

Draft recommendations on the  
future electoral arrangements for  
the City of Gloucester

*January 2001*

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations to the Government on whether there should be changes to local authorities' electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

Professor Malcolm Grant (Chairman)  
Professor Michael Clarke CBE (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Brokenshire  
Kru Desai  
Pamela Gordon  
Robin Gray  
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of wards and electoral divisions – of every principal local authority in England. In broad terms our objective 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, and the number of councillors and ward names. We can also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish councils in the district.

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



## SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Gloucester City Council on 27 June 2000.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during the first stage of the review, and makes draft recommendations for change.**

We found that the existing electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Gloucester City:

- **in eight of the 13 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the city and three wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average;**
- **by 2005 this unequal representation is expected to continue, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in seven wards and by more than 20 per cent in three wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 64-65) are that:

- **Gloucester City Council should have 36 councillors, three fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 15 wards, instead of 13 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 13 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of two;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

These draft recommendations seek to ensure that the number of electors represented by each city councillor is as nearly as possible the same, having regard to local circumstances.

- **In 13 of the proposed 15 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the city average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all of the wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the city in 2005.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the re-distribution of councillors for the parish of Quedgeley.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 9 January 2001. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. 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 and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.**
- **It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. He will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 5 March 2001:

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Website: [www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)**

*Figure 1: The Commission’s Draft Recommendations: Summary*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Map reference</b>
1 Abbey	3	Abbeymead ward (part); Barnwood ward (part)	Large map
2 Barnwood	3	Abbeymead ward (part); Barnwood ward (part); Eastgate ward (part); Hucclecote ward (part)	Large map
3 Barton & Tredworth	3	Barton ward (part); Eastgate ward (part); Westgate ward (part)	Large map
4 Elmbridge	2	Eastgate ward (part); Longlevens ward (part)	Large map
5 Fieldcourt	2	Quedgeley ward (part – the proposed Fieldcourt parish ward of Quedgeley parish)	Large map
6 Grange	2	Podsmead ward (part); Tuffley ward (part)	Large map
7 Hucclecote	3	Abbeymead ward (part); Hucclecote ward (part)	Large map
8 Kingsholm & Wotton	2	Eastgate ward (part); Kingsholm ward (part); Westgate ward (part)	Large map
9 Longlevens	3	Kingsholm ward (part); Longlevens ward (part)	Large map
10 Moreland	3	Barton ward (part); Linden ward (part); Podsmead ward (part); Westgate ward (part)	Large map
11 Podsmead	1	Podsmead ward (part); Tuffley ward (part)	Large map
12 Robinswood	3	Abbeymead ward (part); Barnwood ward (part); Barton ward (part); Eastgate ward (part); Matson ward; Tuffley ward (part)	Large map
13 Severn Vale	2	Quedgeley ward (part – the proposed Severn Vale parish ward of Quedgeley parish)	Large map
14 Tuffley	2	Tuffley ward (part)	Large map
15 Westgate	2	Eastgate ward (part); Linden ward (part); Westgate ward (part)	Large map

*Notes: 1 Quedgeley is the only parished part of the city.*

*2 Map 2 and the large map at the back of this report illustrate the proposed wards outlined above.*

*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.*

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Gloucester City

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	3	6,958	2,319	1	7,076	2,359	-2
2 Barnwood	3	6,902	2,301	0	7,022	2,341	-3
3 Barton & Tredworth	3	6,812	2,271	-1	7,038	2,346	-3
4 Elmbridge	2	4,448	2,224	-3	4,686	2,343	-3
5 Fieldcourt	2	3,999	2,000	-13	4,760	2,380	-1
6 Grange	2	4,731	2,366	3	4,748	2,374	-1
7 Hucclecote	3	7,290	2,430	6	7,566	2,522	5
8 Kingsholm & Wotton	2	4,685	2,343	2	4,996	2,498	4
9 Longlevens	3	7,297	2,432	6	7,564	2,521	5
10 Moreland	3	7,194	2,398	5	7,208	2,403	0
11 Podsmead	1	2,364	2,364	3	2,300	2,300	-4
12 Robinswood	3	7,270	2,423	6	7,505	2,502	4
13 Severn Vale	2	4,596	2,298	0	5,067	2,534	5
14 Tuffley	2	4,606	2,303	1	4,760	2,380	-1
15 Westgate	2	3,309	1,655	-28	4,398	2,199	-9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>82,461</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>86,694</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,291</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,408</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on Gloucester City Council's submission.

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 draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Gloucester City on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the six districts in Gloucestershire as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Gloucester City. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in August 1976 (Report No. 164). The electoral arrangements of Gloucestershire County Council were last reviewed in May 1982 (Report No. 424). We expect to review the County Council's electoral arrangements in 2002.

3 In undertaking these reviews, we must have regard to:

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992, ie the need to:
  - (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
  - (b) secure effective and convenient local government;
- the *Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements* contained in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Appendix B).

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the City Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards. We can also make recommendations on the electoral arrangements for parish councils in the city.

5 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (third edition published in October 1999). This sets out our approach to the reviews.

6 In our *Guidance*, we state that we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and ward configuration are most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

7 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equality of representation across the district as a whole. Having regard to the statutory criteria, our aim is to achieve as low a level of electoral imbalance as is practicable. We will require particular justification for schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

8 We are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that district but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. 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 a city’s electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a district council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other districts.

9 The review is in four stages (Figure 3).

*Figure 3: Stages of the Review*

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Description</b>
One	Submission of proposals to the Commission
Two	The Commission’s analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	Final deliberation and report to the Secretary of State

10 In July 1998 the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, which set out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. In two-tier areas, it proposed introducing a pattern in which both the district and county councils would hold elections every two years, ie in year one half of the district council would be elected, in year two half the county council would be elected, and so on. The Government stated that local accountability would be maximised where every elector has an opportunity to vote every year, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member wards (and divisions) in two-tier areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral areas in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities.

11 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1999/2000 PER programme, including the Gloucestershire districts, that the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the October 1999 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we considered that local authorities and other interested parties might wish to have regard to the Secretary of State’s intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. The proposals have been taken forward in the Local Government Act 2000 which, among other matters, provides that the Secretary of State may make Orders to change authorities’ electoral cycles. However, until such time as the Secretary of State makes any Order under the 2000 Act, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, which provides for elections by thirds or whole-council elections in two-tier areas, and our present *Guidance*.

12 Stage One began on 27 June 2000, when we wrote to Gloucester City Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Gloucestershire Association of Parish and Town Councils, the parish council in the city, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the city, the Members of the European Parliament for the South West Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the City Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 2 October 2000.

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

14 Stage Three began on 9 January 2001 and will end on 5 March 2001. This stage involves publishing the draft recommendations 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 our draft recommendations.**

15 During Stage Four we will reconsider the draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation, decide whether to move away from them in any areas, and submit final recommendations to the Secretary of State. Interested parties will have a further six weeks to make representations to the Secretary of State. It will then be for him to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. If the Secretary of State accepts the recommendations, with or without modification, he will make an Order. The Secretary of State will determine when any changes come into effect.



## 2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

16 The City of Gloucester is bounded by the district of Tewkesbury to its west, north and east and by the district of Stroud to its south. It is a compact, culturally diverse city, with landmarks including the Cathedral and the restored Victorian Dockland. It has a diverse economic base which includes a number of major engineering and high-tech companies, a well-developed service sector and insurance sector companies. Covering some 4,050 hectares, and with a population of 101,608, Gloucester has a population density of 25 people per hectare. The city contains only one parish, Quedgeley, situated in the south-west of the city.

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

18 The electorate of the city is 82,461 (February 2000). The Council presently has 39 members who are elected from 13 wards, all of which are represented by three councillors. The Council is elected by thirds.

19 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in Gloucester, with around 30 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing developments.

20 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,114 electors, which the City Council forecasts will increase to 2,223 by the year 2005 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 eight of the 13 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the city average, three wards by more than 20 per cent and one ward by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Quedgeley ward, where each of the three councillors represents 36 per cent more electors than the city average.

*Map 1: Existing Wards in Gloucester City*

Figure 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbeymead	3	7,964	2,655	26	8,691	2,897	30
2 Barnwood	3	6,021	2,007	-5	6,021	2,007	-10
3 Barton	3	4,948	1,649	-22	4,977	1,659	-25
4 Eastgate	3	6,107	2,036	-4	6,724	2,241	1
5 Hucclecote	3	7,484	2,495	18	7,478	2,493	12
6 Matson	3	5,540	1,847	-13	5,540	1,847	-17
7 Kingsholm	3	6,459	2,153	2	6,612	2,204	-1
8 Linden	3	5,398	1,799	-15	5,437	1,812	-18
9 Longlevens	3	6,791	2,264	7	7,014	2,338	5
10 Podsmead	3	5,663	1,888	-11	5,686	1,895	-15
11 Quedgeley	3	8,595	2,865	36	9,827	3,276	47
12 Tuffley	3	6,205	2,068	-2	6,205	2,068	-7
13 Westgate	3	5,286	1,762	-17	6,482	2,161	-3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>82,461</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>86,694</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,114</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,223</b>	<b>-</b>

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Gloucester City 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 city. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2000, electors in Barton ward were relatively over-represented by 22 per cent, while electors in Quedgeley ward were relatively under-represented by 36 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

21 At the start of the review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for Gloucester City Council.

22 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met officers and members from the City Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received eight representations during Stage One, including city-wide schemes from the City Council, the Liberal Democrat Group and a local resident, all of which may be inspected at the offices of the City Council and the Commission.

#### **Gloucester City Council**

23 The City Council proposed a council of 36 members, three less than at present, serving 16 wards, compared to the existing 13. It proposed a mix of single- and multi-member wards throughout the city.

24 The City Council argued that its proposed ward boundaries utilised, “wherever possible”, permanent topographical features but stated that less identifiable boundaries had been proposed in areas where “the need to achieve electoral equality [had] outweighed the argument for community identity and interest”. Under the City Council’s proposals two wards, Fieldcourt and Severn, would vary by more than 10 per cent both initially and in 2005.

#### **The Liberal Democrat Group**

25 The Liberal Democrat Group proposed a 37-member council serving 17 wards. It supported the majority of the City Council’s proposals with the exception of an area in the east of the city, where it proposed incorporating an extra councillor, putting forward four new wards, compared to the City Council’s three wards. It also proposed a boundary amendment to the City Council’s proposals in the north of the city.

#### **Other Representations**

26 We received a further six representations, all from local residents. A local resident put forward a city-wide scheme, proposing an increase in council size of one, from 39 to 40 members, serving 13 wards, the same as at present. Her scheme made minor modifications to the existing arrangements and proposed that Quedgeley parish be represented by an additional councillor overall. One local resident objected to the City Council’s proposals for a mixed pattern of single- and multi-member wards, while another objected to the City Council’s proposals for Quedgeley parish, arguing that the ward boundaries should be the same as the parish boundary. Another local resident supported the Liberal Democrat Group’s proposals while another argued that the current Longlevens ward be maintained on its current boundaries. Another local resident objected to the City Council’s proposals, arguing that the Westgate area should be represented by more than a single councillor.



## 4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

27 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Gloucester is, so far as reasonably practicable and consistent with the statutory criteria, 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”.

28 In relation to Schedule 11, our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on existing electorate figures, but also on assumptions as to changes in the number and distribution of local government electors likely to take place within the next five years. We must also have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

29 It is therefore impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for 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.

30 Our *Guidance* states that we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective 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 start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity and interests. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates.

### **Electorate Forecasts**

31 The City Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 5 per cent from 82,461 to 86,694 over the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. It expects most of the growth to be in Quedgeley ward, although a significant amount is also expected in Westgate ward. The Council has 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 City Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

32 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to the City Council’s figures, are content that they represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time.

## **Council Size**

33 As already explained, the Commission's starting point is to assume that the current council size facilitates effective and convenient local government, although we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be the case.

34 Gloucester City Council presently has 39 members. The City Council proposed a council of 36 members, a reduction of three. It argued that the "piloting of the 'cabinet' [form of political structure] has meant the creation of 'executive' and 'non-executive' roles for councillors with the effect of replacing the traditional committee system with a lesser number of scrutiny and quasi-judicial committees." It argued further that a reduction in size would not have an adverse effect on the operation of the council and that the reduction in the number of councillors was supported by all political groups on the city council.

35 The scheme put forward by the Liberal Democrat Group proposed a council size of 37, a reduction of two councillors. The Liberal Democrat Group argued that the east of the city was entitled to ten councillors, one more than that allocated by the City Council. The scheme put forward by a local resident proposed a council size of 40, an increase of one.

36 We have carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One and note that there is a general consensus for a reduction in council size. We consider that there is a lack of evidence to support an increase in the number of councillors and we have not been convinced that this would command widespread support locally. We also carefully considered the Liberal Democrat Group's argument that the east of the city would be entitled to ten councillors, giving a council size of 37. However, we have calculated that the area concerned would merit 9.5 councillors initially but note that by 2005 it would merit only 9.3, and that the extra councillor is therefore not warranted. We are therefore content to endorse the City Council's proposals for a council size of 36, given that it received the support of the majority of the council and would give good electoral equality while, in our view, reflecting the statutory criteria.

37 Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 36 members.

## **Electoral Arrangements**

38 At Stage One, three local residents objected to the City Council's proposed mixed-member ward pattern, arguing that some electors would not have the opportunity to vote as often as others. However, in view of the degree of consensus behind large elements of the Council's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties, we have concluded that we should base our recommendations on the City Council's scheme. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or other schemes submitted at Stage One. We note the objections received with regard to the City Council's proposals for a pattern of single- and multi-member wards, however, while we acknowledge that three-member wards may facilitate elections by

thirds, we recognise that in order to put forward schemes which secure the best balance between electoral equality, reflecting local communities and providing for effective and convenient local government, it may be necessary to move away from a uniform pattern of three-member wards. Therefore, we remain of the view that the City Council's scheme would best meet the need to secure electoral equality while reflecting the statutory criteria. However, to improve electoral equality further, while having regard to local community identities and interests, we have decided to move away from the City Council's proposals in four areas, affecting 11 of its proposed wards. For city warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Eastgate, Kingsholm and Longlevens wards
- (b) Abbeymead, Barnwood and Hucclecote wards
- (c) Matson, Podsmead and Tuffley wards
- (d) Barton, Linden and Westgate wards
- (e) Quedgeley ward

39 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

### **Eastgate, Kingsholm and Longlevens wards**

40 These three wards are each represented by three councillors and are located in the north of the city. Eastgate, Kingsholm and Longlevens wards currently have 4 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more and 7 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average (1 per cent more, 1 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more in 2005).

41 The City Council proposed three wards covering much of this area, Elmbridge and Kingsholm & Wotton wards, each represented by two councillors, and Longlevens ward represented by three councillors. Its proposed Longlevens ward would incorporate the area of Kingsholm ward to the north of Estcourt Road and that part of the current Longlevens ward to the north of Cheltenham Road. Its proposed Kingsholm & Wotton ward would comprise the remainder of the current Kingsholm ward, that part of the current Westgate ward to the east of St Oswald's Road and to the north of the railway line, and the area to the north of Metz Way to the west of the railway line and to the south of Estcourt Road and Wotton Brook from the current Eastgate ward. Its proposed Elmbridge ward would comprise that part of Eastgate ward to the north of Estcourt Road and Wotton Brook and that part of the current Longlevens ward to the south of Cheltenham Road. The City Council's proposed Elmbridge, Kingsholm & Wotton and Longlevens wards would have 3 per cent fewer, 5 per cent fewer and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (3 per cent fewer, 3 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more in 2005).

42 The Liberal Democrat Group objected to the City Council's proposed Kingsholm & Wotton and Longlevens ward, arguing that the "course of Wotton Brook [to the north of Cheltenham Road] would appear to be a convenient boundary". It argued further that the properties to the north of Estcourt Road had "no natural link with the centre of Longlevens". A local resident proposed that the current Longlevens ward be maintained.

43 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage One and have decided to base our draft recommendations on the City Council's submission. Given the good electoral equality and reflection of local communities that would be secured, we propose adopting the City Council's proposed Longlevens and Elmbridge wards in their entirety. We have considered the alternative proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrat Group but note that, under a council size of 36, its proposed Kingsholm & Wotton ward would be significantly under-represented.

44 However, we propose that Sandhurst Lane, and the properties to the east of it, which the City Council proposed including in its Severn ward, should be included within the proposed Kingsholm & Wotton ward as we consider that this area shares more natural links with this ward, to which it is linked by Tewkesbury Road/Kingsholm Road.

45 Under our proposals, the wards of Elmbridge, Kingsholm & Wotton and Longlevens would have 3 per cent fewer, 2 per cent more, and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (3 per cent fewer, 4 per cent more and 5 per cent more respectively by 2005). We would welcome views from all interested parties during Stage Three. These wards are shown on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

### **Abbeymead, Barnwood and Hucclecote wards**

46 The wards of Abbeymead, Barnwood and Hucclecote are each represented by three councillors and are located in the north-east of the city. Abbeymead, Barnwood and Hucclecote wards have 26 per cent more, 5 per cent fewer and 18 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (30 per cent more, 10 per cent fewer and 12 per cent more in 2005).

47 The City Council proposed three revised three-member wards for this area. Its proposed Abbey ward would comprise the current Abbeymead ward, less the area to the north east of Abbeymead Avenue and to the north of Lobleys Drive, and less the area to the north-east of Bittern Avenue and to the west of Abbeymead Avenue. Its proposed Barnwood ward would comprise the majority of the current Barnwood ward, less the area to the south of Heron Way and to the east of Hawthorn Avenue, together with that part of the current Abbeymead ward to the south of Coney Hill Road and to the west of Abbeymead Avenue (as described earlier) and that part of the current Hucclecote ward to the west of Gilpin Avenue/Kingstone Avenue and to the north of and including the King George V playing fields. Its proposed Hucclecote ward would comprise the remainder of the current Hucclecote ward and include the area of the current Abbeymead ward to the north of Lobleys Drive and Abbeymead Avenue. The City Council argued that its proposed Hucclecote ward was based on a "well established residential area". The City Council's proposed Abbey, Barnwood and Hucclecote wards would have 6 per cent more, 5 per cent more and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (3 per cent more, 3 per cent more and 5 per cent more in 2005).

48 The Liberal Democrat Group objected to the City Council's proposals for this area, arguing that the area was entitled to an extra councillor. It proposed four new wards for the area, Abbeymead and Hucclecote, to be represented by three councillors each and Barnwood and Abbeydale wards, represented by two councillors each.

49 A local resident supported the Liberal Democrats' proposals, arguing that their proposals would "better preserve the traditional identity of the Hucclecote area and will also more readily allow the developing community of Abbeymead to establish its own identity".

50 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We noted that under the Liberal Democrat Group's proposed 37-member council this eastern area would merit 9.8 councillors currently, 9.6 in 2005. However, under the City Council's proposed 36-member council it would merit 9.5 councillors currently and 9.3 councillors by 2005. Therefore, as detailed earlier in this chapter, we propose basing our draft recommendations on the City Council's scheme, subject to two boundary modifications in order to address the slight under-representation of the area that would result under its proposals. We propose that the boundary between the proposed Abbey and Barnwood, and Robinswood wards should follow Sud Brook, thus transferring those properties to the west of Sud Brook and to the east of Painswick Road into a revised Robinswood ward as discussed later. Under our proposals, Abbey, Barnwood and Hucclecote wards would have 1 per cent more, equal to and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (2 per cent fewer, 3 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more respectively in 2005). Our draft recommendations are shown on the large map inserted in the back of this report. We would welcome views from all interested parties during Stage Three.

### **Matson, Podsmead and Tuffley wards**

51 Matson, Podsmead and Tuffley wards are located in the south of the city and are each represented by three councillors. The three wards currently have 13 per cent fewer, 11 per cent fewer and 2 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the city average respectively (17 per cent fewer, 15 per cent fewer and 7 per cent fewer in 2005).

52 In order to address the current over-representation of this area, the City Council proposed four new wards; Robinswood ward, to be represented by three councillors, a two-member Tuffley ward, a two-member Grange ward and a single-member Podsmead ward. Its proposed Robinswood ward would comprise the current Matson ward, that part of the current Eastgate ward to the south of the railway line and Painswick Road and that part of the current Barton ward to the south of the railway line. It would also comprise that part of the current Tuffley ward to the east of Stroud Road. Its proposed Podsmead ward would comprise that part of the current Podsmead and Tuffley wards to the north of Cole Avenue. The City Council argued that its proposed Podsmead ward was based on a "well established residential area with extensive commercial sites". Its proposed Grange ward would comprise that part of the current Podsmead ward to the south of Cole Avenue and "residential areas" from the current Quedgeley ward to the north of Sims Lane and east of Bristol Road. Its proposed Tuffley ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Tuffley ward. Under the City Council's proposals Grange, Podsmead, Robinswood and Tuffley wards would have 6 per cent fewer, 8 per cent more, 5 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the city average currently (4 per cent fewer, equal to, 1 per cent more and 2 per cent fewer in 2005).

53 The Liberal Democrat Group supported the City Council's proposals for this area, while a local resident objected to the City Council's proposals.

54 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We are basing our draft recommendations on the City Council's submission, albeit with boundary modifications. As a consequence of our proposal that Quedgeley parish should be divided between two wards (to be discussed later), we are proposing that an area to the west of the railway line in the proposed Tuffley ward should be included instead within a revised Grange ward in order to secure good electoral equality. We propose that the properties around Randwick Road and Nympsfield Road, and those properties on Grange Road to the west of the railway line, should be included in the revised Grange ward, as we consider that this would improve electoral equality further while having regard to the statutory criteria. We also propose that the area to the south of the railway line in the proposed Podsmead ward be transferred to the proposed Tuffley ward, as we consider that this would provide a more identifiable boundary between the two wards. We further propose that the boundary between the City Council's proposed Tuffley and Robinswood ward should follow the existing boundary as far as Reservoir Road and then run south following the western boundary of Robinswood Hill Country Park, in order to improve electoral equality. Under our draft proposals, our proposed Grange, Podsmead, Robinswood and Tuffley wards, as shown on the large map inserted at the back of this report, would have 3 per cent more, 3 per cent more, 6 per cent more and 1 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (1 per cent fewer, 4 per cent fewer, 4 per cent more and 1 per cent fewer respectively in 2005). We would welcome views on our proposals during Stage Three.

### **Barton, Linden and Westgate wards**

55 Barton and Linden wards are located in the central part of the city and are each represented by three councillors. Westgate ward covers the centre of the city and an area along the city's western boundary. Barton, Linden and Westgate wards currently have 22 per cent fewer, 15 per cent fewer and 17 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the city average (25 per cent fewer, 18 per cent fewer and 3 per cent fewer in 2005).

56 The City Council proposed four new wards for this area. Its proposed three-member Moreland ward would comprise the majority of the current Linden ward together with that part of the current Barton ward to the south of Tredworth Road. It would also include that part of the current Westgate ward to the south of Trier Way and to the west of Parkend Road. Its proposed three-member Barton & Tredworth ward would comprise that part of the current Eastgate ward to the south of Metz Way and that part of Barton ward to the north of Tredworth Road. It would also comprise a small area of the current Westgate ward to the east of Park End Road. Its proposed single-member Cathedral ward would comprise that part of the current Westgate ward to the south of the railway line and to the west of Trier Way and to the east of the Quay and the docks area. Its proposed single-member Severn ward would comprise the area of the current Quedgeley ward to the west of the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal, together with The Quay, Royal Oak Road, St Oswald's Road and Tewkesbury Road from the current Westgate ward. It argued that although by 2005 its proposed Severn ward would have 12 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the city average it is a "large, sparsely populated, rural hinterland with well defined natural boundaries". Under these proposals Barton & Tredworth, Cathedral, Moreland and Severn wards would have 1 per cent fewer, equal to, 5 per cent more and 40 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the city average currently (3 per cent fewer, 9 per cent more, equal to and 12 per cent fewer respectively by 2005).

57 The Liberal Democrat Group supported the City Council's proposals for this area and a local resident objected to the City Council's proposals. Another local resident objected to the City Council's proposals for the Westgate ward area.

58 We have carefully considered the representations received and are content to endorse the City Council's proposed Barton & Tredworth and Moreland wards as part of our draft recommendations. However, given the high levels of electoral imbalance in its proposed Cathedral and Severn wards by 2005 we are proposing that these two wards be combined to form a revised two-member Westgate ward. We propose that the existing Westgate ward boundaries along the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal should be retained, before following the centre of St Anns Way and Trier Way. The boundary would then follow the railway line westwards before following the centre of St Oswald's Road and Sandhurst Lane northwards. This would avoid the need for Quedgeley parish to be split between four district wards, as discussed later. We consider that the area to the east of Sandhurst Lane should be transferred to the proposed Kingsholm & Wotton ward (as stated earlier). Under our proposals, the proposed Barton & Tredworth, Moreland and Westgate wards, as shown on the large map inserted at the back of this report, would have 1 per cent fewer, 5 per cent more and 28 per cent fewer electors per councillor than the city average initially (3 per cent fewer, equal to and 9 per cent fewer respectively by 2005). We would welcome views from all interested parties during Stage Three.

### **Quedgeley ward**

59 Quedgeley ward, comprising the parish of the same name, is located in the south-west of the city and is represented by three councillors. Quedgeley ward currently has 36 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average (47 per cent more in 2005) and is the most under-represented ward in the city.

60 The City Council put forward two new wards for the Quedgeley area and also proposed that two smaller areas of the current Quedgeley ward be transferred to its proposed Grange and Severn wards. It proposed that the area of Quedgeley parish to the west of the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal be transferred to its proposed Severn ward and that an area to the north of RAF Quedgeley, east of Bristol Road and to the north of Sims Lane, be transferred to its proposed Grange ward, as previously discussed. It proposed that the remaining area of the parish be split along School Lane to form two two-member wards. Under these proposals Fieldcourt and Severn Vale wards would have 24 per cent fewer and 6 per cent more electors per councillor than the city average currently (12 per cent fewer and 4 per cent more in 2005).

61 The Liberal Democrat Group stated that it had concerns regarding the City Council's proposals for the area. A local resident objected to the City Council's proposals, arguing that the parish has "retained a distinct character of its own". The local resident also proposed that the proposed wards be named Quedgeley North West and Quedgeley South East or South Quedgeley and Canalside wards.

62 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We have concluded that Quedgeley ward would not be best served by being split between four new wards, as proposed by the City Council, and we are of the view that the consequential effect on the electoral

arrangements of the parish council would not provide for effective and convenient local government. We have noted that under a council size of 36, Quedgeley parish would be entitled to almost exactly four city councillors. Therefore, we propose that the current ward be split between two new two-member wards, Fieldcourt and Severn Vale. We propose that the boundary should run north behind the properties on Goss Wood Corner and along the northern edge of the school playing field, along St James', with all the properties within Farriers End and RAF Quedgeley being included within Fieldcourt ward. We consider that these arrangements would better reflect community links and identity in the parish than the City Council's proposals. We carefully considered the alternative ward names submitted at Stage One, but we have not been convinced that they would enjoy widespread support. However, we would welcome views from interested parties at Stage Three. Our proposed Fieldcourt and Severn Vale wards are shown on the large map inserted at the back of this report, and would have 13 per cent fewer and equal to the city average number of electors per councillor currently (1 per cent fewer and 5 per cent more in 2005).

## **Electoral Cycle**

63 The City Council proposed no change to the existing electoral cycle of elections by thirds. We received no other representations on the electoral cycle. We therefore propose no change to the present system of elections by thirds for the City Council.

## **Conclusions**

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

- there should be a reduction in council size from 39 to 36 members;
- there should be 15 wards;
- the boundaries of 13 of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of two wards;
- elections should continue to be held by thirds.

65 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the City Council's scheme, but propose departing from it in the following areas:

- we propose modified boundaries between the proposed Fieldcourt, Grange and Severn Vale wards in the south-western part of the city;
- we propose modified boundaries between the proposed Grange, Podsmead, Robinswood and Tuffley wards in the central and southern parts of the city;
- we propose modifying the boundary between the proposed Robinswood, and Abbey and Barnwood wards in the eastern part of the city;

- we propose that an area around St Oswald's Road, Tewkesbury Road and Sandhurst Lane be included within the proposed Kingsholm & Wotton ward;
- we propose that the proposed Cathedral and Severn wards be combined to form a two-member Westgate ward.

66 Figure 5 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2000 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2005.

*Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements*

	2000 electorate		2005 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	39	36	39	36
Number of wards	13	15	13	15
Average number of electors per councillor	2,114	2,291	2,223	2,408
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	8	1	7	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	3	1	3	0

67 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Gloucester City Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the city average from eight to one. By 2005 no wards are forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the city.

#### **Draft Recommendation**

Gloucester City Council should comprise 36 councillors serving 15 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and on the large map inside the back cover. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

### **Parish Council Electoral Arrangements**

68 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as possible with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different district wards it must also be divided into parish

wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the district. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for the parish of Quedgeley to reflect the proposed city wards.

69 The parish of Quedgeley is currently served by 16 councillors representing five wards: Central, East, Field Court, Severn Vale and South. As part of our draft recommendations we propose that Quedgeley parish be split between two new parish wards, Fieldcourt and Severn Vale, to be coterminous with our proposed city wards of the same name. We would welcome views on our proposals for the warding of Quedgeley parish at Stage Three.

**Draft Recommendation**  
Quedgeley Parish Council should comprise 16 councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Fieldcourt (returning eight councillors) and Severn Vale (returning eight councillors). The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed city ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large map inserted at the back of this report.

70 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of Quedgeley parish.

**Draft Recommendation**  
For parish councils, elections should continue to be held at the same time as elections for the principal authority.

**71 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Gloucester and welcome comments from the City Council and others relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle, ward names, and parish council electoral arrangements. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.**

*Map 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Gloucester*



## 5 NEXT STEPS

72 We are putting forward draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for consultation. We will take fully into account all representations received by 5 March 2001. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Commission and the City Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

73 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Review Manager  
Gloucester Review  
Local Government Commission for England  
Dolphyn Court  
10/11 Great Turnstile  
London WC1V 7JU

Fax: 020 7404 6142

E-mail: [reviews@lgce.gov.uk](mailto:reviews@lgce.gov.uk)

[www.lgce.gov.uk](http://www.lgce.gov.uk)

74 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 Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an Order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.



## APPENDIX A

### Gloucester City Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Our draft recommendations detailed in Figures 1 and 2 differ from those put forward by the City Council in 11 wards, where the Council's proposals were as follows:

*Figure A1: Gloucester City Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>
Abbey	Abbey ward (part); Barnwood ward (part)
Barnwood	Abbey ward (part); Barnwood ward (part); Eastgate ward (part); Hucclecote ward (part)
Cathedral	Barton ward (part); Linden ward (part); Westgate ward (part)
Fieldcourt	Quedgeley ward (part)
Grange	Podsmead ward (part); Quedgeley ward (part)
Kingsholm & Wotton	Eastgate ward (part); Kingsholm ward (part); Westgate ward (part)
Podsmead	Moreland ward (part); Podsmead ward (part); Tuffley ward (part)
Robinswood	Barton ward (part); Eastgate ward (part); Matson ward (part); Tuffley ward (part)
Severn	Quedgeley ward (part); Westgate ward (part)
Severn Vale	Quedgeley ward (part)
Tuffley	Tuffley ward (part)

Figure A2: Gloucester City Council's Proposals: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2000)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2005)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Abbey	3	7,292	2,431	6	7,478	2,493	3
Barnwood	3	7,236	2,412	5	7,478	2,493	3
Cathedral	1	2,288	2,288	0	2,635	2,635	9
Fieldcourt	2	3,487	1,744	-24	4,248	2,124	-12
Grange	2	4,293	2,147	-6	4,636	2,318	-4
Kingsholm & Wotton	2	4,340	2,170	-5	4,651	2,326	-3
Podsmead	1	2,476	2,476	8	2,412	2,412	0
Robinswood	3	7,228	2,409	5	7,284	2,428	1
Severn	1	1,366	1,366	-40	2,108	2,108	-12
Severn Vale	2	4,867	2,434	6	5,012	2,506	4
Tuffley	2	4,548	2,274	-1	4,702	2,351	-2

Source: Electorate figures are based on Gloucester City Council's submission.

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

## APPENDIX B

### The Statutory Provisions

#### Local Government Act 1992: the Commission's Role

1 Section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Commission to undertake periodic electoral reviews of each principal local authority area in England, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Section 13(3) provides that, so far as reasonably practicable, the first such review of any area should be undertaken not less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years, after this Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), submitted an initial electoral review report on the county within which that area, or the larger part of the area, was located. This timetable applies to districts within shire and metropolitan counties, although not to South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear<sup>1</sup>. Nor does the timetable apply to London boroughs; the 1992 Act is silent on the timing of periodic electoral reviews in Greater London. Nevertheless, these areas will be included in the Commission's review programme. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

2 Under section 13(5) of the 1992 Act, the Commission is required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State for any changes to the electoral arrangements within the areas of English principal authorities as appear desirable to it, having regard to the need to:

- (a) reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- (b) secure effective and convenient local government.

3 In reporting to the Secretary of State, the Commission may make recommendations for such changes to electoral arrangements as are specified in section 14(4) of the 1992 Act. In relation to principal authorities, these are:

- the total number of councillors to be elected to the council;
- the number and boundaries of electoral areas (wards or divisions);
- the number of councillors to be elected for each electoral area, and the years in which they are to be elected; and
- the name of any electoral area.

4 Unlike the LGBC, the Commission may also make recommendations for changes in respect of electoral arrangements within parish and town council areas. Accordingly, in relation to parish

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<sup>1</sup> The Local Government Boundary Commission did not submit reports on the counties of South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear.

or town councils within a principal authority's area, the Commission may make recommendations relating to:

- the number of councillors;
- the need for parish wards;
- the number and boundaries of any such wards;
- the number of councillors to be elected for any such ward or, in the case of a common parish, for each parish; and
- the name of any such ward.

5 In conducting the review, section 27 of the 1992 Act requires the Commission to comply, so far as is practicable, with the rules given in Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 for the conduct of electoral reviews.

#### **Local Government Act 1972: Rules to be Observed in Considering Electoral Arrangements**

6 By virtue of section 27 of the Local Government Act 1992, in undertaking a review of electoral arrangements the Commission is required to comply so far as is reasonably practicable with the rules set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Act. For ease of reference, those provisions of Schedule 11 which are relevant to this review are set out below.

7 In relation to shire districts:

Having regard to any changes in the number or distribution of the local government electors of the district likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration (by the Secretary of State or the Commission):

- (a) the ratio of the number of local government electors to the number of councillors to be elected shall be, as nearly as may be, the same in every ward in the district;
- (b) in a district every ward of a parish council shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district;
- (c) in a district every parish which is not divided into parish wards shall lie wholly within a single ward of the district.

8 The Schedule also provides that, subject to (a)–(c) above, regard should be had to:

- (d) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and

(e) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

9 The Schedule provides that, in considering whether a parish should be divided into wards, regard shall be had to whether:

(f) the number or distribution of electors in the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and

(g) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

10 Where it is decided to divide any such parish into parish wards, in considering the size and boundaries of the wards and fixing the number of parish councillors to be elected for each ward, regard shall be had to:

(h) any change in the number or distribution of electors of the parish which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration;

(i) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and

(j) any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

11 Where it is decided not to divide the parish into parish wards, in fixing the number of councillors to be elected for each parish regard shall be had to the number and distribution of electors of the parish and any change which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the fixing of the number of parish councillors.