

Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lancashire

May 2003

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What is The Boundary Committee for England?

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

Members of the Committee:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

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

Summary

We began a review of Lancashire's electoral arrangements on 9 July 2002.

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

We found that the current arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Lancashire:

- **In 34 of the 78 divisions, each of which are currently represented by a single councillor, the number of electors varies by more than 10% from the average for the county and 16 divisions vary by more than 20%.**
- **By 2006 this situation is improve slightly with the number of electors forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 27 divisions and by more than 20% in 13 divisions.**

Our main proposals for Lancashire's future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and Paragraphs 137–138) are that:

- **Lancashire should have 84 councillors, six more than at present, representing 84 divisions;**
- **as the divisions are based on district wards which have themselves been changed as a result of recent district reviews, the boundaries of all divisions will be subject to change.**

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

- **In 23 of the proposed 84 divisions the number of electors per councillor would vary by more than 10% from the average and by more than 20% in two divisions.**
- **This level of electoral equality is expected to improve further with the number of electors per councillor in 22 divisions expected to vary by more than 10% from the average and one division by more than 20% by 2006.**

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

- **We will consult on these proposals for eight weeks from 28 May 2003. We take this consultation very seriously. We may decide to move away from our draft recommendations in light of comments or suggestions that we receive. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, which will then be responsible for implementing change to the local authority electoral arrangements.**
- **The Electoral Commission will decide whether to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. It will also decide when any changes will come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to us at the address below by 21 July 2003.

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

Table 1: Draft recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards	
Burnley		
1	Burnley Central East	Part of Bank Hall ward; Brunshaw ward; Daneshouse with Stoneyholme ward.
2	Burnley Central West	Part of Gannow ward; Trinity ward; Whittlefield with Ightenhill ward.
3	Burnley North East	Part of Bank Hall ward; Lanehead ward; Queensgate ward.
4	Burnley Rural	Briercliffe ward; Cliviger with Worsthorpe; part of Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward.
5	Burnley South West	Part of Coal Clough with Deerplay ward; part of Gannow ward; Rosegrove with Lowerhouse ward; part of Rosehill with Burnley Wood ward.
6	Padiham and Burnley West	Part of Coal Clough with Deerplay ward; Gawthorpe ward; Hapton with Park ward.
Chorley		
7	Chorley East	Chorley East ward; Chorley North East ward;
8	Chorley North	Astley & Buckshaw ward; Clayton-le-Woods & Whittle-le-Woods ward; Euxton North ward.
9	Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton Ward; Heath Charnock & Rivington ward; Pennine ward; Wheelton & Withnell ward.
10	Chorley Rural North	Brindle & Hoghton ward; Clayton-le-Woods North ward; Clayton-le-Woods West & Cuerden ward.
11	Chorley Rural West	Eccleston & Mawdesley ward; Euxton South ward; Lostock ward.
12	Chorley South	Chisnall ward; Coppull ward.
13	Chorley West	Chorley South East ward; Chorley South West ward.
Fylde		
14	Fylde East	Kirkham North ward; Kirkham South ward; Medlar with Wesham ward; Newton & Treales ward.
15	Flyde South	Freckleton West ward; Freckleton East ward; Ribby with Wrea ward; part of Warton and Westby ward.
16	Flyde West	Elswick & Little Eccleston ward; Park ward; Singleton & Greenhalgh ward; Staining and Weeton ward; part of Warton and Westby ward.
17	Lytham	Ansdell ward; Clifton ward; St Johns ward.
18	St Annes North	Ashton ward; Kilnhouse ward; St Leonards ward.
19	St Annes South	Central ward; Fairhaven ward; Heyhouses ward.
Hyndburn		
20	Accrington Central	Central ward; part of Church ward; part of Immanuel ward; Spring Hill ward.
21	Accrington North	Part of Church ward; Huncoat ward; Milnshaw ward.
22	Accrington South	Barnfield ward; Baxenden ward; Peel ward.
23	Great Harwood	Netherton ward; Overton ward.
24	Oswaldtwistle	Part of Immanuel ward; St. Andrew's ward; St. Oswald's ward.
25	Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham	Altham ward; Clayton-le-Moors ward; Rishton ward.
Lancaster		
26	Heysham North	Torrisholme ward; Westgate ward.
27	Heysham South	Heysham Central ward; Heysham South ward; Overton ward.
28	Lancaster Central	Bulk ward; Castle ward.
29	Lancaster Rural East	Lower Lune Valley ward; Halton with Aughton ward; Kellet ward; Upper Lune Valley ward.
30	Lancaster Rural North	Bolton-le-Sands ward; Carnforth ward; Silverdale ward; Warton ward.
31	Lancaster Rural South	Ellel ward; Scotforth West ward; University ward.
32	Lancaster South East	Dukes ward; John O'Gaunt ward; Scotforth East.
33	Morecambe North	Bare ward; part of Poulton ward; Slyne with Hest ward.
34	Morecambe West	Harbour ward; Heysham North ward; part of Poulton ward.
35	Skerton	Skerton West ward; Skerton East ward.

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
Pendle	
36 Pendle Central East	Marsden ward; Vivary Bridge ward; Waterside ward.
37 Pendle Central South	Clover Hill ward; Southfield ward; Walverden ward.
38 Pendle Central West	Bradley ward; Brierfield ward; Whitefield ward.
39 Pendle East	Blacko & Higherford ward; Boulsworth ward; Foulridge ward; Horsfield ward
40 Pendle West	Barrowford ward; Higham & Pendleside ward; Old Laund Booth ward; Reedley ward.
41 West Craven	Coates ward; Craven ward; Earby ward.
Preston	
42 Preston Central North	College ward; Deepdale ward; Moor Park ward.
43 Preston Central South	Tulketh ward; University ward; St George's ward.
44 Preston East	Brookfield ward; Ribbleton ward.
45 Preston North	Cadley ward; Greyfriars ward.
46 Preston North East	Garrison ward; Sharoe Green ward.
47 Preston Rural North	Preston Rural East ward; Preston Rural North ward.
48 Preston Rural West	Ingol ward; Lea ward.
49 Preston South	Riversway ward; Town Centre ward.
50 Preston South East	Fishwick ward; St Matthew's ward.
51 Preston West	Ashton ward; Larches ward.
Ribble Valley	
52 Clitheroe	Edisford & Low Moor ward; Littlemoor ward; Primrose ward; St Mary's ward; Salthill ward.
53 Longridge & Bowland	Aighton, Bailey & Chaigley ward; Alston & Hothersall ward; Bowland, Newton & Slaidburn ward; Chipping ward; Derby & Thornley ward; Dilworth ward; Ribchester ward.
54 Ribble Valley North East	Chatburn ward; Gisburn & Rimington ward; Read & Simonstone ward; Sabden ward; Waddington & West Bradford ward; Whalley ward; Wiswell & Pendleton ward.
55 Ribble Valley South West	Billington & Old Langho ward; Clayton-le-Dale with Ramsgreave ward; Langho ward; Mellor ward; Wilpshire ward.
Rossendale	
56 Rossendale East	Greensclough ward; Stacksteads ward; Whitewell ward.
57 Rossendale North	Cribden ward; Goodshaw ward; Hareholme ward.
58 Rossendale South	Eden ward; Greenfield ward; Longholme ward.
59 Rossendale West	Helmshore ward; Worsley ward.
60 Whitworth	Facit & Shawforth ward; Healey & Whitworth ward; Irwell ward.
South Ribble	
61 Leyland East	Golden Hill ward; Leyland Central ward; Leyland St Mary's ward; Leyland St Ambrose ward.
62 Leyland West	Earnshaw Bridge ward; Lowerhouse ward; Moss Side ward; Seven Stars ward.
63 Penwortham North	Broad Oak ward; Howick & Priory ward; Whitefield ward
64 Penwortham South	Charnock ward; Kingsfold ward; Middleforth ward; Tardy Gate ward.
65 South Ribble Central	Farington East ward; Farington West ward; Lostock Hall ward.
66 South Ribble North East	Bamber Bridge North ward; Bamber Bridge West ward; Walton-le-Dale ward.
67 South Ribble Rural East	Bamber Bridge East ward; Coupe Green & Gregson Lane ward; Samlesbury & Walton ward.
68 South Ribble Rural West	Little Hoole & Much Hoole ward; Longton & Hutton West ward; New Longton & Hutton East ward.

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
West Lancashire	
69 Ormskirk West	Knowsley ward; Scott ward.
70 Skelmersdale Central	Birch Green ward; Digmaor ward; part of Skelmersdale North ward; Tanhouse ward
71 Skelmersdale East	Moorside ward; Up Holland ward; Wrightington ward.
72 Skelmersdale West	Ashurst ward; Part of Skelmersdale North ward; Skelmersdale South ward.
73 West Lancashire East	Derby ward; Newburgh ward; Parbold ward.
74 West Lancashire North	Hesketh with Beconsall ward; North Meols ward; Tarleton ward.
75 West Lancashire South	Aughton & Downholland ward; Aughton Park ward; Bickerstaffe ward; Halsall ward.
76 West Lancashire West	Burscough West ward; Burscough East; Rufford ward; Scarisbrick ward.
Wyre	
77 Amounderness	Carleton ward; Staina ward; part of Tithebarn ward.
78 Fleetwood East	Mount ward; Park ward; Pharos ward.
79 Fleetwood West	Rossall ward; Warren ward.
80 Garstang	Brock ward; Cabus ward; Calder ward; Catterall ward; Garstang ward; Wyresdale ward.
81 Poulton-le-Fyde	Breck ward; Hardhorn ward; High Cross ward; part of Tithebarn ward.
82 Thornton Cleveleys Central	Jubilee ward; Norcross ward; Victoria ward.
83 Thornton Cleveleys North	Bourne ward; Cleveleys Park ward.
84 Wyreside	Great Eccleston ward; Hambleton & Stalmine with Staynall ward; Pilling ward; Preesall ward.

Notes:

1. *The constituent district wards are those resulting from the electoral reviews of the 12 Lancashire districts which were completed in 2000. Where whole district wards do not form the building blocks, constituent parishes and parish wards are listed.*
2. *The large map inserted at the back of the report illustrates the proposed divisions outlined above and the maps in Appendix A illustrate some of the proposed boundaries in more detail.*

Table 2 Draft recommendations for Lancashire

Division name (by district council area)		Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Variance from average%	Electorate (2006)	Variance from average%
Burnley						
1	Burnley Central East	1	11,665	12	11,975	11
2	Burnley Central West	1	11,406	9	11,726	9
3	Burnley North East	1	10,360	-1	10,522	-2
4	Burnley Rural	1	11,989	15	12,259	14
5	Burnley South West	1	11,362	9	11,655	8
6	Padiham and Burnley West	1	10,477	0	10,820	1
Chorley						
7	Chorley East	1	10,009	-4	10,092	-6
8	Chorley North	1	11,072	6	11,784	10
9	Chorley Rural East	1	12,330	18	12,157	13
10	Chorley Rural North	1	10,629	2	10,185	-5
11	Chorley Rural West	1	11,598	11	11,315	5
12	Chorley South	1	9,534	-9	11,196	4
13	Chorley West	1	13,330	28	12,822	19
Fylde						
14	Fylde East	1	10,345	-1	10,798	1
15	Fylde South	1	8,721	-17	8,815	-18
16	Fylde West	1	9,036	-14	9,704	-10
17	Lytham	1	9,648	-8	10,314	-4
18	St Annes North	1	10,566	1	10,976	2
19	St Annes South	1	11,113	6	11,553	8
Hyndburn						
20	Accrington Central	1	10,320	-1	10,659	-1
21	Accrington North	1	9,257	-11	9,654	-10
22	Accrington South	1	10,150	-3	10,098	-6
23	Great Harwood	1	8,296	-21	8,339	-22
24	Oswaldtwistle	1	10,707	2	10,816	1
25	Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors and Altham	1	11,063	6	11,271	5
Lancaster						
26	Heysham North	1	10,673	2	11,276	5
27	Heysham South	1	10,197	-2	11,095	3
28	Lancaster Central	1	10,160	-3	11,375	6
29	Lancaster Rural East	1	10,959	5	11,540	7
30	Lancaster Rural North	1	10,510	1	11,054	3
31	Lancaster Rural South	1	10,527	1	11,145	4
32	Lancaster South East	1	10,978	5	12,043	12
33	Morecambe North	1	9,741	-7	10,110	-6
34	Morecambe West	1	10,678	2	11,114	3
35	Skerton	1	10,037	-4	10,380	-3
Pendle						
36	Pendle Central East	1	10,167	-3	10,367	-4
37	Pendle Central South	1	9,933	-5	10,173	-5
38	Pendle Central West	1	10,354	-1	10,471	-3
39	Pendle East	1	10,346	-1	10,540	-2
40	Pendle West	1	10,529	1	10,780	0
41	West Craven	1	12,457	19	12,466	16

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Variance from average%	Electorate (2006)	Variance from average%
Preston					
42 Preston Central North	1	10,870	4	11,333	5
43 Preston Central South	1	10,633	2	11,466	7
44 Preston East	1	11,128	6	11,704	9
45 Preston North	1	9,313	-11	10,338	-4
46 Preston North East	1	10,226	-2	11,097	3
47 Preston Rural North	1	8,399	-20	9,773	-9
48 Preston Rural West	1	10,151	-3	12,528	17
49 Preston South	1	9,861	-6	11,073	3
50 Preston South East	1	8,457	-19	8,821	-18
51 Preston West	1	9,185	-12	9,566	-11
Ribble Valley					
52 Clitheroe	1	11,691	12	10,896	1
53 Longridge with Bowland	1	10,623	2	10,099	-6
54 Ribble Valley North East	1	10,941	5	10,709	0
55 Ribble Valley South West	1	10,177	-3	9,894	-8
Rossendale					
56 Rossendale East	1	11,240	8	11,902	11
57 Rossendale North	1	9,899	-5	10,158	-5
58 Rossendale South	1	11,168	7	11,182	4
59 Rossendale West	1	8,776	-16	8,766	-18
60 Whitworth	1	9,262	-11	9,598	-11
South Ribble					
61 Leyland East	1	11,184	7	10,982	2
62 Leyland West	1	11,255	8	11,170	4
63 Penwortham North	1	9,411	-10	9,295	-13
64 Penwortham South	1	11,107	6	11,379	6
65 South Ribble Central	1	8,912	-15	9,216	-14
66 South Ribble North East	1	8,907	-15	9,032	-16
67 South Ribble Rural East	1	9,451	-10	9,642	-10
68 South Ribble Rural West	1	10,985	5	11,227	4
West Lancashire					
69 Ormskirk West	1	9,346	-11	9,109	-15
70 Skelmersdale Central	1	10,874	4	11,347	6
71 Skelmersdale East	1	11,218	7	11,405	6
72 Skelmersdale West	1	11,415	9	11,104	3
73 West Lancashire East	1	10,154	-3	10,055	-6
74 West Lancashire North	1	10,571	1	11,239	5
75 West Lancashire South	1	11,202	7	11,165	4
76 West Lancashire West	1	11,484	10	11,946	11

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Variance from average%	Electorate (2006)	Variance from average%
Wyre					
77 Amounderness	1	9,311	-11	9,592	-11
78 Fleetwood East	1	10,560	1	10,697	0
79 Fleetwood West	1	9,703	-7	9,427	-12
80 Garstang	1	11,648	11	11,832	10
81 Poulton-le-Fyde	1	10,309	-1	10,083	-6
82 Thornton Cleveleys Central	1	11,240	8	10,915	2
83 Thornton Cleveleys North	1	9,935	-5	9,787	-9
84 Wyreside	1	12,510	20	12,486	16
Totals	84	877,921	-	902,469	-
Averages	-	10,451	-	10,744	-

Source: Electorate figures are provided by Lancashire County Council.

Note: The electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor as each division is represented by a single councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

1 Introduction

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

2 In each two-tier county, our approach is first to complete the PERs of all the constituent districts and, when the Orders for the resulting changes in those areas have been made, then to commence a PER of the county council's electoral arrangements. Orders were made for the new electoral arrangements in the districts in Lancashire in July 2001 and we are now embarking on our county review in this area.

3 In carrying out these county reviews, we must have regard to:

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

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

5 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of electoral divisions. In each two-tier county, our approach is first to complete the PERs of all the constituent districts and, when the Orders for the resulting changes in those areas have been made, then to commence a PER of the county council's electoral arrangements. Orders were made for the new electoral arrangements in the districts in Lancashire in July 2001 and we are now embarking on our county review in this area.

6 Prior to the commencement of Part IV of the Local Government Act 2000 each county council division could only return one member. This restraint has now been removed by section 89 of the 2000 Act, and we may now recommend the creation of multi-member county divisions. However, we do not expect to recommend large numbers of multi-member divisions other than, perhaps, in the more urban areas of a county.

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

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

9 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, as far as possible, equal representation across the local authority as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or

more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

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

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

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

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

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

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

16 As a part of this review we may also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils in the county. However, we made some recommendations for new parish electoral arrangements as part of our district reviews. We

therefore only expect to put forward such recommendations during county reviews on an exceptional basis. In any event, we are *not* able to review administrative boundaries *between* local authorities or parishes, or consider the establishment of new parish areas as part of this review.

The review of Lancashire

17 We completed the reviews of the 12 district council areas in Lancashire in September 2000 and orders for the new electoral arrangements have since been made. This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Lancashire County Council. The last such review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission, which reported to the Secretary of State in November 1980 (Report No.399).

18 The review is in four stages (see Table 3).

Table 3: Stages of the review

Stage	Description
One	Submission of proposals to us
Two	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	Final deliberation and report to The Electoral Commission

19 Stage One began on 9 July 2002, when we wrote to Lancashire County Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the 12 district councils in the county, Lancashire Police Authority, the Local Government Association, parish and town councils in the county, Members of Parliament with constituencies in the county, Members of the European Parliament for the North West Region, the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited Lancashire County Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of submissions (the end of Stage One) was 28 October 2002.

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

21 We are currently at Stage Three. This stage, which began on 28 May 2003 and will end on 21 July 2003, involves publishing the draft proposals in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.**

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

2 Current electoral arrangements

23 The county of Lancashire comprises the 12 districts of Burnley, Chorley, Fylde, Hyndburn, Lancaster, Pendle, Preston, Ribble Valley, Rossendale, South Ribble, West Lancashire and Wyre. Covering an area of 289,971 hectares, the county is bordered to the north by Cumbria, to the east by North Yorkshire and East Yorkshire, to the south by the conurbations of Greater Manchester and Merseyside and to the west by the Irish Sea. It is characterised by a spread of closely spaced and functionally inter-linked medium sized towns. It also includes a number of small market towns, seaside resorts, ports and commuter settlements together with large areas of countryside.

24 Lancashire County Council was significantly reorganised in 1974 and again in 1998 when Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool became Unitary Authorities. The county currently has an electorate of 877,921 (December 2001) which is expected to increase by 2.6% by 2006 to 902,469. The Council currently has 78 elected Members each representing a single Electoral Division.

25 The Committee made final recommendations for each of the twelve district councils in Lancashire in September 2000. Orders putting these recommendations into effect were made in July 2001.

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

27 At present, each councillor represents an average of 11,255 electors, which the County Council forecasts will increase to 11,570 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic change and migration over the last two decades, the number of electors per councillor in 34 of the 78 divisions varies by more than 10% from the district average, 16 divisions by more than 20%, seven divisions by more than 30% and two divisions by more than 40%. The worst imbalance is in Chorley Rural North division where the councillor represents 77% more electors than the county average.

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

Table 4: Existing electoral arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Variance from average %
Burnley					
1 Burnley Central East	1	11,239	0	11,575	0
2 Burnley Central West	1	11,584	3	11,863	3
3 Burnley North East	1	11,682	4	11,903	3
4 Burnley Rural	1	11,027	-2	11,251	-3
5 Burnley South West	1	9,452	-16	9,678	-16
6 Burnley West	1	12,276	9	12,687	10
Chorley					
7 Chorley East	1	14,854	32	14,891	29
8 Chorley North	1	9,209	-18	9,907	-14
9 Chorley Rural East	1	11,200	0	11,102	-4
10 Chorley Rural North	1	19,869	77	20,245	75
11 Chorley Rural West	1	12,325	10	12,012	4
12 Chorley West	1	11,044	-2	11,393	-2
Fylde					
13 Fylde East	1	12,827	14	13,077	13
14 Fylde West	1	11,838	5	12,331	7
15 Lytham	1	10,460	-7	11,131	-4
16 St Annes North	1	12,904	15	13,547	17
17 St Annes South	1	11,400	1	12,076	4
Hyndburn					
18 Accrington Central	1	6,710	-40	6,968	-40
19 Accrington South	1	10,069	-11	10,018	-13
20 Church & Accrington North	1	11,396	1	11,820	2
21 Great Harwood	1	8,233	-27	8,278	-28
22 Oswaldtwistle	1	11,929	6	12,076	4
23 Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham	1	11,455	2	11,678	1
Lancaster					
24 Heysham	1	14,740	31	16,000	38
25 Lancaster City	1	11,174	-1	12,422	7
26 Lancaster East	1	11,357	1	12,714	10
27 Lancaster Rural Central	1	9,527	-15	10,037	-13
28 Lancaster Rural North	1	10,775	-4	11,268	-3
29 Lancaster Rural South	1	13,513	20	14,065	22
30 Morecambe East	1	12,225	9	12,771	10
31 Morecambe West	1	11,478	2	11,880	3
32 Skerton	1	9,672	-14	9,980	-14

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Variance from average %
Pendle					
33 Colne	1	12,415	10	12,710	10
34 Nelson	1	9,596	-15	9,568	-17
35 Pendle East	1	8,907	-21	9,046	-22
36 Pendle North	1	12,463	11	12,466	8
37 Pendle South	1	10,182	-10	10,464	-10
38 Pendle West	1	10,221	-9	10,539	-9
Preston					
39 Preston Central East	1	9,628	-14	10,130	-12
40 Preston Central West	1	9,562	-15	10,099	-13
41 Preston East	1	8,876	-21	9,269	-20
42 Preston North	1	9,786	-13	10,829	-6
43 Preston Rural East	1	17,529	56	19,680	70
44 Preston Rural West	1	12,316	9	14,834	28
45 Preston South East	1	8,544	-24	8,989	-22
46 Preston South West	1	10,858	-4	12,264	6
47 Preston West	1	11,125	-1	11,606	0
Ribble Valley					
48 Clitheroe	1	11,691	4	10,896	-6
49 Longridge	1	10,085	-10	9,582	-17
50 Ribble Valley North East	1	11,479	2	11,226	-3
51 Ribble Valley South West	1	10,177	-10	9,894	-14
Rossendale					
52 Bacup	1	8,203	-27	8,766	-24
53 Haslingden	1	12,958	15	12,924	12
54 Rossendale East	1	8,677	-23	8,719	-25
55 Rossendale West	1	12,391	10	12,719	10
56 Whitworth	1	8,117	-28	8,478	-27
South Ribble					
57 South Ribble Central	1	10,949	-3	11,553	0
58 South Ribble East	1	9,120	-19	9,343	-19
59 South Ribble North	1	15,097	34	15,211	31
60 South Ribble North West	1	12,031	7	11,880	3
61 South Ribble South	1	10,712	-5	10,560	-9
62 South Ribble South West	1	12,432	10	12,280	6
63 South Ribble West	1	10,872	-3	11,116	-4
West Lancashire					
64 Ormskirk	1	13,585	21	13,351	15
65 Skelmersdale Central	1	10,730	-5	11,182	-3
66 Skelmersdale East	1	11,063	-2	11,283	-2
67 Skelmersdale West	1	11,756	4	11,432	-1
68 West Lancashire East	1	13,649	21	13,937	20
69 West Lancashire North	1	14,872	32	15,597	35
70 West Lancashire South	1	10,608	-6	10,587	-8

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Variance from average %
Wyre					
71 Amounderness	1	10,462	-7	10,089	-13
72 Cleveleys	1	9,065	-19	8,838	-24
73 Garstang	1	11,620	3	11,802	2
74 Hesketh	1	11,160	-1	10,806	-7
75 Hillhouse	1	10,203	-9	10,643	-8
76 Marine	1	9,104	-19	9,320	-19
77 Poulton-le-Fylde	1	11,064	-2	10,805	-7
78 Wyre Side	1	12,538	11	12,513	8
Totals		877,921	-	902,469	-
Averages	-	11,255	-	11,570	-

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

Note: Each division is represented by a single councillor, and the electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Accrington Central division were relatively over-represented by 40%, while electors in Chorley Rural North division were relatively under-represented by 77 %. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3 Submissions received

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

30 During this initial stage of the review, officers from The Boundary Committee visited the area and met officers and members of the County Council. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 10 submissions during Stage One, including a county-wide scheme from the County Council, all of which may be inspected at our offices and those of the County Council.

Lancashire County Council

31 The County Council proposed a council of 84 members, six more than at present, serving 84 divisions, compared to the existing 78 members, serving 78 divisions. Under its proposals, Chorley, Fylde, Lancaster, Preston, South Ribble and West Lancashire, would all receive an additional councillor.

Liberal Democrat Group

32 The Liberal Democrat Group on Lancashire County Council put forward proposals for an 89-member council. Under these proposals, Burnley, Chorley, Lancaster, Pendle and West Lancashire would all gain an additional councillor – additional to those allocated under the County Council's 84-member scheme.

Conservative Group

33 The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council expressed support for the County Council's proposals for ten of the districts, except Pendle and Chorley. It put forward an alternative scheme for the Chorley area.

Parish and town councils

34 Scotforth Parish Council made general comments about the review process. Slyne-with-Hest Parish Council objected to the County Council's proposal to place it in Morecambe North division with the 'urban' Bare and Torrisholme.

Councillors

35 County Councillor Case put forward proposals for Chorley. These were identical to those put forward by the Conservative Group. County Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals.

36 Preston City Councillor Collins objected to the County Council's proposals for Preston, particularly its treatment of the existing Preston Central West division and its affect on Moor Park and Tulketh district wards. Councillor Collins provided a number of alternatives for these wards and a number of the surrounding wards.

Other submissions

37 Pendle Liberal Democrats expressed support for the Liberal Democrat Group's proposals for an 89-member council. Under these proposals, Burnley, Chorley, Lancaster, Pendle and West Lancashire would all gain an additional councillor - additional to those

allocated under the County Council's 84-member scheme. In addition, it also put forward proposals for Pendle based on the County Council's proposed allocation of six councillors for Pendle.

38 We received one further submission from a local resident. He objected to the County Council's proposals to include Park ward in the its proposed Fylde West division.

4 Analysis and draft recommendations

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

40 As with our reviews of districts, our primary aim in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Lancashire is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended) – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being ‘as nearly as may be, the same in every division of the county’.

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

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

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

44 We accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for an authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, especially when also seeking to achieve coterminosity in order to facilitate convenient and effective local government. There must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach, in the context of the statutory criteria, is that such flexibility must be kept to a minimum. Accordingly, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be minimised, the aim of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should make electoral equality their starting point, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as the boundaries of district wards and community identity. Five-year forecasts of changes in electorate must also be taken into account and we would aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral equality over this five-year period.

Electorate forecasts

45 Since 1975 there has been an 11 % decrease in the electorate of Lancashire County Council. The County Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of 2.6% % from 877,921 to 902,469 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Preston, although a significant amount is also expected in the Fylde and Lancaster districts. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy

rates. Advice from the County Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to division boundaries has been obtained.

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

Council size

47 Lancashire County Council presently has 78 members. The County Council proposed a council of 84 members, which represents an increase of six members. The Liberal Democrat Group and Pendle Liberal Democrats proposed a council of 89 members, which represents an increase of 11 members.

48 As explained earlier, we now require justification for any council size proposed, whether it is an increase, decrease, or retention of the existing council size. It is vital that we have evidence that proposals have been carefully thought through, and have been developed in the context of a review of political management structures and the role of councillors in the new structures. Unfortunately, the Liberal Democrat Group did not provide us with any evidence, despite a request for further information. Therefore, we have not been able to consider their proposals further.

49 In reaching its decision on council size, the County Council considered a number of factors. The County Council adopted Executive arrangements in July 2001 and its Stage One submission set out the Council's structure under its new political management style. It now consists of a Cabinet comprising ten councillors, including the Leader and Deputy Leader of the County Council, five Overview and Scrutiny Committees and nine other standing Committees/Sub-committees undertaking non-cabinet functions. The County Council stated that 'All non-Cabinet councillors serve on at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee' adding that 'clearly, these are still early days in the development of the Overview and Scrutiny function, but experience to date suggests it will be demanding in terms of the commitment required of Councillors to ensure this element of the County Council role works effectively'.

50 In addition, the County Council highlighted the changing role of councillors as a result of the modernisation agenda and its emphasis on 'Councils taking a leadership role in local communities through the formation of effective partnerships with other service providers at local level to deliver high quality and "joined up" services which meet needs of local people'. The County Council stated 'if [it] is to engage effectively with local communities, the representational role of Councillors is key'. To support its view that this is best done by increasing, rather than decreasing, the number of County Councillors it highlighted the results of an opinion poll of 'Lancashire people' that it commissioned in 2000. This suggested that of those surveyed, 74% considered that the most important role for their County Councillor is to 'listen to the views of local people'. The County Council added that it believes that 'County Councillors need to develop and build upon their representational role and become more involved than previously in acting on behalf of the County Council at the local level [...] this developing role will inevitable place further demands upon them if the County Council is to engage effectively with local communities'.

51 The County Council considered the effects of keeping the existing council size, but concluded that in order to give the correct allocation of Councillors to each district, it would be necessary to reduce the number of councillors in some districts. It considered that this 'would be a retrograde step [and that] less Councillors would make it much more difficult [...] for the County Council to fulfil the Government's modernisation agenda and to work effectively with local communities, local partners and district councils'.

52 In considering the issue of council size we would express some concern that the County Council did not actively examine the option of reducing council size, instead dismissing it as making it harder for councillors to fulfil their role. Given this rationale, there is tendency for an upward drift in council sizes, which we would seek to avoid. However, given the available evidence and the lack of alternative proposals, we would agree with the County Council's view that an 84-member council would be suitable.

53 Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we conclude that the statutory criteria would be met by a council of 84 members.

Electoral arrangements

54 We have given careful consideration to the views received during Stage One, including the county-wide schemes from the County Council and Liberal Democrat Group. However, we could not consider the warding arrangements of the Liberal Democrat Group proposals having accepted the argument for a council size of 84 members, as their proposals were based on a different council size to that proposed by the County Council.

55 The County Council expressed a wish to retain a pattern of single-member divisions across the county. It stated 'The current 78 County Councillors each represent one division and although restrictions on multi-member divisions have been lifted it is the County Council's view that multi-member divisions may cause confusion and that single-member divisions should continue in the interest of community understanding'. We also note that its proposals secured reasonable levels of electoral equality and good levels of coterminosity while having regard to the statutory criteria. However, in a number of districts we have examined alternatives to improve coterminosity and community identity further.

56 In Chorley, the Conservative Group submitted proposals that gave similar levels of electoral equality to the County Council's scheme, but which resulted in 100% coterminosity. It stated that its avoided quite as much mixing of rural and urban wards as the County Council's scheme. Councillor Case also put forward proposals for Chorley. These were identical to the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group. Although the Conservative Groups proposals provide improved coterminosity, they do split more parishes than the County Council's proposals, albeit along district ward boundaries. While both the County Council and the Conservatives proposals did not contain particularly detailed argument on community identity, the argumentation put forward by Councillor Case, who's proposals were identical to those put forward by the Conservative Group, was more persuasive. Coupled with its excellent levels of electoral equality, we propose adopting the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group and Councillor Case for Chorley.

57 We are also proposing a number of minor modifications to the County Council's proposals in Hyndburn and Lancaster to improve coterminosity. We consider that the modification would better reflect community identity.

58 In Pendle, we have examined the alternative proposals put forward by Pendle Liberal Democrats. Although it put forward argumentation for its proposals, they give considerably worse levels of coterminosity and have little evidence of public support.

59 In Preston, we have considered the detailed submission of Councillor Collins. While he put forward some very good arguments for alternative arrangements in the area covered by the existing Preston Central division, we do not consider that these can be adopted when consideration is given for the whole of Preston city.

60 We have carefully considered all the representations received, including county-wide scheme from the County Council and the Liberal Democrat Group. The County Council's proposals would increase the council size from 78 to 84. With our proposed modifications,

the Council's proposals would also improve electoral equality, compared to the existing arrangements. Under these proposals coterminosity across the county would also significantly improve.

61 For county division purposes, the twelve district areas in the county are considered in turn, as follows:

- i. Burnley (pages 28–29);
- ii. Chorley (pages 29–31);
- iii. Fylde (pages 31–32);
- iv. Hyndburn pages 32–33);
- v. Lancaster (pages 33–34);
- vi. Pendle (pages 35–36);
- vii. Preston (pages 36–37);
- viii. Ribble Valley (page 37–38);
- ix. Rossendale (pages 38–39);
- x. South Ribble (page 39–40);
- xi. West Lancashire (page 40);
- xii. Wyre (page 41).

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

Burnley borough

63 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of Burnley is represented by six county councillors serving six divisions. Burnley Central East division has an electoral imbalance of 0%, both now and in 2006. Burnley Central West division is 3% under-represented, both now and in 2006. Burnley North East division is currently 4% under-represented (3% by 2006). Burnley Rural division is currently 2% over-represented (3% by 2006). Burnley South West division is 16% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Burnley West division is currently 9% under-represented (10% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Burnley is very marginally over-represented on the County Council.

64 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining six councillors, but with a modified division pattern. Given the County Council's decision to retain single-member divisions across Lancashire, and Burnley's new arrangements of three-member wards, the County Council had not been able to achieve any coterminosity. Its modified Burnley Central East division would comprise Brunshaw ward and Daneshouse-with-Stoneyholme ward, and an area of Bank Hall ward to the south of the River Brun and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. The division would be 12% under-represented (11% by 2006). Its modified Burnley Central West division would comprise Trinity ward and Whittlefield-with-Ightenhill ward, and an area of Gannow ward to the east of Padiham Road and Barry Street. The division would be 9% under-represented, both now and in 2006. Its modified Burnley North East division would comprise Lanehead ward and Queensgate ward, and an area of Bank Hall ward to the north of the River Brun and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal. The division would be 1% over-represented (2% by 2006).

65 The County Council's modified Burnley Rural division would comprise Briercliffe ward and Cliviger-with-Worsthorne ward, and an area of Rosehill-with-Burnley Wood ward to the east of Lower Howorth Fold House. The division would be 15% under-represented (14% by 2006). Its modified Burnley South West division would comprise Rosegrove-with-Lowerhouse ward, part of Coal Clough-with-Deerplay to the north of Glen View Road and Rossendale Road, part of Gannow ward to the west of Padiham Road and Barry Street, and part of Rosehill-with-Burnley Wood ward to the west of Lower Howorth Fold House. The division would be 9% under-represented (8% by 2006). The County Council's modified Padiham & Burnley West division would comprise Gawthorpe ward and Hapton-with-Park

ward, and an area of Coal Clough-with-Deerplay ward to the south of Glen View Road and Rossendale Road. It would initially have an electoral variance of zero, changing to 1% under-represented by 2006.

66 The County Council stated '[the choice] to retain single member divisions across Lancashire, and Burnley's new arrangements of three member wards, has made achieving coterminosity impossible', adding 'the County Council's submitted proposal is considered to best reflect community ties, representing as it does a largely minimal change to the long-established current electoral divisions. Notably it was considered important to retain the communities of Padiham and Burnley Lane within single Electoral Divisions'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

67 After careful consideration of the evidence we have decided to adopt the County Council's proposals for this area. We concur with the County Council's view that the arrangement of three-member wards makes it very hard to achieve coterminosity. One option to improve coterminosity would be the creation of one or more multi-member divisions. However, we note that the County Council has expressed a preference to retain single-member divisions throughout the county. Therefore it would be hard to justify such a proposal in terms of community identity and without evidence of support from local people. The County Council's proposals do secure reasonable levels of electoral equality while having regard to the statutory criteria.

68 Our draft recommendations would achieve no coterminosity between county and district boundaries. The levels of electoral equality would be the same as the County Councils', described above. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps (sheet 1 of 3 and Map 2 on sheet 2 of 3) at the back of the report.

Chorley borough

69 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of Chorley is represented by six county councillors serving six divisions. Chorley East division is currently 32% under-represented (29% by 2006). Chorley North division is currently 18% over-represented (14% by 2006). Chorley Rural East division has an electoral variance of zero, increasing to 4% over-represented by 2006. Chorley Rural North division is currently 77% under-represented (75% by 2006). Chorley Rural West division is currently 10% under-represented (4% by 2006). Chorley West division is 2% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Chorley is under-represented on the County Council.

70 At Stage One the County Council proposed an additional councillor for Chorley, giving it seven members. Its proposals for this area would achieve 43% coterminosity. Its proposed Chorley Central division would comprise Chorley South West ward, part of Chorley North East ward to the south west of the railway line, Shakespeare Terrace and Thornhill Road, and part of Chorley North West ward to the south of the River Chor and Southport Road to the west of Chorley Parklands High School. The division would be 6% over-represented (5% under-represented by 2006). Its proposed Chorley Central West division would comprise Astley & Buckshaw ward, Euxton North ward and Euxton South ward, and part of Chorley North West ward to the North of the River Chor and Southport Road to the west of Chorley Parklands High School. The division would be 1% under-represented (6% by 2006). The County Council's proposed Chorley North division would comprise Clayton-le-Woods North ward and Clayton-le-Woods West & Cuerden ward, and part of Clayton-le-Woods & Whittle-le-Woods ward to the north of Carr Brook, Preston Road, Swansey Lane and Birchin Lane. The division would be 8% under-represented (1% by 2006).

71 The County Council's proposed Chorley Rural East division would comprise Brindle & Hoghton ward, Pennine ward and Wheelton & Withnell ward, and part of Chorley North East ward to the north east of the railway line, Shakespeare Terrace and Thornhill Road. It would also comprise part of Clayton-le-Woods & Whittle-le-Woods ward to the south of Carr Brook, Preston Road, Swansey Lane and Birchin Lane. The division would be 28% under-represented (18% by 2006). Its proposed Chorley Rural West division would comprise Chisnall ward, Eccleston & Mawdesley ward and Lostock ward. The division would be 10% under-represented (5% by 2006). Its proposed Chorley South division would comprise Adlington & Anderton ward and Coppull ward. It would have an electoral variance of zero (4% over-represented by 2006). Its proposed Chorley South East division would comprise Chorley East ward, Chorley South East ward and Heath Charnock & Rivington ward. The division would be 10% under-represented, both now and in 2006.

72 The County Council stated 'the final submitted proposal produces a significant improvement over the existing situation for electoral equality principally, whilst improving coterminosity. [It] pays careful attention to community ties and avoids as far as is practicable splitting parish areas, with only one case of a parish divided across divisions, at Coppull. In all other instances the proposed division boundaries respect and avoid splitting parish areas, which also recognise logical groupings of more geographically distinct settlements such as Clayton Brook and Clayton-le-Woods and Adlington and Coppull'. It added 'the urban/rural composition of a number of proposed divisions was carefully considered. The view was taken that the urban/rural composition of some divisions was unavoidable'.

73 At Stage One the Conservative Group also proposed an additional councillor for Chorley, giving it seven members. Its proposals for this area would achieve 100% coterminosity. Its proposed Chorley East division would comprise Chorley East ward and Chorley North East ward. The division would be 4% over-represented (6% by 2006). Its proposed Chorley North division would comprise Astley & Buckshaw ward, Clayton-le-Woods & Whittle-le-Woods ward and Euxton North ward. The division would be 6% under-represented (10% by 2006). Its proposed Chorley Rural East division would comprise Adlington & Anderton ward, Heath Charnock & Rivington ward, Pennine ward and Wheelton & Withnell ward. The division would be 18% under-represented (13% by 2006).

74 The Conservative Group's proposed Chorley Rural North division would comprise Brindle & Hoghton ward, Clayton-le-Woods North ward and Clayton-le-Woods West & Cuerden ward. The division would be 2% under-represented (5% over-represented by 2006). Its proposed Chorley Rural West division would comprise Eccleston & Mawdesley ward, Euxton South ward and Lostock ward. The division would be 11% under-represented (5% by 2006). Its proposed Chorley South division would comprise Chisnall ward and Coppull ward. The division would be 9% over-represented (4% under-represented by 2006). Its proposed Chorley West division would comprise Chorley South East and Chorley South West wards. The division would be 28% under-represented (19% by 2006).

75 At Stage One Councillor Case put forward identical proposals to the Conservative Group for Chorley. Councillor Case objected to the County Council's proposals for Chorley South East division, which the councillor considered would separate the rural Heath Charnock & Rivington ward from its neighbouring rural wards. Councillor Case questioned the sense under the County Council's proposals of 'tacking' Heath Charnock & Rivington ward in a division with the town centre wards of Chorley East and Chorley South East while 'splitting' it from its neighbouring Anderton and Adlington parishes. The Councillor stated 'The nature and needs of these two elements, the one essentially rural, the other clearly identified as part of the urban core are fundamentally very different'. The Conservative Group acknowledged that its proposals gave marginally worse levels of electoral equality, but gave a significant improvement to coterminosity. Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

76 We note that both proposals achieve broadly similar levels of electoral equality, but that the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group and Councillor Case achieve considerably better levels of coterminosity than the County Council's scheme. In addition, we consider that the Conservative Group and Councillor Case's proposals provide a better balance in separating urban and rural areas. While their proposals do divide a number of parishes, something we would seek to avoid, we note that the divisions are coterminous with district ward boundaries, which means they are still identifiable to the electorate. Alternatively, the boundary between the County Council's proposed Chorley Central and Chorley Rural East divisions is non-coterminous with either district ward or parish boundaries, which we consider can confuse the electorate.

77 After careful consideration of the evidence, we have decided to adopt the proposals put forward by the Conservative Group and Councillor Case for Chorley. We consider that their proposals secure reasonable levels of electoral equality and excellent levels of coterminosity while having regard to the statutory criteria. The levels of electoral equality would be the same as the Conservative Group proposals, described above. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map (sheet 1 or 3) at the back of the report.

Fylde borough

78 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of Fylde is represented by five county councillors serving five divisions. Fylde East division is currently 14% under-represented (13% by 2006). Fylde West division is currently 5% under-represented (7% by 2006). Lytham division is currently 7% over-represented (4% by 2006). St Annes North division is currently 15% under-represented (17% by 2006). St Annes South division is currently 1% under-represented (4% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Fylde is under-represented on the County Council.

79 At Stage One the County Council proposed an additional councillor for Fylde, giving it six members. Its proposals for this area would achieve 67% coterminosity. Its modified Fylde East division would comprise Kirkham North ward, Kirkham South ward, Medlar-with-Wesham ward and Newton & Treales ward. The division would be 1% over-represented (1% under-represented by 2006). Its proposed Fylde South division would comprise Freckleton East ward, Freckleton West ward, Ribby-with-Wrea ward, and the Bryning-with-Warton parish area of Warton & Westby ward. The division would be 17% over-represented (18% by 2006). Its modified Fylde West division would comprise Elswick & Little Eccleston ward, Park ward, Singleton & Greenhalgh ward, Staining & Weeton ward, and the Westby-with-Plumptons parish area of Warton & Westby ward. The division would be 14% over-represented (10% by 2006).

80 The County Council's modified Lytham division would comprise Ansdell ward, Clifton ward and St Johns ward. The division would be 8% over-represented (4% by 2006). Its modified St Annes North division would comprise Ashton ward, Kilnhouse ward and St Leonards ward. The division would be 1% under-represented (2% by 2006). Its modified St Annes South division would comprise Central ward, Fairhaven ward and Heyhouses ward. The division would be 6% under-represented (8% by 2006).

81 The County Council stated 'this proposal looks to divide the urban area of Lytham St. Annes into four divisions with one of these additionally taking in the rural hinterland to the north. The proposal ensures Lytham, Warton-Freckleton and Kirkham-Wesham urban areas are each contained within a single Division. It achieves much improved electoral equality. Coterminosity is also improved'. A local resident from Lytham St Annes objected to the County Council's proposals to include the 'very urban' Park ward in Fylde West division with more rural wards. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

82 After careful consideration to the evidence we have decided to adopt the County Council's proposals for this area. We note the local residents concerns about the mixing of urban and rural wards, and while we would generally try to avoid this, we accept that occasionally it is necessary. However, the resident did not suggest any alternative arrangements and those that we have examined either led to large electoral variances or meant the inclusion of an alternate urban area with a rural area. Therefore, on balance, we consider that the County Council's proposals provide the best pattern of electoral divisions for the Fylde borough.

83 Our draft recommendations would secure reasonable levels of electoral equality and good levels of coterminosity while having regard to the statutory criteria. The levels of electoral equality would be the same as the County Council's proposals, described above. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps (sheet 1 of 3 and Map 3 on sheet 3 of 3) at the back of the report.

Hyndburn borough

84 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of Hyndburn is represented by six county councillors serving six divisions. Accrington Central division is 40% over-represented, both now and in 2006). Accrington South division is currently 11% over-represented (13% by 2006). Church & Accrington North division is currently 1% under-represented (2% by 2006). Great Harwood division is currently 27% over-represented (28% by 2006). Oswaldtwistle division is currently 6% under-represented (4% by 2006). Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham division is currently 2% under-represented (1% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Hyndburn is over-represented on the County Council.

85 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining six councillors, but with a modified division pattern. Its proposals for this area would achieve 50% coterminosity. Its modified Accrington Central division would comprise Central ward and Spring Hill ward, and part of Church ward to the south west of the River Hyndburn, Dunkenhagh Way and a further section to the south of the River Hyndburn. It would also include part of Immanuel ward to the north east of Fielding Lane, Broadfield and to the north of Bottams Cottage. The division would be 1% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Its modified Accrington North division would comprise Huncoat ward and Milnshaw ward, and part of Altham ward to the south of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Hawthorn Bank and part of Church ward to the north east of the River Hyndburn, Dunkenhagh Way and a further section to the north of the River Hyndburn. The division would be 6% over-represented (5% by 2006). Its modified Accrington South division would comprise Barnfield ward, Baxendale ward and Peel ward. The division would be 3% over-represented (6% by 2006).

86 The County Council's modified Great Harwood division would comprise Nethererton ward and Overton ward. The division would be 21% over-represented (22% by 2006). Its proposed Oswaldtwistle division would comprise St Andrew's ward and St Oswald's ward, and part of Immanuel ward to the south west of Fielding Lane, Broadfield and to the south of Bottams Cottage. The division would be 2% under-represented (1% by 2006). Its modified Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham division would comprise Clayton-le-Moors ward and Rishton ward, and part of Altham ward to the north of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Hawthorn Bank. The division would be 1% under-represented, with an electoral variance of zero by 2006.

87 The County Council stated that in formulating its proposals for Hyndburn, a strong determining factor was the issue of local community ties. The County Council noted the particular improvement in electoral equality for its proposed Accrington Central division. It also acknowledged that the variance for Great Harwood division is high, but stated '[it] is recognised in community terms and geographically as a distinct and separate settlement

and the proposals reflect this'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

88 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the improvement in electoral equality achieved under the County Council's scheme. We have examined the high variance for Great Harwood and would concur with the County Council's view that this area forms a distinct community and that to further improve electoral equality would be at the expense of reflecting community identity. We also note that under its proposals Altham parish and Altham ward are warded and divided between the County Council's proposed Accrington North division and Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham division. We acknowledge that this improves electoral equality, but are concerned that it does not reflect community identity or create an easily identifiable boundary. Therefore we propose transferring the whole of Altham parish/Altham ward to the County Council's proposed Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham division. While this worsens electoral equality, we consider that it is justified in this case as it represents better community identity, keeping the whole of Altham parish within a single division, while also improving coterminosity.

89 As a consequence, our proposed Accrington North division would be the same as the County Council's but less the part of Altham ward to the south of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Hawthorn Bank area. The division would be 11% over-represented (10% by 2006). Our proposed Rishton, Clayton-le-Moors & Altham division would be the same as the County Council's, but including the part of Altham ward to the north of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, Hawthorn Bank. The division would be 6% under-represented (5% by 2006). The remainder of our proposed division for Hyndburn would be identical to the County Council's proposals. As a consequence of this modification, under our proposals coterminosity would improve from 50% to 67%.

90 Our draft recommendations would secure reasonable levels of electoral equality and good levels of coterminosity. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps (sheet 1 of 3 and Map 1 on sheet 2 of 3) at the back of the report.

Lancaster city

91 Under the current arrangements, the city of Lancaster is represented by nine county councillors serving nine divisions. Heysham division is currently 31% under-represented (38% by 2006). Lancaster City division is currently 1% over-represented (7% under-represented by 2006). Lancaster East division is currently 1% under-represented (10% by 2006). Lancaster Rural Central division is currently 15% over-represented (13% by 2006). Lancaster Rural North division is currently 4% over-represented (3% by 2006). Lancaster Rural South division is currently 20% under-represented (22% by 2006). Morecambe East division is currently 9% under-represented (10% by 2006). Morecambe West division is currently 2% under-represented (3% by 2006). Skerton division is 14% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Lancaster is under-represented on the County Council.

92 At Stage One the County Council proposed an additional councillor for Lancaster, giving it 10 members. Its proposals for this area would achieve 60% coterminosity. Its modified Heysham North division would comprise Torrisholme ward and Westgate ward. The division would be 2% under-represented (5% by 2006). Its proposed Heysham South division would comprise Heysham Central ward, Heysham South ward and Overton wards. The division would be 2% over-represented (3% under-represented by 2006). Its proposed Lancaster Central division would comprise Bulk ward and Castle ward. The division would be 3% over-represented (6% under-represented by 2006). Its modified Lancaster Rural East division would comprise Halton with Aughton ward, Kellet ward, Lower Lune Valley ward and Upper Lune Valley ward, and the Over Wyresdale parish area of Ellel ward. The division would be

7% under-represented (10% by 2006). Its proposed Lancaster Rural North division would comprise Bolton-le-Sands ward, Carnforth ward, Silverdale ward and Warton ward. The division would be 1% under-represented (3% by 2006).

93 The County Council's proposed Lancaster Rural South division would comprise Scotforth West ward and University ward, and part of Ellel ward less the area covered by Over Wyresdale parish. The division would be 2% over-represented (1% under-represented by 2006). Its modified Lancaster South East division would comprise Dukes ward, John O'Gaunt ward and Scotforth East ward. The division would be 5% under-represented (12% by 2006). Its modified Morecambe North division would comprise Bare ward and Slyne-with-Hest ward, and part of Poulton ward to the north of the railway line. The division would be 7% over-represented (6% by 2006). Its modified Morecambe West division would comprise Harbour ward and Heysham North ward, and part of Poulton ward to the south of the railway line. The division would be 2% under-represented (3% by 2006). Its modified Skerton division would comprise Skerton East ward and Skerton West ward. The division would be 4% over-represented (3% by 2006).

94 The County Council stated that '[its] proposals reflect a sympathetic consideration to the arrangement of electoral divisions across the main urban areas of Lancaster, Morecambe and Heysham (subject to the physical constraints imposed by the arrangement of wards along the River Lune and Morecambe Bay) and also the wider rural hinterland of the district'. The County Council also highlighted the improvements to coterminosity and electoral equality resulting from its scheme.

95 However, Slyne-with-Hest Parish Council 'object[ed] strongly to [its] inclusion in the Morecambe North division'. It stated that as a rural area it has little in common with the urban areas of Bare and Torrisholme. Scotforth Parish Council stated 'it is important to take into account the geographical size of each ward, therefore the population numbers may not always be equal in each area'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

96 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the significant improvements to electoral equality and coterminosity that the County Council's proposals provide. We also note the concerns of Slyne-with-Hest Parish Council about the mixing of urban and rural wards and, while we would generally try to avoid such a situation, we accept that occasionally it is necessary. The parish council did not suggest any alternative arrangements and we do not consider there to be sufficient electors in the surrounding rural area to justify a division made up of wholly rural wards. We also note the concerns of Scotforth Parish Council, but we are unable to consider issues of rural sparsity. Nor can we seek to under- or over-represent a given area. However, Scotforth Parish Council's comments do cause us to note that the County Council's proposed Lancaster Rural Central division covers a very large geographical area. We have sought to address this by proposing the transfer of the Over Wyresdale Parish Council area of Ellel ward to Lancaster Rural South division. This has the effect of reuniting the whole of Ellel ward in a single division while improving coterminosity and reducing the geographical extent of Lancaster Rural Central division.

97 Our proposed Lancaster Rural East division would comprise Halton with Aughton ward, Kellet ward, Lower Lune Valley ward and Upper Lune Valley ward. The division would be 5% under-represented (7% by 2006). Our proposed Lancaster Rural South division would comprise Ellel ward, Scotforth West ward and University ward. The division would be 1% under-represented (4% by 2006). The remainder of our proposed divisions for Lancaster would be identical to the County Council's proposals. As a consequence of this modification coterminosity would improve from 60% to 70%.

98 Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps (sheet 1 of 3 and Map 5 on sheet 3 of 3) at the back of the report.

Pendle borough

99 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of Pendle is represented by six county councillors serving six divisions. Colne division is 10% under-represented, both now and in 2006). Nelson division is currently 15% over-represented (17% by 2006). Pendle East division is currently 21% over-represented (22% by 2006). Pendle North division is currently 11% under-represented (8% by 2006). Pendle South division is 10% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Pendle West division is 9% over-represented, both now and in 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Pendle is over-represented on the County Council.

100 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining six councillors, but with a modified division pattern. Its proposals for Pendle would achieve 100% coterminosity. Its modified Pendle Central East division would comprise Marsden ward, Vivary Bridge ward and Waterside ward. The division would be 3% over-represented (4% by 2006). Its modified Pendle Central South division would comprise Clover Hill ward, Southfield ward and Walverden ward. The division would be 5% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Its modified Pendle Central West division would comprise Bradley ward, Brierfield ward and Whitefield ward. The division would be 1% over-represented (3% by 2006). Its modified Pendle East division would comprise Blacko & Higherford ward, Boulsworth ward, Foulridge and ward Horsefield ward. The division would be 1% over-represented (2% by 2006). Its modified Pendle West division would comprise Barrowford ward, Higham & Pendleside ward, Old Laund Booth ward and Reedley ward. The division would be 1% under-represented (zero % by 2006). Its modified West Craven division would comprise Coates ward, Craven ward and Earby ward. The division be 19% under-represented (16% by 2006).

101 The County Council stated 'a significant issue in any review of electoral boundary change for Pendle is the historic links with Yorkshire. Prior to 1974 the areas of Barnoldswick, Earby and Kelbrook were not part of Lancashire and many of the inhabitants still value their historic ties to Yorkshire'. Under the County Council's proposals these villages are grouped together in a single division, West Craven. In addition, the County Council stated that its proposals for Nelson and Colne, plus their outlying villages, gave 'serious consideration to community identity issues with the intention of providing easily identifiable boundaries with no adverse effect on community ties'. County Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area.

102 The Pendle Liberal Democrats, who supported the proposals put forward by the Liberal Democrat Group on Lancashire County Council for an 89-member council, also put forward proposals for Pendle Borough based on it having six councillors. Its proposals give broadly similar levels of electoral equality to those of the County Council, but only 30% coterminosity, compared to 100% under the County Council's proposals. Pendle Liberal Democrats objected to the County Council's proposals, which it believed combines parts of Nelson and Colne within the same division, and while it provided alternative division arrangement for this area, it did not provide any evidence suggesting why these two communities should not be combined within a single division. It also objected to the County Council's inclusion of Blacko & Higherford ward within Pendle East division, citing the poor road links. We would concur with these concerns about Pendle East division, but given the need to address electoral equality across the district and achieve good levels of coterminosity we consider that the County Council's proposals offer the best balance when weighed against the statutory criteria. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council stated that it did not support the County Council's proposals, but offered no further comment, evidence or alternative proposals.

103 We propose adopting the County Council's proposals for this area in their entirety as they secure reasonable levels of electoral equality and excellent levels of coterminosity while having regard to the statutory criteria. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Preston city

104 Under the current arrangements, the city of Preston is represented by nine county councillors serving nine divisions. Preston Central East division is currently 14% over-represented (12% by 2006). Preston Central West division is currently 15% over-represented (13% by 2006). Preston East division is currently 21% over-represented (20% by 2006). Preston North division is currently 13% over-represented (6% by 2006). Preston Rural East division is currently 56% under-represented (70% by 2006). Preston Rural West division is currently 9% under-represented (28% by 2006). Preston South East division is currently 24% over-represented (22% by 2006). Preston South West division is currently 4% over-represented (6% under-represented by 2006). Preston West division is currently 1% over-represented (zero % by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Preston is under-represented on the County Council.

105 At Stage One the County Council proposed an additional councillor, giving it 10 members. Its proposals for Preston would achieve 100% coterminosity. Its modified Preston Central North division would comprise College ward, Deepdale ward and Moor Park ward. The division would be 4% under-represented (5% by 2006). Its modified Preston Central South division would comprise St George's ward, Tulketh ward and University wards. The division would be 2% under-represented (7% by 2006). Its modified Preston East ward would comprise Brookfield ward and Ribbleton ward. The division would be 6% under-represented (9% by 2006). Its modified Preston North division would comprise Cadley ward and Greyfriars ward. The division would be 11% over-represented (4% by 2006).

106 The County Council's modified Preston North East division would comprise Garrison ward and Sharoe Green ward. It would be 2% over-represented (3% under-represented by 2006). Its modified Preston Rural North division would comprise Preston Rural East ward and Preston Rural North ward. It would be 20% over-represented (9% by 2006). Its modified Preston Rural West division would comprise Ingol ward and Lea ward. It would be 3% over-represented (17% under-represented by 2006). Its modified Preston South division would comprise Riversway ward and Town Centre ward. It would be 6% over-represented (3% under-represented by 2006). Its modified Preston South East division would comprise Fishwick ward and St Mathew's ward. It would be 19% over-represented (18% by 2006). Its modified Preston West division would comprise Ashton ward and Larches ward. It would be 12% over-represented (11% by 2006).

107 The County Council stated 'an additional division has been proposed for Preston and improved electoral equality has been achieved, as has full coterminosity. Serious consideration has been given to local community ties and interests, for example by grouping similar built-up areas such as Ribbleton and Brookfield, College and Moor Park, St Matthew's and Fishwick, Larches and Ashton, Cadley and Greyfriars, Sharoe Green and Garrison, and also grouping the rural parishes, the proposed boundaries respect as far as practicable local community ties. It must be recognised that the arrangement of central area wards bounded to the south by the River Ribble limits the options available'.

108 Preston City Councillor Collins objected to the County Council's proposals for Preston, in particular the area covered by the existing Preston Central West division and the proposals to divide Moor Park and Tulketh wards. He produced evidence to suggest that the Plungington Road provides the focus for the communities in both Moor Park and Tulketh wards and that the County Council's proposals would 'wrench' them apart. He stated that 'it is a nonsense to put Deepdale in a [division] with Moor Park and College. Moor Park at no point has a boundary with Deepdale. Deepdale's natural community links are with St

George's'. He also pointed out that the County Council's proposals do not take into consideration the ward groupings of the area forums set up by Preston City Council. He argued that in comparison to the County Council's proposed Preston South East division, a division consisting of Moor Park and Tulketh wards would contain sufficient electors.

109 Given his proposals to retain Moor Park and Tulketh wards in a single division, Councillor Collins submitted proposals for how this would fit in with a number of the surrounding wards. He suggested a new division comprising College and Sharoe Green wards. From our figures, such a ward would be 20% over-represented, both now and in 2006. He also proposed a division combining Deepdale ward, St George's ward and University ward. From our figures this would be 12% over-represented (9% by 2006). His proposed Moor Park & Tulketh division would also be 12% over-represented (10% by 2006).

110 Unfortunately, Councillor Collins did not make any proposals for the remaining divisions in the city. We have therefore looked at trying to incorporate his proposals within a modified version of the County Council's proposals and, alternatively, considered the possibility of devising a completely new scheme. However, given the size of Preston City wards, either approach would have resulted in substantial electoral variances. We have considered the possibility of moving away from a scheme comprising divisions made up of whole district wards, but without the considerable argument about community identity and support from local people, we do not consider this possible. Therefore, while we accept some of Councillor Collins' arguments for the links between Moor Park and Tulketh wards, we do not consider that it is possible to keep them in the same division without having serious consequences for the remainder of the city.

111 In the event that his proposal for a Moor Park & Tulketh division was rejected, Councillor Collins proposed a 'least worst option' for Moor park ward. He proposed combining Moor Park with College and St George's wards and creating another division consisting of Deepdale, Fishwick and St Mathew's wards. However, he did not provide any proposals for the surrounding divisions. As with Councillor Collins' preferred option, we have looked at incorporating his proposals in a wider scheme. Again, this could not be achieved without some substantial electoral variances.

112 The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area.

113 Therefore, we propose adopting the County Council's proposals for this area in their entirety as they secure reasonable levels of electoral equality and excellent levels of coterminosity while having regard to the statutory criteria. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Ribble Valley borough

114 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of Ribble Valley is represented by four county councillors serving four divisions. Clitheroe division is currently 4% under-represented (6% over-represented by 2006). Longridge division is currently 10% over-represented (17% by 2006). Ribble Valley North East division is currently 2% under-represented (3% over-represented by 2006). Ribble Valley South West is currently 10% over-represented (14% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Ribble Valley is over-represented on the County Council.

115 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining four councillors, but with a modified division pattern. Its proposals for Ribble Valley would achieve 100% coterminosity. Its modified Clitheroe division would comprise Edisford & Low Moor ward, Littlemoor ward, Primrose ward, St Mary's ward and Salthill ward. It would be 12% under-represented (1% by 2006). Its modified Longridge & Bowland division would comprise Aighton, Bailey & Chaigney ward, Alston & Hothersall ward, Bowland, Newton & Slaidburn ward, Chipping

ward, Derby & Thornley ward, Dilworth ward and Ribchester ward. It would be 2% under-represented (6% over-represented by 2006). Its modified Ribble Valley North East division would comprise Chatburn ward, Gisburn & Rimington ward, Read & Simonstone ward, Sabden ward, Waddington & West Bradford ward, Whalley ward and Wiswell & Pendleton ward. It would be 5% under-represented (zero % by 2006). Its modified Ribble Valley South West division would comprise Billington & Old Langho ward, Clayton-le-Dale-with-Ramsgreave ward, Lanhgo, Mellor ward and Wilpshire ward. It would be 3% over-represented (8% by 2006).

116 The County Council stated 'the four divisions within Ribble Valley identify with distinct communities, and the proposal for new electoral boundaries introduces only a minimal change to existing arrangements resulting in increased electoral equality and full coterminosity with the new ward boundaries'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

117 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note that the County Council's proposals give good levels of electoral equality and excellent levels of coterminosity, while having regard for the statutory criteria. In light of this and given that we received no other proposals for this area we have adopted the County Council's proposals for this area in their entirety. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

Rossendale district

118 Under the current arrangements, the district of Rossendale is represented by five county councillors serving five divisions. Bacup division is currently 27% over-represented (24% by 2006). Haslingden division is currently 15% under-represented (12% by 2006). Rossendale East division is currently 23% over-represented (25% by 2006). Rossendale West division is 10% under-represented, both now and in 2006. Whitworth division is currently 28% over-represented (27% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Rossendale is over-represented on the County Council.

119 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining five councillors, but with a modified division pattern. Its proposals for Rossendale would achieve 100% coterminosity. Its modified Rossendale East division would comprise Greensclough ward, Stackstead ward and Whitewell ward. It would be 8% under-represented (11% by 2006). Its modified Rossendale North division would comprise Cribden ward, Goodshaw ward and Hareholme ward. It would be 5% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Its modified Rossendale South division would comprise Eden ward, Greenfield ward and Longholme ward. It would be 7% under-represented (4% by 2006). Its modified Rossendale West division would comprise Helmshore ward and Worsley ward. It would be 16% over-represented (18% by 2006). Its modified Whitworth division would comprise Facit & Shawforth ward, Healey & Whitworth ward and Irwell wards. It would be 11% over-represented, both now and in 2006.

120 The County Council stated that its proposals had regard to the fact that 'Rossendale comprises the distinct communities of Bacup, Haslingden, Rawtenstall and Whitworth which are located in a series of deeply cut, interconnected valleys surrounded by moorland'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

121 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note that the County Council's proposals give good levels of electoral equality and excellent levels of coterminosity, while having regard for the statutory criteria. We did examine the possibility of addressing the 18% over-representation in the County Council's proposed Rossendale West division. However, this would worsen coterminosity and have in our view, an adverse effect

on community identity. In light of this and given that we received no other proposals for this area we have adopted the County Council's proposals for this area in their entirety. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

South Ribble borough

122 Under the current arrangements, the Borough of South Ribble is represented by seven county councillors serving seven divisions. South Ribble Central division is currently 3% over-represented (zero % by 2006). South Ribble East division is 19% over-represented, both now and in 2006. South Ribble North division is currently 34% under-represented (31% by 2006). South Ribble North West division is currently 7% under-represented (3% by 2006). South Ribble South division is currently 5% over-represented (7% by 2006). South Ribble South West division is currently 10% under-represented (6% by 2006). South Ribble West division is currently 3% over-represented (4% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, South Ribble is marginally over-represented on the County Council.

123 At Stage One the County Council proposed an additional councillor, giving the borough eight members. Its proposals would achieve 100% coterminosity. Its modified Leyland East division would comprise Golden Hill ward, Leyland Central ward, Leyland St Mary's ward and Leyland St Ambrose ward. It would be 7% under-represented (2% by 2006). Its modified Leyland West division would comprise Earnshaw Bridge ward, Lowerhouse ward, Moss Side ward and Seven Stars ward. It would be 8% under-represented (4% by 2006). Its modified Penwortham North division would comprise Broad Oak ward, Howick & Priory ward and Whitefield ward. It would be 10% over-represented (13% by 2006). Its modified Penwortham South division would comprise Charnock ward, Kingsfold ward, Middleforth ward and Tardy Gate ward. It would be 6% under-represented, both now and in 2006.

124 The County Council's modified South Ribble Central division would comprise Farington East ward, Farington West ward and Lostock ward. It would be 15% over-represented (14% by 2006). Its modified South Ribble North East division would comprise Bamber Bridge North ward, Bamber Bridge West ward and Walton-le-Dale ward. It would be 15% over-represented (16% by 2006). Its modified South Ribble Rural East division would comprise Bamber Bridge East ward, Coupe Green & Gregson Lane ward and Samlesbury & Walton ward. It would be 10% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Its modified South Ribble Rural West division would comprise Little Hoole & Much Hoole ward, Longton & Hutton West ward and New Longton & Hutton East ward. It would be 5% under-represented, both now and in 2006.

125 The County Council stated 'the electorate in South Ribble is forecast to increase by 2006 and an additional division has been proposed. In determining the submission serious consideration has been given to community issues and whilst little change has been made to existing arrangements this does result in full coterminosity and an increase in electoral equality'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

126 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We have some concerns about the levels of electoral equality in a number of wards and have examined alternatives. However, given that the majority of wards are over-represented and that they are all close to each other, it is difficult to address this without considerably worsening coterminosity and with little regard for community identity. Therefore, in light of this and the fact that we have no alternative submissions, we have decided to adopt the County Council's proposals without modification. Its proposals give reasonable levels of electoral

equality and excellent levels of coterminosity, while having regard for the statutory criteria. Therefore, we propose adopting them in their entirety. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large map at the back of the report.

West Lancashire district

127 Under the current arrangements, the borough of West Lancashire is represented by seven county councillors serving seven divisions. Ormskirk division is currently 21% under-represented (15% by 2006). Skelmersdale Central division is currently 5% over-represented (3% by 2006). Skelmersdale East division is 2% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Skelmersdale West division is currently 4% under-represented (1% by 2006). West Lancashire East division is currently 21% under-represented (20% by 2006). West Lancashire North division is currently 32% under-represented (35% by 2006). West Lancashire South division is currently 6% over-represented (8% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, West Lancashire is under-represented on the County Council.

128 At Stage One the County Council proposed an additional councillor for West Lancashire, giving it eight members. Its proposals would achieve 75% coterminosity. Its modified Ormskirk West division would comprise Knowsley and Scott wards. It would be 11% over-represented (15% by 2006). Its modified Skelmersdale Central division would comprise Birch Green ward, Dignum ward and Tanhouse ward, and part of Skelmersdale North ward to the south of Church Road, Appleton Road, Glenburn Road and Houghtons Road. It would be 4% under-represented (6% by 2006). Its modified Skelmersdale East division would comprise Moorside ward, Up Holland ward and Wrightington ward. It would be 7% under-represented (6% by 2006). Skelmersdale West division would comprise Ashurst ward and Skelmersdale South ward, and part of Skelmersdale North ward to the north of Church Road, Appleton Road, Glenburn Road and Houghtons Road. It would be 9% under-represented (3% by 2006).

129 The County Council's modified West Lancashire East division would comprise Derby ward, Newburgh ward and Parbold ward. It would be 3% over-represented (6% by 2006). Its modified West Lancashire North division would comprise Hesketh-with-Beaconsall ward, North Meols ward and Tarleton ward. It would be 1% under-represented (5% by 2006). Its modified West Lancashire South division would comprise Aughton & Downholland ward, Aughton Park ward, Bickerstaffe ward and Halsall ward. It would be 7% under-represented (4% by 2006). Its modified West Lancashire West division would comprise Burscough West ward, Burscough East ward, Rufford ward and Scarisbrick ward. It would be 10% under-represented (11% by 2006).

130 The County Council stated 'in determining electoral equality an additional division is proposed which provides a significant improvement, and coterminosity increases from the existing position of one division to six'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

131 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note that the County Council's proposals give good levels of electoral equality and excellent levels of coterminosity, while having regard for the statutory criteria. In light of this and given that we received no other proposals for this area we propose adopting them in their entirety. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps (sheet 1 of 3 and Map 6 on sheet 3 of 3) at the back of the report.

Wyre borough

132 Under the current arrangements, the borough of Wyre is represented by eight county councillors serving eight divisions. Amounderness division is currently 7% over-represented (13% by 2006). Cleveleys division is currently 19% over-represented (24% by 2006). Garstang division is currently 3% under-represented (2% by 2006). Hesketh division is currently 1% over-represented (7% by 2006). Hillhouse division is currently 9% over-represented (8% by 2006). Marine division is 19% over-represented, both now and in 2006. Poulton-le-Fylde division is currently 2% over-represented (7% by 2006). Wyre Side division is currently 11% under-represented (8% by 2006). Overall, relative to the size of the electorate in the rest of the county, Wyre is over-represented on the County Council.

133 At Stage One the County Council proposed retaining eight councillors. Its proposals would achieve 75% coterminosity. Its modified Amounderness division would comprise Carleton ward and Staina ward, and part of Tithebarn ward to the south of Horse Bridge Watercourse and the railway line. It would be 11% over-represented, both now and in 2006). Its modified Fleetwood East division would comprise Mount ward, Park ward and Pharos ward. It would be 1% under-represented (zero % by 2006). Its modified Fleetwood West division would comprise Rossall ward and Warren ward. It would be 7% over-represented (12% by 2006). Its modified Garstang division would comprise Brock ward, Cabus ward, Calder ward, Catterall ward, Garstang ward and Wyreside ward. It would be 11% under-represented (10% by 2006).

134 The County Council's modified Poulton-le-Fylde division would comprise Breck ward, Hardhorn ward and High Cross ward, and part of Tithebarn ward to the north of Horse Bridge Watercourse and the railway line. It would be 1% over-represented (6% by 2006). Its modified Thornton Cleveleys Central division would comprise Jubilee ward, Norcross ward and Victoria ward. It would be 8% under-represented (2% by 2006). Its modified Thornton Cleveleys North division would comprise Bourne ward and Cleveleys park ward. It would be 5% over-represented (9% by 2006). Its modified Wyreside division would comprise Great Eccleston ward, Hambleton & Stalmine-with-Staynall ward, Pilling ward and Preesall ward. It would be 20% under-represented (16% by 2006).

135 The County Council stated 'in determining this submission there has been serious discussion around community issues and the proposal secures substantially improved levels of electoral equality and coterminosity, clearly recognisable boundaries and appears to have no adverse effect on local community ties'. The Conservative Group on Lancashire County Council and Councillor Brown expressed support for the County Council's proposals for this area. We received no other comments regarding this area.

136 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note that the County Council's proposals give good levels of electoral equality and good levels of coterminosity, while having regard for the statutory criteria. In light of this and given that we received no other proposals for this area we propose adopting them in their entirety. Our draft recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on the large maps (sheet 1 of 3 and Map 4 on sheet 3 of 3) at the back of the report.

Conclusions

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

- there should be an increase in council size from 78 to 84;
- the boundaries of all divisions will be subject to change as the divisions are based on district wards which have themselves changed as a result of the district reviews.

138 As already indicated, we have based our draft recommendations on the County Council's, but propose to depart from them in the following areas:

- in Chorley we propose adopting the Conservatives proposals;
- in Hyndburn borough we propose a modification to the County Council's proposed Accrington North and Rishton, Clayton-le-Moor & Altham divisions;
- In Lancaster City we propose a modification to the County Council's proposed Lancaster Rural East and Lancaster Rural South divisions.

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

Table 5: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft arrangements	Current arrangements	Draft arrangements
Number of councillors	78	84	78	84
Number of divisions	78	84	78	84
Average number of electors per councillor	11,255	10,451	11,570	10,744
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	34	23	27	22
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	16	2	13	1

140 As shown in Table 5, our draft recommendations for Lancashire County Council would result in a reduction in the number of divisions with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 16 to two. By 2006 one division is forecast to have an electoral variance of more than 10%.

5 What happens next?

141 There will now be a consultation period, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Lancashire County Council contained in this report. We will take fully into account all submissions received by 21 July 2003. Any received *after* this date may not be taken into account. All responses may be inspected at our offices and those of the County Council. A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

142 Express your views by writing directly to us;

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

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

Appendix A

Draft recommendations for Lancashire County Council: Detailed mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed division boundaries for the Lancashire County Council area.

Sheet 1 of 3 inserted at the back of this report illustrates in outline form the proposed divisions for Lancashire, including constituent borough wards and parishes.

Sheet 2 of 3 illustrates the proposed electoral divisions in Burnley and Hyndburn.

Sheet 3 of 3 illustrates the proposed electoral divisions in Fylde, Lancaster, West Lancashire and Wyre.

Appendix B

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. Public bodies, such as The Boundary Committee for England, are encouraged to follow the Code.

The Code of Practice applies to consultation documents published after 1 January 2001, which should reproduce the criteria, give explanations of any departures, and confirm that the criteria have otherwise been followed.

Table B1: Boundary Committee for England's compliance with Code criteria

Criteria	Compliance/departure
Timing of consultation should be built into the planning process for a policy (including legislation) or service from the start, so that it has the best prospect of improving the proposals concerned, and so that sufficient time is left for it at each stage.	We comply with this requirement.
It should be clear who is being consulted, about what questions, in what timescale and for what purpose.	We comply with this requirement.
A consultation document should be as simple and concise as possible. It should include a summary, in two pages at most, of the main questions it seeks views on. It should make it as easy as possible for readers to respond, make contact or complain.	We comply with this requirement.
Documents should be made widely available, with the fullest use of electronic means (though not to the exclusion of others), and effectively drawn to the attention of all interested groups and individuals.	We comply with this requirement.
Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all groups with an interest. Twelve weeks should be the standard minimum period for a consultation.	We consult on draft recommendations for a minimum of eight weeks, but may extend the period if consultations take place over holiday periods.
Responses should be carefully and open-mindedly analysed, and the results made widely available, with an account of the views expressed, and reasons for decisions finally taken.	We comply with this requirement.
Departments should monitor and evaluate consultations, designating a consultation coordinator who will ensure the lessons are disseminated.	We comply with this requirement.