

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
Hartlepool

May 2002

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

WHAT IS THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND?

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

Members of the Committee are:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

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

SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission for England (LGCE) began a review of the electoral arrangements for Hartlepool on 16 October 2001. As a consequence of the transfer of functions referred to earlier, it falls to us to complete the work of the LGCE.

- **This report summarises the submissions 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 Hartlepool:

- **in nine of the 17 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough and two wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to continue, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in eight wards and by more than 20 per cent in two wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 77-78) are that:

- **Hartlepool Borough Council should have 47 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 17 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified, and two wards should retain their existing boundaries.**

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

- **In 15 of the proposed 17 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to marginally deteriorate with the number of electors per councillor in 3 wards expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 14 May 2002. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in the light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**

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

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 8 July 2002

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

Table 1: Draft Recommendations: Summary

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1	Brus	3	Brus ward; part of St Hilda ward	Large map and Map 2
2	Burn Valley	3	part of Brinkburn ward; part of Grange ward	Large map and Map 2
3	Dyke House	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; Dyke House ward	Large map and Map 2
4	Elwick	1	the parishes of Brierton, Claxton, Dalton Piercy, Elwick, Hart and Newton Bewley	Map 2
5	Fens	3	part of Fens ward; part of Rossmere ward; part of Seaton ward	Large map and Map 2
6	Furze	3	part of Rift House ward; part of Stranton ward	Large map and Map 2
7	Grange	3	part of Grange ward; part of Jackson ward	Large map and Map 2
8	Greatham	1	the parish of Greatham	Map 2
9	Hart	3	<i>unchanged</i> ; Hart ward	Large map and Map 2
10	Jackson	3	part of Jackson ward; part of Stranton ward	Large map and Map 2
11	Owton	3	part of Fens ward; Owton ward	Large map and Map 2
12	Park	3	part of Grange ward; part of Park ward; part of Throston ward	Large map and Map 2
13	Rift West	3	part of Brinkburn ward; part of Park ward; part of Rift House ward	Large map and Map 2
14	Rossmere	3	part of Rift House ward; part of Rossmere ward; part of Seaton ward	Large map and Map 2
15	St Hilda	3	part of St Hilda ward (the parish of Headland and part of the unparished area)	Large map and Map 2
16	Seaton	3	part of Seaton ward; part of Stranton ward	Large map and Map 2
17	Throston	3	part of Throston ward	Large map and Map 2

Notes: 1 Part of the Borough is parished and comprises Elwick and Greatham wards as indicated above.

2 The wards in the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map in the back of the report.

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

Table 2: Draft Recommendations for Hartlepool

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Brus	3	4,551	1,517	4	4,572	1,524	4
2	Burn Valley	3	4,510	1,503	4	4,352	1,451	-1
3	Dyke House	3	4,328	1,443	-1	4,169	1,390	-5
4	Elwick	1	1,386	1,386	-5	1,647	1,647	12
5	Fens	3	4,190	1,397	-4	4,037	1,346	-8
6	Furze	3	4,213	1,404	-3	4,069	1,356	-7
7	Grange	3	4,642	1,547	7	4,489	1,496	2
8	Greatham	1	1,708	1,708	18	1,645	1,645	12
9	Hart	3	4,137	1,379	-5	4,755	1,585	8
10	Jackson	3	3,806	1,269	-13	3,937	1,312	-10
11	Owton	3	4,242	1,414	-3	4,087	1,362	-7
12	Park	3	4,301	1,434	-1	4,559	1,520	4
13	Rift West	3	4,666	1,555	7	4,527	1,509	3
14	Rossmere	3	4,325	1,442	-1	4,404	1,468	0
15	St Hilda	3	4,283	1,428	-2	4,180	1,393	-5
16	Seaton	3	4,780	1,593	10	4,971	1,657	13
17	Throston	3	4,184	1,395	-4	4,507	1,502	2
	Totals	47	68,252	-	-	68,907	-	-
	Averages	-	-	1,452	-	-	1,466	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on Hartlepool Borough Council's submissions.

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 district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1 INTRODUCTION

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

2 The Cleveland (Structural Change) Order 1995, SI 1995, No. 187 created a unitary authority for Hartlepool which came into existence on 1 April 1996. Hartlepool's last review was carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in 1975 (Report no. 42).

3 In making final recommendations to the Electoral Commission, we have had regard to:

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

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

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

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

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

8 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

9 Stage One began on 16 October 2001, when the LGCE wrote to Hartlepool Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. It also notified Cleveland Police Authority, the Local Government Association, National Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the borough, the Member of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, the Members of the European Parliament for the North East Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. It placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Hartlepool Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 7 January 2002.

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

11 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 14 May 2002 and will end on 8 July 2002, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

12 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. The Electoral Commission will determine when any changes come into effect.

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

13 With a population of some 92,000, Hartlepool Borough covers an area of approximately 9,390 hectares and lies on the north-east coast, bordering the borough of Stockton-on-Tees to the south, the County of Durham to the north and west, with the North Sea forming the eastern boundary. Hartlepool constitutes a main urban settlement with the area to the west of the town constituting a more rural hinterland. In recent years the coastal town has seen a massive transformation, with the replacement of traditional heavy industries with modern hi-tech firms. The borough contains eight parishes but most of the town of Hartlepool is unparished

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

15 Hartlepool Borough has an electorate of 68,252 which is forecast to increase over the next five years to 68,907. At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,452 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,466 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in nine of the 17 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the district average, two wards by more than 20 per cent and one ward by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Throston ward where each of the three councillors represents 32 per cent more electors than the district average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Hartlepool

Table 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Brinkburn	3	3,812	1,271	-12	3,713	1,238	-16
2 Brus	3	3,818	1,273	-12	3,867	1,289	-12
3 Dyke House	3	4,328	1,443	-1	4,170	1,390	-5
4 Elwick	1	1,300	1,300	-10	1,564	1,564	7
5 Fens	3	4,836	1,612	11	4,659	1,553	6
6 Grange	3	4,670	1,557	7	4,500	1,500	2
7 Greatham	1	1,794	1,794	24	1,728	1,728	18
8 Hart	3	4,137	1,379	-5	4,756	1,585	8
9 Jackson	3	4,152	1,384	-5	4,274	1,425	-3
10 Owton	3	3,502	1,167	-20	3,374	1,125	-23
11 Park	3	4,417	1,472	1	4,671	1,557	6
12 Rift House	3	4,407	1,469	1	4,255	1,418	-3
13 Rossmere	3	3,747	1,249	-14	3,842	1,281	-13
14 St Hilda	3	5,016	1,672	15	4,887	1,629	11
15 Seaton	3	4,788	1,596	10	4,842	1,614	10
16 Stranton	3	3,792	1,264	-13	3,802	1,267	-14
17 Throston	3	5,736	1,912	32	6,003	2,001	36
Totals	47	68,252		-	68,907	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,452	-	-	1,466	-

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 varies from the average for the district. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Owton ward were relatively over-represented by 20 per cent, while electors in Throston ward were relatively under-represented by 32 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

16 At the start of the review the LGCE invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to it giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Hartlepool Borough Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

17 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the LGCE visited the area and met officers and members from the Borough Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. Five representations were received during Stage One, including a submission from the Borough Council enclosing two borough-wide schemes, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council.

Hartlepool Borough Council

18 At Stage One the Borough Council submitted two schemes, from the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat/Conservative Alliance (Lib Dem/Cons Alliance). Agreement was reached between the two groups in relation to the proposed size of the Council. The Labour Group and Lib Dem/Cons Alliance both proposed retaining a council size of 47 members representing 17 wards (15 three-member wards and two single-member wards), as at present.

19 The Labour Group's proposals retained the existing single-member Elwick and Greatham wards in the rural area. It proposed substantially re-warding the urban town area with only two wards, Dyke House and Hart, remaining unchanged. The Labour Group's scheme would provide for an improved level of electoral equality in the borough, with all but four wards having variances of less than 10 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

20 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed alternative warding arrangements in the rural area, including the parish warding of Hart Parish, creating revised single-member Elwick and Greatham wards. In the urban town area it proposed substantial re-warding, with no wards remaining unchanged. Its scheme would provide for an improved level of electoral equality in the borough with all but two wards having variances of less than 10 per cent from the borough average by 2006.

Parish and Town Councils

21 We received three representations from parish and town councils. Greatham Parish Council stated that in 1967 Greatham Parish was divided into two parts as a result of the creation of West Hartlepool County Borough. It proposed restoring the two divided parts of the parish to the pre-1967 area.

22 Elwick Parish Council proposed that Elwick parish should remain within Elwick ward, stating that "Elwick Parish Council would wish to be assured that the Parish Council will not lose its identity by being absorbed into another area at the conclusion of this review".

23 Hartlepool Headland Town Council proposed reducing the current under-representation in St Hilda ward by transferring an area of the western part of the ward to Brus ward, "thus confirming its traditional closer links with that area, and bringing it closer to the target ratio".

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

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

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

26 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.

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

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

Electorate Forecasts

29 Since 1975 there has been a 1 per cent increase in the electorate of Hartlepool borough. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 1 per cent from 68,252 to 68,907 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Hart ward although a number of wards would see a slight decline in electorate. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

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

Council Size

31 Hartlepool Borough Council presently has 47 members. As detailed earlier, consensus was reached between the Labour Group and the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance with both proposing to

retain a council size of 47 members. The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance argued that “no convincing case has yet been put forward for a reduction or an increase in the overall size of the Council”.

32 The Labour Group stated that “the review comes at a time when the majority of the Borough is undergoing great social and economic change”, further stating “there are to be significant changes in the face of local politics, with a recent referendum supporting the introduction of directly elected mayors, the first election to which will take place in May 2002”. The Labour Group also acknowledged that the current council size facilitated a balance of representation between the parished area in the west of the borough and the remainder of the urban, unparished area contending that the more rural area should continue to be represented by two councillors.

33 We received no further representations in relation to council size, and in view of the cross-party consensus received for retaining the existing council size, and given the balance of representation that it facilitates between rural and urban parts of the borough, we are content to put this forward for consultation. We have noted that all political groups on the council, when considering council size, have argued that at the present time there is no persuasive evidence to move away from the current council size, particularly given that the uncertainty surrounding the future executive structure of the council with regards to the introduction of a directly elected mayor. We acknowledge that the introduction of a directly elected mayor will have implications for the operation of the council in the future, but further acknowledge that at this time it is difficult to predict in what way. Therefore, on balance, we are of the view that retaining the existing council size, at this time, is appropriate. We would welcome views on this issue during stage three.

34 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 achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 47 members.

Electoral Arrangements

35 Having considered all the representations received at Stage One, we have noted that both borough-wide schemes would secure improved electoral equality. However, we have decided to base our draft recommendations on the Labour Group’s proposals. We consider that the Labour Group’s scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the other statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. In particular, we have considered the two proposals for the Seaton area and, with officers from the Committee having visited the area, we are of the view that the Labour Group’s proposal to retain all of the Seaton Carew community within one ward, albeit with a higher level of electoral imbalance, provides for the best balance between reflecting local community identity, securing logical boundaries and electoral equality. Furthermore, we have not been persuaded to ward Hart parish and include the southern part of the parish in a more urban town ward, as proposed by the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance, as this would not provide for effective and convenient local government as the proposed parish ward would only contain seven electors initially.

36 However, to improve electoral equality further and having regard to local community identities and interests, we have decided to move away from the Labour Group’s proposals in a number of areas. We propose adopting elements of the proposals submitted by the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance in relation to the parished area of the borough together with some of our own proposals in the central area. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Elwick and Greatham wards;
- (b) Brus, Dyke House and St Hilda wards;
- (c) Hart, Park and Throston wards;

- (d) Grange, Jackson and Stranton wards;
- (e) Brinkburn and Rift House wards;
- (f) Rossmere and Seaton wards;
- (g) Fens and Owton wards

37 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inserted in the back of the report.

Elwick and Greatham wards

38 The existing wards of Elwick and Greatham are situated in the west of the borough and constitute the rural parished area. Elwick ward comprises the parishes of Brierton, Dalton Piercy, Elwick and Hart. Greatham ward comprises the parishes of Claxton, Greatham and Newton Bewley. Both wards are each represented by one councillor. Under existing arrangements, Elwick and Greatham wards have 10 per cent fewer and 24 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (7 per cent and 18 per cent more than the average by 2006).

39 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed retaining the existing single-member Elwick and Greatham wards, arguing that “at this stage to include them [the parishes] in the ‘urban wards’ would create a number of wards which it is felt would be too large in land areas to be adequately served by councillors”.

40 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed including the parishes of Claxton and Newton Bewley, from the existing Greatham ward, in a revised single-member Elwick ward. The remaining part of the existing Greatham ward, the parish of Greatham, would form a revised single-member Greatham ward. It also proposed warding Hart parish, from the existing Elwick ward, to include the eastern part of the parish, to the south of the A1049, in a revised three-member Throston ward. Under the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance’s proposals, the proposed Elwick and Greatham wards would have 5 per cent fewer and 18 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (5 per cent more and 12 per cent more than the average by 2006).

41 We received two further representations in relation to this area. Elwick Parish Council proposed that “Elwick Parish Council would wish to be assured that the Parish Council will not lose its identity by being absorbed into another area at the conclusion of the review”.

42 Greatham Parish Council stated that in 1967 Greatham Parish was divided into two parts as a result of the creation of West Hartlepool County Borough. It proposed restoring the two divided parts of the parish to the pre-1967 area.

43 Having carefully considered the representations received, we have decided to adopt the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance’s proposals as part of our draft recommendations as they offer the best balance between electoral equality and reflecting local communities (the Labour Group’s proposed Greatham ward would have 18 per cent more electors per councillor than the average by 2006). However, we propose one amendment to the proposed Elwick ward. We do not propose that part of Hart parish should be included in Throston ward as we do not believe this would provide for effective and convenient local government given that the proposed parish ward would only contain seven electors. We note that both the proposed wards would have 12 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average by 2006 and have therefore considered ways of reducing these imbalances. We noted that Greatham parish contains an area of urban overspill from the existing Fens ward. We considered dividing the parish of Greatham in order that the urban part could be included in the urban-based Fens ward. However, transferring the urban part of Greatham parish into Fens ward would result in the rural area being entitled to 1.6 councillors. This allocation of councillors would not facilitate a good balance between electoral equality and the other statutory criteria, creating a notable imbalance

of representation between the town area and the rural area. We have therefore decided to retain the Greatham parish boundary as a ward boundary, as detailed above, and are of the view that the resulting level of electoral imbalance is justified given the better balance of representation that is secured.

44 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Elwick and Greatham wards would have 5 per cent fewer and 18 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (12 per cent more than the average for both wards by 2006). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2.

Brus, Dyke House and St Hilda wards

45 The existing wards of Brus, Dyke House and St Hilda are situated in the north-east of the borough, with Brus and St Hilda wards bordering the North Sea. The three wards are currently each represented by three councillors. Under existing arrangements, Brus, Dyke House and St Hilda wards contain 12 per cent fewer, 1 per cent fewer and 15 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (12 per cent fewer, 5 per cent fewer and 11 per cent more than the average by 2006).

46 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed combining the existing Brus ward with the area to the west of Stonethwaite Close, Rosthwaite Close, Wasdale Close and the railway line, from the existing St Hilda ward, to form a revised three-member Brus ward. The remaining part of St Hilda ward would form a revised three-member St Hilda ward. The Labour Group also proposed that the existing Dyke House ward be retained, stating that "This is a compact urban ward with clear community identity and with little if any housing changes planned". Under the Labour Group's proposals, the proposed Brus, Dyke House and St Hilda wards would have 4 per cent more, 1 per cent fewer and 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (4 per cent more, 5 per cent fewer and 5 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

47 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed broadly similar warding arrangements to the Labour Group's proposals. However, it proposed including Dorchester Drive, from the existing Brus ward, in a revised three-member Hart ward. As a result, its proposed Brus and Dyke House wards would have 3 per cent and 14 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (3 per cent and 8 per cent more than the average by 2006), with St Hilda wards variance being the same as under the Labour Group's proposal.

48 We received one further representation in relation to this area. Hartlepool Headland Town Council proposed reducing the current under-representation in St Hilda ward by transferring an area to the north of Warren Road in the western part of the ward (polling district MD) to Brus ward, "thus confirming its traditional closer links with that area, and bringing it closer to the target ratio".

49 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as part of our draft recommendations, without amendment. We consider that the Labour Group's proposals provide for acceptable levels of electoral equality, would reflect community identities and are broadly based on the existing warding arrangements. While we noted the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's alternative boundaries between Hart and Brus wards, we have not been persuaded that they offer a more clearly identifiable and convenient boundary, nor a better reflection of community identity and interests, particularly as we do not propose warding Hart parish (as discussed earlier). We note that this arrangement would broadly reflect the proposals made by Hartlepool Headland Town Council.

50 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor for the proposed wards would be the same as under the Labour Group's proposals. Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Hart, Park and Throston wards

51 The existing wards of Hart, Park and Throston are situated in the west and north of the town area. The three wards are each represented by three councillors. Under existing arrangements, Hart, Park and Throston wards contain 5 per cent fewer, 1 per cent more and 32 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (8 per cent, 6 per cent and 36 per cent more than the average by 2006).

52 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed including the area to the south of Hart Lane, from the existing Throston ward, in a revised three-member Park ward. The remaining part of the existing Throston ward would form a revised three-member Throston ward. The Labour Group proposed including the area to the west of Weldeck, The Oval and Glendale Avenue (from the existing Grange ward) in a revised three-member Park ward. It further proposed including the area to the south of Southbrook Livery, from the existing Park ward, in a new three-member Rift West ward, as detailed below. The southern boundary of the revised Park ward would follow along the north of Catcote School and the Allotment Gardens to its west before continuing westwards, being tied to field edges, to the existing boundary with Elwick ward. It proposed that the existing Hart ward be retained. The Labour Group expressed concern that there are a number of new developments taking place in Hart ward that will require the creation of a new ward, stating that "This being the case it is likely that before the next formal round of boundary reviews this ward [Hart ward] may need to be reduced in geographical size and that the emerging polling districts be incorporated into a new ward". As a result, it proposed that the revised Hart ward "be renamed Clavering or something similar, thus releasing the name 'Hart' to be reintroduced at some future date". Under the Labour Group's proposals, the proposed Hart, Park and Throston wards would have 5 per cent fewer, 9 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (8 per cent, 13 per cent and 2 per cent more than the average by 2006).

53 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed modifying the southern boundary of Hart ward so that it followed the centre of Hart Road, stating that "Hart Road is a main access route to the town [which] forms a logical southern boundary for the Hart ward". It also proposed including Dorchester Drive, from Brus ward, in the revised three-member Hart ward (as detailed earlier). It proposed warding Hart parish, from the existing Elwick ward, to include the eastern part of the parish (to the east of the A179 and to the south of the A1049) in a revised three-member Throston ward. It further proposed including the properties to the south of Chester Road and to the east of Thornhill Gardens, from the existing Throston ward, in a revised three-member Dyke House ward (as detailed earlier). In relation to Park ward, it proposed modifying the ward's northern boundary to follow the centre of Hart Lane, including the area to the south of Hart Lane, from Throston ward, in the revised ward, and the southern boundary so that it follows the back of the properties on Kipling Road and Thackery Road and continues westwards, being tied to field edges, to the existing boundary with Elwick ward. Under the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, the proposed Hart, Park, and Throston wards would have 4 per cent fewer, 19 per cent fewer and 18 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (8 per cent fewer, 12 per cent fewer and 8 per cent more than the average by 2006).

54 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as part of our draft recommendations, subject to one amendment. We propose moving away from the Labour Group's proposals in order to achieve a better level of electoral equality. We propose amending the boundary between the proposed Park and Grange wards to include all of Weldeck Road, Granville Avenue, Grange Avenue, The Oval and Glendale Avenue in a revised three-member Grange ward. The consequent effect of this modification would also facilitate the achievement of good electoral equality in the central part of the town, as discussed below. With regard to the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, we have not been persuaded that their proposals offer more clearly identifiable and convenient boundaries, nor a better reflection of community identity and interests. We also consider that part of Hart parish should not be included in Throston ward as we do not believe this would

provide for effective and convenient local government given that the proposed parish ward would initially only contain seven electors

55 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Hart, Park and Throston wards would have 5 per cent, 1 per cent and 4 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (8 per cent, 4 per cent and 2 per cent more than the average by 2006). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Grange, Jackson and Stranton wards

56 The existing wards of Grange, Jackson and Stranton are situated in the centre and east of the town area, with Stranton ward bordering the North Sea. The three wards are each represented by three councillors. Under existing arrangements, Grange, Jackson and Stranton wards contain 7 per cent more, 5 per cent fewer and 13 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (2 per cent more, 3 per cent fewer and 14 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

57 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed including the area in the west of the existing Grange ward in a revised Park ward, as detailed above. It further proposed including the area to the south of Park Road, from the existing Grange ward, in a new three-member Burn Valley ward, as detailed below. The remaining part of Grange ward would be combined with the area to the west of Murray Street, from the existing Jackson ward, to form a revised three-member Grange ward. The remaining part of Jackson ward would be combined with the area to the north of Stockton Road, Burn Road and Newburn Bridge Industrial Estate, from the existing Stranton ward, to form a revised three-member Jackson ward. The remaining part of Stranton ward (less the area to the east of the railway line) would become part of a new three-member Furze ward together with that part of the current Rift House ward to the south of Oxford Road, to the east of Ventnor Avenue, to the south of Southbrooke Avenue and to the east of the Allotment Gardens. Under the Labour Group's proposals, the proposed Furze, Grange and Jackson wards would have 11 per cent more, 2 per cent more and 13 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (6 per cent more, 2 per cent fewer and 10 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

58 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed retaining the existing Grange ward, subject to one amendment to improve electoral equality. It proposed modifying the boundary between Grange and Jackson wards to include all the properties on Cobden Street and Bright Street, plus properties on Mulgarve Road (from Cobden Street to Bright Street) and Rosemary Road (from Welldeck Gardens to Bright Street), in a revised three-member Grange ward. It also proposed combining Chandlers Close, Ensign Court and Schooner Court, from the existing Stranton ward, with the remaining part of Jackson ward to form a revised three-member Jackson ward. It proposed combining the remaining part of Stranton ward with the area to the north of Warrior Drive and Queen Street, and to the west of the properties on Saffron Walk and Lithgo Close (part of the Warrior Park Estate), from the existing Seaton ward, to form a revised three-member Stranton ward. It argued that "the Warrior Park Estate is a new community. Its residents are drawn from the town as a whole and most do not have long-standing connections with Seaton Carew". Under the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, the proposed Grange, Jackson and Stranton wards would have 5 per cent more, 1 per cent more and 8 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (1 per cent more, 3 per cent more and 3 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

59 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as part of our draft recommendations, subject to a number of amendments to improve electoral equality and to facilitate a good scheme in the central part of the town. We propose amending the boundary between the proposed Grange and Burn Valley wards to include all of Grantham Avenue, Eltringham Road, Stanhope Avenue and Park Road (the properties in the proposed Grange ward) in a new three-member Burn Valley ward.

We propose amending the boundary between the proposed Rossmere, Furze and Rift West wards to facilitate the provision of better electoral equality in the proposed Rossmere ward. We propose including all of the Allotment Gardens, Stranton Cemetery, the area to the south of Stockton Road (from Westbrooke Avenue to Haswell Gardens) and to the west of the back of the properties on Haswell Avenue in a revised three-member Rossmere ward. With regard to the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, we have not been persuaded that the proposals would provide for more identifiable and convenient boundaries. We also note that the proposals would divide the community of Seaton Carew, which is a defined community isolated from the rest of the borough by the railway line to the west and open land to the north, as detailed below.

60 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Furze, Grange and Jackson wards would have 3 per cent fewer, 7 per cent more and 13 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average respectively (7 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more and 10 per cent fewer than the average by 2006). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Brinkburn and Rift House wards

61 The existing wards of Brinkburn and Rift House are situated in the east and the centre of the town area. Both wards are each represented by three councillors. Under existing arrangements, Brinkburn and Rift House wards have 12 per cent fewer and 1 per more electors per councillor than the borough average (16 per cent and 3 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

62 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed combining the area to the south of Park Road, from the existing Grange ward, with the area to the north of Oxford Road, east of Shakespeare Avenue and north of Burn Valley Gardens and the Bowling Green (the boundary would follow along the back of Hartlepool Sixth Form College and the playing fields to meet Catcote Road), from the existing Brinkburn ward, to form a new three-member Burn Valley ward. It proposed combining the remaining part of Brinkburn ward with the area to the south of Southbrook Livery from the existing Park ward (the boundary would follow along the north of Catcote School and the Allotment Gardens to the west, continuing westwards, being tied to field edges, to the existing boundary with Elwick ward). This would be further combined with the area to the west of the back of the properties on Ventnor Road (adjoining Rift House Recreation Ground) and to the north of the back of the properties on the southern side of Southbrooke Avenue up to the break between the Allotment Gardens and Stranton Cemetery, from the existing Rift House ward, to form a new three-member Rift West ward. The remaining part of Rift House ward would be included in the revised three-member Furze ward, as detailed earlier. Under the Labour Group's proposals, the proposed Burn Valley and Rift West wards would have 2 per cent fewer and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (7 per cent fewer and 3 per cent more than the average by 2006).

63 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed combining the area to the south of Oxford Road, from the existing Brinkburn ward, with the existing Rift House ward to form a revised three-member Rift House ward. The remaining part of Brinkburn ward would be combined with the area to the north of Marlowe Road and to the south of the back of the properties on Thackery Road and Kipling Road, from the existing Park ward, to form a revised three-member Brinkburn ward. Under the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, the proposed Brinkburn and Rift House wards would have 2 per cent and 8 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (2 per cent fewer and 3 per cent more than the average by 2006).

64 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as part of our draft recommendations, subject to one amendment to improve electoral equality. We propose amending the boundary between the proposed Rossmere, Furze and Rift West wards, as detailed earlier. With regard to the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, while we consider that the proposed wards have some merit, we have to take into consideration that we are broadly adopting the Labour Group's proposals

in the borough and therefore the proposed wards would be incompatible with the warding arrangements being proposed as part of our draft recommendations. Furthermore, we do not believe that they provide for a better reflection of local communities as the boundary between the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposed Brinkburn and Owton wards divides the housing estate centred on Masefield Road. We are of the view that the Labour Group's proposal to retain the existing boundary along the centre of Brierton Lane provides for a more identifiable boundary in this area.

65 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Burn Valley and Rift West wards would have 4 per cent more and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (1 per cent fewer and 3 per cent more than the average by 2006). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Rossmere and Seaton wards

66 The existing wards of Rossmere and Seaton are situated in the south-east of the borough and town area, with Seaton ward bordering the North Sea. Both wards are represented by three councillors. Under the existing arrangements, Rossmere and Seaton wards have 14 per cent fewer and 10 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (13 per cent fewer and 10 per cent more than the average by 2006).

67 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed combining the area to the east of the railway line (up to Newburn Bridge), from the existing Stranton ward, with the area to the east of the railway line, from the existing Seaton ward, to form a revised three-member Seaton ward. Under the proposals the revised Seaton ward would have 13 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average by 2006. The Labour Group provided justification for this level of over-representation, stating that "This area is also undergoing some considerable expansion and, in so doing is beginning to forge a wider Seaton Carew identity", further contending that "Seaton is not yet big enough to justify the creation of two wards with two councillors per ward", and arguing that a slightly larger three-member ward should be retained to facilitate elections by thirds until such time that the area "requires re-forming into two borough wards". The Labour Group proposed combining the remaining part of Seaton ward, less the area to the south of the properties on Seaton Lane, with the existing Rossmere ward, less the area broadly to the south of Golden Flatts County Primary School, the properties on Seaton Lane, Raefield and Inglefield, to form a revised three-member Rossmere ward. The remaining parts of Rossmere and Seaton wards would be combined with the existing Fens ward to form a revised three-member Fens ward, as detailed below. Under the Labour Group's proposals, the proposed Rossmere and Seaton wards would have 15 per cent fewer and 10 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (14 per cent fewer and 13 per cent more than the average by 2006).

68 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed a revised three-member Rossmere ward, combining the area to the east of the properties on Duncan Road, Dunoon Road and Hamilton Road, from the existing Owton ward, with properties on Torquay Avenue and on Catcote Road (from Torquay Avenue to Truro Drive), from the existing Fens ward, with the existing Rossmere ward. It also proposed retaining the existing Seaton ward, less the area in the north of the ward which would be transferred to a revised Stranton ward, as detailed above. Under the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, the proposed Rossmere and Seaton wards would have 2 per cent more and equal to the borough average number of electors per councillor (3 per cent more and 4 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

69 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as part of our draft recommendations, subject to one amendment to improve electoral equality in Rossmere ward. We propose amending the boundary between Rossmere, Furze and Rift West wards, as detailed above. In proposing Seaton ward we have taken into account the restrictive nature of the area as it is bounded on one side by the North Sea, on the other side by the railway line, and is the subject of significant

redevelopment. Our ability to improve electoral equality is therefore limited due to the fact that it is isolated from the rest of the borough. With regard to the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, we have not been persuaded that their proposals offer more clearly identifiable and convenient boundaries, nor a better reflection of community identity and interests. As detailed earlier, we are of the view that a higher electoral variance is acceptable in this instance.

70 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Rossmere and Seaton wards would have 1 per cent fewer and 10 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (equal to and 13 per cent more than the average by 2006). Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Fens and Owton wards

71 The existing wards of Fens and Owton are situated in the south of the borough and the town area. Both wards are each represented by three councillors. Under existing arrangements, Fens and Owton wards have 11 per cent more and 20 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (6 per cent more and 23 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

72 At Stage One, the Labour Group proposed combining the area to the west of Ivanhoe Crescent and to the north of the properties on Kesteven Road and Fenton Road, from the existing Fens ward, with the existing Owton ward to form a revised three-member Owton ward. The remaining part of Fens ward would be combined with parts of the existing Rossmere and Seaton wards, as detailed above, to form a revised three-member Fens ward. Under the Labour Group's proposals, the proposed Fens and Owton wards would have 4 per cent and 3 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (8 per cent and 7 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

73 The Lib Dem/Cons Alliance proposed including the area to the west of Monkton Road and part of Macrae Road (properties numbered 27-39), from the existing Fens ward, in a revised three-member Owton ward. It also proposed including parts of the existing Fens ward in a revised three-member Rossmere ward, as detailed above. It also proposed including part of Owton ward in a revised Rossmere ward, as detailed above. It further proposed including part of the existing Park ward in a revised three-member Owton ward, as detailed above. Under the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, the proposed Fens and Owton wards would have 7 per cent more and 3 per cent more electors per councillor than the borough average (2 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer than the average by 2006).

74 Having carefully considered the representations received for this area, we have decided to adopt the Labour Group's proposals as part of our draft recommendations, without amendment, as they offer the best balance between electoral equality and reflecting local communities. With regard to the Lib Dem/Cons Alliance's proposals, we have not been persuaded that their proposals offer more clearly identifiable and convenient boundaries, nor a better reflection of community identity and interests.

75 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in each ward would be the same as under the Labour Group's proposals. Our draft recommendations are illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map at the back of the report.

Electoral Cycle

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

Conclusions

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

- a council size of 47 members should be retained;
- there should be 17 wards, as at present;
- the boundaries of 15 of the existing wards should be modified and two wards should retain their existing boundaries.

78 Our draft recommendations would involve modifying all but two of the existing wards in Hartlepool borough. As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the Labour Group's proposals, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- we propose combining the existing Elwick ward with the parishes of Claxton and Newton Bewley to form a revised single-member Elwick ward;
- we propose that the parish of Greatham form a revised single-member Greatham ward;
- we propose amending the boundaries between the revised Park, Grange and Burn Valley wards to improve electoral equality;
- we propose amending the boundary between the revised Rossmere and the proposed Furze and Rift West wards to improve electoral equality.

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

Table 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	47	47	47	47
Number of wards	47	47	47	47
Average number of electors per councillor	1,452	1,452	1,466	1,466
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	9	2	8	3
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	2	0	2	0

80 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Hartlepool Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from nine to two. By 2006 only three wards are forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent.

Draft Recommendation

Hartlepool Borough Council should comprise 47 councillors serving 17 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inside the back cover.

Map 2: Draft Recommendations for Hartlepool

5 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

81 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Hartlepool contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 8 July 2002. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the Borough Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

82 Express your views by writing directly to us:

Team Leader
Hartlepool Review
Boundary Committee
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW

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

APPENDIX A

Code of Practice on Written Consultation

The Cabinet Office's November 2000 *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/index/consultation.htm, requires all Government Departments and Agencies to adhere to certain criteria, set out below, on the conduct of public consultations. Non-Departmental 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.