

Draft recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements
for Thurrock

May 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 borough.

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for the centre and west of Thurrock is inserted inside the back cover of the report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for Thurrock on 28 November 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 Thurrock:

- **in three of the 20 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough;**
- **by 2005 this unequal representation is expected to deteriorate significantly, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in nine wards and by more than 20 per cent in one ward.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 71-72) are that:

- **Thurrock Council should have 49 councillors, as at present;**
- **there should be 20 wards, as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 18 of the existing wards should be modified, and two wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place by thirds.**

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

- **In 15 of the proposed 20 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in all wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2005.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 15 May 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 9 July 2001:

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Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas | Map reference |
|----|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Aveley & Uplands | 3 | Aveley ward (part); Belhus ward (part); West Thurrock ward (part) | Large map |
| 2 | Belhus | 3 | Belhus ward (part); West Thurrock ward (part) | Large map |
| 3 | Chadwell St Mary | 3 | Chadwell St Mary ward (part); East Tilbury ward (part); Little Thurrock Blackshots ward (part); Little Thurrock Rectory ward (part) | Large map |
| 4 | Chafford & North Stifford | 2 | Chafford Hundred ward (part); Grays Riverside ward (part); Stifford ward (part) | Large map |
| 5 | Corringham & Fobbing | 2 | Corringham & Fobbing ward; Corringham West ward (part) | Maps 2 and A2 |
| 6 | East Tilbury | 2 | Chadwell St Mary ward (part); East Tilbury ward (part) | Large map and Map 2 |
| 7 | Grays Riverside | 3 | Grays Riverside ward (part) | Large map |
| 8 | Grays Thurrock | 3 | Grays Riverside ward (part); Grays Thurrock ward | Large map |
| 9 | Little Thurrock Blackshots | 2 | Little Thurrock Blackshots ward; Stifford ward (part) | Large map |
| 10 | Little Thurrock Rectory | 2 | Little Thurrock Rectory ward (part) | Large map |
| 11 | Ockendon | 3 | Belhus ward (part); Ockendon ward | Large map |
| 12 | Orsett | 2 | <i>Unchanged</i> | Large map, Map 2 and Map A2 |
| 13 | South Chafford | 2 | Chafford Hundred ward (part) | Large map |
| 14 | Stanford East & Corringham Town | 3 | Corringham West ward (part); Stanford-le-Hope East ward (part) | Maps 2 and A2 |
| 15 | Stanford-le-Hope West | 2 | Stanford-le-Hope East ward (part); Stanford-le-Hope West ward | Maps 2 and A2 |
| 16 | Stifford Clays | 2 | Stifford ward (part) | Large map |
| 17 | The Homesteads | 3 | Corringham West ward (part); The Homesteads ward | Maps 2 and A2 |

| | Ward name | Number of councillors | Constituent areas | Map reference |
|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--|----------------------|
| 18 | Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park | 2 | Grays Riverside ward (part); Little Thurrock Rectory ward (part); Tilbury Riverside ward | Large map |
| 19 | Tilbury St Chads | 2 | <i>Unchanged</i> | Large map |
| 20 | West Thurrock | 3 | Aveley ward (part); Belhus ward (part); West Thurrock ward (part) | Large map |

Notes: 1 The whole borough is unparished.

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

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Thurrock

| | 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 | Aveley & Uplands | 3 | 6,411 | 2,137 | 2 | 6,520 | 2,173 | -4 |
| 2 | Belhus | 3 | 6,458 | 2,153 | 2 | 6,473 | 2,158 | -4 |
| 3 | Chadwell St Mary | 3 | 7,195 | 2,398 | 14 | 7,208 | 2,403 | 6 |
| 4 | Chafford & North Stifford | 2 | 2,836 | 1,418 | -33 | 4,247 | 2,124 | -6 |
| 5 | Corringham & Fobbing | 2 | 4,466 | 2,233 | 6 | 4,490 | 2,245 | -1 |
| 6 | East Tilbury | 2 | 4,532 | 2,266 | 8 | 4,589 | 2,295 | 2 |
| 7 | Grays Riverside | 3 | 6,131 | 2,044 | -3 | 7,285 | 2,428 | 8 |
| 8 | Grays Thurrock | 3 | 6,322 | 2,107 | 0 | 6,243 | 2,081 | -8 |
| 9 | Little Thurrock Blackshots | 2 | 4,503 | 2,252 | 7 | 4,464 | 2,232 | -1 |
| 10 | Little Thurrock Rectory | 2 | 4,357 | 2,179 | 4 | 4,571 | 2,286 | 1 |
| 11 | Ockendon | 3 | 6,705 | 2,235 | 6 | 6,685 | 2,228 | -1 |
| 12 | Orsett | 2 | 4,493 | 2,247 | 7 | 4,707 | 2,354 | 4 |
| 13 | South Chafford | 2 | 2,043 | 1,022 | -51 | 4,468 | 2,234 | -1 |
| 14 | Stanford East & Corringham Town | 3 | 6,803 | 2,268 | 8 | 6,770 | 2,257 | 0 |
| 15 | Stanford-le-Hope West | 2 | 4,542 | 2,271 | 8 | 4,661 | 2,331 | 3 |
| 16 | Stifford Clays | 2 | 4,887 | 2,444 | 16 | 4,867 | 2,434 | 8 |
| 17 | The Homesteads | 3 | 6,804 | 2,268 | 8 | 6,894 | 2,298 | 2 |

| | 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 (%) |
|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 18 | Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park | 2 | 4,203 | 2,102 | 0 | 4,238 | 2,119 | -6 |
| 19 | Tilbury St Chads | 2 | 4,008 | 2,004 | -5 | 4,124 | 2,062 | -9 |
| 20 | West Thurrock | 3 | 5,244 | 1,748 | -17 | 7,159 | 2,386 | 6 |
| | Totals | 49 | 102,943 | - | - | 110,663 | - | - |
| | Averages | - | - | 2,101 | - | - | 2,258 | - |

Source: Electorate figures are based on Thurrock 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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of Thurrock on which we are now consulting. 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 Thurrock. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in January 1976 (Report No. 140). Since undertaking that review, Thurrock has become a unitary authority (1996) as a consequence of which the Local Government Boundary Commission undertook a Directed Review (1996). The change in unitary status and subsequent Directed Review led to an increase of 10 borough councillors, bringing the total number of councillors from 39 to 49.

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 C).

4 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on Thurrock Council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

5 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (fourth edition published in December 2000). 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 borough 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 borough 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 borough’s electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a borough 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

| Stage | Description |
|--------------|---|
| 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. In unitary authority areas the White Paper proposed elections by thirds. 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 and three-member wards in unitary authority areas. However, it stated that there was no intention to move towards very large electoral wards in sparsely populated rural areas, and that single-member wards (and electoral divisions) would continue in many authorities. 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 and our present *Guidance*.

11 Stage One began on 28 November 2000, when we wrote to Thurrock Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Essex Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, the Members of the European Parliament for the Essex Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Thurrock Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 19 February 2001.

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

13 Stage Three began on 15 May 2001 and will end on 9 July 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.**

14 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

15 The borough of Thurrock is situated to the south of Essex, on the north side of the River Thames. It has 18 miles of river-front and covers an area of 18,433 hectares, more than half of which is Green Belt land. The borough also contains the largely residential areas of Aveley, Belhus, Chadwell St Mary, Corringham, Little Thurrock, South Ockendon, Stanford-le-Hope, Tilbury, West Thurrock and the commercial centre of the borough, Grays. The borough is entirely unparished. The riverside area is highly industrialised; it contains the large modern container port of Tilbury, oil refineries at Coryton and Shell Haven and bulk storage installations at Purfleet, South Stifford and West Thurrock. The borough also contains the Lakeside Regional Shopping Centre. While the rural parts of the borough contain some thriving agricultural communities, of the 52,000 domestic properties in the borough, 13,000 are Council owned. The borough is well connected to London and the North by the A13, the M25 and by railway. The Queen Elizabeth Road Bridge and high-speed rail links connect Thurrock to Kent and the South. Thurrock became a unitary authority in April 1996. The borough is entirely unparished.

16 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'.

17 The electorate of the borough is 102,943 (February 2000). The Council presently has 49 members who are elected from 20 wards, two of which are relatively rural in character with the remainder being predominantly urban. Nine of the wards are each represented by three councillors and 11 are each represented by two councillors. The Council is elected by thirds.

18 Since the last Directed Review in 1996 there has been an increase in the electorate in Thurrock, with around 5 per cent more electors than six years ago as a result of significant housing development. The most notable increases have been in Chadwell St Mary, Chafford Hundred and Little Thurrock Rectory wards.

19 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,101 electors, which the Council forecasts will increase to 2,258 by the year 2005 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, including significant housing development, the number of electors per councillor in three of the 20 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average. The worst imbalance is in Little Thurrock Rectory ward where the councillor represents 15 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in Thurrock

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 | Aveley | 3 | 5,709 | 1,903 | -9 | 5,781 | 1,927 | -15 |
| 2 | Belhus | 3 | 6,459 | 2,153 | 2 | 6,476 | 2,159 | -4 |
| 3 | Chadwell St Mary | 3 | 7,025 | 2,342 | 11 | 7,212 | 2,404 | 6 |
| 4 | Chafford Hundred | 2 | 4,549 | 2,275 | 8 | 8,381 | 4,191 | 86 |
| 5 | Corringham & Fobbing | 2 | 4,413 | 2,207 | 5 | 4,437 | 2,219 | -2 |
| 6 | Corringham West | 2 | 3,984 | 1,992 | -5 | 3,972 | 1,986 | -12 |
| 7 | East Tilbury | 2 | 4,281 | 2,141 | 2 | 4,338 | 2,169 | -4 |
| 8 | Grays Riverside | 3 | 6,131 | 2,044 | -3 | 7,285 | 2,428 | 8 |
| 9 | Grays Thurrock | 3 | 6,322 | 2,107 | 0 | 6,243 | 2,081 | -8 |
| 10 | Little Thurrock Blackshots | 2 | 3,859 | 1,930 | -8 | 3,806 | 1,903 | -16 |
| 11 | Little Thurrock Rectory | 2 | 4,815 | 2,408 | 15 | 5,029 | 2,515 | 11 |
| 12 | Ockendon | 3 | 6,705 | 2,235 | 6 | 6,685 | 2,228 | -1 |
| 13 | Orsett | 2 | 4,493 | 2,247 | 7 | 4,707 | 2,354 | 4 |
| 14 | Stanford-le-Hope East | 2 | 4,413 | 2,207 | 5 | 4,473 | 2,237 | -1 |
| 15 | Stanford-le-Hope West | 2 | 3,858 | 1,929 | -8 | 3,896 | 1,948 | -14 |
| 16 | Stifford | 3 | 6,122 | 2,041 | -3 | 6,102 | 2,034 | -10 |
| 17 | The Homesteads | 3 | 5,947 | 1,982 | -6 | 6,037 | 2,012 | -11 |
| 18 | Tilbury Riverside | 2 | 3,745 | 1,873 | -11 | 3,780 | 1,890 | -16 |

| 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 (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 19 Tilbury St Chads | 2 | 4,168 | 2,084 | -1 | 4,124 | 2,062 | -9 |
| 20 West Thurrock | 3 | 5,945 | 1,982 | -6 | 7,899 | 2,633 | 17 |
| Totals | 49 | 102,943 | – | – | 110,663 | – | – |
| Averages | – | – | 2,101 | – | – | 2,258 | – |

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Thurrock Council

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2000, electors in Tilbury Riverside ward were relatively over-represented by 11 per cent, while electors in Little Thurrock Rectory ward were relatively under-represented by 15 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

20 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 Thurrock Council.

21 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met officers and members of Thurrock Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received two representations during Stage One, including a borough-wide scheme from the Council, both of which may be inspected at the offices of the Council and the Commission.

Thurrock Council

22 Thurrock Council proposed a council of 49 members serving 20 wards, as at present. The Council proposed changes to all but four of the existing wards.

23 Under its proposals there would be improved levels of electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average in six wards, and by more than 20 per cent in three wards. This level of electoral equality would improve considerably over the next five years, to vary by less than 10 per cent in all 20 wards by 2005.

24 Thurrock Council's proposal is summarised in Appendix B.

Other Representations

25 We received a further representation from South Stifford Residents' Association, which proposed combining North and South Stifford in a single ward.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

26 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Thurrock 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”.

27 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.

28 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.

29 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 be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

Electorate Forecasts

30 Thurrock Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2005, projecting an increase in the electorate of some 7 per cent from 102,943 to 110,663 over the five-year period from 2000 to 2005. It expects most of the growth to be in Chafford Hundred where work is continuing on the Chafford Hundred housing development of more than 4,000 residential units plus schools and local facilities. 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 Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained.

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

Council Size

32 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.

33 Thurrock Council presently has 49 members. At Stage One, the Council proposed retaining the existing council size in order to continue to meet the Council's work commitments. We received no further representations regarding the size of the council at Stage One.

34 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 49 members.

Electoral Arrangements

35 Having considered alternative options, we have decided to base our draft recommendations on Thurrock Council's scheme. We note that it has not received any opposition as a result of being put on public display at the Civic Offices of the Council, and we recognise that it has received support from both political parties and the independent members on the Council. We consider that this scheme would provide a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or alternative schemes. However, to better reflect local community identities and interests and to use more clearly identifiable boundaries, we have decided to move away from the Council's proposals in 13 wards. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Aveley, Belhus, Ockendon and West Thurrock wards;
- (b) Chafford Hundred, Grays Riverside, Grays Thurrock and Stifford wards;
- (c) Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Little Thurrock Rectory, Tilbury Riverside and Tilbury St Chads wards;
- (d) Corringham & Fobbing, Corringham West, Orsett, Stanford-le-Hope East, Stanford-le-Hope West and The Homesteads wards.

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

Aveley, Belhus, Ockendon and West Thurrock wards

37 The existing wards of Aveley, Belhus, Ockendon and West Thurrock cover the western part of the borough. Under the current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in each of the four wards varies from the borough average by 9 per cent, 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years in Aveley, Belhus and West Thurrock wards, to vary by 15 per cent, 4 per cent and 17 per cent, while improving in Ockendon ward, to vary by 1 per cent from the borough average in 2005.

38 At Stage One Thurrock Council proposed that this area should comprise the four three-member wards of Aveley & Uplands, Belhus, Ockendon and West Thurrock. It proposed that Aveley ward should comprise the existing Aveley ward and that part of the existing West Thurrock ward bounded by London Road, North Road, Purfleet By-Pass and Ship Lane. It proposed that in order to address the levels of electoral inequality in the geographically isolated ward of Aveley, it should be combined with the “nearest community”, which is the area of West Thurrock, known as Uplands, which is self-contained and relatively isolated from other areas. It did not propose any changes to the existing wards of Belhus and Ockendon, given that these wards have reasonable levels of electoral equality which are not projected to change significantly over the next five years. It proposed that West Thurrock ward should comprise the remainder of the existing ward less the Gumley Road Estate, to the south-east of London Road and The Chase, in order to address electoral inequality in the existing ward.

39 Under the Council’s proposals there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Aveley & Uplands, Belhus, Ockendon and West Thurrock wards by 2 per cent, 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 22 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Ockendon and West Thurrock wards, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 1 per cent from the borough average in each ward. The level of electoral equality in Aveley & Uplands and Belhus wards is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary by 4 per cent from the borough average in each ward in 2005.

40 We received no other representations for this area at Stage One.

41 Having considered the Council’s proposal and our own alternatives, we consider that there is considerable merit in the Council’s proposals. They would result in good levels of electoral equality and would reflect community identities and interests, having regard to the strong road and land boundaries in this area. We therefore propose largely adopting the Council’s proposals for this area. However, in the interests of improved community representation and in order to use more clearly identifiable boundaries, we are proposing a number of amendments to the proposed wards.

42 In the north-west of the borough, we propose using the more clearly identifiable boundaries of the M25 and the A13 between the proposed wards of Aveley, Belhus and West Thurrock. This would have a minimal effect on electoral equality. We considered using the M25 as the whole of the boundary between Aveley and Belhus wards, however, we considered that it made more sense for Belhus Park, to the west of the M25, to remain in Belhus ward. We are concerned that the Council’s proposed boundary between Grays Riverside and West Thurrock wards would divide communities and we propose therefore retaining the existing boundary between these two wards. While this would result in marginally worse levels of electoral equality, we consider that this is justified in order to use a clearer boundary between communities.

43 On the advice of Ordnance Survey we propose a minor amendment to the boundary between the proposed Belhus and Ockendon wards in order to tie the boundaries to clearer ground detail. These changes would not affect any electors.

44 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in Aveley & Uplands, Belhus, Ockendon and West Thurrock wards by 2 per cent, 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 17 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Ockendon and West Thurrock wards, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 1 per cent and 6 per cent from the borough average. The level of electoral equality in Aveley & Uplands and Belhus wards is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary by 4 per cent from the borough average in each ward in 2005. Our draft recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 2, and are illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

Chafford Hundred, Grays Riverside, Grays Thurrock and Stifford wards

45 The existing wards of Chafford Hundred, Grays Riverside, Grays Thurrock and Stifford cover the western centre of the borough. Under the current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in Chafford Hundred, Grays Riverside and Stifford wards varies from the borough average by 8 per cent, 3 per cent and 3 per cent respectively, while equalling the borough average in Grays Thurrock ward. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years in Chafford Hundred, Grays Riverside, Grays Thurrock and Stifford wards, to vary by 86 per cent, 8 per cent, 8 per cent and 10 per cent from the borough average in 2005.

46 At Stage One Thurrock Council proposed that this area should comprise five wards with Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock wards each being represented by three councillors and Chafford & North Stifford, South Chafford and Stifford Clays wards each being represented by two councillors. It proposed that Chafford & North Stifford ward should comprise that part of the existing Chafford Hundred ward to the east of Warren Gorge and that part of the existing Stifford ward to the west of Cuckoo Lane, Medebridge Road, and Stifford Clays Road. While it noted that North Stifford is separated by major roads from surrounding areas, it considered that it shares community ties most closely with the Chafford Hundred estate, so the Council proposed combining them in a ward. The remainder of the existing Chafford Hundred ward would form the proposed South Chafford ward.

47 It proposed that Grays Riverside ward should comprise the existing ward less that part bounded by Brooke Road, Clarence Road, High Street, Hogg Lane and London Road, which it proposed transferring to Grays Thurrock ward, together with the Gumley Road Estate of the existing West Thurrock ward (as detailed above). It proposed that Grays Thurrock ward should comprise the existing ward and that part of Grays Riverside, as detailed above. It argued that the transfer of electors from Grays Riverside to Grays Thurrock ward would address electoral imbalances between the existing Grays wards and would counter the effect of adding the Gumley Road Estate to the proposed Grays Riverside ward. It proposed that Stifford Clays ward should comprise the remainder of the existing Stifford ward, less Blackshots Lane and roads to its east, together with Albert Close, Victoria Avenue and Regent Close. It argued that this area comprises similar housing and that the proposed changes will address electoral inequality in the area without affecting community representation.

48 Under the Council's proposals there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Chafford & North Stifford, Grays

Riverside, Grays Thurrock, South Chafford and Stifford Clays wards by 33 per cent, 10 per cent, 12 per cent, 51 per cent and 16 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve considerably over the next five years due to significant housing development which is planned for the Chafford area. The number of electors per councillor in each of the five wards is projected to vary by 6 per cent, 1 per cent, 3 per cent, 1 per cent and 8 per cent from the borough average in 2005.

49 At Stage One, we received a further representation from South Stifford Residents' Association, which proposed combining North and South Stifford in a single ward. It argued that the two areas share historic, social and community links.

50 Having considered the options available, we note that the Council's proposals result in good levels of electoral equality and generally seem to reflect community identities and interests while having regard to the strong road and land boundaries in this area. We therefore propose adopting the Council's proposed wards for this area, subject to amendments in order to improve the reflection of community identity and to provide more clearly identifiable boundaries. We have noted the comments of South Stifford Residents' Association. However, North and South Stifford are divided by the Chafford Hundred Estate and we do not consider that combining North and South Stifford with a section of Chafford Hundreds would offer a better reflection of community identity or clearer boundaries than the Council's proposals. We are content, therefore, to endorse the Council's proposed Chafford & North Stifford, Stifford Clays and South Chafford wards.

51 As a result of changes to the proposed boundary between Grays Riverside and West Thurrock wards (as detailed above), it is not necessary to deviate from the existing boundary between Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock in order to ensure good levels of electoral equality. We consider that the existing boundary between Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock wards offers a clearer boundary between communities than the Council's alternative. We therefore propose retaining the existing ward boundaries. These proposals would have a slight adverse effect on proposed levels of electoral equality, which we consider to be justified given that our draft recommendations would use clearer boundaries between communities, using established ward boundaries.

52 On the advice of Ordnance Survey we propose minor amendments to the boundaries between the proposed Chafford & North Stifford and Grays Riverside wards, Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock wards, and Grays Riverside and Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park wards in order to tie the boundaries to ground detail. These changes would not affect any electors.

53 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in Chafford & North Stifford, Grays Riverside, South Chafford and Stifford Clays wards by 33 per cent, 3 per cent, 51 per cent and 16 per cent respectively, while equalling the borough average in Grays Thurrock ward. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Chafford & North Stifford, South Chafford and Stifford Clays wards, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 8 per cent from the borough average. The level of electoral equality in Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock wards is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary by 8 per cent from the borough average in

each ward by 2005. Our draft recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 2, and are illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Little Thurrock Rectory, Tilbury Riverside and Tilbury St Chads wards

54 The existing wards of Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Little Thurrock Rectory, Tilbury Riverside and Tilbury St Chads wards cover the eastern centre of the borough. Under the current arrangements the number of electors per councillor varies from the borough average by 11 per cent, 2 per cent, 8 per cent, 15 per cent, 11 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years in East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Tilbury Riverside and Tilbury St Chads to vary by 4 per cent, 16 per cent, 16 per cent and 9 per cent from the borough average, while improving in Chadwell St Mary and Little Thurrock Rectory ward, to vary by 6 per cent and 11 per cent from the borough average in 2005.

55 At Stage One Thurrock Council proposed that this area should comprise six wards, with Chadwell St Mary ward being represented by three councillors and East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Little Thurrock Rectory, Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park and Tilbury St Chads wards each being represented by two councillors. It proposed that Chadwell St Mary ward should comprise the existing ward, less the area of new development to the south-east of Linford Road and Sandy Lane, which it proposed transferring to Tilbury St Chads ward in the interest of electoral equality. It argued that this part of Chadwell St Mary is a new development which “has clearly no association with the established part of Chadwell St Mary”.

56 It proposed that Little Thurrock Blackshots ward should comprise the existing ward and the eastern parts of the existing Stifford ward (as detailed above) which comprises properties of a similar character to the remainder of this ward. This addition would address existing electoral imbalances in this ward. It proposed a Little Thurrock Rectory ward, comprising the majority of the existing Little Thurrock Rectory ward, less the Thurrock Park estate, in the south of the existing ward, which it proposed combining with Tilbury Riverside ward. It proposed that Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park ward should comprise the existing Tilbury Riverside ward and the southern part of Little Thurrock Rectory ward, while Tilbury St Chads ward should comprise the existing Tilbury St Chads ward and the south-eastern part of the existing Chadwell St Mary ward (as detailed above). It argued that, although Tilbury is isolated by green belt land, marshland and the River Thames, it proposed combining Tilbury Riverside with Thurrock Park and Tilbury St Chads with part of Chadwell St Mary to address the existing electoral imbalance within the whole Tilbury area. It stated that the Thurrock Park area of Little Thurrock Rectory ward is of a different character to the rest of this ward and has its own supermarket. However, it noted that there is “unlikely to be any affiliation between Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park”.

57 Under the Council’s proposals there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Little Thurrock Rectory and Tilbury St Chads wards by 10 per cent, 2 per cent, 13 per cent, 4 per cent and 1 per cent respectively, while equalling the borough average in Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park ward. This level of electoral equality is projected to

improve over the next five years in Chadwell St Mary, Little Thurrock Blackshots and Little Thurrock Rectory wards, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 3 per cent, 4 per cent and 1 per cent from the borough average. The level of electoral equality in East Tilbury, Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park and Tilbury St Chads wards is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary by 4 per cent, 6 per cent and 3 per cent from the borough average in 2005.

58 We received no further representations for this area at Stage One.

59 Having considered the Council's proposals and alternative options, we consider that the Council's proposals would result in good levels of electoral equality and would generally represent the distinct communities within this area. We therefore propose adopting the Council's proposed wards for this area subject to a number of boundary changes. We are of the view that the area to the east of the A1089, which the Council has proposed including in Little Thurrock Blackshots ward, has stronger road connections with Chadwell St Mary and appears to be of a similar character to that ward. Therefore, we propose transferring this area to Chadwell St Mary ward, using the A1089 as a clearly identifiable boundary between the two wards. As a result of this proposal the electoral variance of Chadwell St Mary ward would be marginally higher. However, the level of electoral equality in Little Thurrock Blackshots ward would improve under our recommendations. We consider that the A1089 would form a more clearly identifiable boundary between Little Thurrock Rectory ward and areas to its east. This change would have a minimal effect on proposed levels of electoral equality.

60 While we consider that Tilbury is a self-contained community, it is necessary to combine it with other areas in order to secure good levels of electoral equality, as it merits three and a half councillors overall. In the interests of electoral equality, the Council proposed combining Tilbury Riverside ward with the southern part of the existing Little Thurrock Rectory ward. While we do not consider that this proposal is ideal, given that it divides part of Little Thurrock Rectory from the areas to which it is most closely connected, we note that this area comprises a self-contained housing estate which has its own shopping facilities. Having considered alternative options for combining parts of Tilbury with surrounding areas we have concluded that this proposal is the best option available, given that it would use relatively strong boundaries and would divide the community of Little Thurrock into clearly identifiable areas. However, we would welcome views from interested parties at Stage Three with regard to this issue.

61 We have some concerns regarding the Council's proposal to combine the existing Tilbury St Chads ward with the south-eastern part of the existing Chadwell St Mary ward. There are no direct road connections between these two areas, which are of a significantly different character. We do not, therefore, consider that it would be in the best interests of the communities involved for these areas to be combined. If the south-eastern part of Chadwell St Mary's were retained in the existing ward it would result in an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent from the borough average and we do not consider that this level of inequality would be justified, given that this area shares road links with areas to the east. Therefore, we propose that this area should be combined with East Tilbury ward, which is of a similarly rural character. This proposal would have a slight adverse effect on the electoral equality within Chadwell St Mary and Tilbury St Chads wards; however, the level of electoral equality in East Tilbury ward would improve under our proposals.

62 On the advice of Ordnance Survey we propose minor amendments to the boundaries between the proposed Chadwell St Mary and East Tilbury, and Grays Riverside and Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park wards in order to tie the boundaries to ground detail. These changes would not affect any electors.

63 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillor would vary from the borough average in Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots, Little Thurrock Rectory and Tilbury St Chads wards by 14 per cent, 8 per cent, 7 per cent, 4 per cent and 5 per cent respectively, while equalling the borough average in Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park ward. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Chadwell St Mary, East Tilbury, Little Thurrock Blackshots and Little Thurrock Rectory wards, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 6 per cent, 2 per cent, 1 per cent and 1 per cent from the borough average. The level of electoral equality in Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park and Tilbury St Chads wards is projected to deteriorate marginally, to vary by 6 per cent and 9 per cent from the borough average in 2005. Our draft recommendations are detailed in Figures 1 and 2, and are illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

Corringham & Fobbing, Corringham West, Orsett, Stanford-le-Hope East, Stanford-le-Hope West and The Homesteads wards

64 The existing wards of Corringham & Fobbing, Corringham West, Orsett, Stanford-le-Hope East, Stanford-le-Hope West and The Homesteads cover the north-eastern part of the borough. Under the current arrangements the number of electors per councillor varies from the borough average in each of the six wards by 5 per cent, 5 per cent, 7 per cent, 5 per cent, 8 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to deteriorate over the next five years in Corringham West, Stanford-le-Hope West and The Homesteads wards, to vary by 12 per cent, 14 per cent and 11 per cent, while improving in Corringham & Fobbing, Orsett and Stanford-le-Hope East wards, to vary by 2 per cent, 4 per cent and 1 per cent from the borough average in 2005.

65 At Stage One Thurrock Council proposed that this area should comprise five wards, with Stanford East & Corringham Town and The Homesteads wards each being represented by three councillors and Corringham & Fobbing, Orsett and Stanford-le-Hope West wards each being represented by two councillors. It proposed that Corringham & Fobbing ward should comprise the existing ward, with a minor boundary change to unite the whole of Brampton Close within the ward. It proposed retaining the existing boundaries of Orsett ward.

66 The Council put forward a Stanford East & Corringham Town ward, comprising the existing Corringham West ward, less Brampton Close and less that part to the north of Bracelet Close, Edinburgh Avenue, Lyndhurst Road, Mackley Drive and Queen Elizabeth Drive, which it proposed transferring to The Homesteads ward. It asserted that this would form a “broadly homogenous” ward, using clear road boundaries. It proposed that Stanford-le-Hope West ward should comprise the existing Stanford-le-Hope West ward and that part of the existing Stanford-le-Hope East ward to the south of The Manorway. It argued that the areas to be combined in this ward are of a similar character and that The Manorway would offer a “very clear northern

boundary” to this ward. It proposed that The Homesteads ward should comprise the existing The Homesteads ward and the northern part of the existing Corringham West ward (as detailed above) in order to address electoral inequalities in the existing ward.

67 Under the Council’s proposals there would be improved electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor varying from the borough average in Corringham & Fobbing, Orsett, Stanford East & Corringham Town, Stanford-le-Hope West and The Homesteads wards by 6 per cent, 7 per cent, 8 per cent, 8 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve over the next five years in Corringham & Fobbing, Orsett, Stanford-le-Hope West and The Homesteads wards, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 1 per cent, 4 per cent, 3 per cent and 2 per cent from the borough average, while equalling the borough average in Stanford East & Corringham Town ward.

68 We received no other representations for this area at Stage One.

69 Having considered alternative options, we consider that there is considerable merit in the Council’s proposals. These proposals would result in good levels of electoral equality and we consider that they reflect community identities and interests by combining areas of similar character. We also consider that they have proposed clearly identifiable boundaries, which have regard to the strong road and land boundaries in the area. We therefore propose adopting the Council’s proposed wards for this area without amendment. The electoral variances would be as detailed above. Our draft recommendations are also detailed in Figures 1 and 2, and are illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map at the back of the report.

Electoral Cycle

70 Thurrock Council did not propose any change to the existing electoral cycle and we received no other proposals in relation to the electoral cycle of the borough. Accordingly, we make no recommendation for change to the present system of election by thirds.

Conclusions

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

- the existing council size 49 members should be retained;
- there should be 20 wards;
- the boundaries of 18 of the existing wards should be modified;
- elections should continue to be held by thirds.

72 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on Thurrock Council’s proposals, but propose departing from them in the following areas:

- the boundaries between the proposed wards of Aveley & Uplands, Belhus and West Thurrock should be amended to use the clearer boundaries of the A13 and M25 roads;
- the boundaries of the proposed Belhus, Chadwell St Mary, Chafford & North Stifford, East Tilbury, Ockendon and Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park wards should be amended in order to tie the boundaries to ground detail;
- the existing boundary between the proposed wards of Grays Riverside and West Thurrock should be retained;
- the existing boundaries of Grays Riverside and Grays Thurrock wards should be retained, subject to minor changes in order to tie the boundaries of Grays Thurrock ward to ground detail;
- the A1089 and Marshfoot Road should form the eastern boundary of Little Thurrock Blackshots and Little Thurrock Rectory wards, and the eastern parts of the two wards should be transferred to Chadwell St Mary ward;
- the northern part of the proposed Tilbury St Chads ward should be transferred to East Tilbury ward.

73 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 | 49 | 49 | 49 | 49 |
| Number of wards | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| Average number of electors per councillor | 2,101 | 2,101 | 2,258 | 2,258 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average | 3 | 5 | 9 | 0 |
| Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

74 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for Thurrock Council would result in an increase in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from three to five. However, by 2005 no wards are forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough.

Draft Recommendation

Thurrock Council should comprise 49 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large map inside the back cover. The Council should continue to hold elections by thirds.

75 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Thurrock and welcome comments from Thurrock Council and others relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, electoral cycle and ward names. 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 Thurrock

5 NEXT STEPS

76 We are putting forward draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for consultation. We will take fully into account all representations received by 9 July 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 Thurrock Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

77 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

Review Manager
Thurrock 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

www.lgce.gov.uk

78 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

Draft Recommendations for Thurrock: Detailed Mapping

The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for the Thurrock area.

Map A1 illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail in Map A2 and the large map at the back of the report.

Map A2 illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for the east of Thurrock.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for the centre and west of the Thurrock.

Map A1: Draft Recommendations for Thurrock: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed Warding of the East of Thurrock

APPENDIX B

Thurrock Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Our draft recommendations detailed in Figures 1 and 2 differ from those put forward by Thurrock Council in only 13 wards, where the Council's proposals were as follows:

Figure B1: Thurrock Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas

| Ward name | Constituent areas |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Aveley & Uplands | Aveley ward; West Thurrock ward (part) |
| Belhus | <i>Unchanged</i> |
| Chadwell St Mary | Chadwell St Mary ward (part) |
| Chafford & North Stifford | Chafford Hundred ward (part); Stifford ward (part) |
| East Tilbury | <i>Unchanged</i> |
| Grays Riverside | Grays Riverside ward (part); West Thurrock ward (part) |
| Grays Thurrock | Grays Riverside ward; Grays Thurrock ward |
| Little Thurrock Blackshots | Little Thurrock Blackshots ward; Stifford ward (part) |
| Little Thurrock Rectory | Little Thurrock Rectory ward (part) |
| Ockendon | <i>Unchanged</i> |
| Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park | Little Thurrock Rectory ward (part); Tilbury Riverside ward |
| Tilbury St Chads | Chadwell St Mary ward (part); Tilbury St Chads ward |
| West Thurrock | West Thurrock ward (part) |

Figure B2: Thurrock 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 (%) |
|----|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Aveley & Uplands | 3 | 6,410 | 2,137 | 2 | 6,517 | 2,172 | -4 |
| 2 | Belhus | 3 | 6,459 | 2,153 | 2 | 6,476 | 2,159 | -4 |
| 3 | Chadwell St Mary | 3 | 6,934 | 2,311 | 10 | 6,961 | 2,320 | 3 |
| 4 | Chafford & North Stifford | 2 | 2,836 | 1,418 | -33 | 4,247 | 2,124 | -6 |
| 6 | East Tilbury | 2 | 4,281 | 2,141 | 2 | 4,338 | 2,169 | -4 |
| 7 | Grays Riverside | 3 | 5,684 | 1,895 | -10 | 6,834 | 2,278 | 1 |
| 8 | Grays Thurrock | 3 | 7,085 | 2,362 | 12 | 7,006 | 2,335 | 3 |
| 9 | Little Thurrock Blackshots | 2 | 4,764 | 2,382 | 13 | 4,711 | 2,356 | 4 |
| 10 | Little Thurrock Rectory | 2 | 4,357 | 2,179 | 4 | 4,571 | 2,286 | 1 |
| 11 | Ockendon | 3 | 6,705 | 2,235 | 6 | 6,685 | 2,228 | -1 |
| 18 | Tilbury Riverside & Thurrock Park | 2 | 4,203 | 2,102 | 0 | 4,238 | 2,119 | -6 |
| 19 | Tilbury St Chads | 2 | 4,259 | 2,130 | 1 | 4,375 | 2,188 | -3 |
| 20 | West Thurrock | 3 | 4,928 | 1,643 | -22 | 6,847 | 2,282 | 1 |

Source: Electorate figures are based on Thurrock 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 borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

APPENDIX C

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.

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 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.

APPENDIX D

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 Local Government Commission, 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 D1: Commission 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 | The Commission complies with this requirement |
| It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose | The Commission complies 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 | The Commission complies 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 | The Commission complies 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 | The Commission consults 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 | The Commission complies with this requirement |
| Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated | The Commission complies with this requirement |