

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Cambridgeshire County Council

February 2004

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Contents

	page
What is The Boundary Committee for England?	5
Summary	7
1 Introduction	15
2 Current electoral arrangements	19
3 Submissions received	23
4 Analysis and draft recommendations	25
5 What happens next?	43
Appendices	
A Code of practice on written consultation	45

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:

Pamela Gordon (Chair)
Professor Michael Clarke CBE
Robin Gray
Joan Jones CBE
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 the number of councillors elected to the council, division boundaries and division names.

Summary

We began a review of the electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council on 11 March 2003.

- **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 Cambridgeshire:

- **In 29 of the 59 divisions, each of which are currently represented by a single councillor, the number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the county and 12 divisions vary by more than 20%.**
- **By 2007 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 31 divisions and by more than 20% in 15 divisions.**

Our main proposals for Cambridgeshire County Council's future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 138-139) are that:

- **Cambridgeshire County Council should have 69 councillors, 10 more than at present, representing 61 divisions.**
- **As the divisions are based on district wards, which have themselves been changed as a result of recent district reviews, the boundaries of all divisions will be subject to change.**

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

- **In 32 of the proposed 61 divisions, the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the average.**
- **An improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue with the number of electors per councillor in 49 divisions expected to vary by no more than 10% from the average for the county and no divisions expected to vary by more than 20% by 2007.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for nine weeks from 24 February 2004. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in 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 then be responsible for implementing change to the local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also decide when any changes will come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 26 April 2004.

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

Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Constituent district wards	
Cambridge City			
1	Abbey	1	Abbey ward
2	Arbury	1	Arbury ward
3	Castle	1	Castle ward
4	Cherry Hinton	1	Cherry Hinton ward
5	Coleridge	1	Coleridge ward
6	East Chesterton	1	East Chesterton ward
7	King's Hedges	1	King's Hedges ward
8	Market	1	Market ward
9	Newnham	1	Newnham ward
10	Petersfield	1	Petersfield ward
11	Queen Edith's	1	Queen Edith's ward
12	Romsey	1	Romsey ward
13	Trumpington	1	Trumpington ward
14	West Chesterton	1	West Chesterton ward
East Cambridgeshire			
15	Burwell	1	Burwell ward; The Swaffhams ward
16	Ely North East	1	Ely East ward; Ely North ward
17	Ely South West	1	Ely South ward; Ely West ward
18	Fordham	1	Fordham Villages ward; part of Soham South ward (the parish of Soham South)
19	Haddenham	1	Haddenham ward; Stretham ward
20	Littleport	1	Littleport East ward; Littleport West ward
21	Soham North	1	Isleham ward; Soham North ward; part of Soham South ward (the parish of Wicken)
22	Sutton	1	Downham Villages ward; Sutton ward
23	Woodditton	1	Bottisham ward; Cheveley ward; Dullingham Villages ward
Fenland			
24	Chatteris	1	Birch ward; The Mills ward; Wenneye ward
25	Forty Foot	1	Doddington ward; Manea ward; Slade Lode ward; Wimblington ward
26	March East	1	March East ward; part of Elm & Christchurch ward (the parish of Christchurch)

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Constituent district wards
27 March North	1	March North ward
28 March West	1	March West ward; part of Benwick, Coates & Eastrea ward (the parish of Benwick)
29 Roman Bank & Peckover	1	Peckover ward; Roman Bank ward
30 Waldersey	1	Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary ward; part of Elm & Christchurch ward (the parish of Elm)
31 Whittlesey North	1	Bassenhally ward; Delph ward; Kingsmoor ward; St Andrews ward
32 Whittlesey South	1	Lattersey ward; St Marys ward; part of Benwick, Coates & Eastrea ward (Whittlesey South parish ward of Whittlesey parish)
33 Wisbech North	1	Clarkson ward; Kirkgate ward; Waterlees ward
34 Wisbech South	1	Hill ward, Medworth ward; Staithe ward
Huntingdonshire		
35 Elton & Stilton	2	Elton & Folksworth ward; Stilton ward; Yaxley & Farcet ward
36 Godmanchester	2	Godmanchester ward; Huntingdon East ward
37 Gransden & The Offords	1	Buckden ward; Gransden & The Offords ward
38 Huntingdon	2	Alconbury & The Stukeleys ward; Huntingdon North ward; Huntingdon West ward
39 Kimbolton, Staughton & Brampton	1	Brampton ward; Kimbolton & Staughton ward
40 Little Paxton & St Neots North	2	Little Paxton ward; St Neots Eaton Ford ward; St Neots Priory Park ward
41 Ramsey	1	Ramsey ward
42 Sawtry & Ellington	1	Ellington ward; Sawtry ward
43 Somersham & Earith	1	Somersham ward; part of Earith ward (the parishes of Bluntisham and Earith)
44 St Ives	2	St Ives East ward; St Ives South ward; St Ives West ward; part of Earith ward (the parish of Hollywell-cum-Needingworth)
45 St Neots Eaton Socon	2	St Neots Eaton Socon ward; St Neots Eynesbury ward
46 The Hemingfords & Fenstanton	1	Fenstanton ward; The Hemingfords ward
47 Upwood & The Raveleys & Warboys & Bury	1	Upwood & The Raveleys ward; Warboys & Bury ward
South Cambridgeshire		
48 Bar Hill	1	Bar Hill ward; Girton ward
49 Bassingbourn	1	Bassingbourn ward; The Mordens ward
50 Bourn	1	Part of Bourn ward (the parishes of Bourn and Caxton)
51 Cottenham	2	Cottenham ward; Histon & Impington ward
52 Duxford	1	Duxford ward; The Abingtons ward; Whittlesford ward; part of Fowlmere & Foxton ward (the parish of Fowlmere)
53 Fulbourn	1	Fulbourn ward; Teversham ward; part of The Wilbrahams ward (the parishes of Great Wilbraham, Little Wilbraham, Stow Cum Quy and Fen Ditton)

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Constituent district wards
54 Gamlingay	1	Gamlingay ward; Haslingfield & The Eversdens ward; Orwell & Barrington ward
55 Hardwick	1	Barton ward; Caldecote ward; Comberton ward; Hardwick ward
56 Linton	1	Balsham ward; Linton ward
57 Melbourn	1	Melbourn ward; Meldreth ward; part of Fowlmere & Foxton ward (the parish of Foxton)
58 Papworth & Swavesey	1	Papworth & Elsworth ward; Swavesey ward; part of Bourn ward (the parishes of Croxton and Eltisey)
59 Sawston	2	Harston & Hauxton ward; Sawston ward; The Shelfords & Stapleford ward
60 Waterbeach	1	Milton ward; Waterbeach ward; part of The Wilbrahams ward (the parish of Horningsea)
61 Willingham	1	Longstanton ward; Willingham & Over ward

Notes:

1. *The constituent district wards are those resulting from the electoral reviews of the five Cambridgeshire districts which were completed in 2002. Where whole district wards do not form the building blocks, constituent parishes and parish wards are listed.*
2. *The large map inserted at the back of the report illustrates the proposed divisions outlined above.*

Table 2: Draft recommendations for Cambridgeshire County Council

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2007)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	
Cambridge City								
1	Abbey	1	6,269	6,269	0	6,720	6,720	1
2	Arbury	1	6,970	6,970	11	6,990	6,990	5
3	Castle	1	6,662	6,662	7	7,050	7,050	6
4	Cherry Hinton	1	6,293	6,293	1	6,430	6,430	-3
5	Coleridge	1	5,724	5,724	-8	6,180	6,180	-7
6	East Chesterton	1	5,730	5,730	-8	6,230	6,230	-6
7	King's Hedges	1	6,129	6,129	-2	6,400	6,400	-4
8	Market	1	6,352	6,352	2	6,660	6,660	0
9	Newnham	1	6,506	6,506	4	7,030	7,030	6
10	Petersfield	1	5,971	5,971	-5	6,350	6,350	-4
11	Queen Edith's	1	6,326	6,326	1	6,360	6,360	-4
12	Romsey	1	6,288	6,288	1	6,330	6,330	-5
13	Trumpington	1	5,535	5,535	-11	6,470	6,470	-3
14	West Chesterton	1	6,360	6,360	2	6,420	6,420	-3
East Cambridgeshire								
15	Burwell	1	6,112	6,112	-2	6,050	6,050	-9
16	Ely North East	1	6,758	6,758	8	7,530	7,530	13
17	Ely South West	1	5,352	5,352	-14	6,180	6,180	-7
18	Fordham	1	6,675	6,675	7	6,570	6,570	-1
19	Haddenham	1	7,098	7,098	13	7,000	7,000	5
20	Littleport	1	5,392	5,392	-14	7,190	7,190	8
21	Soham North	1	5,126	5,126	-18	5,520	5,520	-17
22	Sutton	1	5,852	5,852	-6	5,860	5,860	-12
23	Woodditton	1	7,527	7,527	20	7,350	7,350	11
Fenland								
24	Chatteris	1	5,378	5,378	-14	5,990	5,990	-10
25	Forty Foot	1	5,984	5,984	-4	6,750	6,750	2

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2007)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
26 March East	1	5,943	5,943	-5	6,530	6,530	-2
27 March North	1	4,907	4,907	-22	5,330	5,330	-20
28 March West	1	5,803	5,803	-7	6,090	6,090	-8
29 Roman Bank & Peckover	1	6,445	6,445	3	6,840	6,840	3
30 Waldersey	1	6,155	6,155	-2	6,830	6,830	3
31 Whittlesey North	1	5,987	5,987	-4	7,630	7,630	15
32 Whittlesey South	1	6,412	6,412	3	6,500	6,500	-2
33 Wisbech North	1	6,953	6,953	11	7,460	7,460	12
34 Wisbech South	1	7,201	7,201	15	7,350	7,350	11
Huntingdonshire							
35 Elton & Stilton	2	11,763	5,882	-6	12,530	6265	-6
36 Godmanchester	2	11,282	5,641	-10	11,500	5750	-13
37 Gransden & The Offords	1	6,031	6,031	-4	7,710	7,710	16
38 Huntingdon	2	10,580	5,290	-15	12,410	6205	-7
39 Kimbolton, Staughton & Brompton	1	7,094	7,094	13	6,980	6,980	5
40 Little Paxton & St Neots North	2	12,451	6,226	0	12,430	6215	-6
41 Ramsey	1	6,147	6,147	-2	6,280	6,280	-5
42 Sawtry & Ellington	1	7,265	7,265	16	7,240	7,240	9
43 Somersham & Earith	1	7,218	7,218	15	7,110	7,110	7
44 St Ives	2	14,268	7,134	14	14,290	7145	8
45 St Neots Eaton Socon	2	10,972	5,486	-12	12,100	6050	-9
46 The Hemingfords & Fenstanton	1	6,932	6,932	11	7,090	7,090	7
47 Upwood & The Raveleys & Warboys & Bury	1	7,015	7,015	12	7,010	7,010	6
South Cambridgeshire							
48 Bar Hill	1	6,998	6,998	12	7,050	7,050	6
49 Bassingbourn	1	5,412	5,412	-13	5,410	5,410	-19
50 Bourn	1	2,312	2,312	-63	6,660	6,660	0
51 Cottenham	2	12,355	6,178	-1	13,850	6,925	4
52 Duxford	1	6,573	6,573	5	6,680	6,680	1

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2007)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
53 Fulbourn	1	7,353	7,353	18	7,210	7,210	9
54 Gamlingay	1	7,667	7,667	23	7,570	7,570	14
55 Hardwick	1	7,058	7,058	13	7,160	7,160	8
56 Linton	1	7,168	7,168	15	7,040	7,040	6
57 Melbourn	1	7,034	7,034	12	6,940	6,940	5
58 Papworth & Swavesey	1	5,556	5,556	-11	6,170	6,170	-7
59 Sawston	2	13,087	6,544	5	12,890	6,445	-3
60 Waterbeach	1	7,365	7,365	18	7,330	7,330	10
61 Willingham	1	6,385	6,385	2	7,300	7,300	10
Totals	69	431,516		-	458,110		-
Averages	-		6,254	-		6,639	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Cambridgeshire County 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 county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1 Introduction

1 This report contains our proposals for the electoral arrangements for the county of Cambridgeshire on which we are now consulting. Our review of the county is part of the programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. This programme started in 1996 and is expected to finish in 2004.

2 In carrying out these county 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.
- The general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and the statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to:
 - eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
 - promote equality of opportunity; and
 - promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

3 Details of the legislation under which we work are set out in The Electoral Commission's *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews* (published by the EC in July 2002). This *Guidance* sets out our approach to the reviews.

4 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of electoral divisions. In each two-tier county, our approach is first to complete the PERs of all the constituent districts and, when the Orders for the resulting changes in those areas have been made, then to commence a PER of the county council's electoral arrangements. Orders were made for the new electoral arrangements in the districts in Cambridgeshire in September 2002 for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire; in October 2002 for East Cambridgeshire and Fenland; and in December 2002 for Huntingdonshire, and we are now embarking on our county review in this area.

5 Prior to the commencement of Part IV of the Local Government Act 2000, each county council division could only return one member. This restraint has now been removed by section 89 of the 2000 Act, and we may now recommend the creation of multi-member county divisions. In areas where we are unable to identify single-member divisions that are coterminous with ward boundaries and to provide acceptable levels of electoral equality we will consider recommending multi-member divisions if they provide a better balance between these two factors. However, we do not expect to recommend large numbers of multi-member divisions other than, perhaps, in the more urban areas of a county.

6 Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 sets out the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements*. These statutory rules state that each division should be wholly contained within a single district and that division boundaries should not split unwarded parishes or parish wards.

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

8 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the local authority as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any division 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.

9 Similarly, we will seek to ensure that each district area within the county is allocated the correct number of county councillors with respect to the district's proportion of the county's electorate.

10 The *Rules* provide that, in considering county council electoral arrangements, we should have regard to the boundaries of district wards. We attach considerable importance to achieving coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards. The term 'coterminosity' is used throughout the report and refers to situations where the boundaries of county electoral divisions and district wards are the same, that is to say where county divisions comprise either one or more whole district wards.

11 We recognise, however, that it is unlikely to be possible to achieve absolute coterminosity throughout a county area while also providing for the optimum level of electoral equality. In this respect, county reviews are different from those of districts. We will seek to achieve the best available balance between electoral equality and coterminosity, taking into account the statutory criteria. While the proportion of electoral divisions that will be coterminous with the boundaries of district wards is likely to vary between counties, we would normally expect coterminosity to be achieved in a significant majority of divisions. The average level of coterminosity secured under our final recommendations for the first eleven counties that we have reviewed (excluding the Isle of Wight) is 70%. We would normally expect to recommend levels of coterminosity of around 60% to 80%.

12 Where coterminosity is not possible in parished areas, and a district ward is to be split between electoral divisions, we would normally expect this to be achieved without dividing (or further dividing) a parish between divisions. There are likely to be exceptions to this, however, particularly where larger parishes are involved.

13 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.

14 A further area of difference between county and district reviews is that we must recognise that it will not be possible to avoid the creation of some county divisions which contain diverse communities, for example, combining rural and urban areas. We have generally sought to avoid this in district reviews in order to reflect the identities and interests of local communities. Some existing county council electoral divisions comprise a number of distinct communities, which is inevitable given the larger number of electors represented by each councillor, and we would expect that similar situations would continue under our recommendations in seeking the best balance between coterminosity and the statutory criteria.

15 As a part of this review we may also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils in the county. However, we made some recommendations for new parish electoral arrangements as part of our district reviews. We therefore expect to put forward such recommendations during county reviews only on an exceptional basis. In any event, we are *not* able to review administrative boundaries *between* local authorities or parishes, or consider the establishment of new parish areas as part of this review.

The review of Cambridgeshire County Council

16 We completed the reviews of the five district council areas in Cambridgeshire in April 2002 and Orders for the new electoral arrangements have since been made. This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Cambridgeshire County Council. The last such review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in December 1983 (Report No. 460).

17 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

18 Stage One began on 11 March 2003, when we wrote to Cambridgeshire County Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the five district councils in the county, Cambridgeshire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Cambridgeshire Local Councils Association, parish and town councils in the county, Members of Parliament with constituencies in the county, Members of the European Parliament for the Eastern Region and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Cambridgeshire County Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of submissions (the end of Stage One) was 7 July 2003.

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

20 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 24 February 2004 and will end on 26 April 2004, 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.**

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

Equal opportunities

22 In preparing this report the Committee has had regard to the general duty under section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1976 to promote racial equality and to the approach set out in BCFE (03) 35, *Race Relations Legislation*, which the Committee considered and agreed at its meeting on 9 April 2003.

2 Current electoral arrangements

23 The county of Cambridgeshire comprises the five districts of Cambridge City, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. The electorate of the county is 431,516 (December 2002). The Council presently has 59 members, with one member elected from each division.

24 Cambridgeshire remains predominantly rural despite increased residential and commercial building in recent years. Its arable farming is internationally recognised, as is its reputation for scientific and technological research and development. It has a history dating back more than 3,000 years which is reflected in the wealth of historic buildings, houses, cathedrals and mansions. It is famous for its University and academic excellence as well as the rivers Cam and the Great Ouse.

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

26 At present, each councillor represents an average of 7,314 electors, which the County Council forecasts will increase to 7,765 by the year 2007 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic change and migration over the last two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 29 of the 59 divisions varies by more than 10% from the district average while 12 divisions have variances of more than 20%. The worst imbalance is in Huntingdon & Godmanchester division where the councillor represents 64% more electors than the county average.

27 As detailed previously, in considering the County Council's electoral arrangements, we must have regard to the boundaries of district wards. Following the completion of the reviews of district warding arrangements in Cambridgeshire, we are therefore faced with a new starting point for considering electoral divisions. Our proposals for county divisions will be based on the new district wards as opposed to those which existed prior to the recent reviews. In view of the effect of these new district wards and changes in the electorate over the past twenty years, which have resulted in electoral imbalances across the county, changes to most if not all of the existing county electoral divisions are inevitable.

Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2007)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Cambridge City							
1 Abbey	1	4,806	4,806	-34	4,900	4,900	-37
2 Arbury	1	5,178	5,178	-29	5,200	5,200	-33
3 Castle	1	7,038	7,038	-4	7,430	7,430	-4
4 Cherry Hinton	1	5,462	5,462	-25	5,600	5,600	-28
5 Coleridge	1	5,866	5,866	-20	6,320	6,320	-19
6 East Chesterton	1	7,180	7,180	-2	7,920	7,920	2
7 Kings Hedges	1	4,832	4,832	-34	4,870	4,870	-37
8 Market	1	6,768	6,768	-7	7,080	7,080	-9
9 Newnham	1	7,788	7,788	6	8,320	8,320	7
10 Petersfield	1	7,841	7,841	7	8,690	8,690	12
11 Queen Edith's	1	6,137	6,137	-16	6,180	6,180	-20
12 Romsey	1	6,017	6,017	-18	6,060	6,060	-22
13 Trumpington	1	6,080	6,080	-17	6,890	6,890	-11
14 West Chesterton	1	6,123	6,123	-16	6,190	6,190	-20
East Cambridgeshire							
15 Burwell	1	8,327	8,327	14	8,230	8,230	6
16 Ely North & South	1	5,285	5,285	-28	5,370	5,370	-31
17 Ely West	1	10,512	10,512	44	11,970	11,970	54
18 Littleport	1	7,206	7,206	-1	8,980	8,980	16
19 Soham	1	9,129	9,129	25	9,460	9,460	22
20 Sutton	1	7,449	7,449	2	7,440	7,440	-4
21 Woodditton	1	7,984	7,984	9	7,800	7,800	0
Fenland							
22 Benwick & Doddington	1	7,471	7,471	2	8,370	8,370	8
23 Chatteris	1	7,025	7,025	-4	7,750	7,750	0
24 Elm	1	6,674	6,674	-9	8,040	8,040	4
25 Leverington	1	8,098	8,098	11	8,710	8,710	12

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2007)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
26 March East	1	8,500	8,500	16	9,320	9,320	20
27 March West	1	6,896	6,896	-6	7,170	7,170	-8
28 Whittlesey	1	6,652	6,652	-9	7,350	7,350	-5
29 Wisbech North	1	6,839	6,839	-6	7,370	7,370	-5
30 Wisbech South	1	9,013	9,013	23	9,180	9,180	18
Huntingdonshire							
31 Brampton	1	7,003	7,003	-4	8,640	8,640	11
32 Buckden	1	6,805	6,805	-7	9,820	9,820	26
33 Eaton	1	9,671	9,671	32	9,470	9,470	22
34 Eynesbury	1	6,351	6,351	-13	6,250	6,250	-20
35 Houghton & Wyton	1	7,810	7,810	7	7,940	7,940	2
36 Huntingdon & Godmanchester	1	11,973	11,973	64	12,240	12,240	58
37 Huntingdon North	1	7,071	7,071	-3	7,150	7,150	-8
38 Norman Cross	1	8,664	8,664	18	9,430	9,430	21
39 Priory Park	1	6,627	6,627	-9	6,710	6,710	-14
40 Ramsey	1	8,924	8,924	22	9,110	9,110	17
41 Sawtry	1	7,546	7,546	3	7,450	7,450	-4
42 Somersham	1	8,510	8,510	16	8,340	8,340	7
43 St Ives North & Warboys	1	8,847	8,847	21	8,670	8,670	12
44 St Ives South	1	7,120	7,120	-3	7,350	7,350	-5
45 West Hunts	1	9,096	9,096	-17	6,120	6,120	-21
South Cambridgeshire							
46 Bassingbourn	1	6,514	6,514	-11	6,520	6,520	-16
47 Comberton	1	7,521	7,521	3	7,620	7,620	-2
48 Cottenham	1	7,440	7,440	2	8,300	8,300	7
49 Fulbourn	1	7,610	7,610	4	7,470	7,470	-4
50 Gamlingay	1	8,712	8,712	19	13,700	13,700	76
51 Girton	1	7,494	7,494	2	7,540	7,540	-3
52 Harston	1	7,382	7,382	1	7,470	7,470	-4

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2002)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2007)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
53 Histon	1	6,424	6,424	-12	7,930	7,930	2
54 Linton	1	7,168	7,168	-2	7,040	7,040	-9
55 Melbourn	1	7,554	7,554	3	7,450	7,450	-4
56 Sawston	1	7,045	7,045	-4	6,890	6,890	-11
57 Shelford	1	5,904	5,904	-19	5,860	5,860	-25
58 Waterbeach	1	7,108	7,108	-3	7,070	7,070	-9
59 Willingham	1	8,447	8,447	15	8,400	8,400	8
Totals	59	431,516	-	-	458,110	-	-
Averages	-	-	7,314	-	-	7,765	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Note: Each division is represented by a single councillor, and the electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol(-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2002, electors in Abbey division in Cambridge City were relatively over-represented by 34%, while electors in Huntingdon & Godmanchester division in Huntingdonshire were relatively under-represented by 64%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 Submissions received

28 At the start of this review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council.

29 During this initial stage of the review, officers from The Boundary Committee visited the area and met officers and members of the County Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 19 submissions during Stage One, including county-wide schemes from Cambridgeshire County Council (the County Council) and Cambridgeshire County Labour Party (the County Labour Party). All these submissions may be inspected at our offices and those of the County Council.

Cambridgeshire County Council

30 The County Council proposed a council of 68 members, nine more than at present, serving 68 single-member divisions. The County Council's proposals achieve 78% coterminosity and 28 of the proposed 68 divisions would have variances of more than 10% by 2007.

District and borough councils

31 Huntingdonshire District Council proposed its own division pattern for Huntingdonshire, comprising seven single-member divisions and six two-member divisions.

Political groups

32 The County Labour Party proposed that the council size should remain at 59 and submitted a county-wide proposal based on this council size. The North East Cambridgeshire Constituency Labour Party (the North East Labour Party) submitted a proposal for the district of Fenland, allocating the district nine councillors to which it would be entitled under a council size of 59. The North West Cambridgeshire Constituency Labour Party (the North West Labour Party) proposed that Huntingdonshire should be represented by 16 councillors, but put forward no scheme for the district.

Parish and town councils

33 We received responses from seven parish and three town councils. In East Cambridgeshire district Soham Town Council contended that the town of Soham should not be divided. In Fenland district Chatteris Town Council considered that Chatteris should be represented by two councillors. In Huntingdonshire district Farcet Parish Council objected to the County Council's proposal for an increase in council size and considered that it should remain at 59. Hollywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council made two submissions, one stating that it should not be combined with St Ives town and the other supporting Councillor Eddy's proposal for the district. Huntingdonshire Town Council supported Huntingdonshire District Council's submission for the district. Sawtry Parish Council considered that electoral division boundaries should remain based from Sawtry. Warboys Parish Council wished to be contained in a division with Upwood & The Raveleys ward.

34 In South Cambridgeshire district Longstanton Parish Council considered that division boundaries should reflect the proposed increase in population in and around Longstanton. Orwell Parish Council did not wish for the existing Bassingbourn division to be separated, and Rampton Parish Council considered that the parishes of Rampton and Cottenham should not be divided between divisions.

Other representations

35 We received a further three submissions from local councillors. Councillor Eddy (Earith division) submitted a district-wide proposal for Huntingdonshire based on an allocation of 19 councillors to the district. Councillor Clarke (Paxton division) submitted an identical proposal to Councillor Eddy's. Councillors Taylor (Warboys division) and Souter (Upwood & The Raveleys division) put forward a district-wide proposal for Huntingdonshire based on an allocation of 19 councillors for the district.

4 Analysis and draft recommendations

36 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council and welcome comments from all those interested relating to the proposed division boundaries, number of councillors and division names. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

37 As with our reviews of districts, our primary aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire 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, and 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 division of the county’.

38 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, and to the boundaries of district wards.

39 We have discussed in Chapter One the additional parameters which apply to reviews of county council electoral arrangements and the need to have regard to the boundaries of district wards in order to achieve coterminosity. In addition, our approach is to ensure that, having reached conclusions on the appropriate number of councillors to be elected to the county council, each district council area is allocated the number of county councillors to which it is entitled.

40 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which results in exactly the same number of electors per councillor in every division of a county.

41 We accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for an authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, especially when also seeking to achieve coterminosity in order to facilitate convenient and effective local government, so 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. Accordingly, 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 the boundaries of district wards and community identity. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be taken into account and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

42 The recommendations do not affect county, district or parish external boundaries, local taxes, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that these recommendations will have an adverse effect on house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. Our proposals do not take account of parliamentary boundaries, and we are not therefore able to take into account any representations that are based on these issues.

Electorate forecasts

43 Since 1975 there has been a 13% increase in the electorate of Cambridgeshire county. The County Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2007, projecting an increase

in the electorate of approximately 6% from 431,516 to 458,110 over the five-year period from 2002 to 2007. It expects most of the growth to be in South Cambridgeshire, although a significant amount is also expected in the remaining four districts. In order to prepare these forecasts, the County 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 County Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to division boundaries has been obtained.

44 Chatteris Town Council argued that the County Council's forecast figures for Chatteris were too low. We asked the County Council to respond to this query and it provided details of how the forecast electorate was calculated for Chatteris. It stated that the forecast is 'based on monitoring information supplied by the County Council Planning Department'. It continued that although more dwellings are likely to be built in Chatteris under the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan by 2016, this 'cannot be used in the review as it is not possible to specify with any certainty where and when the new development will occur'.

45 We know that forecasting electorates is difficult and, having considered all the evidence received concerning electorate forecasts, we accept that the County Council's figures are the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

Council Size

46 As explained earlier, we now require justification for any council size proposed, whether it is an increase, decrease, or retention of the existing council size.

47 Cambridgeshire County Council presently has 59 members. We received proposals for four different council sizes. The County Council proposed a council size of 68, an increase of nine, the County Labour Party, the North East Labour Party, the North West Labour Party and Farcet Parish Council proposed retaining the existing council size of 59, Huntingdonshire District Council proposed a council size of 69, an increase of 10, and Councillors Clarke and Eddy proposed a council size of 70, an increase of 11.

48 The County Council proposed an increase in council size from 59 to 68 members. In its submission, the Council outlined the new 'Cabinet system of governance' that it had adopted from May 2001. The Cabinet consists of the Leader and nine councillors who are each assigned a portfolio. The County Council stated that a report prepared for the Interim Scheme of Members Allowances from 1999 to 2001 found that under the old structure "average" leading Members...attended meetings on approximately 75 days a year' and estimated that 'under the new arrangements...an "average" leading Member would devote some 80 to 90 days per annum to Council business'.

49 The County Council went on to outline its structure in detail referring to its scrutiny committees, its service development groups (SDGs), its local strategic partnerships (LSPs) and other meetings and partnerships. The County Council stated that the Interim Scheme of Members Allowances report 'identified that an "average" backbench member had attended Council meetings on approximately 44 days of the year in 1999/2000 and 2000/2001'. It continued, stating that 'comparing the increase for an "average" leading member, this results in a 15% increase for an "average" backbench member equating to approximately 51 days'. The County Council stated that it has introduced a 'corporate seminar programme to improve and enhance information flows/levels of awareness particularly of backbench members' and that these seminars are held on a monthly basis.

50 With regard to the representational role of councillors the County Council considered that 'given the increasing number of commitments for both Executive and Non-Executive councillors, the most effective way for all councillors to engage with their local communities

is to increase the total number of councillors in Cambridgeshire'. As evidence for these increasing commitments the County Council pointed to the 'increase in consultation by County and District authorities [which] has subsequently resulted in an increase in workload'. It also stated that 'members representing rural parishes also highlighted the fact that they were expected to attend more meetings locally'.

51 The County Council concluded that 'the average workload of each councillor is greater than it was prior to the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000'. The County Council was of the opinion that 'if councillors are to engage effectively with their local electors, parish councils and community groups, the total number of councillors on the Council will need to increase to enable the current workload burden to be spread more evenly'.

52 The Labour Party proposed retaining the existing council size of 59 members. It considered that the County Council's proposed increase of nine seats 'appeared to be predicated upon the argument that as the workload of the individual councillors has increased, the council should be increased in size by 15%'. It continued, stating that 'it was not clear how they arrived at the figure of 15%'. The Labour Party stated that it 'can clearly accept that the workload of those who are now Cabinet Members has increased' but considered that 'surely the workload of those outside the Cabinet has decreased'. It went on to question whether the proposed increase was 'a fig leaf to construct an argument for 14 coterminous seats in Cambridge' and stated that 'if it is the latter then I might suggest that if they wanted coterminous seats in Cambridge, the county should have raised objections to the re-warding of Cambridge in 2001'.

53 Farcet Parish Council also proposed retaining the existing council size. It considered that 'the argument advanced in the [Council's] consultative document... does not set out in detail the reasons for the suggested increase in seats'. It considered that 'in the absence of a closely argued case for 68 councillors it must be assumed this is a strategy to ensure that the wards and electoral divisions in Cambridgeshire are coterminous'.

54 The North East Labour Party and the North West Labour Party also proposed retaining the existing council size but did not provide any argumentation.

55 Huntingdonshire District Council proposed an increase of council size from 58 to 69 members. It considered that 'the Panel [Huntingdonshire District Council's Elections Panel] were unclear as to the rationale behind the proposed growth in the number of councillors to 68 and why an increase of 15% had been chosen which appeared to be somewhat arbitrary'. It went on to argue that 'the proportion of the County electorate in Huntingdonshire in 2008 [December 2007 projected electorate] at 27.22% results in an arithmetical number of councillors of 18.51. In each of the other districts, their [the County Council's] proposal rounds the number of members per district up or down to the nearest whole number. However, in Huntingdonshire this logic has not been followed and instead of rounding the percentage up to the nearest whole number of 19, it has been rounded down to 18'. It concluded that 'the Panel therefore recommends that if the size of County Council membership is to increase, it should do so to 69 members, with 19 members representing divisions in Huntingdonshire'.

56 Councillors Souter and Taylor considered that the County Council's proposals for an increase in council size are 'reasonable'. However, they proposed that Huntingdonshire be allocated a further councillor, in order to achieve the correct allocation between the districts, resulting in a council size of 69.

57 Councillors Clarke and Eddy, and Hollywell-Cum-Needlingworth Parish Council proposed a council size of 70, an increase of 11. All stated 'I cannot accept the County Council's proposal that there should only be 68 members of the County Council and that Cambridge City will have 14 members', and considered that 'it would appear that 14 members for

Cambridge City is the County Council's real starting point, rather than their arbitrary proposal to restrict the increase in members to 15%. They went on to state that 'I personally have no problem with that, providing it is accepted that the fairest council size should then be a county council of 70 members'.

58 After considering the representations received on council size we did not consider that we had sufficient evidence and argumentation to make a decision on the most appropriate size for Cambridgeshire County Council. We therefore asked all parties who submitted a representation at Stage One regarding council size to provide further information as to why their proposed council sizes would provide for more effective and convenient local government for Cambridgeshire.

59 In the County Council's further evidence it stated that 'many cabinet members have commented on the increase in their workload as a result of the new internal political management arrangements' and said that 'the involvement of non-executive councillors, by appointing backbench members as "executive assistants" to work with portfolio holders, is likely to be one option the Council will be considering to relieve the pressure on the executive'. The County Council commented that many councillors are now holding surgeries and that this generates more responses and more workload.

60 The Council considered that as well as being appointed to a 'wide range of external bodies' (details of which were provided) 'new bodies are being developed which reflect the changes in the County and nationally, e.g. implementation structure vehicle to manage the development within the County and also the establishment of new bodies providing youth and adult services, combining Social Services and Education, and Social Services and Health where appropriate'. It was argued that more councillors were required to share the burden of these new bodies and to allow the 'long history of effective partnership working' to continue. It concluded by referring to the composition of the Council and stated that 'we hope that the opportunity to increase the number of councillors on the Council and consequently spread the workload evenly will attract more young people and people with jobs to stand for election'.

61 The North East Labour Party considered that 'the present size of [the] County Council has worked satisfactorily in the past'. It considered that 'the "cabinet" structure which has been introduced appears to be working so there would seem little point in changing and disrupting it while it is still relatively new'. It therefore considered that 'an increase in the number of members cannot be justified'.

62 The Labour Party also supplied further evidence in support of its proposal to retain the existing council size. It considered that two aspects of the councillors' role, those of representing the interests of residents on the local authority and representing the interests of both residents and the local authority on and to a wide range of external bodies, have been unchanged by any 'suggested increase in the functions of the council' resulting from the implementation of the new political management structure.

63 It stated that 'many "portfolio holders" are now full-time councillors and as such are adequately rewarded for their new "full-time" responsibilities'. However, it noted that 'councillors who previously were committee and sub-committee members now have a perceived lower level of involvement in the day-to-day running of the local authority' and considered that the proposal for an increase in council size is 'based upon the desire of the Council to retain fourteen coterminous electoral divisions within the City of Cambridge'.

64 In its further evidence Huntingdonshire District Council 'concluded that it is the Authority under review – in this case Cambridgeshire County Council – which is best placed to put forward the case on council size, bearing in mind the requirement to have regard to the political management structure it operates and the impact it has on the role of County Councillors'.

65 Both Councillor Clarke and Councillor Eddy responded to the request for further evidence regarding council size. Councillor Clarke stated that 'I fully support the County Council's reasons for an increase in council membership' but went on to say that 'the figures the County Council produced, do show that a council size [of] 69 members, which is an increase of 17%, would be more appropriate'. Councillor Clarke considered that 'my County Council colleagues would not raise any objection if a council membership of 69 was used as a starting point by the Boundary Committee'.

66 Councillor Eddy asserted that a council size of 68 would be 'clearly biased against Huntingdonshire', and that he would prefer the starting point used by the Committee to be a council of 69 members.

67 We have given much consideration to the issue of council size in Cambridgeshire. We consider that the County Council has provided good evidence for an increase in council size. We consider that the evidence provided by the County Council in justifying an increase in council size is sufficient. We note that it refers at all times to the new political management structure used by Cambridgeshire County Council and cites evidence regarding the increased workloads of all councillors. It provides details of reports and studies into the new pressures on the 'average' councillor and the increase in hours devoted to council work. It addresses the new scrutiny arrangements employed, in particular in the field of health and social care, and the representational roles fulfilled by councillors on external bodies. It continues by citing reports which concluded that the 'average' backbench member's commitment to the council had increased by some 15% since the implementation of the new political management structure. Whilst it alluded to the expanse in population of Cambridgeshire in its subsequent evidence, its reference was in respect to the knock-on effects on the Council's Service Development Groups and the consequent increase on the workload of the councillors.

68 In addition to what we consider to be a well-argued case for an increase in council size, we further note that this council size has been fully consulted on by the County Council and has received some level of local support. We have examined the responses to the County Council's consultation and have noted that only one submission opposing the increase was received, from the Cambridgeshire County Labour Party, using the arguments detailed above. We consider that the evidence provided by those parties supporting the retention of the existing council size (the North East Labour Party, the North West Labour Party and Farcet Parish Council) was based more on an opposition to the proposed increase to 68 and noted that little reference was made to councillors' representational roles or the impact on their workload of the new political management structure. Indeed, no argument at all is provided by two of the parties (the North West Labour Party and Farcet Parish Council) proposing the retention of the existing arrangements. In light of the *Guidance* offered to interested parties, specifically the point that it is no longer sufficient to assert that no change to the existing arrangements is required, we believe that there is insufficient evidence to justify the retention of the existing council size.

69 We note the concerns of Councillors Clarke and Eddy, Hollywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council and the County Labour Party that the County Council's submission may be based on retaining 14 single-member coterminous divisions in Cambridge City. However, we can only make our decision on the evidence before us and, in this instance, the evidence and argumentation for an increase in council size is more persuasive than that provided for a retention of the existing council size. We would also like it noted that, whilst we are aware of the political implications of our reviews, we have no regard for these when formulating our recommendations.

70 Having concluded that the evidence provided by the County Council is sufficient to justify an increase in council size, we examined the allocation of councillors between the districts in Cambridgeshire, under a council size of 68. As mentioned earlier, we will seek to ensure that each district area within the county is allocated the correct number of county councillors

with respect to the district's proportion of the county's electorate. As argued by Huntingdonshire District Council and Councillors Clarke, Eddy, Souter and Taylor and Hollywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council during Stage One, the correct allocation of councillors between the five districts cannot be achieved under a council size of 68. The County Council's scheme leaves Huntingdonshire under-represented by one councillor. We are therefore proposing an increase in council size to 69 members to provide the correct allocation of councillors between the five districts of the county.

71 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

72 We have carefully considered all the representations received, including countywide schemes from the County Council and the County Labour Party. The County Council's proposals would improve electoral equality, compared with the existing arrangements, with the number of divisions where the number of electors would vary by more than 10% from the county average reduced from 31 to 26 by 2007. The County Council's scheme would provide 78% coterminosity between district wards and county divisions across Cambridgeshire.

73 Having adopted a council size of 69 members as the most appropriate for Cambridgeshire, it was very difficult for us to adopt any of the divisions proposed by the County Labour Party as their scheme was based on a council size of 59. The County Labour Party's scheme was based on a different council size from the one that we propose adopting and therefore divisions in the scheme were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members. Using the councillor:elector ratio from a council size of 69 results in higher levels of electoral inequality in the County Labour Party's proposed divisions and thus makes it very difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a county-wide scheme based on a different council size.

74 We were concerned that in all of the submissions we received, there was a lack of good evidence and argumentation supporting the proposals, especially in relation to community identities and interests across the county. Under the Local Government Act 1992 we must have regard to the need to reflect the identities and interest of local communities. However, in Cambridgeshire this has been difficult due to the lack of argumentation and evidence received regarding community identities and interests and, for the most part, we have had to base our draft recommendations on proposals that provide a good balance between electoral equality and coterminosity with only a limited understanding of community identities and interests in the affected areas. We would therefore welcome further evidence regarding community identities and interests across Cambridgeshire at Stage Three.

75 As indicated above, we are adopting a council size of 69, as proposed by Huntingdonshire District Council in order to address the County Council's incorrect allocation of councillors for Huntingdonshire district. Across the county we are adopting locally proposed schemes with some amendments in order to improve electoral equality. In Cambridge City we are adopting the County Council's scheme in its entirety. In East Cambridgeshire we are adopting the County Council's proposals with our own amendments in two divisions. In Fenland we are adopting the County Council's proposals in six divisions and our own in five divisions. In Huntingdonshire we are adopting Huntingdonshire District Council's proposal in its entirety, and in South Cambridgeshire we are broadly adopting our own scheme whilst retaining five of the County Council's proposed divisions. In each instance our amendments to the proposed schemes are to improve electoral equality.

76 As stated earlier in the report, following the commencement of part IV of the Local Government Act 2000, we may now recommend the creation of multi-member divisions. Six two-member divisions were proposed at Stage One in Huntingdonshire, which we are adopting, along with two more of our own in the district of South Cambridgeshire.

77 Our draft recommendations provide 77% coterminosity between district wards and county divisions. Our recommendations would initially produce 29 divisions with electoral variances of over 10% and four divisions with electoral variances over 20%. This is forecast to improve by 2007, with 12 divisions having electoral variances of over 10% and no division having a variance over 20% from the county average. For county division purposes, the five district areas in the county are considered in turn, as follows:

i.	Cambridge City	page 31
ii.	East Cambridgeshire district	page 32
iii.	Fenland district	page 33
iv.	Huntingdonshire district	page 35
v.	South Cambridgeshire district	page 39

78 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

Cambridge City

79 Under the current arrangements, the city of Cambridge is represented by 14 county councillors serving 14 divisions. Abbey, Arbury, Castle, Cherry Hinton and Coleridge divisions are over-represented with 34%, 29%, 4%, 25% and 20% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (37%, 33%, 4%, 28% and 19% by 2007). King's Hedges, Market, Queen Edith's, Romsey, Trumpington and West Chesterton divisions are over-represented with 34%, 7%, 16%, 18%, 17% and 16% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (37%, 9%, 20%, 22%, 11% and 20% by 2007). Newnham and Petersfield divisions are under-represented with 6% and 7% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (7% and 12% by 2007). East Chesterton division is over-represented with 2% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average and will be under-represented by 2% by 2007.

80 At Stage One we received two submissions in relation to the city of Cambridge. The County Council and the County Labour Party submitted city-wide schemes. The County Council's scheme was based on the number of councillors representing Cambridge remaining the same as at present at 14, which it would be entitled to under a council size of 69. The County Council proposed that each of the 14 district wards in Cambridge City be represented by a single county councillor, making 14 coterminous single-member divisions. The County Council considered that this was important as 'the City is unparished and the district wards are the main way different parts of the City are defined'.

81 Under the County Council's proposals, 100% coterminosity would be secured within the city. The proposed Arbury, Castle, Newnham and Market divisions would initially contain 11%, 7%, 4% and 2% more electors per councillor than the county average respectively (5%, 6% and 6% more and equal to the county average by 2007). The proposed Cherry Hinton, Queen Edith's, Romsey and West Chesterton divisions would initially contain 1%, 1%, 1% and 2% more electors per councillor than the county average respectively (3%, 4%, 5% and 3% fewer by 2007). The proposed Coleridge, East Chesterton, King's Hedges, Petersfield and Trumpington divisions would initially contain 8%, 8%, 2%, 5% and 11% fewer electors per councillor than the county average respectively (7%, 6%, 4%, 4% and 3% fewer by 2007). The proposed Abbey division would initially be equal to the county average and would contain more electors by 1% by 2007.

82 The County Labour Party's scheme was based on a decrease in the number of councillors representing Cambridge from 14 to 12 to which it would be entitled under a council size of 59. It proposed 12 single-member divisions. However, as discussed previously we are proposing an increase in council size from 59 to 69 and it has therefore been difficult to utilise any of the Labour Party's proposed divisions because divisions in the County Labour Party's scheme were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members. Using the councillor:elector ratio from a council size of 69 results in higher levels of electoral inequality in the County Labour Party's divisions and thus makes it very difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a district-wide scheme based on a different council size.

83 We have carefully considered the representations we received at Stage One. We are proposing to adopt the County Council's scheme in its entirety because of its excellent level of coterminosity and the good electoral equality that it provides. Under our draft recommendations the city of Cambridge will have 100% coterminosity between district ward and county division boundaries. The electoral variances for our proposed divisions will be as detailed above in the County Council's proposals. Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

East Cambridgeshire district

84 Under the current arrangements, the district of East Cambridgeshire is represented by seven county councillors serving seven divisions. Ely North & South and Littleport divisions are over represented with 28% and 1% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (31% fewer and 16% more by 2007). Burwell, Ely West, Soham, Sutton and Woodditton divisions are under represented with 14%, 44%, 25%, 2% and 9% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (6%, 54% and 22% more, 4% fewer and equal to the county average by 2007).

85 At Stage One we received three submissions in relation to the district of East Cambridgeshire, including district-wide schemes from the County Council and the Labour Party. The County Council's scheme was based on an increase in the number of councillors from seven to nine to which it would be entitled under a council size of 69.

86 The County Council proposed nine coterminous single-member divisions for East Cambridgeshire. In the south of the district it proposed a Burwell division comprising the district wards of Burwell and The Swaffhams, and a Woodditton division comprising the district wards of Bottisham, Cheveley and Dullingham Villages. In the north of the district the County Council proposed an Ely North East division comprising the district wards of Ely East and Ely North, an Ely South West division comprising the district wards of Ely South and Ely West, and a Littleport division comprising the district wards of Littleport East and Littleport West.

87 In the east of the district the County Council proposed a Fordham division comprising the district wards of Isleham and Fordham and a Soham division comprising the district wards of Soham North and Soham South. In the west of the district it proposed a Sutton division comprising the district wards of Downham Villages and Sutton, and a Haddenham division comprising the district wards of Haddenham and Stretham.

88 Under the County Council's proposals 100% coterminosity would be secured in the district. The proposed Burwell, Ely South West, Fordham, Sutton and Littleport divisions would initially contain 2%, 14%, 31%, 6% and 14% fewer electors than the county average respectively (9%, 7%, 36% and 12% fewer and 8% more by 2007). The proposed Ely North East, Haddenham, Soham and Woodditton divisions would initially contain 8%, 13%, 19% and 20% more electors than the county average respectively (13%, 5%, 18% and 11% more by 2007). The County Council acknowledged the high level of electoral inequality in their

proposed Fordham division, but considered that it should be accepted 'in this isolated, sparsely populated area, right at the edge of the county'.

89 The County Labour Party's scheme was based on an increase in the number of councillors representing East Cambridgeshire from seven to eight to which it would be entitled under a council size of 59. It proposed four single-member and two two-member divisions. However, as discussed previously, we are proposing an increase in council size from 59 to 69 and it has therefore been difficult to utilise any of the Labour Party's proposed divisions because divisions in the County Labour Party's scheme were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members resulting in higher levels of electoral inequality and thus making it very difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a district-wide scheme based on a different council size.

90 Soham Town Council objected to the separation of Soham in the County Council's proposals. It was, however, referring to the County Council's consultation paper rather than its submitted scheme. Soham Town Council considered that 'any boundary alterations must at least coincide with the recently determined district electoral review boundaries'.

91 We have carefully considered all the representations we received at Stage One. We are proposing to adopt the County Council's proposals in the seven divisions of Burwell, Ely North East, Ely South West, Haddenham, Littleport, Sutton and Woodditton because of their good levels of electoral equality and coterminosity within the district. However, we are proposing amendments to the County Council's proposed Fordham and Soham divisions in the east of the district. We do not consider that sufficient evidence and argumentation has been provided by the County Council to justify the significantly lower than average electoral variance (36%) in its proposed Fordham division. While we acknowledge the rural nature of the area we still consider that it is possible to improve electoral equality without proposing 'unworkable' divisions. We are therefore proposing amended Fordham and Soham North divisions. Under our proposals a revised Soham North division would comprise the district wards of Soham North, Isleham and Wicken parish of Soham South district ward, while a revised Fordham division would comprise the district ward of Fordham Villages and the remainder of Soham South district ward. We acknowledge that the County Council reported that local parties opposed dividing Soham, but we did not hear directly from them at Stage One, and we would welcome comments on this at Stage Three.

92 Under our draft recommendations the district of East Cambridgeshire will have 78% coterminosity between district ward and county division boundaries. Our proposed Burwell, Ely South West, Soham North, Sutton and Littleport divisions would initially contain 2%, 14%, 18%, 6% and 14% fewer electors than the county average respectively (9%, 7%, 17% and 12% fewer and 8% more by 2007). Our proposed Ely North East, Haddenham, Woodditton and Fordham divisions would initially contain 8%, 13%, 20% and 7% more electors than the county average respectively (13%, 5% and 11% more and 1% fewer by 2007). Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Fenland district

93 Under the current arrangements, the district of Fenland is represented by nine county councillors serving nine divisions. March West, Whittlesey, Wisbech North, Elm and Chatteris divisions are over-represented with 6%, 9%, 6%, 9% and 4% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (8%, 5% and 5% fewer, 4% more and equal to the county average by 2007). Benwick & Doddington, Leverington, March East and Wisbech South divisions are under-represented with 2%, 11%, 16% and 23% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (8%, 12%, 20% and 18% by 2007).

94 At Stage One we received four submissions in relation to the district of Fenland, including district-wide proposals from the County Council, the County Labour Party and the

North East Labour Party. The County Council's scheme was based on an increase in councillors from nine to 11 to which it would be entitled under a council size of 69.

95 The County Council proposed 11 single-member divisions. In the north of the district the County Council proposed three coterminous divisions, a Roman Bank & Peckover division comprising the district wards of Peckover and Roman Bank, a Wisbech North division comprising the district wards of Clarkson, Kirkgate and Waterlees and a Wisbech South division comprising the district wards of Hill, Medworth and Staithe. It also proposed a coterminous Waldersey division comprising the district wards of Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary and Elm & Christchurch.

96 The County Council proposed three coterminous divisions in the March area of the district whereby the three proposed divisions of March East, March North and March West would be coterminous with the district wards of the same names. In the south of the district it proposed a coterminous Chatteris division comprising the district wards of Birch, Slade Lode, The Mills and Wenneye, and a Forty Foot division comprising the district wards of Doddington, Manea and Wimblington and Benwick parish of Benwick, Coates & Eastrea district ward.

97 In the west of the district the County Council proposed a Whittlesey North division comprising the district wards of Bassenhally, Delph, Kingsmoor and St Andrews, and a Whittlesey South division comprising the district wards of Lattersey, St Marys and Whittlesey South parish ward of Benwick, Coates & Eastrea district ward.

98 Under the County Council's proposals 82% coterminosity would be secured in the district. The proposed Forty Foot, March East, March North, March West and Whittlesey North divisions would initially contain 20%, 14%, 22%, 18% and 4% fewer electors than the county average respectively (12%, 11%, 20% and 21% fewer and 15% more by 2007). The proposed Chatteris, Roman Bank & Peckover, Waldersey, Wisbech North, Wisbech South and Whittlesey South divisions would initially contain 12%, 3%, 8%, 11%, 15% and 3% more electors than the county average respectively (17%, 3%, 12%, 12% and 11% more and 2% fewer by 2007).

99 Both the County Labour Party and the North East Labour Party schemes were based on the number of councillors representing Fenland remaining at nine to which it would be entitled under a council size of 59. The North East Labour Party proposed nine single-member divisions. The County Labour Party supported seven of these but made alternative proposals for two divisions in the Whittlesey area. However, as discussed previously we are proposing an increase in council size from 59 to 69 and it has therefore been difficult to utilise any of the Labour Party's proposed divisions because divisions in the Labour Party's schemes were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members. Using the councillor:elector ratio from a council size of 69 results in higher levels of electoral inequality in the Labour Party's proposed divisions and thus makes it very difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a district-wide scheme based on a different council size.

100 Chatteris Town Council contended that the forecast figures for Chatteris town were too low. As discussed earlier, we asked the County Council to respond to this query and, having received its response we are satisfied with the figures that they have provided for Chatteris town. Chatteris Town Council also raised objections to the County Council's proposed Chatteris division, but these objections referred to proposals in the County Council's consultation paper, not their final submission.

101 We have carefully considered all the representations we received at Stage One. We are proposing to adopt the County Council's scheme in the six divisions of Roman Bank & Peckover, Wisbech North, Wisbech South, Whittlesey North and Whittlesey South as we consider these to provide a good balance between coterminosity and electoral equality. We

are also proposing to adopt the County Council's proposed March North division. We acknowledge the high level of electoral inequality (-20%) in this division but due to the size and distribution of the electorate in March and the surrounding district wards we did not consider that we could improve on this without causing knock-on effects across the rest of the district. We are, however, proposing our own amendments to the remaining five divisions. The County Council's proposals emphasised coterminosity as a priority. Whilst obtaining an acceptable level of coterminosity is important, it is also necessary for us to ensure that our recommendations provide a good level of electoral equality and our amendments in the district of Fenland are made with this intention.

102 We do not consider that the argumentation in any of the representations was strong enough to justify so many divisions in the County Council's scheme with electoral imbalances of over 10%. Therefore our amendments provide what we consider to be a better balance between coterminosity and electoral equality. We are proposing a non-coterminous Waldersey division comprising the district ward of Parson Drove & Wisbech St Mary and Elm parish of Elm & Christchurch district ward. In order to improve on the high levels of electoral variance proposed by the County Council in March and the south of the district we are proposing a non-coterminous March East division comprising the district ward of March East and Christchurch parish of Elm & Christchurch district ward, and a non-coterminous March West division comprising the district ward of March West and Benwick parish ward of Benwick, Coates & Eastrea ward. In the south of the district we propose amending the County Council's proposed Forty Foot division by transferring Benwick parish into an amended March West division and including Slade Lode district ward. Our proposed Chatteris division would be the same as the County Council's proposal with the exception of Slade Lode ward. We consider that these amendments are necessary in order to provide a better balance between electoral equality and coterminosity but we would welcome comments at Stage Three.

103 Under our draft recommendations the district of Fenland will have 64% coterminosity between district ward and county division boundaries. Chatteris, March East, March North, March West, Forty Foot, Waldersey and Whittlesey North divisions would initially contain 14%, 5%, 22%, 7%, 4%, 2% and 4% fewer electors than the county average respectively (10%, 2%, 20%, 8% fewer and 2%, 3% and 15% more by 2007). Roman Bank & Peckover, Wisbech North, Wisbech South and Whittlesey South divisions would initially contain 3%, 11%, 15% and 3% more electors than the county average respectively (3%, 12% and 11% more and 2% fewer by 2007). Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Huntingdonshire district

104 Under the current arrangements, the district of Huntingdonshire is represented by 15 county councillors serving 15 divisions. Brampton, Buckden, Eynesbury, Huntingdon North, Priory Park, St Ives South and West Hunts divisions are over-represented with 4%, 7%, 13%, 3%, 9%, 3% and 17% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (11% and 26% more and 20%, 8%, 14%, 5% and 21% fewer by 2007). Eaton, Houghton & Wyton, Huntingdon & Godmanchester, Norman Cross, Ramsey, Somersham and St Ives North & Warboys divisions are under represented with 32%, 7%, 64%, 18%, 22%, 16% and 21% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (22%, 2%, 58%, 21%, 17%, 7% and 12% by 2007). Sawtry division is under-represented with 3% more electors per county councillor than the county average (4% fewer by 2007).

105 At Stage One we received 13 submissions, including district-wide schemes from the County Council, Huntingdonshire District Council, the County Labour Party, Hollywell-cum-Needlingworth Parish Council, Councillor Eddy, Councillor Clarke and Councillors Souter and Taylor. The County Council proposed two schemes for this district based on an increase in councillors from 15 to 18 to which it would be entitled under a council size of 68.

106 The County Council proposed a preferred option of 18 single-member divisions and an alternative option with 10 single-member and four two-member divisions. In its preferred option, seven divisions would have electoral variances of over 10% and two over 20% by 2007 under a council size of 69. In the County Council's alternative option, six divisions would have electoral variance of over 10% and two over 20% by 2007 under a council size of 69. We have looked at the divisions proposed by the County Council but, as discussed previously, we are proposing an increase in council size from 59 to 69. It has therefore been difficult to utilise many of the County Council's proposed divisions from either scheme because divisions in the County Council's schemes were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members. Using the councillor:elector ratio from a council size of 69 results in higher levels of electoral inequality in the County Council's proposed divisions and thus makes it difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a district-wide scheme based on a different council size.

107 Huntingdonshire District Council proposed an increase in councillors from 15 to 19 to which the district would be entitled under a council size of 69. It proposed seven single-member and six two-member divisions for the district of Huntingdonshire. It did not, however, provide any names for its proposed divisions. In the north of the district it proposed a coterminous two-member division (1) comprising the district wards of Elton & Folksworth, Stilton and Yaxley & Farcet and a coterminous single-member division (2) comprising the district ward of Ramsey only. In the east of the district it proposed a coterminous single-member division (4) comprising the district wards of Upwood & The Raveleys and Warboys & Bury. It also proposed a single-member division (8) comprising the district wards of Somersham and the parishes of Bluntisham and Earith from Earith district ward, and a two-member division (7) comprising the district wards of St Ives East, St Ives South, St Ives West and Hollywell-cum-Needingworth parish of Earith district ward. It proposed a single-member division (10) comprising the district wards of Fenstanton and The Hemingfords, and a two-member division (6) comprising the district wards of Godmanchester and Huntingdon East.

108 In the south of the district the District Council proposed a single-member division (11) comprising the district wards of Buckden and Gransden & The Offords, a two-member division (12) comprising the district wards of Little Paxton, St Neots Priory Park and St Neots Eaton Ford and a two-member division (13) comprising the district wards of St Neots Eaton Socon and St Neots Eynesbury. Finally, in the west of the district it proposed a single-member division (9) comprising the district wards of Brampton and Kimbolton & Staughton, a two-member division (5) comprising the district wards of Alconbury & The Stukeleys, Huntingdon North and Huntingdon West and a division (3) comprising the district wards of Ellington and Sawtry.

109 The District Council considered that their proposed divisions 'represent communities of interest', although it did not provide any detailed argumentation for its divisions. The District Council's proposals for divisions 1, 2, 3 and 10 are the same as those proposed in the County Council's alternative option.

110 Under the District Council's proposals 85% coterminosity would be secured within the district. The proposed divisions 1, 2, 5, 6, 13 and 11 would initially contain 6%, 2%, 7%, 10%, 12% and 4% fewer electors than the county average respectively (6%, 5%, 7%, 13%, and 9% fewer and 16% more by 2007). The proposed divisions 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 10 would initially contain 16%, 12%, 14%, 15%, 13% and 11% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (9%, 6%, 8%, 7%, 5% and 7% more by 2007). The proposed division 12 would initially have equal to the county average and 6% fewer by 2007.

111 The County Labour Party's scheme was based on the number of councillors representing Huntingdonshire increasing by one from 15 to 16, to which it would be entitled under a council size of 59. It proposed 16 single-member divisions. The North West Labour

Party also considered that Huntingdonshire should be represented by 16 councillors. However, as discussed previously, we are proposing an increase in council size from 59 to 69 and it has therefore been difficult to utilise any of the County Labour Party's or the North West Labour Party's proposed divisions because divisions in the County Labour Party's schemes were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members. Using the councillor:elector ratio from a council size of 69 results in higher levels of electoral inequality in the Labour Party's proposed divisions and thus makes it very difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a district-wide scheme based on a different council size.

112 Huntingdon Town Council considered that the County Council's proposals for Huntingdon town did 'not support community identity nor existing boundaries'. It gave support to the proposals submitted by the District Council. Farcet Parish Council considered that Farcet parish should not be separated from the rest of its district ward, as in the County Council's preferred proposal for the district [removing Yaxley parish]. It also considered that Huntingdonshire should be represented by 16 councillors. Warboys Parish Council supported the County Council's proposal that it to be part of a coterminous division with Somersham and Upwood & The Raveleys district wards. Sawtry Parish Council were of the 'opinion that the local electoral division boundaries remain based from Sawtry'.

113 Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council made two submissions. The first submission objected to the District Council's proposals that it be included in a division with St Ives stating that the 'village status of Hollywell-cum-Needingworth would be jeopardised if it was attached to a ward with part of St Ives'. In its second submission, Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council gave support for, and attached a copy of, Councillor Eddy's submission (detailed below).

114 Councillor Eddy, Councillor Clarke and Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council submitted identical proposals for the district of Huntingdonshire. The scheme was based on an increase in council size from 15 to 19 councillors for the district to which it would be entitled under a council size of 69. They proposed 13 divisions, six two-member and seven single-member divisions. The proposal was also identical to Huntingdonshire District Council's in seven of the 13 divisions (the proposed divisions 1, 2, 3, 9, 11, 12 and 13) but differed in the east of the district. They did, however, propose names for these divisions; division (1) would be named Yaxley, division (2) would be named Ramsey, division (3) would be named Sawtry, division (9) would be named Brampton, Kimbolton & Staughton, division (11) would be named Buckden, Gransden & The Offords, division (12) would be named St Neots Eaton Ford & Priory Park and division (13) would be named St Neots Eynesbury & Eaton Socon.

115 Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council, Councillor Eddy and Councillor Clarke proposed an Alconbury, The Stukeleys & Upwood division comprising the district wards of Alconbury & The Stukeleys and Upwood & The Raveleys, a two-member St Ives division comprising the district wards of St Ives East, St Ives South and St Ives West and a two-member Somersham & Warboys division comprising the district wards of Earith, Somersham and Warboys & Bury. They also proposed a two-member Huntingdon North, West & Godmanchester division comprising the district wards of Godmanchester, Huntingdon North, Huntingdon West and that part of Huntingdon East ward to the south west of the High Street. They also proposed a Huntingdon East division comprising the remainder of Huntingdon East district ward, and The Hemingfords & Fenstanton division comprising the district wards of Fenstanton and The Hemingfords.

116 Under Councillor Eddy, Councillor Clarke and Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council's proposals 85% coterminosity would be secured in the district. The proposed Alconbury, The Stukeleys & Upwood, St Neots Eynesbury & Eaton Socon, Yaxley and Buckden, Gransden & The Offords divisions would initially contain 21%, 11%, 5% and 2% fewer electors than the county average respectively (8%, 9% and 6% fewer and 16% more

by 2007). The proposed Brampton, Kimbolton & Staughton, Huntingdon North, West & Godmanchester, Somersham & Warboys, The Hemingfords & Fenstanton, Sawtry, St Neots Eaton Ford & Priory Park and Huntingdon East divisions would initially contain 15%, 3%, 12%, 12%, 18%, 1% and 9% more electors than the county average respectively (5%, 2%, 3%, 7%, 9% more and 6% and 1% fewer by 2007). The proposed St Ives and Ramsey divisions would both initially be equal to the county average and contain 7% and 5% fewer electors respectively by 2007.

117 Councillors Souter and Taylor's proposal was based on 19 single-member divisions for the district to which it would be entitled under a council size of 69. They contended that single-member divisions 'bring[s] the elected member closer to the people it represents [and] prevents divisions from becoming too unwieldy'. Their proposal was identical to the District Council's in four divisions (divisions 2, 4, 8 and 10). They proposed that division (2) be named Ramsey, division (4) be named Warboys & Upwood, division (8) be named Somersham and division (10) be named Hemingfords.

118 In the north of the district they proposed a Yaxley division comprising Yaxley parish of Yaxley & Farcet district ward and a Norman Cross division comprising the district wards of Elton & Folksworth and Stilton and Farcet parish of Yaxley and Farcet district ward. In the southeast of the district they proposed a St Ives South division comprising the district ward of St Ives South and Hollywell-cum-Needingworth parish of Earith district ward, a St Ives North division comprising the district wards of St Ives East and St Ives West and a Godmanchester division comprising the district ward of Godmanchester and Offord Cluny and Offord Darcy parishes of Gransden & The Offords district ward.

119 In the south of the district they proposed a Gransden & Paxton division comprising the district ward of Little Paxton and the remainder of Gransden & The Offords district ward, a St Neots Eynesbury division coterminous with the district ward of the same name, a St Neots Eatons division comprising the district ward of St Neots Eaton Socon and part of St Neots Eaton Ford, that part to the south of Mill Hill Road, and a St Neots North division comprising the district ward of St Neots Priory Park and the remainder of St Neots Eaton Ford district ward.

120 In the west of the district they proposed a West Huntingdonshire division comprising the district wards of Ellington and Kimbolton & Staughton and Grafham and Perry parishes of Brampton district ward, a Brampton & Buckden division comprising the district ward of Buckden and the remainder of Brampton district ward and a Sawtry division comprising the district ward of Sawtry and Alconbury and Alconbury Weston parishes of Alconbury & The Stukeleys district ward. In the centre of the district they proposed a Huntingdon North division comprising the district ward of Huntingdon North and the remainder of Alconbury & The Stukeleys district ward, a Huntingdon West division comprising the district ward of Huntingdon West and part of Huntingdon East district ward, that part to the southwest of Primrose Lane and Priory Lane, and a Huntingdon East division comprising the remainder of Huntingdon East district ward.

121 Under Councillors Souter and Taylor's proposal 26% coterminosity would be secured within the district. The proposed Brampton & Buckden, Godmanchester, Huntingdon North, Huntingdon East, Huntingdon West, West Huntingdonshire, Yaxley and Gransden & Paxton divisions would initially contain 3%, 12%, 29%, 8%, 17%, 11%, 7% and 23% fewer electors than the county average respectively (9%, 10%, 11%, 14%, 16%, 14% fewer and 1% and 3% more by 2007). St Ives North, St Ives South, St Neots Eynesbury, St Neots North, St Neots Eatons and Sawtry divisions would initially contain 17%, 8%, 5%, 15%, 10% and 7% more electors than the county average respectively (11%, 4%, 20%, 8%, 3% and 1% by 2007).

122 We have carefully considered all the representations we received at Stage One. We propose to adopt the District Council's proposal in full for Huntingdonshire, as we consider it

facilitates the best balance between electoral equality and coterminosity across the district. We have not been persuaded to adopt Councillors Souter and Taylor's proposals due to the very low level of coterminosity resulting from their scheme. We note that the scheme proposed by Councillor Eddy, Councillor Clarke and Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council provided a slightly better level of electoral equality than the District Council's proposals. However, the proposals for Huntingdon North, West & Godmanchester and Huntingdon East divisions would involve the creation of a parish ward with 20 electors in it and we do not consider that a parish ward of this size provides for convenient and effective local government. We note the objections of Hollywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council to the splitting of Hollywell-cum-Needingworth parish from Earith district ward, and we considered combining Godmanchester and the Huntingdon district wards to create a three-member division, which would facilitate a scheme in the rest of the district allowing Hollywell-cum-Needingworth parish to be in a division with the rest of Earith district ward. However, we would require very strong evidence and argumentation to propose a three-member division and we do not consider that we have sufficient argumentation and evidence at this stage to propose such a division. We would, however, welcome comments on this at Stage Three.

123 We note that the District Council did not propose division names for Huntingdonshire and have therefore proposed names that we consider to be suitable. Under our proposals division (1) would be named Elton & Stilton, division (2) would be named Ramsey, division (3) would be named Sawtry & Ellington, division (4) would be named Upwood & The Raveleys & Warboys & Bury, division (5) would be named Huntingdon, division (6) would be named Godmanchester, division (7) would be named St Ives, division (8) would be named Somersham & Earith, division (9) would be named Kimbolton, Staughton & Brampton, division (10) would be named The Hemingfords & Fenstanton, division (11) would be named Gransden & The Offords, division (12) would be named Little Paxton & St Neots North and division (13) would be named St Neots Eaton Socon. We would, however, welcome comments on these names at Stage Three.

124 Under our draft recommendations the district of Huntingdonshire will have 85% coterminosity between district ward and county division boundaries. The electoral variances under our draft recommendations would be as detailed above in the District Council's proposals. Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

South Cambridgeshire district

125 Under the current arrangements, the district of South Cambridgeshire is represented by 14 county councillors serving 14 divisions. Bassingbourn, Linton, Sawston, Shelford, Waterbeach and Histon divisions are over-represented with 11%, 2%, 4%, 19%, 3% and 12% fewer electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (16%, 9%, 11%, 25% and 9% fewer and 2% more by 2007). Cottenham, Gamlingay, Willingham and Harston divisions are under-represented with 2%, 19%, 15% and 1% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (7%, 76% and 8% more and 4% fewer by 2007). Comberton, Fulbourn, Girton and Melbourn divisions are under-represented with 3%, 4%, 2%, 3% more electors per county councillor than the county average respectively (2%, 4%, 3% and 4% fewer by 2007).

126 At Stage One we received five submissions including district-wide proposals from the County Council and the Labour Party. The County Council's scheme was based on the number of councillors representing South Cambridgeshire increasing from 14 to 16 to which it would be entitled under a council size of 69. It proposed 16 single-member divisions.

127 In the north of the district the County Council proposed a Willingham division comprising the district wards of Longstanton and Willingham & Over, a Cottenham division comprising the district ward of Cottenham and a Waterbeach division comprising the district wards of Milton and Waterbeach. It also proposed a Histon & Impington division comprising

the district ward of Histon & Impington, a Bar Hill division comprising the district wards of Bar Hill and Girton, and a Papworth & Swavesey division comprising the district wards of Papworth & Elsworth and Swavesey.

128 In the east of the district the County Council proposed a Fulbourn division comprising the district wards of Fulbourn, Teversham and The Wilbrahams and a Linton division comprising the district wards of Balsham and Linton. In the south of the district it proposed a Duxford division comprising the district wards of Duxford, The Abingtons and Whittlesford, a Sawston division comprising the district ward of Sawston, a Shelford division comprising the district wards of Harston & Hauxton and The Shelfords & Stapleford, and a Melbourn division comprising the district wards of Fowlmere & Foxton and Melbourn. It also proposed a Bassingbourn division comprising the district wards of Bassingbourn, Meldreth and The Mordens.

129 In the west of the district the County Council proposed a Gamlingay division comprising the district wards of Gamlingay, Haslingfield & The Eversdens and Orwell & Barrington, a Bourn division comprising the district ward of Bourn and a Hardwick division comprising the district wards of Barton, Caldecote, Comberton and Hardwick.

130 Under the County Council's proposals 100% coterminosity would be secured within the district. Its proposed Cottenham, Duxford, Melbourn, Papworth & Swavesey, Sawston and Bourn divisions would initially contain 5%, 10%, 3%, 18%, 11% and 56% fewer electors than the county average respectively (11%, 14%, 10%, 14% and 18% fewer and 7% more by 2007). Its proposed Bar Hill, Bassingbourn, Fulbourn, Gamlingay, Hardwick, Histon & Impington, Linton, Shelford, Waterbeach and Willingham divisions would initially contain 12%, 16%, 22%, 23%, 13%, 3%, 15%, 21%, 14% and 2%, more electors than the county average respectively (6%, 10%, 13%, 14%, 8%, 19%, 6%, 12%, 6% and 10% more by 2007).

131 The County Labour Party's scheme was based on the number of councillors representing South Cambridgeshire remaining at 14 to which it would be entitled under a council size of 59. It proposed 14 single-member divisions. However, as discussed previously, we are proposing an increase in council size from 59 to 69 and it has therefore been difficult to utilise any of the County Labour Party's proposed divisions because divisions in the County Labour Party's scheme were of different sizes to those required under a council size of 69 members. Using the councillor:elector ratio from a council size of 69 results in higher levels of electoral inequality in the County Labour Party's scheme and thus makes it very difficult to incorporate individual divisions from their scheme into a district-wide scheme based on a different council size.

132 Rampton Parish Council requested that it remain in a division with Cottenham parish as under the current arrangements. Orwell Parish Council requested that its links with Bassingbourn should be maintained in order to keep links between local primary schools and the village college at Bassingbourn parish. Longstanton Parish Council wished to ensure that division boundaries reflected the increase in population in the Longstanton area.

133 We have carefully considered all the submissions we received at Stage One. We are proposing to adopt the County Council's proposals in the five divisions of Bar Hill, Gamlingay, Hardwick, Linton and Willingham, because we consider that these divisions provide a good balance between electoral equality and coterminosity. However, we are proposing our own divisions in the remainder of the district as we consider that the County Council's proposals provided a high level of electoral inequality. We are proposing a further seven single-member divisions and two two-member divisions. We note that our proposals reduce coterminosity in the district, but we consider that this is necessary in order to improve electoral equality and provide a better balance between the two.

134 In the north of the district we are proposing a coterminous two-member Cottenham division comprising the district wards of Cottenham and Histon & Impington, and in the south of the district we are proposing a coterminous two-member Sawston division comprising the district wards of Harston & Hauxton, Sawston and The Shelfords & Stapleford. Although these were not locally proposed we are proposing them as they provide both good electoral equality and are coterminous. We note that some parties do not favour two-member divisions, however, we consider that given the relatively urban nature of these divisions they are not unworkably large. In the west of the district we are proposing a single-member Waterbeach division comprising the district wards of Milton including Milton (detached) and Waterbeach, and Horningsea parish of The Wilbrahams district ward. We are also proposing a single-member Fulbourn division comprising the district wards of Fulbourn, Teversham and the remainder of The Wilbrahams district ward in order to improve electoral equality.

135 In the south of the district we are proposing a Duxford division comprising the district wards of Duxford, The Abingtons and Whittlesford and Fowlmere parish of Fowlmere & Foxton district ward and a Melbourn division comprising the district wards of Melbourn, Meldreth and Foxton parish of Fowlmere & Foxton district ward. We are also proposing a coterminous Bassingbourn division comprising the district wards of Bassingbourn and The Mordens. In the west of the district we are proposing a Bourn division comprising the parishes of Bourn and Caxton from Bourn district ward, and a Papworth & Swavesey division comprising the district wards of Papworth & Elsworth and Swavesey and the remainder of Bourn district ward.

136 We note that our proposed Waterbeach division would constitute a detached division. This is due to an area of Milton district ward being detached (Milton detached) and this was brought to our attention during the recent electoral arrangements review of South Cambridgeshire. During this review it was suggested that Milton detached be combined in a ward with The Wilbrahams. However, this proposal was rejected as it can be argued that a detachment would still occur as the two areas are geographically separated by the River Cam, which forms a significant barrier. The anomaly in this area would be best addressed by an amendment to the external boundary between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, as the only access into the Milton Detached area is from Cambridge City. However, this option is outside the remit of this review. Therefore, although it results in a detached division, we consider that the identities and interests of the local community would be better reflected if the two parts of Milton parish are retained within the same division.

137 Under our draft recommendations the district of South Cambridgeshire would have 57% coterminosity between district ward and county division boundaries. Our proposed Bassingbourn, Papworth & Swavesey, Cottenham and Bourn divisions would initially contain 13%, 11%, 1% and 63% fewer electors than the county average respectively (19% and 7% fewer, 4% more and equal to the county average by 2007). Our proposed Fulbourn, Waterbeach, Melbourn, Duxford and Sawston divisions would initially contain 18%, 18%, 12%, 5% and 5% more electors than the county average respectively (9%, 10%, 5% and 1% more and 3% fewer by 2007). Our draft proposals are illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Conclusions

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

- there should be an increase in council size from 59 to 69; and
- the boundaries of all divisions will be subject to change as the divisions are based on district wards which have themselves changed as a result of the district reviews.

139 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the County Council's and Huntingdonshire District Council's proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas to improve electoral equality:

- in East Cambridgeshire we propose adopting the majority of the County Council's proposals. However, we are proposing two amendments in Soham town and Fordham to improve electoral equality;
- in Fenland we propose broadly adopting the County Council's proposals with amendments to five divisions to facilitate better electoral equality; and
- in South Cambridgeshire we propose adopting five of the County Council's proposed divisions but to improve electoral equality we are proposing nine of our own divisions, including the two-member divisions of Cottenham and Sawston.

140 Table 5 shows how our draft recommendations will affect electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements (based on 2002 electorate figures) and the forecast electorates for the year 2007.

Table 5: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	2002 Electorate		2007 Forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	59	69	59	69
Number of divisions	59	61	59	61
Average number of electors per councillor	7,314	6,254	7,765	6,639
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10% from the average	29	29	31	12
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	12	3	15	0
Level of coterminosity	68%*	77%	68%*	77%

* level of coterminosity following the completion of the LGBC Review in 1983

141 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Cambridgeshire County Council would result in the number of divisions with an electoral variance of more than 10% remaining at 29. However, by 2007 only 12 divisions are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10%, with no division having a variance of over 20%.

Draft recommendation

Cambridgeshire County Council should comprise 69 councillors serving 61 divisions, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and on the large map inside the back cover.

5 What happens next?

142 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Cambridgeshire County Council contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 26 April 2004. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses (including names and addresses of respondents unless specified otherwise) may be inspected at our offices and those of the County Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

143 Express your views by writing directly to us:

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

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

Appendix A

Code of practice on written consultation

The Cabinet Office's November 2000 *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation/Consultation/Code.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 A1: The 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.