

Final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council

Electoral review

September 2011

Translations and other formats

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Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body that conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. The broad purpose of an electoral review is to decide on the appropriate electoral arrangements – the number of councillors, the names, number and boundaries of wards or divisions – for a specific local authority. We are conducting an electoral review of Hartlepool Borough Council to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the authority.

The review aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same. The Commission commenced the review in 2010.

This review was conducted as follows:

Stage	Stage starts	Description
Council Size	20 July 2010	Submission of proposals for council size to the LGBCE
One	28 September 2010	Submission of proposals of warding arrangements to the LGBCE
Two	21 December 2010	LGBCE's analysis and deliberation
Three	29 March 2011	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	20 June 2011	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

Draft recommendations

The Commission proposed a council size of 33 members, comprising a pattern of 11 three-member wards. Having considered the evidence, we decided to adopt a council size of 33 members as part of our draft recommendations. We consider that a council size of 33 members will ensure the council can discharge its roles and responsibilities effectively and will provide for a ward pattern that best reflects community identities and interests in Hartlepool.

Our draft recommendations were broadly based on Hartlepool Borough Council's proposals, with some significant modifications where evidence of community identity had been provided by local residents. The draft recommendations provided good levels of electoral equality.

Submissions received

The Commission received 64 representations in response to the draft recommendations. The draft recommendations were well received by Hartlepool Borough Council, with many suggestions of alternative ward names. The Commission also received localised evidence of community identity from parish councils and local residents in the borough. Opposition to the draft recommendations was focused around the Headland and the harbour area, and the rural parishes. All submissions can be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Analysis and final recommendations

Electorate figures

Hartlepool Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for December 2016, a date five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2011. These forecasts projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 2.8% over this period. The Council provided a robust methodology to support this increase and we are content to accept the Council's electorate forecasts as the basis of our final recommendations.

General analysis

Our draft recommendations were broadly based on the proposals of the Council, with significant amendments based on evidence of community identity. We sought to provide good electoral equality and a clear warding pattern using man-made and natural boundaries.

In our final recommendations we have sought to strike a balance between achieving good levels of electoral equality and reflecting community identity and interests. We have carefully considered all the representations made to us. In particular, we acknowledge that local people have expressed concerns over the ward names, and we have therefore considered names which best represent communities.

Our final recommendations for Hartlepool Borough are that the Council should have 33 members, representing 11 three-member wards. None of these wards would have an electoral variance greater than 10% by 2016.

What happens next?

We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council. The changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Parliament can either accept or reject our recommendations. If accepted, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the next elections for Hartlepool Borough Council, in 2012.

We are grateful to all those organisations and individuals who have contributed to the review through expressing their views and advice. The full report is available to download at www.lgbce.org.uk

1 Introduction

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body that conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review Hartlepool Borough Council's electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

2 The submissions received during Stage One of this review informed our *Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council*, which were published on 29 March 2011.

What is an electoral review?

3 The main aim of an electoral review is to try to ensure 'electoral equality', which means that all councillors in a single authority represent approximately the same number of electors. Our objective is to make recommendations that will improve electoral equality, while also trying to reflect communities in the area and provide for effective and convenient local government.

4 Our three main considerations – equalising the number of electors each councillor represents; reflecting community identity; and providing for effective and convenient local government – are set out in legislation¹ and our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why are we conducting a review in Hartlepool?

5 We have decided to conduct this review because, based on the December 2009 electorate figures, 35% of wards in the borough have electoral variances greater than 10% from the average. Most notably, Dyke House ward has 22% fewer electors than the average. This situation is forecast to worsen following significant development planned over the next five years.

How will the recommendations affect you?

6 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward and, in some instances, which parish or town council wards you vote in. Your ward name may change, as may the names of parish or town council wards in the area. If you live in a parish, the name or boundaries of that parish will not change.

¹ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

7 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL
Sir Tony Redmond
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Alan Cogbill
Director of Reviews: Archie Gall

2 Analysis and final recommendations

8 We have now finalised our recommendations for the electoral arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council.

9 As described earlier, our prime aim when recommending new electoral arrangements for Hartlepool is to achieve a level of electoral fairness – that is, each elector’s vote being worth the same as another’s. In doing so we must have regard to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009,² with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- provide for equality of representation
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities, in particular:
 - the desirability of arriving at boundaries that are easily identifiable
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries so as not to break any local ties

10 Legislation also states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors in an area, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward at the end of the review.

11 The achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum. In all our electoral reviews, we therefore recommend strongly that in formulating proposals for us to consider, local authorities and other interested parties should also try to keep variances to a minimum, making adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. We aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral fairness over a five-year period.

12 Our recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Hartlepool Borough Council or the external boundaries or names of parish or town councils, or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that the recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. The proposals do not take account of parliamentary constituency boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

13 Under the 2009 Act, where a council elects by thirds or halves (as opposed to the whole council being elected every four years), there is a presumption that the authority should have a uniform pattern of three-member and two-member wards respectively. We will only move away from this presumption where we receive compelling evidence to do so and where it can be demonstrated that an alternative warding pattern will better reflect our statutory criteria. Our starting point for this review was that Hartlepool should have a uniform pattern of three-member wards given its current electoral cycle.

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Submissions received

14 Prior to and during the initial stage of the review, we visited Hartlepool Borough Council and met with the Mayor, members, officers and parish and town councils. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 68 submissions during Stage One, all of which may be inspected at both our offices and those of the Council. All representations received can also be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

15 We take the evidence received during consultation very seriously and the submissions received were carefully considered before we formulated our final recommendations. Officers from the Commission have also been assisted by officers at Hartlepool Borough Council who have provided relevant information throughout the review.

Electorate figures

16 As part of this review, Hartlepool Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2016, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 2.8% over the period from 2010 to 2016.

17 The increase in electorate will be concentrated mainly around the harbour (the existing Stranton ward) and in the north-west (the existing Hart ward). Work on both of these developments has already commenced, with a large number of houses on the harbour already built. There are also core strategy sites in Claxton parish (the existing Elwick ward). The Council provided comprehensive documentation displaying the number, type and precise location of developments with planning permission. The core strategy sites do not have planning permission but, after discussions with the Council and following a visit to Hartlepool, we are satisfied that these developments are likely to proceed. We are therefore content to accept the Council's forecasts as the basis of our final recommendations.

Council size

18 Hartlepool Borough Council currently has 47 councillors elected from 17 wards. During our initial consultation, the Commission received 12 comments in relation to council size. The Council proposed the current size of 47 members be retained, while the Mayor submitted a proposal for a reduction to 32 councillors.

19 We considered the Mayor's proposals provided good evidence for a reduction in council size. However, as stated above, as the 2009 Act provides that for authorities that elect by thirds there should be a presumption in favour of three-member wards. We therefore increased the Mayor's proposed council size from 32 to 33 and decided to adopt the proposed council size of 33 members as the basis of our draft recommendations.

20 During Stage Three, five respondents suggested a council size of 32, arguing that this would facilitate a two-member ward containing the rural villages. However, such a two-member ward would have a variance of 23% fewer electors than the average by 2016, and little evidence was provided to support this level of electoral

inequality. We therefore confirm as final our recommendation to reduce the existing council size of 47 members to 33, and this is the basis of our final recommendations for warding arrangements within the borough of Hartlepool.

Electoral fairness

21 As discussed in the introduction to this report, the prime aim of an electoral review is to achieve electoral fairness within a local authority.

22 Electoral fairness, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. It is expected that our recommendations should provide for electoral fairness whilst ensuring that we reflect communities in the area, and provide for effective and convenient local government.

23 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The district average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the district (69,416 in 2010 and 71,371 by 2016) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 33 under our recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our final recommendations is 2,104 in 2010 and 2,163 by 2016.

24 Under the final recommendations, all of our proposed 11 wards will have electoral variances of less than 10% from the average for the authority by 2016. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness under our final recommendations for Hartlepool.

General analysis

25 The draft recommendations for Hartlepool were broadly based on the proposals of Hartlepool Borough Council ('the Council'). In the centre of the urban area, we deviated from the Council's proposals on the basis of strong community evidence provided by local residents' associations and community groups. In the north of Hartlepool, we adopted a proposal from the Hartlepool Labour Party, which was very similar to that proposed by the Council. In the south of Hartlepool, we made amendments to reflect transport links and community connections.

26 During Stage Three, 64 representations were received. The Council supported the draft recommendations, with suggestions to change the names of some of the wards. No submissions were received from any political groups on the council, and no other borough-wide submissions were received. All the submissions received can be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

27 The majority of submissions focused on one of four areas: Middleton ward; South ward; Heritage ward; and the rural area. Respondents in our proposed Middleton and South wards objected to the new ward names, suggesting a clear alternative in both cases.

28 Submissions received regarding Heritage ward broadly argued that the peninsula, which is called the Headland, has few community connections or links with the Harbour area. The two areas are separated by water, and the peninsula appears

to have little in common with the rest of Hartlepool. Some submissions suggested adopting the Mayor's Stage One proposal to link the Headland with the Brus area, which provided for very poor electoral equality, but many submissions merely voiced opposition. Submissions were also received from the rural area, in particular regarding the draft recommendation not to include the village of Hart with the rest of the rural area. These submissions broadly reiterated the evidence provided at Stage One. A number of submissions also supported the Mayor's Stage One proposal for a two-member rural ward with a variance of 23% fewer electors than the average for the borough by 2016.

29 A number of submissions also suggested a uniform pattern of two-member wards, with one respondent under the mistaken belief that this would automatically lead to elections by halves and therefore save the council money. Respondents also expressed general opposition to three-member wards. While we carefully consider suggestions put forward for individual areas, we do not consider arguments made from principle on the relative merits of single-, two- or three-member wards. This is because the 2009 Act requires us to have a presumption in favour of three-member wards in authorities which elect by thirds.

30 Greatham Parish Council reiterated its request to leave the parish unwarded on account of the difficulty in finding parish councillors to represent the northern section, Greatham Fens. The parish of Greatham contains 1,700 electors, with approximately half the electors in the village of Greatham and the other half in the Fens area, an area of urban overspill in the north of the parish. The draft recommendations proposed four parish councillors in the northern parish ward and three parish councillors in the southern parish ward.

31 Having considered representations received during Stage Three, we consider that the final recommendations provide for strong, easily identifiable boundaries. Our proposals are for a pattern of 11 three-member wards. We consider our proposals ensure good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests.

32 We therefore confirm our draft recommendations as final, with two amendments. Firstly, having considered representations received in relation to Greatham, we propose a minor boundary change to the south of Greatham parish, between West ward and East ward to include a factory which only has road access to Greatham. This does not affect any electors. Secondly, we propose that the following wards are renamed: East ward renamed as Seaton ward; Heritage ward renamed as Headland & Harbour ward; Middleton ward renamed as Burn Valley ward; South ward renamed as Fens & Rossmere ward; Warren Grange ward renamed as Hart ward; West ward renamed as Rural West ward.

Electoral arrangements

33 This section of the report details the warding recommendations for each area of Hartlepool in context of the submissions received. The following areas are considered in turn:

- The villages and the north-west urban area (pages 9–10)
- The eastern area along the coast (pages 10–13)
- The southern and central urban area (pages 13–16)

34 Details of the final recommendations are set out in Table C1 on page 27, and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

The villages and the north-west urban area

35 The western part of Hartlepool consists of rural parishes, connected by small roads. The parish of Hart is the most northerly, while the parish of Greatham is the most southerly. The northern urban area covers the areas of Hart Station and Throston. Under the current arrangements, the area broadly comprises Elwick, Hart and Greatham wards, with parts of Park and Throston wards.

36 Our draft recommendations in this area were for the following three-member wards: West ward containing 7% more electors; Jesmond ward containing 4% fewer electors; and Warren Grange ward containing 4% fewer electors than the average by 2016. The Jesmond and Warren Grange wards were adopted from the Labour Party's proposals, which differed slightly from the Council's proposals. West ward was broadly based upon both the Council's and the Labour Party's proposals, with the inclusion of Greatham parish in the West ward due to lack of road access to the east.

37 During Stage One, we received 45 submissions strongly arguing that the rural villages should remain together in a rural ward and, in particular, that Hart village should not be combined with urban parts of Hartlepool. To include Hart village in West ward would result in an electoral variance of 15% by 2016. As we noted that Hart village has good road connections into the Hart Station and Throston areas of Hartlepool, our draft recommendations placed the parish of Hart in a Warren Grange ward with these two areas.

38 At Stage Three, the submissions received broadly reiterated their requests for all the rural parishes to be in the same ward, preferably without any urban area. However, as during Stage One, we considered that there was insufficient evidence to warrant such a high variance. These submissions are detailed further in the section below.

39 Therefore, in this area we confirm our draft recommendations as final, with changes to the ward names and a minor boundary change to the boundary between East and West wards, which would not affect any electors and which is outlined in paragraph 65. Our final recommendation is for West ward to be renamed Rural West ward, and for Warren Grange ward to be renamed Hart ward. Our draft recommendation for Jesmond ward would not be altered.

The villages

40 Our draft recommendation was for a three-member West ward containing 7% more electors than the average in 2016.

41 During Stage Three, 12 submissions regarding the rural area were received. The submissions were from Elwick Parish Council, Hart Parish Council, Greatham Parish Council, Hart History Group, Councillor Thompson, and seven local residents.

42 These submissions reiterated their requests for all the rural parishes to be in the same ward, and preferably not to be included in any urban area. The majority of

submissions focused on the two-member ward proposed by the Mayor at Stage One, which provided for very poor electoral equality, with an electoral variance of 23% fewer electors than the borough average. Placing the village of Hart into West ward would require the parish to be warded.

43 Although many submissions mentioned that Hart primary school and Elwick primary school shared a headteacher and that the churches shared a vicar, they tended to emphasise differences from the urban area of Hartlepool rather than connections between the villages. The submissions also mentioned a parish magazine which is shared by the rural parishes, as well as community connections.

44 If Hart village were to be included in West ward in addition to the inclusion of Greatham village, the electoral variance would increase to 2% more electors in 2010 and 15% more electors than the average in 2016. We consider that while there is good evidence that Hart has better connections with the rural villages than with Warren Grange, this is not sufficiently persuasive to justify a variance of 15% by 2016. Furthermore, if Hart Village were to be placed in West ward, then Warren Grange ward would have a variance of 11% fewer electors than the average by 2016.

45 The Council suggested that West ward be renamed Park & Villages. Elwick Parish Council opposed the name Park & Villages if Hart village is not included in West ward, saying that this would cause confusion as not all the villages are included. Elwick Parish Council suggested instead the name of Rural West. We consider the name of Rural West to be an appropriate description of the area included in this ward, and therefore adopt it as the name for this ward.

The north-west urban area

46 Our draft recommendations were for a three-member Jesmond ward containing 4% fewer electors and a three-member Warren Grange ward containing 4% fewer electors than the average by 2016.

47 We did not receive any submissions regarding the Jesmond ward or Warren Grange ward during Stage Three, except for those specifically relating to the parish of Hart, which are mentioned in the section above. The Council proposed that Warren Grange ward be named Hart, as it contains Hart village and the area of Hart Station. We have decided to adopt this proposed modification.

48 Table C1 (on page 27) provides details of the electoral variances of the final recommendations for wards in this area of the borough. The final recommendations are shown on Map 1 and Map 2 accompanying this report.

The eastern area along the coast

49 The eastern part of Hartlepool consists of Seaton Carew to the south-east of Hartlepool, the harbour, the peninsula of Headland and the Brus area to the north-east. Under the current arrangements, the area broadly comprises Dyke House, Seaton, Stranton, St Hilda and Brus wards.

50 The draft recommendations proposed the following three-member wards: Heritage ward containing 2% more electors; De Bruce ward containing 9% fewer

electors; and East ward containing 2% more electors than the average by 2016. These wards were broadly based on the Council's and Labour Party's proposals, with a change to East ward, placing Greatham parish with the West ward due to poor access from Greatham parish into Seaton Carew.

51 During Stage One, we received five submissions regarding the harbour area and two submissions regarding Seaton Carew, in addition to the borough-wide schemes. During Stage Three, we received 13 submissions and a petition, focusing on the Headland area. These submissions broadly argued that the Headland had few community connections with the harbour area. However, no submission proposed an alternative pattern with good electoral equality or strong boundaries.

52 In this area we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations as final, with changes to the ward names. Our final recommendation is for Heritage ward to be renamed Headland & Harbour ward, while our draft recommendation for De Bruce ward would not be altered. Our final recommendation for East ward is that it should be renamed Seaton ward. We also recommend a minor boundary change to Seaton ward, which would not affect any electors, and which is outlined in paragraph 65.

Headland, the harbour and the northern coast

53 The urban area to the north-east of Hartlepool broadly comprises the current wards of Brus and Dyke House. The harbour-side area is the current ward of St Hilda and part of the Stranton area. Extensive development has occurred in the harbour-side area during the last few years, with more development still taking place.

54 Our draft recommendation was for a three-member Heritage ward combining the new harbour-side developments with Headland parish. This ward has strong boundaries and would have a variance of 2% more electors than the average by 2016.

55 At Stage One, the Mayor suggested putting the harbour-side developments in East ward with Seaton Carew. We considered that the Mayor's scheme had adverse knock-on effects in the area to the north and that the harbour-side developments (which are ongoing) have little in common with Seaton Carew. Having toured this area, we considered the Council's proposal to be the most appropriate pattern for this area.

56 During Stage Three, 13 submissions directly relating to these areas were received. These submissions were from Greatham Parish Council, The Headland Parish Council, Councillor Marshall, and 10 local residents.

57 A petition, signed by more than 800 residents, was also received. This petition opposed the draft recommendations, suggesting instead that Headland be combined with another part of the coast, similar to the Mayor's Stage One submission. The marina and station area is separated from the Headland area by the harbour and the docks. There is a bus service (the number seven) every four minutes during the day, which travels from the Headland along the main roads (Cleveland Road and Marina Way) to the station area, and then into the Fens area of Hartlepool. All the submissions received came from the Headland area, with the exception of the submission from Greatham Parish Council. Those submissions also opposed the name Heritage, suggesting Headland as an alternative.

58 In addition to the petition, a number of submissions suggested combining the Headland with part of the Brus area, which is in the De Bruce ward. The Mayor's Stage One proposal provided for an electoral variance of 12%, and required the marina and station area to be united with Seaton Carew further down the coast. The Stage One submission from independent councillors also combined the Headland with part of the Brus area, which resulted in an estate being split in two. No submissions specifically relating to the Brus area have been received, either at Stage One or at Stage Three. During Stage Three, the Council suggested that the name De Bruce ward should be retained.

59 We have carefully considered the options in this area, including the Mayor's suggestion, and acknowledge that the Headland clearly has little in common with the marina and station area, both of which are to an extent isolated from the rest of Hartlepool Borough. The Headland area has few transport links to any part of Hartlepool in the evenings, while the marina and station area is divided from the rest of Hartlepool by busy roads and an industrial estate. We recognise that these two areas are distinct and that they are different communities, but do not consider that dividing the Brus community in order to place a part of it with Headland would be in the interests of Hartlepool as a whole.

60 We also note the local opposition to the name Heritage. We agree that this name does not represent the area. As a number of residents have referred to the areas as 'the Headland' and 'the Harbour', we propose Headland & Harbour as an appropriate ward name.

61 We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation for De Bruce ward. We also confirm our draft recommendation for Heritage ward, with the slight amendment that the ward be renamed Headland & Harbour ward.

Seaton Carew

62 The existing wards in this area are the three-member Seaton ward, which is projected to have a variance of 12% more electors than the average by 2016, and part of Rossmere ward, which is projected to have a variance of 4% more electors by 2016.

63 Our draft recommendation was for a three-member East ward containing Seaton Carew and part of the urban area of Hartlepool bordered by Seaton Lane and the A689. This ward would contain 2% more electors than the average in 2016. Having toured the area, we consider there is a good road connection between the Seaton Lane area and Seaton Carew. The A689 provides a strong boundary separating the Seaton Lane area from the neighbouring Foggy Furze and Rossmere areas to the north. As mentioned in the paragraphs above, we did not include Greatham village in this ward as we noted that there were no road connections between Greatham village and Seaton Carew. Furthermore, Greatham Parish Council stated that it would prefer to be included with the other villages in West ward, with which they have direct road links.

64 During Stage Three, the Council suggested that the name of East ward be changed to Seaton ward. At Stage One we received submissions suggesting that the ward name should be Seaton Carew, instead of Seaton. We note that the main town is called Seaton Carew, not Seaton. However, the area directly below the main road

which has been linked with Seaton Carew is called Seaton Lane. We therefore conclude that Seaton is a more appropriate name for the ward, and so have adopted the name of Seaton as part of our final recommendation.

65 During Stage Three, Greatham Parish Council suggested that the boundary between East ward and West ward should be altered around the industrial estate to include a factory which only has road access to Greatham. The area is not part of a parish and no electors would be transferred. We consider that this amendment produces a clearer boundary.

66 Table C1 (on page 27) provides details of the electoral variances of the final recommendations for wards in this area of the borough. The final recommendations are shown on Map 1, Map 2 and Map 3 accompanying this report.

The southern and central urban area

67 The southern and central areas of Hartlepool include the main town centre. They broadly comprise the current wards of Grange, Burn Valley, Foggy Furze, Rift House, Owton and Fens, as well as part of Park, Rossmere and Stranton wards.

68 In the southern area, the draft recommendations proposed the following three-member wards: South ward containing 9% more electors; and Manor House ward containing 8% more electors than the average by 2016. These wards were adopted from both the Council's and Labour Party's proposals, which were identical to each other and very similar to the Mayor's proposals. During Stage One, submissions were received broadly supporting this pattern.

69 In the central area, the draft recommendations proposed the following three-member wards: Victoria ward containing 8% fewer electors; Middleton ward containing 4% fewer electors; and Foggy Furze ward containing 1% more electors than the average by 2016. These wards were broadly based on both the Council's and the Labour Party's proposals, with modifications based on suggestions received from the Furness, Cameron and Belk Street Residents' Association and the Dent/Derwent Residents' Association.

70 At Stage Three, we received 13 submissions relating to the southern area, and 16 submissions and one petition relating to the central area. In both areas, the submissions opposed specific changes to ward names, and proposed alternative ward names.

71 In this area we confirm our draft recommendations as final, with some changes to the ward names. Our final recommendation is that South ward be renamed Fens & Rossmere ward, and Middleton ward be renamed Burn Valley ward. Our draft recommendations for Manor House, Foggy Furze and Victoria wards would not be altered.

Southern urban area

72 The existing wards in this area are the three-member Fens, Owton, Rift House and Rossmere wards, which are projected to have variances of 12% fewer, 12% fewer, 3% more and 4% more electors than the average respectively by 2016.

73 Our draft recommendation was for two three-member wards, called Manor House and South, which would contain 8% more and 9% more electors respectively by 2016. These wards were adopted from the Council's proposals.

74 During Stage Three, we received 13 submissions specifically relating to this area. These submissions were from Greatham Parish Council, the Fens Residents' Association, Councillor A Lilley, Councillor G Lilley and nine local residents.

75 Three of these submissions supported our draft recommendation for the transfer of the 'I' block (an area of five streets directly to the north of the Fens area) to the new Manor House ward. Four submissions supported the inclusion of the South Fens area (part of Greatham parish) in a new South ward. Greatham Parish Council voiced concern over consequential parish warding arrangements, but did not argue that the South Fens should be included in the same ward as Greatham village.

76 Councillor Gibbons (Fens ward) argued for a two-member ward in this area, apparently under the assumption that a uniform pattern of two-member wards would automatically lead to elections by halves. There was also opposition to a uniform pattern of three-member wards.

77 The Council suggested the name Jubilee instead of the proposed South ward. However, there was no support for this name, and the majority of submissions expressed considerable opposition. A number of the submissions referred to the ward as covering areas known locally as the Fens and Rossmere areas. An article in the local paper, which was also submitted to us by a local resident, argued that the name Fens & Rossmere is supported by local councillors. We note the lack of support for the name Jubilee and consider that as the majority of submissions referred to the proposed South ward as either the Fens area or as the Fens and Rossmere area that the new ward should be named Fens & Rossmere.

78 We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendation for Manor House ward. We also confirm our draft recommendation for South ward, with the amendment that the ward be renamed Fens & Rossmere ward.

Central urban area

79 The existing wards in this area are the three three-member Burn Valley, Foggy Furze and Grange wards, which are projected to have variances of 10% fewer, 14% fewer and 11% fewer electors than the average respectively by 2016.

80 Our draft recommendation was for three three-member wards called Foggy Furze, Middleton and Victoria, which would contain 1% more, 4% fewer and 8% fewer electors respectively by 2016. These wards were based a number of different proposals for this area.

81 During Stage Three, we received 16 submissions and one petition requesting that the proposed Middleton ward be called Burn Valley ward. The submissions were from the Burn Valley Rejuvenation Consortium, the Oxford Road Baptist Church, and 14 local residents. The petition was signed by approximately 200 residents and was submitted by the Burn Valley North Residents' Association. The submissions cited local landmarks, pressing the point that the site of the original village of Middleton is actually near the harbour and not in Middleton ward. The Council supported this

change of name. We consider that the evidence provided clearly indicates that this area is locally known as Burn Valley, and not as Middleton, and that Burn Valley is therefore a more suitable ward name.

82 We did not receive any submissions specifically relating to either Victoria or Foggy Furze wards during Stage Three. The Council suggested that the name of Victoria ward be changed to Jackson ward, but did not provide any reason for this change. We do, however, note that Victoria ward contains Victoria Football Ground whilst Ward Jackson Park is not within the proposed ward, and we therefore consider that Victoria is a more appropriate name for this ward.

83 We therefore confirm as final our draft recommendations for Foggy Furze ward and Victoria ward. We also confirm our draft recommendation for Middleton ward, with the slight amendment that the ward be renamed Burn Valley ward.

84 Table C1 (on page 27) provides details of the electoral variances of the final recommendations for wards in this area of the borough. The final recommendations are shown on Map 1, Map 2 and Map 3 accompanying this report.

Conclusions

85 Table 1 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2010 and 2016 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2010	2016
Number of councillors	33	33
Number of electoral wards	11	11
Average number of electors per councillor	2,104	2,163
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	2	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Final recommendation

Hartlepool Borough Council should comprise 33 councillors serving 11 wards, as detailed and named in Table C1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Parish electoral arrangements

86 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single district ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

87 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Hartlepool Borough Council has powers under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

88 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for the parish of Greatham.

89 The parish of Greatham should be divided into two parish wards: Greatham South Fens (returning four members) and Greatham Village (returning three members).

Final recommendation

Greatham Parish Council should comprise seven councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Greatham South Fens (returning four members) and Greatham Village (returning three members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 3.

3 What happens next?

90 We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council. The changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. Parliament can either accept or reject our recommendations. If accepted, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the next elections for Hartlepool Borough Council in 2012.

4 Mapping

Final recommendations for Hartlepool

91 The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for Hartlepool Borough Council:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Hartlepool Borough Council.
- **Sheet 2, Map 2** illustrates the proposed wards in the north of Hartlepool.
- **Sheet 3, Map 3** illustrates the proposed wards in the south of Hartlepool and the proposed warding arrangements for Greatham parish.

Appendix A

Glossary and abbreviations

AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)	A landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty is so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it
Boundary Committee for England	The Boundary Committee for England was a committee of the Electoral Commission, responsible for undertaking electoral reviews. The Boundary Committee's functions were assumed by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in April 2010
Constituent areas	The geographical areas that make up any one ward, expressed in parishes or existing wards, or parts of either
Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral Commission	An independent body that was set up by the UK Parliament. Its aim is integrity and public confidence in the democratic process. It regulates party and election finance and sets standards for well-run elections

Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral imbalance	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections
Local Government Boundary Commission for England or LGBCE	The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for undertaking electoral reviews. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England assumed the functions of the Boundary Committee for England in April 2010
Multi-member ward or division	A ward or division represented by more than one councillor and usually not more than three councillors
National Park	The 13 National Parks in England and Wales were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 and can be found at www.nationalparks.gov.uk
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of

	representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town Council'
Parish (or Town) Council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward
Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
PER (or periodic electoral review)	A review of the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England, undertaken periodically. The last programme of PERs was undertaken between 1996 and 2004 by the Boundary Committee for England and its predecessor, the now-defunct Local Government Commission for England
Political management arrangements	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enabled local authorities in England to modernise their decision making process. Councils could choose from two broad categories; a directly elected mayor and cabinet or a cabinet with a leader
Town Council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average

Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average
Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council

Appendix B

Code of practice on written consultation

The Cabinet Office's *Code of Practice on Consultation* (2008) (<http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf>) 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 Local Government Boundary Commission for England, are encouraged to follow the Code.

The Code of Practice applies to consultation documents published after 1 November 2008, which should reproduce the criteria, give explanations of any departures, and confirm that the criteria have otherwise been followed.

Table B1: The Local Government Boundary Commission 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 at the start of the review and on our draft recommendations. Our consultation stages are a minimum total of 16 weeks.

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.

Appendix C

Table C1: Final recommendations for Hartlepool Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2010)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2016)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Burn Valley	3	6,322	2,107	0%	6,217	2,072	-4%
2	De Bruce	3	5,786	1,929	-8%	5,880	1,960	-9%
3	Fens & Rossmere	3	7,225	2,408	14%	7,084	2,361	9%
4	Foggy Furze	3	6,479	2,160	3%	6,549	2,183	1%
5	Hart	3	5,980	1,993	-5%	6,241	2,080	-4%
6	Headland & Harbour	3	5,595	1,865	-11%	6,650	2,217	2%
7	Jesmond	3	6,285	2,095	0%	6,242	2,081	-4%
8	Manor House	3	6,962	2,321	10%	6,993	2,331	8%
9	Rural West	3	5,933	1,978	-6%	6,970	2,323	7%
10	Seaton	3	6,661	2,220	6%	6,607	2,202	2%
11	Victoria	3	6,188	2,063	-2%	5,938	1,979	-8%
	Totals	33	69,416	-	-	71,371	-	-
	Averages	-	-	2,104	-	-	2,163	-

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

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

