The parish ward boundaries for Boosbeck and Charltons & Margrove Park parish wards are illustrated and named on Map A4 in Appendix A.

111 The parish of Saltburn, Marske & New Marske is currently served by 18 councillors and is divided into three parish wards: Longbeck, St Germain's and Saltburn (returning seven, six and five councillors respectively). In our draft recommendations we proposed amending all three parish ward boundaries to reflect those parts of Saltburn, Marske & New Marske parish that fall within the proposed borough wards of the same name in this area, tying the boundaries to ground detail where necessary. In order to provide a more representative allocation of parish councillors, we proposed that each of the Longbeck, St Germain's and Saltburn parish wards should be represented by six parish councillors.

112 At Stage Three, Saltburn, Marske & New Marske Parish Council supported the recommendation that the parish council should comprise 18 parish councillors with each parish ward returning six parish councillors, and with the parish wards reflecting the proposed borough wards. Although the final recommendations for these borough wards are different from those proposed at draft for Saltburn borough ward, they do not affect the proposals for the parish wards. We therefore confirm our draft recommendations for Saltburn, Marske & New Marske parish as final.

**Final recommendation**

Saltburn, Marske & New Marske Parish Council should comprise 18 councillors, as at present, representing three parish wards: Longbeck (returning six councillors), St Germain's (returning six councillors) and Saltburn (returning six councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as shown on Map 2 and the large map at the back of the report.

113 The parish of Skelton & Brotton is currently represented by 17 parish councillors and is divided into six parish wards: Brotton West, Brotton East, Old Skelton, Skelton Green, North Skelton & Layland and New Skelton & Hollybush. In our draft recommendations we proposed creating a new Triangle parish ward which at borough ward level would be included in the amended Saltburn ward. We proposed that this new parish ward should be served by two councillors, thereby increasing the total number of councillors on the parish council from 17 to 19.

114 At Stage Three, we received strong opposition to our proposal to create a Triangle parish ward in Skelton & Brotton parish and include it in Saltburn borough ward, as discussed earlier. We also received a response from Skelton & Brotton Parish Council opposing our proposal to create a new Triangle parish ward and also to increase the number of councillors from 17 to 19.

115 As a result of the change in our recommendations for borough wards between draft and final, we are proposing no change to the existing parishing electoral arrangements for Skelton & Brotton parish.

**Final recommendation**

Skelton & Brotton Parish Council should comprise 17 parish councillors, as at present, representing six wards: Brotton West (returning four councillors), Brotton East (returning three councillors), Old Skelton (returning three councillors), Skelton Green (returning two councillors), North Skelton & Layland (returning two councillors) and New Skelton & Hollybush (returning three councillors). The boundary between Brotton East and Brotton West parish wards is illustrated on Map A3.

*Map 2: Final recommendations for Redcar & Cleveland*



## 6 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

116 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in Redcar & Cleveland and submitted our final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692).

117 It is now up to the Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 26 November 2002.

118 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

The Secretary  
Electoral Commission  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW



## APPENDIX A

### **Final recommendations for Redcar & Cleveland: Detailed mapping**

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the Redcar & Cleveland area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the district and indicates the areas that are shown in more detail on Map A2, A3 and Map A4 and the large map at the back of this report.

**Map A2** illustrates the proposed ward boundaries for Guisborough town.

**Map A3** illustrates the proposed boundaries between Lockwood and Brotton wards.

**Map A4** illustrates the proposed boundaries between Lockwood and Belmont wards.

The **large map** inserted at the back of this report illustrates the proposed warding arrangements for The Western urban core and Redcar.

*Map A1: Final recommendations for Redcar: Key map*

*Map A2: Proposed ward boundaries for Guisborough town.*

*Map A3: Proposed boundaries between Lockwood and Brotton wards.*

*Map A4: Proposed boundaries between Lockwood and Belmont wards.*