

# Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for North Tyneside

Report to The Electoral Commission

*October 2003*

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# Contents

	Page
What is The Boundary Committee for England?	5
Summary	7
1 Introduction	11
2 Current electoral arrangements	13
3 Draft recommendations	17
4 Responses to consultation	19
5 Analysis and final recommendations	21
6 What happens next?	45
Appendices	
A Final recommendations for North Tyneside: detailed mapping	47
B Guide to interpreting the first draft of the electoral change Order	49
C First draft of electoral change Order	51



# 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 are:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

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

This report sets out our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of North Tyneside.



# Summary

We began a review of North Tyneside's electoral arrangements on 14 May 2002. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 25 February 2003, after which we undertook an eight-week period of consultation. We now submit final recommendations to The Electoral Commission.

- **This report summarises the representations that we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and contains our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission.**

We found that the existing arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in North Tyneside:

- **in nine of the 20 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the borough and six wards vary by more than 20% from the average;**
- **by 2006 this situation is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in 10 wards and by more than 20% in four wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 146–147) are that:

- **North Tyneside Borough Council should have 60 councillors, the same as at present;**
- **there should be 20 wards, the same as at present;**
- **the boundaries of all 20 of the existing wards should be modified.**

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

- **In 17 of the proposed 20 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the borough average and none would vary by more than 20% from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors per councillor in no ward expected to vary by more than 9% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to The Electoral Commission, which will not make an Order implementing them before 2 December 2003. The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

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*Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary*

	<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Large map reference</b>
1	Battle Hill	3	Part of Battle Hill ward; part of Northumberland ward	1 and 2
2	Benton	3	Part of Benton ward; part of Holystone ward	1
3	Camperdown	3	Camperdown ward; part of Holystone ward; part of Weetslade ward	1
4	Chirton	3	Chirton ward; part of Collingwood ward; part of Riverside ward	2
5	Collingwood	3	Part of Collingwood ward; part of North Shields ward; part of Seatonville ward; part of Valley ward	2
6	Cullercoats	3	Part of Cullercoats ward	2
7	Howdon	3	Howdon ward; part of Wallsend ward	1 and 2
8	Killingworth	3	Part of Holystone ward	1 and 2
9	Longbenton	3	Longbenton ward; part of Benton ward	1
10	Monkseaton North	3	Part of Monkseaton ward; part of St Mary's ward	2
11	Monkseaton South	3	Part of Cullercoats ward; part of Monkseaton ward; part of Seatonville ward	2
12	Northumberland	3	Part of Battle Hill ward; part of Northumberland ward	1
13	Preston	3	Part of North Shields ward	2
14	Riverside	3	Part of North Shields ward; part of Riverside ward	2
15	St Mary's	3	Part of St Mary's ward; part of Valley ward	2
16	Tynemouth	3	Tynemouth ward; part of North Shields ward	2
17	Valley	3	Part of Collingwood ward; part of Valley ward	1 and 2
18	Wallsend	3	Part of Northumberland ward; part of Wallsend ward	1 and 2
19	Weetslade	3	Part of Weetslade ward	1
20	Whitley Bay	3	Whitley Bay ward; part of St Mary's ward; part of Seatonville ward	2

**Notes:**

1. *The whole district is unparished.*
2. *The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.*
3. *We have made a number of minor boundary amendments to ensure that existing ward boundaries adhere to ground detail. These changes do not affect any electors.*

Table 2: Final recommendations for North Tyneside

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Battle Hill	3	8,319	2,773	15	7,849	2,616	9
2	Benton	3	7,529	2,510	4	7,432	2,477	3
3	Camperdown	3	7,605	2,535	5	7,125	2,375	-1
4	Chirton	3	7,250	2,417	0	6,919	2,306	-4
5	Collingwood	3	8,097	2,699	12	7,864	2,621	9
6	Cullercoats	3	7,586	2,529	5	7,327	2,442	2
7	Howdon	3	7,400	2,467	2	7,426	2,475	3
8	Killingworth	3	7,047	2,349	-3	7,227	2,409	1
9	Longbenton	3	6,570	2,190	-9	7,175	2,392	0
10	Monkseaton North	3	7,102	2,367	-2	6,755	2,252	-6
11	Monkseaton South	3	7,118	2,373	-2	6,938	2,313	-3
12	Northumberland	3	6,665	2,222	-8	6,635	2,212	-8
13	Preston	3	6,927	2,309	-4	6,835	2,278	-5
14	Riverside	3	6,939	2,313	-4	7,280	2,427	1
15	St Mary's	3	7,159	2,386	-1	6,888	2,296	-4
16	Tynemouth	3	7,599	2,533	5	7,498	2,499	4
17	Valley	3	6,109	2,036	-16	6,878	2,293	-4
18	Wallsend	3	7,297	2,432	1	7,128	2,376	-1
19	Weetslade	3	7,547	2,516	4	7,799	2,600	9
20	Whitley Bay	3	6,974	2,325	-4	6,663	2,221	-7
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>144,839</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>143,641</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,414</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>-</b>

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

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



# 1 Introduction

1 This report contains our final recommendations for the electoral arrangements for the borough of North Tyneside. We are reviewing the five metropolitan boroughs in Tyne and Wear as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. The programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to finish in 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of North Tyneside. North Tyneside's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1979 (Report no. 350).

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

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
  - 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.
- the general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1996 and the statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to:
  - eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
  - promote equality of opportunity; and
  - promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

4 Details of the legislation under which the review of North Tyneside was conducted are set out in a document entitled *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Periodic Electoral Reviews*. This *Guidance* sets out the approach to the review.

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

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the borough 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.

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

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit to the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough wards currently return three

councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could lead to an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

9 This review was in four stages. Stage One began on 14 May 2002, when we wrote to North Tyneside Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Northumbria Police Authority, the Local Government Association, Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough, Members of the European Parliament for the North East Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 16 September 2002. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

10 Stage Three began on 25 February 2003 with the publication of the report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for North Tyneside*, and ended on 22 April 2003. During this period comments were sought from the public and any other interested parties on the preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four the draft recommendations were reconsidered in the light of the Stage Three consultation and we now publish the final recommendations.

## 2 Current electoral arrangements

11 The borough of North Tyneside is situated to the north of the River Tyne estuary in Tyne and Wear with a coastline stretching into Northumbria. Wallsend, in the south of the borough, is at the eastern end of Hadrian's Wall and home to the highly skilled off-shore industry. In the west, Tynemouth Priory welcomes ships and passenger ferries into the port of Tyne and to the north is Newcastle Airport. Road and rail links are excellent.

12 The borough covers an area of 8,377 hectares. The southern border is defined by the River Tyne and the eastern by the North Sea. The northern fringe of the borough is open countryside and the main urban areas, including the towns of North Shields, Tynemouth, Wallsend and Whitley Bay, lie along the river and coastline. There are three other large settlements - Forest Hall, Killingworth and Longbenton - between these main towns and the rural hinterland.

13 The population of North Tyneside currently stands at 195,000, which marks a decline of less than 1% since 1991. Forecasts for the next ten years predict that the population level will continue to remain relatively stable. However, there have been changes in the distribution of population across the borough; for example, since 1991 there have been population increases in Holystone, Monkseaton and North Shields wards and decreases in Chirton, Longbenton and Wallsend wards.

14 The borough does not contain any parishes. The electorate of the borough is 144,839 (December 2001) and the Council presently has 60 members who are elected from 20 wards. All wards are three-member wards.

15 At present, each councillor represents an average of 2,414 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will decrease to 2,394 by the year 2006 if the current number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in nine of the 20 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average with six wards varying by more than 20%. The worst imbalance is in Holystone ward where each councillor represents 42% more electors than the borough average.

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

*Map 1: Existing wards in North Tyneside*

Table 3: Existing electoral arrangements

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Battle Hill	3	8,836	2,945	22	8,338	2,779	16
2	Benton	3	6,576	2,192	-9	6,420	2,140	-11
3	Camperdown	3	7,117	2,372	-2	6,750	2,250	-6
4	Chirton	3	5,611	1,870	-23	5,372	1,791	-25
5	Collingwood	3	6,892	2,297	-5	6,463	2,154	-10
6	Cullercoats	3	7,586	2,529	5	7,327	2,442	2
7	Holystone	3	10,273	3,424	42	10,451	3,484	46
8	Howdon	3	5,757	1,919	-21	5,444	1,815	-24
9	Longbenton	3	4,497	1,499	-38	5,157	1,719	-28
10	Monkseaton	3	8,151	2,717	13	7,726	2,575	8
11	North Shields	3	8,487	2,829	17	8,394	2,798	17
12	Northumberland	3	8,753	2,918	21	8,611	2,870	20
13	Riverside	3	6,536	2,179	-10	6,863	2,288	-4
14	St Mary's	3	7,327	2,442	1	7,065	2,355	-2
15	Seatonville	3	7,265	2,422	0	7,324	2,441	2
16	Tynemouth	3	6,846	2,282	-5	6,748	2,249	-6
17	Valley	3	7,360	2,453	2	8,072	2,691	12
18	Wallsend	3	6,335	2,112	-13	6,645	2,215	-7
19	Weetslade	3	7,835	2,612	8	7,980	2,660	11
20	Whitley Bay	3	6,799	2,266	-6	6,491	2,164	-10
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>144,839</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>143,641</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,414</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,394</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Longbenton ward were relatively over-represented by 38%, while electors in Holystone ward were relatively under-represented by 42%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 Draft recommendations

17 During Stage One, 23 representations were received, including two borough-wide schemes from North Tyneside Borough Council (one from the Cabinet and one from the Council), and representations from the Conservative Group on the Council, the Labour Group on the Council, North Tyneside Constituency Labour Party, the Mayor of North Tyneside, a member of Parliament and a local resident (who put forward three borough-wide schemes). A further 15 representations were received from a councillor, local organisations and residents. In the light of these representations and the evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for North Tyneside*.

18 Our draft recommendations involved modifying all of the existing wards in North Tyneside to achieve an improvement in electoral equality. We adopted the Cabinet's proposals in the north-west and south-east of the borough, the Council's and Labour Party's proposals in the west of the borough, the Council's proposals in the central and southern areas of the borough and the Cabinet's and Council's proposals in the south-west of the borough. We put forward our own proposals for the north-east of the borough. We proposed that:

- North Tyneside Borough Council should be served by 60 councillors, the same as at present, representing 20 wards, also as at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.

*Draft recommendation*

North Tyneside Borough Council should comprise 60 councillors, serving 20 wards.

19 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 19 of the 20 wards varying by no more than 10% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with no ward varying by more than 6% from the average in 2006.



## 4 Responses to consultation

20 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 48 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of North Tyneside Borough Council.

### North Tyneside Constituency Labour Party

21 North Tyneside Constituency Labour Party (Labour) commented on the 10 wards in the west of the borough. It proposed amendments to the proposed Battle Hill, Camperdown, Howdon, Northumberland and Weetslade wards. It also stated that the Borough Council did 'not send out a media release on [our] draft proposals and ... did not put [our] draft proposals on their website.'

### The Mayor of North Tyneside and the Leader of the Conservative Group

22 In a joint submission, the Mayor (now the former mayor) and the Leader of the Conservative Group, writing on behalf of the Conservatives, (the Conservatives) proposed a minor amendment to the boundary between the proposed Benton and Longbenton wards, and also put forward amendments to the proposed Collingwood, Monkseaton South, Monkseaton North, St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards.

### Local political parties

23 Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party supported proposals put forward for the east of the borough by Mr Patrick Cosgrove, a local resident.

### Members of Parliament

24 Alan Campbell MP (Tynemouth Constituency) provided argumentation in support of proposals put forward for the east of the borough by Mr Patrick Cosgrove.

### Local residents associations

25 Dudley Residents Association opposed the proposal in the draft recommendations to divide Dudley village between the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards, and included a petition with 487 signatures to that effect.

### Borough Councillors

26 Councillors McIntyre, Smith and Fairs (all representing Whitley Bay ward) objected to the proposed Whitley Bay ward and Councillor Glindon (Battle Hill ward) objected to the proposed Battle Hill ward. Councillor Jackson (Monkseaton ward) withdrew his Stage One submission and supported the proposals put forward by the Mayor and Cabinet at Stage One.

27 Councillor Bell (Seatonville ward) opposed the proposals put forward for the existing Seatonville ward and the proposed division of Preston Grange estate. Councillor Green (Weetslade ward) proposed amendments to the boundary between the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards. Councillor Stringfellow (Riverside ward) supported the proposals put forward by Mr Cosgrove for the east of the borough.

## Other representations

28 A local resident, Mr Patrick Cosgrove, put forward significant amendments to the 11 eastern wards of the borough. These proposals received support from Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party, Alan Campbell MP and Councillor Stringfellow (Riverside ward), as detailed previously.

29 We also received submissions from 11 local residents objecting to the proposed Whitley Bay ward and 19 representations from local residents objecting to the proposal to divide Preston Grange estate between Collingwood and Monkseaton South wards. Two local residents objected to the proposals for Dudley village and two local residents opposed the transfer of part of Kings estate from Battle Hill ward to the proposed Northumberland ward. We received one submission from two local residents in support of the proposed Benton ward. Another local resident supported the inclusion of Manors estate in the proposed Benton ward and commented that Fairways estate should also be part of this ward.

## 5 Analysis and final recommendations

30 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for North Tyneside 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; 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 ward of the district or borough'.

31 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 within the next five years. We also must have regard to the desirability of fixing identifiable boundaries and to maintaining local ties.

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

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

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

### Electorate forecasts

35 Since 1975 there has been a 5% decrease in the electorate of North Tyneside borough. Development resulting from regeneration has led to a shift of electors towards the regenerated areas. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting a decrease in the electorate of 1% from 144,839 to 143,641 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the decrease to be in Battle Hill and Monkseaton wards, although a significant growth in the electorate is expected in Valley ward. Advice from the Borough Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to ward boundaries has been obtained. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Borough Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to Unitary development plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Having accepted that this is an inexact science and, having considered the forecast electorates, we stated in our draft recommendations report that we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could reasonably be made at the time.

36 We received no comments on the Borough Council's electorate forecasts during Stage Three, and remain satisfied that they represent the best estimates currently available.

## Council size

37 North Tyneside Borough Council currently has 60 members. At Stage One, the Borough Council proposed to retain a council of 60 members. In its initial submission, the Borough Council argued that 'we take the view that the present 20 wards and 60 councillors should be retained as they allow effective representation at the local level.' It also stated that all three parties on the council shared this view. The Borough Council had considered councillors' workloads and their 'capacity to represent residents under ... the mayoral model in North Tyneside.'

38 The Labour Party also argued that 20 three-member wards should be retained. They stated that this would 'allow effective representation at a local level, which is related to the needs of local communities and individual residents.'

39 A local resident, Mr Alan Pond, put forward three submissions (the first proposing a council size of 21, the second and third of 20) to 'achieve the desire expressed by a large number of the general public, to reduce the number of politicians who are elected.' He supported this argument by quoting members of the public and stated that they wanted a 'more focused and efficient council.'

40 North Tyneside Borough Council, the Labour Party and Mr Pond were asked to provide further evidence and argumentation supporting their proposed council sizes. North Tyneside Borough Council subsequently identified three main functions of councillors: 'to represent the interests of residents on the council', 'to formulate and monitor the local authority's policies and priorities' and 'to represent the interests of both residents and the authority on and to a wide range of external bodies'. It described its modernised political management arrangements in which the 'elected mayor appoints a cabinet of between two and nine other councillors'. The cabinet is responsible 'for bringing forward major policies and strategies to Council and then making sure that Council policies are implemented', as well as taking 'many of the important decisions about how policies are implemented.' In North Tyneside, 'the Cabinet is seven elected members and the mayor.'

41 The Cabinet is 'held to account by non-executive members and ... through Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its sub-committees'. There are 35 non-executive committee places, but the three further sub-committees of Overview and Scrutiny take the non-executive committee places to 62. 'The Council also exercises a number of quasi-judicial functions' and 'there are 54 committee places designated for this work.' It stated that 'the total number of committee places in the council's current arrangements is 155, more than two and a half committee places per councillor.' This figure is expected to increase in the near future 'as the Council is in the process of introducing local area committees ... which will involve elected members and residents'. The Borough Council argued that, given that many members work full-time, 'the current balance of committee places compared to number of councillors represents an acceptable workload for councillors, especially when combined with their wider community leadership/community representation role', before concluding that retaining 60 councillors would secure 'effective and convenient government.'

42 In their further submission, the Labour Party stated that they had looked seriously at reducing the number of wards to 16, and therefore the number of councillors to 48. However, it was decided that this would make it difficult for councillors to 'keep contact with all the electorate through street visits' which they felt was 'very important', along with 'holding regular surgeries.' They therefore concluded that 'it was right to keep the number of councillors at 60', particularly as all the political groups on the council had agreed that this should be recommended.

43 Mr Pond also provided further argumentation on his proposed council sizes. He stated that his proposals to reduce the number of councillors represented 'a widely held view that we are grossly over-governed and that there are far too many politicians at all levels of government.' He

argued that 'there is little evidence to show that an increase in politicians leads to any improvement in public services' and stated that, in fact, the opposite seemed to be true. In addition, he stated that a reduction in the number of councillors would be likely to result in 'improvements in efficiency and more democracy as local people are given more responsibility for managing their own affairs.' Mr Pond claimed that 'it is now increasingly common to see local councils more as catalysts and initiators of change rather than needing to provide all public services directly' as 'those central to the process of policy and decision making draw on a much wider pool of talent than the old system of party political councillors and professional officers, including community groups and members of the general public.' Mr Pond stated that the logic of his proposals was 'to take power away from the party politicians on the council and to give it back to local communities.' 'Policy would be made much more directly by the general public, through the use of referenda and citizens' initiative ... alongside a significant geographical decentralisation of power out of the town hall by setting up parish councils and neighbourhood forums'. Mr Pond stated that 'the role of elected councillors would then be to manage the council's services in accordance with the people's will'. Therefore, fewer councillors would be required. In conclusion, 'the leaner, slimmer structure created at the top by these reforms (proposed) would free up resources that would be put into giving power back to local communities.'

44 We carefully considered all the representations regarding council size that we received during Stage One. We recognised the effort and work that has been required to produce these submissions, and were grateful for the co-operation that we received with our requests for further evidence and argumentation.

45 Mr Pond's second proposal suggested 20 wards, each electing one councillor and his third proposal argued for four new wards, each electing five councillors. Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit on the number of councillors who can be returned or elected from each metropolitan borough or district ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. We were therefore unable to implement either of Mr Pond's latter two proposals as the number of councillors per proposed ward is not divisible by three. His first proposal suggested a council size of 21 with seven wards, each to be represented by three councillors. We did not consider that the argumentation and evidence provided was sufficient for such a significant reduction in councillors. Such a radical reduction would require extensive consultation with local people and widespread support. We also noted that Mr Pond had not examined the role of councillors under the new political management structure and considered that he did not sufficiently take into account the impact such a significant reduction in council size would have on the workload of councillors or the management of the authority.

46 We considered that the Borough Council and the Labour Party had put forward a good case for retaining the existing number of councillors. The Borough Council argued in terms of councillors' internal and external commitments and persuaded us that each councillor's workload is anticipated to grow. We also concurred that it is important to consider the fact that many members work full-time, and noted that the current workload for councillors is considered to be at an 'acceptable' level, in light of the three main functions of councillors identified. We appreciated the description of the modernised political arrangements in North Tyneside and agreed that a reduction in the number of councillors at this time might hinder its effective functioning. The Labour Party did look at reducing the number of councillors, before concluding that this would lead to unacceptable distancing of councillors from the electorate. We noted that cross-party agreement was reached and were persuaded that 60 members would indeed secure effective and convenient local government. We also noted that 60 members gave the correct allocation of councillors between the distinct parts of the borough.

47 Having looked at the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the responses received, we concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 60 members.

48 During Stage Three two respondents, Alan Campbell MP and Mr Cosgrove, commented on council size. Alan Campbell MP stated that 'my own view is that an opportunity exists to reconsider the appropriate numbers with a view to reducing the totals. I accept, however, that reducing the number of wards or councillors leads to problems with regard to equal representation east and west of the A19. I also recognise the argument that the Cabinet system requires a minimum number of councillors to ensure effective scrutiny. I therefore accept the 20 wards and 60 councillor figures.' Mr Cosgrove stated that 'there is almost unanimity that the borough is best served by the current arrangement of 60 councillors representing 20 wards.'

49 In the light of these representations we are therefore content to endorse the draft recommendation of 60 councillors representing 20 wards as final.

## Electoral arrangements

50 We carefully considered all representations received during Stage One, including a submission from the North Tyneside Labour Group which stated that both it and the North Tyneside Liberal Democrats felt that officers had produced draft proposals 'without any member involvement' and had left 'insufficient time to arrive at any all-Party consensus or take proper account of outside bodies' views.' Mr Pond stated that the consultation exercise 'was not well advertised and the information provided to the public was incomplete'. A number of other respondents made the same point. The Borough Council answered these objections in its submission. It described the efforts made to keep members aware of the review: 'Firstly, a copy of The Electoral Commission guidance material was sent out to the councillors on the 21 May 2002. Secondly, copies of the population projections and maps used by officers in drafting proposals were provided to group leaders in early June, and thirdly, a copy of the consultation document was sent to all councillors on the 21 August.' Members were also reminded of the timetable. 'Offers were also made to group representation to support them in the population analysis and re-drafting of ward boundaries.' The Borough Council stated that these offers were not taken up. We are therefore satisfied that members of the council were given the opportunity to become fully involved in the review process. The Borough Council also pointed out that members of the public were kept informed by a press release, fixed displays in libraries and in the Town Hall, the Borough Council's website and the sending of copies of the draft proposals to local groups inviting comments. All in all, we are satisfied that reasonable steps were taken to draw attention to the review process and the Borough Council's proposals.

51 We noted that the A19 forms a strong boundary between the east and west of the borough, and that the majority of submissions received at Stage One used this as a boundary. However, we considered that it was necessary to breach this boundary in the south of the borough to provide the correct allocation of councillors across the borough as a whole.

52 Having carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One and having visited the area, we based our draft recommendations on the Cabinet's proposals in the north-west of the borough, the Council's and Labour Group's proposals for the south-west of the borough and the Council's proposals for the central and southern areas. We modified the proposals for a number of wards to tie boundaries to better ground detail. We considered that a combination of these three schemes, in addition to some of our own proposals, would provide a better balance between the statutory criteria than the current arrangements or any scheme taken individually. We considered that the Cabinet's proposals, although providing good levels of electoral equality, did not reflect community identities in some areas of the borough. We considered that the Council's proposals divided certain communities such as Cullercoats and North Shields. In these areas, we adopted the Cabinet's proposals in view of the degree of consensus behind large elements of the Cabinet's proposals, and the consultation exercise which it undertook with interested parties. In the east of the borough we put forward our own proposals to provide a better reflection of communities by uniting them in single wards, as outlined by Councillor Jackson. Our proposals in this area also further improved electoral equality. We were able to

reflect the views of a number of respondents who wrote to us at Stage One regarding the Benton, Cullercoats and Preston areas and New York village.

53 As discussed in the previous section, we did not adopt any of Mr Pond's three borough-wide schemes. Nevertheless, we appreciated the time and effort that Mr Pond had put into his submission and were grateful for his input.

54 Although there is no limit on the number of councillors that can be returned or elected from each metropolitan ward, the figure must be divisible by three. We acknowledge that this provides restrictions for those submitting proposals for North Tyneside, and indeed not every ward lends itself to being well represented by three councillors due to natural boundaries and established communities dictating where the ward boundary should run. However, we considered that our draft proposals offered the best warding arrangement for this area given these constraints.

55 At Stage Three we received 48 submissions. These are detailed in the previous and subsequent sections. As a result of this further evidence and argumentation, and having revisited the area, we propose a number of amendments to our draft recommendations. We propose significant amendments to the proposed Collingwood, Monkseaton North, Monkseaton South, St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards and a minor amendment to the boundary between the proposed Collingwood and Preston wards to better reflect community identities and interests. We also propose amendments to the boundaries between the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards and between the proposed Battle Hill and Northumberland wards, again to better reflect community identities and interests.

56 We have been able to reflect most of the submissions received at Stage Three in our final recommendations. We gave careful consideration to the other submissions received at Stage Three, but concluded that none of the further proposed amendments would provide a better balance between the statutory criteria than the draft recommendations. Mr Cosgrove proposed a revised warding pattern for 11 wards in the east of the borough, which received a measure of local support. However, adopting this revised warding pattern would essentially result in a new scheme for the east of the borough and we did not consider that the evidence and argumentation justified this, especially given the lack of local consultation that would be possible at this stage of the review. We have, however, had regard for Mr Cosgrove's proposals and a number of our amendments in the north-east of the borough are based on his proposals.

57 In its Stage Three submission, Labour stated that 'within one month of [our] draft proposals residents of the area have not been informed.' It stated that 'there has been nothing on the council's website up to the 22 March 2003, and the council magazine which has been sent to every home in the borough at the end of March did not contain any details of the proposals.'

58 We noted Labour's comments on advertising the review process. On publication of the draft recommendations we placed public notices in the *Gateshead Herald & Post*, *Evening Chronicle*, *Newcastle Herald & Post*, *North Tyneside Herald & Post*, *Shields Gazette*, *South Tyneside Herald & Post* and *Sunderland Echo* papers and issued a press release to local papers. We also provided posters to the Borough Council to place in local libraries and local information points to publicise the publication of the draft recommendations. All those who submitted a representation at Stage One received a copy of the draft recommendations, as did local MPs. We also encouraged the Borough Council to advertise the review as much as possible. In light of this we are satisfied that the draft recommendations received adequate publicity.

59 The draft recommendations have been reviewed in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- i. Benton, Camperdown, Holystone, Longbenton and Weetslade wards (page 26);
- ii. Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend wards (page 29);
- iii. Chirton, Collingwood, Riverside and Valley wards (page 32);
- iv. Monkseaton, St Mary's, Seatonville and Whitley Bay wards (page 35);
- v. Cullercoats, North Shields and Tynemouth wards (page 40).

60 Details of our final recommendations are set out in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2, in Appendix A and on the large maps.

### **Benton, Camperdown, Holystone, Longbenton and Weetslade wards**

61 The existing Benton, Camperdown, Holystone, Longbenton and Weetslade wards are situated in the north-west of the borough. Under the existing arrangements, the councillor:elector ratio in Holystone and Weetslade wards is 42% and 8% above the borough average respectively (46% and 11% above by 2006). Benton, Camperdown and Longbenton wards have councillor:elector ratios 9%, 2% and 38% below the borough average respectively (11%, 6% and 28% below by 2006).

62 At Stage One, the Cabinet proposed significant modifications to each of these wards and proposed two new wards in this area. Its proposed Forest Hall ward included the Forest Hall community and comprised parts of the existing Benton and Holystone wards. The Cabinet's proposed Killingworth ward was based on the existing Holystone ward and included the West Moor area from Longbenton ward and the industrial area south of Killingworth Lake from Camperdown ward. The Edgemount area was transferred to its proposed Camperdown ward, which also included the southern part of Dudley village from the existing Weetslade ward. Its proposed Wideopen ward would be based on the existing Weetslade ward, with one modification that the southern part of Dudley village be transferred to its proposed Camperdown ward. The new boundary between the proposed Camperdown and Wideopen wards would follow the railway line up to Market Street, run along Market Street and Ashkirk, to the south of Fordley Community Primary School and then along the existing boundary to the edge of the borough.

63 The Council also proposed altering the existing ward boundaries of all of these wards. Its proposed Longbenton ward was based on the existing ward, but also included the Benton estate (currently in Benton ward) as 'at present there is an artificial distinction made between the two sides of what is effectively the same housing estate.' Its proposed Benton ward included areas south of Great Lime Road and west of the playing fields, currently in the existing Holystone ward, as they have 'greater identification with Forest Hall' which would be situated in the proposed Benton ward. Its proposed Stephenson ward was based on the existing Holystone ward and involved the transfer of the Edgemount estate to its proposed Camperdown ward. The areas south of Great Lime Road would be transferred to Benton ward, as previously stated. The new estate of The Wyndings would be transferred from the existing Weetslade ward into its proposed Camperdown ward. The Council stated that The Wyndings estate was part of the Annitsford area and considered that 'most of Annitsford is within Camperdown ward and it would be sensible to treat The Wyndings estate in this way. Its main access is from the east.' This represented the only change proposed to the existing Weetslade ward by the Council.

64 The Labour Party's proposals for these five wards were identical to the Council's proposals, except that the boundary between its proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards would be slightly amended to follow Weetslade Road and the B1321, before running along the existing boundary and continuing northwards to the edge of the district.

65 We received a submission from the Mayor of North Tyneside supporting the Cabinet's proposals and providing further argumentation. He stated that the proposed Camperdown ward was 'not ideal', but noted that it was constrained by the northern boundary of the borough and has been in existence for 20 years. He stated that major change in the case of the proposed Wideopen ward was 'constrained by the western boundary of the borough', but minor

amendments were possible which would see part of Dudley village, 'already split between the two wards', transferred into Camperdown ward. He provided comments in support of the Cabinet's proposed Benton, Forest Hall, Killingworth and Longbenton wards. The Mayor also expressed his concerns surrounding the Council's proposals.

66 Killingworth Village Residents Association stated in its submission that it 'would much prefer a separate ward for Killingworth'.

67 We received five submissions from local residents arguing that Benton is 'very similar to Forest Hall in people and areas' and objecting to the Cabinet's proposal to transfer Benton to its proposed Longbenton ward as 'there is no affinity socially or economically between Benton and Longbenton.'

68 After careful consideration of all representations received during Stage One, we adopted the Cabinet's proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards, with minor amendments, as we considered that the links between Dudley and Fordley villages merit the two being united in a new Camperdown ward. Similarly, there are reasonable links between the area adjacent to the B1319 and the rest of its proposed Wideopen ward. We concurred with the Mayor that the railway line forms a good boundary and should be used wherever possible. We considered the Fordley community to be too isolated in the north of Camperdown ward under the Council's proposals. However, we proposed three minor amendments to the Cabinet's proposals to tie ward boundaries to better ground detail. The first of these was to include Wheatley Terrace in Camperdown ward, to reflect access routes. The second was to run the boundary between Camperdown and Weetslade wards to the north of the houses along Ashkirk. The third was to retain Stephenson Industrial Estate in Camperdown ward. We did not propose that Weetslade ward be renamed Wideopen ward as we were not persuaded that this would best reflect local communities.

69 We proposed that Holystone ward be renamed Killingworth, as suggested by the Cabinet and Killingworth Village Residents Association, but followed the Council's and the Labour Party's boundaries for this ward as we considered that they grouped the similar communities of Holystone, Killingworth Village and Palmersville in the same ward. We considered the links between the east and west of the Cabinet's proposed Killingworth ward to be too poor to put it forward as part of our draft recommendations. We also adopted the Council's and Labour Party's proposals for Benton and Longbenton wards as they had received local support, provided good electoral equality and reflected community identities and interests. These proposals united the villages of Benton and Forest Hall in Benton ward and we were persuaded by local residents that the two villages are very similar. Furthermore, it was argued by local residents that 'there is no affinity socially or economically between Benton and Longbenton' as 'the two communities are separated by the A186 road and a passenger rail line running alongside each other'. Having visited the area, we concurred with these views and felt that their argumentation was more persuasive than that put forward by the Cabinet and the Mayor, who we considered did not justify the poor links between the constituent parts of the Cabinet's proposed Killingworth ward.

70 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Benton and Camperdown wards would have councillor:elector ratios 4% and 10% above the borough average respectively (3% and 4% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Killingworth, Longbenton and Weetslade wards would be 3%, 9% and 1% below the borough average respectively (1% above, equal to and 3% above by 2006).

71 At Stage Three we received eight submissions in relation to this area. Labour argued that Dudley village should be retained in the proposed Weetslade ward and that The Wyndings estate, which is in Annitsford, should be transferred to the proposed Camperdown ward with the rest of Annitsford. This is because 'the only road entrance to The Wyndings estate is through the Camperdown ward and therefore we feel it would be sensible for them to go into Camperdown [ward].' Labour supported the proposed Benton, Killingworth and Longbenton wards, but

commented that they considered Holystone ward being renamed Killingworth 'might cause confusion as the west of the Killingworth area would be in Camperdown ward.'

72 The Mayor and the Conservatives pointed out that 'two small housing developments are planned for [the area between the proposed Benton and Longbenton wards immediately to the east of Longbenton Community College], which will only have access from the east.' They therefore considered that the boundary should be 'redrawn to take account of these developments.' They also stated that they consider Holystone ward being renamed Killingworth 'much better reflects the true nature of the ward, especially on its amended boundaries.'

73 Dudley Residents Association objected to the proposals concerning Dudley village and put forward amendments to the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards. It included a petition with 487 signatures in support of these amendments. It proposed that the boundary run to the east of the properties along Weetslade Road, to the east of the properties along Brookside and Ashkirk roads, west of Fordley Community School before running west of The Wyndings estate and so including it in the proposed Camperdown ward. It argued that 'keeping people and community services, i.e. doctors, shops and the People Centre, together in one ward is essential for our village's future.' It also pointed out that The Wyndings estate can only be accessed from Front Street in the proposed Camperdown ward.

74 Councillor Green (Weetslade ward) proposed the same amendments to the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards as Dudley Residents Association. She also pointed out that access to The Wyndings estate is from the east and argued that the amendments would 'preserve the identities of those village communities, with all of Dudley in Weetslade [ward] and all of Fordley and Annitsford in Camperdown [ward].' She stated that the petition organised by Dudley Residents Association has the support of the ward councillors.

75 Two submissions from local residents made similar points. They both argued that The Wyndings estate is accessed from the proposed Camperdown ward and argued on the grounds of community identity that Dudley village should not be divided between two wards. One described how the village was working as one to build a new community building and the other stated that 'the suggested boundary of Market Street would divide the heart of the village, putting our proposed community facility, the majority of our shops and the doctors surgery into Camperdown ward.'

76 We received one submission from two local residents in support of our proposed Benton and Longbenton wards. They stated 'that the A186 road and rail line running alongside each other are an appropriate boundary separating Longbenton ward and Benton ward.' Another local resident supported the inclusion of Manors estate in the proposed Benton ward and commented that Fairways estate should also be part of this ward. However, Fairways estate lies outside the borough boundary and transferring it into North Tyneside Borough is beyond the remit of this review.

77 After careful consideration of all representations received regarding this area, we are amending our draft recommendations for the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards. We concur with Labour, Dudley Residents Association, Councillor Green and the two local residents that The Wyndings estate should be transferred to the proposed Camperdown ward to reflect that estate's access routes. To improve electoral equality in light of this amendment and to reflect community identity in the area we propose uniting Dudley village in the proposed Weetslade ward. The amended boundary between these two proposed wards would run up the A189, to the east of properties along Weetslade Road, to the east of properties along Brookside and Ashkirk, to the west of Dudley Middle School and then to the west and north of The Wyndings estate before meeting the borough boundary. We consider that this amendment better reflects community identities and interests in Dudley village and reflects access routes to The Wyndings estate.

78 We are grateful to the Mayor and the Conservatives for pointing out the proposed housing development between the proposed Benton and Longbenton wards but, in the absence of any detailed amendments or figures, have not been persuaded to move away from our draft recommendations between these two wards. We also noted the support received for these two wards, as proposed in our draft recommendations, from local residents.

79 We have also not been persuaded to rename the proposed Killingworth ward, as suggested by Labour, as we received support for this name from the Mayor and the Conservatives and noted that it reflected the opinion of a number of submissions received at Stage One.

80 With the one amendment detailed above, therefore, we are confirming our draft recommendations as final for this area.

81 Under our final recommendations, the proposed Benton, Camperdown and Weetslade wards would have councillor:elector ratios 4%, 5% and 4% above the borough average respectively (3% above, 1% below and 9% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratios in the proposed Killingworth and Longbenton wards would be 3% and 9% below the borough average respectively (1% above and equal to by 2006).

### **Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend wards**

82 The existing Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend wards cover the area to the south-west of the borough. Under the existing arrangements, the councillor:elector ratio in Battle Hill and Northumberland wards is 22% and 21% above the district average respectively (16% and 20% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in Howdon and Wallsend wards is 21% and 13% below the borough average respectively (24% and 7% below by 2006).

83 At Stage One the Cabinet proposed two new wards in this area and modifications to two of the existing wards. The Cabinet's proposed Battle Hill ward was based on the existing ward but no longer included the area to the west of Kings Road North, which would be transferred to the proposed Wallsend West ward. Its proposed Wallsend West ward was based on the existing Northumberland ward but also included the area to the west of Kings Road North. The town centre area south of Wallsend Burn would be transferred to its proposed Wallsend East ward. Its proposed Wallsend East ward was based on the existing Wallsend ward and also included the area south of Wallsend Burn. The Holy Cross area was transferred to its proposed Howdon ward, the ward boundary following Wallsend Dene and then Wallsend Burn before joining the existing boundary at Willington Bridge. Its proposed Howdon ward included the Holy Cross area as 'it shares many community links with Holy Cross.'

84 The Council's proposals for the ward boundaries of these four wards were identical to the Cabinet's proposals. It stated that these changes would 'bring the centre of Wallsend together in Wallsend ward' and unite the Holy Cross and Howdon areas which 'share many community links'. The Council did not propose to change the names of any of these existing wards.

85 The Labour Party submitted its own proposals for these wards. The boundary between its proposed Northumberland ward and Battle Hill and Wallsend wards would follow Coast Road, run down West Street, along Wallsend Burn, around Richardson Dees Park, around the hospital and would then pass to the east of the sports ground off Kings Road. The area between this sports ground and Holy Cross village would be transferred to its proposed Battle Hill ward. The area to the east of Kings Road would be transferred out of the existing Battle Hill ward to its proposed Northumberland ward. Its proposed Wallsend ward shared boundaries with Battle Hill and Northumberland wards as detailed above, and that part of the Willington area currently located in Wallsend ward would be transferred to its proposed Howdon ward. Its proposed Howdon ward was based on the existing ward, with the addition of the Willington area and the area of the existing Riverside ward to the west of the A19 road. The Labour Party stated that

'this would bring all of Howdon into one ward and also ensures that the community of Willington Quay is linked with the area with which it most closely identifies.'

86 The Mayor of North Tyneside supported the Cabinet's proposals. He stated that Battle Hill ward is a 'well-established ward' and that the A1058 Coast Road to the south 'forms a natural boundary.' The area to the west of Kings Road North, to be transferred to Wallsend West ward under the Cabinet's proposals, is 'very similar in nature' to this area and the 'new boundary forms a more logical divide' than the existing one. He stated that the proposed Howdon ward 'reunites the whole of High Howdon in one ward' and transfers the community of Holy Cross into Howdon ward. The Mayor pointed out that, although the proposed Wallsend West ward 'crosses the Coast Road, it crosses at a point where there is easy and well-used pedestrian access via the Station Road flyover.' He also stated that the proposed Wallsend East ward 'is now a more cohesive one based almost entirely on Wallsend town centre.'

87 We received a submission from a local resident who objected to the east and west of Wallsend being divided between two wards. She argued that all of Wallsend should remain entirely in Wallsend ward, and that no part should be moved into Howdon ward.

88 We carefully considered all representations received regarding these wards during Stage One. Both the Cabinet and the Council were in agreement over the ward boundaries for the proposed Battle Hill, Howdon, Northumberland and Wallsend wards in the south of the borough, and we noted the supporting argumentation for these proposals provided by the Mayor. We adopted the Cabinet's and Council's proposals for these wards as they provided for good electoral equality, reflected community identities and used strong boundaries. However, we proposed retaining the existing ward names as we considered that they provided the best reflection of the constituent parts of the respective wards. While we noted the Labour Party's proposals, we considered that Coast Road provided the strongest boundary in the area, and that Holy Cross village would be too isolated from the rest of the proposed Wallsend ward under its proposals. Having visited the area, we considered the links between Holy Cross village and the rest of the proposed Howdon ward to provide substantial justification for transferring this area into Howdon ward for reasons of electoral equality. We noted the concerns of the local resident who argued that she looks to the Wallsend area for shops and services, rather than the Howdon area, but do not consider the argumentation provided to be sufficient to move away from the Cabinet's and Council's proposals. We did state, however, that we would welcome comments from local people during Stage Three.

89 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Battle Hill, Howdon and Wallsend wards would have councillor:elector ratios 9%, 2% and 1% above the borough average respectively (4% above, 3% above and 1% below by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Northumberland ward would be 2% below the borough average, both initially and by 2006.

90 At Stage Three we received five submissions in relation to this area. Labour objected to the proposed Howdon ward, arguing that 'the residents of [the area] south of Tynemouth Road identify with Howdon and we understand that the councillors from Howdon ward take up enquires on behalf of residents who live in Howdon but are in Riverside ward.' It stated that they considered 'this would be an ideal situation to unite the people of Howdon into one ward.' It also pointed out that our draft recommendations divided Kings estate, arguing that this estate should be retained in Battle Hill ward rather than transferring the area west of Kings Road to the proposed Northumberland ward.

91 Councillor Glindon (Battle Hill ward) argued that Battle Hill and Northumberland wards 'are naturally separated by the dene which runs from the town up to the Rising Sun'. She stated that our draft recommendations would 'divide Kings estate down the middle.' She stated that 'there is a residents association for the estate, with a building, which is sited on the east part of the estate and of Kings Road.' She argued that 'many residents, who would be moved from Battle Hill into the new ward, now use the Battle Hill Community Centre and the Development Project based

there, which currently serves the whole ward'. Furthermore, 'several members of the Project's Management Committee come from the west side of Kings estate and, if the draft proposals go through, then this area would no longer have access to the very specific benefits of being part of the wider community of Battle Hill.'

92 We received two representations from local residents also objecting to the proposed Battle Hill ward. One stated that 'Kings estate runs from Dinsdale Avenue to Tynedale Avenue and [our] proposals will split the estate in half.' This resident concluded by stating that 'all parts of Kings estate [should be kept] within Battle Hill ward.' The second submission stated that our proposals would 'split up a community and an estate of residents who take pride in living within Battle Hill ward.'

93 Mr Cosgrove, a local resident, also made some comments regarding these wards. He stated that 'it was inevitable that the A19 boundary had to be breached in the Riverside/Howdon area.' He continued, stating that 'it is acknowledged that this offends against the natural community of Howdon, and is opposed by residents of that area. If a means can be found to unite Howdon whilst retaining some degree of electoral equality it would gain widespread support. It is difficult to see how it can be done, however, in a way which would produce wards of acceptable numerical sizes to the Boundary Committee.'

94 After careful consideration of all representations received regarding this area, we are endorsing our draft recommendations as final with one amendment to the boundary between the proposed Battle Hill and Northumberland wards. We note the evidence regarding the Battle Hill Community Centre and the Development Project that serve the entire estate and consider that this area does have a strong community identity. We have been persuaded by the community identity argumentation provided by Labour, Councillor Glindon and the two local residents to move away from our draft recommendations. We concur with Councillor Glindon that ideally the dene, which runs to the west of High View North, should be used as an easily identifiable boundary between these two wards. However, using the dene as the boundary between these two wards would result in high electoral variances (with both wards being over 10%) in two neighbouring wards. We do not consider that the evidence and argumentation received is strong enough to justify these variances in an urban area but are instead adopting the proposal of a local resident to unite the area to the east of Tynedale Avenue in an amended Battle Hill ward. This unites the Kings estate, as defined by a local resident, in a single ward and we consider that the area to the west of Tynedale Avenue has good links with the estate to the west. Consequently, we propose that the amended boundary should run north up Kings Road, south and west of the properties on Tynedale Avenue and then to the west of Rose Gardens, High Farm Middle School, St Bernadette's R.C. Primary School and north of Rising Sun Villas and Rising Sun Cottages before joining the boundary at Kings Road again. We consider that this amendment would unite the Kings Estate community in a single ward and so provide a better reflection of community identity. This amendment worsens electoral equality with both wards varying from the borough average by just under 10% by 2006, but we consider that these higher variances are justified by the better reflection of community identity provided by this amendment.

95 Ideally we would like to unite the Howdon community in a single ward, as proposed by Labour and suggested by Mr Cosgrove, and we looked at how this might be achieved. However, the conclusion we reached was similar to that reached by Mr Cosgrove, that it was very difficult to see how this could be done 'in a way which would produce wards of acceptable numerical sizes'. This area lies on the edge of the borough and there is little scope to address the knock-on effects to the surrounding wards that such an amendment would produce. We are also constrained by the need to provide a uniform pattern of three-member wards across the borough. We therefore confirm our proposed Howdon and Riverside wards as final.

96 Under our final recommendations, the proposed Battle Hill, Howdon and Wallsend wards would have councillor:elector ratios 15%, 2% and 1% above the borough average respectively

(9% above, 3% above and 1% below by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Northumberland ward would be 8% below the borough average, both initially and by 2006.

### **Chirton, Collingwood, Riverside and Valley wards**

97 The existing Chirton, Collingwood, Riverside and Valley wards are situated in the centre of the borough. Under the existing arrangements, the councillor:elector ratio in Valley ward is 2% above the borough average (12% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in Chirton, Collingwood and Riverside wards is 23%, 5% and 10% below the borough average respectively (25%, 10% and 4% below by 2006).

98 At Stage One the Cabinet proposed one new ward in this area and modifications to the boundaries of the remaining wards. Its proposed Shiremoor ward was based on the existing Valley ward, but the villages of Earsdon and South Wellfield would be transferred out of the ward into St Mary's ward. Its proposed Collingwood ward was also based on the existing ward but included the Preston Grange area from Seatonville ward. The West Chirton area to the south of Coast Road would be transferred into its proposed Chirton ward, which also included the areas north of the Metro line from the existing Riverside and North Shields wards. Its proposed Riverside ward included the central North Shields area south of the Metro line, but the area east of the A19 and north of the Metro line would be transferred to its proposed Chirton ward, to reflect the 'close links' between these areas.

99 The Council proposed alterations to each of the wards in this area, the most significant being to Collingwood ward. Its proposed Valley ward was 'largely unchanged' from the existing ward, except that Earsdon village would be transferred into St Mary's ward. Its proposed Collingwood ward would be extended north to include New York village and the Murton area. It also extended eastwards to include the Abbots Way and Monks Wood areas, but the presently 'isolated' area to the south of Coast Road would be transferred to its proposed Chirton ward. The boundary between its proposed Chirton and Riverside wards would follow Wallsend Road, before running southwards along Station Road and then following the Metro line to North Shields Station. Its proposed Riverside ward also included the area to the south of Albion Road and to the west of Howard Street from the existing North Shields ward.

100 The Labour Party put forward a modified Valley ward. This involved the transfer of Earsdon and South Wellfield villages out of the existing ward because they 'have far more in common with the coastal communities than those of Backworth, Shiremoor and West Allotment.'

101 In support of the Cabinet's proposals, the Mayor of North Tyneside argued that that part of Collingwood ward to be transferred to the proposed Chirton ward 'forms a natural part of Chirton, and it is clearly undesirable to cross the Coast Road, unless absolutely necessary.' Regarding the proposed Collingwood ward, he stated that 'Preston Grange is very closely bounded to the rest of Collingwood' and that the ward 'is now bounded by four main roads ... and therefore forms an easily identifiable ward.' The Mayor argued that 'there are clear communities of interest between the riverside communities' in the proposed Riverside ward. He also stated that communities of Earsdon and South Wellfield should be transferred from the existing Valley ward into the proposed St Mary's ward, 'with which they have a more natural affinity.' The Mayor also expressed his concerns about the Council's proposals for two of these wards. He stated that the Council's proposals for Collingwood ward would 'split the estate of Preston Grange - a well established community - in two', as well as dividing Preston village. He pointed out that 'the ward would cross the busy main road of Beach Road.' The Mayor argued that the South Wellfield area should be transferred out of Valley ward, together with Earsdon village, as it also has strong links with the coast. He stated that 'open fields separate South Wellfield from the rest of Valley ward, and this community would be isolated under [the Council's] proposals.'

102 Having carefully considered all representations received during Stage One, we adopted the Cabinet's Valley ward as it utilised good boundaries and, having visited the area, considered that the villages of Earsdon and South Wellfield look to and have good links with the Monkseaton area. We concurred with the Mayor that, under the Council's proposals, the community of South Wellfield would be isolated from the rest of Valley ward. We also noted that the Labour Party proposed transferring these two villages out of Valley ward. We adopted the Council's Chirton, Collingwood and Riverside wards in the central areas of the borough as the proposals addressed the anomalies in the existing arrangements. They also grouped similar communities in single wards by uniting New York village in the proposed Collingwood ward, and including the Murton area in this ward to reflect its access routes. We therefore considered the Council's proposals for this area to provide a better reflection of community identity than the Cabinet's proposals, which did not address the anomaly of New York village currently being divided between two wards. The Council's proposals also received some local support with a resident arguing that 'New York is a long-established community village' which would benefit from being united in one ward and that the village 'has more in common with the other areas of Collingwood ward rather than those of Seatonville ward.' Although we noted the comments made by the Mayor, we considered that the Council's proposals better met the statutory criteria in these three wards than the Cabinet's proposals.

103 We also adopted its proposed Chirton and Riverside wards, partly as a result of adopting the Council's proposed Collingwood ward and because they provided for good electoral equality and, having visited the area, we considered that they provided a good reflection of community identity. However, we proposed two modifications to these wards to further improve electoral equality and to reflect access routes. The first was to the eastern boundary of the proposed Collingwood ward to improve electoral equality. We proposed that the boundary run along the back of Cleehill Drive, follow Malvern Road and then run behind Heybrook Avenue before joining Beach Road. The second modification was to the northern boundary of the proposed Riverside ward. We proposed that the ward boundary should run to the west of Kilburn Gardens, to reflect the fact that access is from Chirton ward. We noted that the councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Valley ward would be above 10% initially. However, this councillor:elector ratio would improve to under 5% by 2006 owing to housing development in the area.

104 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Chirton ward would have a councillor:elector ratio equal to the borough average (4% below by 2006). The councillor:elector ratios in the proposed Collingwood, Riverside and Valley wards would be 3%, 4% and 16% below the borough average respectively (6% below, 1% above and 4% below by 2006).

105 At Stage Three we received 26 submissions in relation to this area. Labour stated that they were 'happy the Boundary Committee has accepted our proposals' for the proposed Valley ward. The Mayor and the Conservatives objected to only part of Preston Grange estate being included in the proposed Collingwood ward and pointed out that 'under [our] proposals, the "Collingwood Centre" would lie not in Collingwood ward, but in Monkseaton South [ward].' They stated that Preston Grange 'has an established residents association ... which represents the whole of the area' and that the children from this estate attend schools in 'the North Shields "pyramid" (a two-tier system)'. They proposed that the New York and Murton communities should be contained in the proposed Monkseaton South ward and proposed that Collingwood ward's eastern boundary should follow Beach Road.

106 Councillor Bell (Seatonville ward) objected to our proposed division of Preston Grange estate. He argued that 'issues arising on the estate are commonly estate-wide rather than individual or street ones.' He commented that 'one recent development within the ward which will be badly affected is the councillors close working with the Community Beat Officers in tackling anti-social behaviour and vandalism'.

107 Mr Cosgrove commented that 'everybody agrees with the proposed boundaries for Valley ward, although the name of Shiremoor ... would be more appropriate.' However, he proposed a

number of amendments to the proposed Chirton, Collingwood and Riverside wards. Under his proposals Riverside ward's eastern boundary would be extended to run east of the properties along Howard Street. The northern boundary of his proposed Chirton ward would be Verne Road and the proposed boundary would then run up Regent Terrace, to the north of Preston Cemetery and south down Walton Avenue. It would run east along Cleveland Road and then to the west of properties on Grosvenor Place and Alma Place before running south along Church Way to the Beacon Centre. The boundary of his proposed Collingwood ward would run to the west of Preston Cemetery, to the east of properties on Whitehouse Lane and Devon Road (following the existing boundary) and then north around the Murton community. This ward would therefore include The Cedars and Whitehouse Country Primary School from the proposed Preston ward to reflect their access routes. Mr Cosgrove's proposals received support from Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party, Alan Campbell MP and Councillor Stringfellow (Riverside ward).

108 We received a further 19 submissions from local residents objecting to our proposal to divide Preston Grange estate between the proposed Collingwood and Monkseaton South wards. It was argued that Preston Grange is a 'self-contained community' and has been a 'strong community for many years now'. Furthermore, 'as members of St Hilda's Church Marden with Preston Grange this would also split our parish into two different council wards.' Another resident stated that 'Preston Grange has its own school and thriving community centre, which emphasises the togetherness of all the residents.' It also has its own retail centre. It was stated that 'to divide the estate will result in a loss of identity and community spirit with a corresponding adverse affect upon political and social representations of the residents.'

109 After careful consideration of all representations received, we are endorsing the draft recommendations as final with two amendments to the proposed Collingwood ward. We have been persuaded by the community identity argumentation provided by the Mayor and the Conservatives, Councillor Bell, Mr Cosgrove and 19 local residents that Preston Grange estate should be united in a single ward. We also noted the support that Mr Cosgrove's proposals received from Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party, Alan Campbell MP and Councillor Stringfellow. Having revisited the area, we have been persuaded that Preston Grange is a self-contained community, with its own school and a community centre that serves the entire estate. We note the argument that this estate looks to North Shields, but consider that its links are also strong with Collingwood, due to its close proximity to this ward. It is also separated from North Shields by Preston Cemetery. We therefore propose that Preston Grange estate be united in the proposed Collingwood ward, with an amended eastern boundary of Preston North Road. This amended ward would provide a good reflection of community identity, would utilise strong boundaries and would still provide a reasonable level of electoral equality.

110 The second amendment is a minor one between the proposed Collingwood and Preston wards. We concur with the Mayor and the Conservatives and Mr Cosgrove that The Cedars and Whitehouse Primary School should be transferred to the proposed Collingwood ward to reflect their access routes, and are grateful to them for pointing out this anomaly. Consequently, we propose that the boundary run up Beach Road, which in itself provides for a stronger and more easily identifiable boundary in this area. This amendment would not affect the electoral variances of the proposed Collingwood and Preston wards.

111 We noted the support for the draft recommendations to transfer the Murton and New York communities to the proposed Collingwood ward, and the support for the proposed Valley ward. We have not been persuaded to rename this ward Shiremoor ward due to the lack of argumentation provided. We considered the further amendments proposed for this area by Mr Cosgrove but concluded that adopting this revised warding pattern would essentially result in a new scheme for the east of the borough and we did not consider that the evidence and argumentation justified this, especially given the lack of consultation that would be possible at this stage. We also have to take into consideration the knock-on effects that adopting these proposals would have on surrounding wards as we are unable to consider any ward in isolation.

112 Under our final recommendations, the proposed Chirton ward would have a councillor:elector ratio equal to the borough average (4% below by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Collingwood ward would be 12% above the borough average (9% above by 2006). Riverside and Valley wards would have variances 4% and 16% below the borough average respectively (1% above and 4% below by 2006).

### **Monkseaton, St Mary's, Seatonville and Whitley Bay wards**

113 The existing Monkseaton, St Mary's, Seatonville and Whitley Bay wards cover the north-east of the borough. Under the existing arrangements, the councillor:elector ratio in Monkseaton, St Mary's and Seatonville wards is 13% above, 1% above and equal to the borough average respectively (8% above, 2% below and 2% above the borough average by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in Whitley Bay ward is 6% below the borough average (10% below by 2006).

114 At Stage One the Cabinet proposed modifications to all of these four wards and renamed two of them. It proposed that St Mary's ward include the villages of Earsdon and South Wellfield from the existing Valley ward. The area south of Monkseaton Drive would be transferred to its proposed Monkseaton North and Whitley Bay wards. Its proposed Monkseaton North ward was based on the existing Monkseaton ward and included the area between Eastbourne Gardens and Monkseaton Drive from the existing St Mary's ward. The area west of Earsdon Road, currently in Monkseaton ward, would be transferred to its proposed Monkseaton South ward, which already covered part of Earsdon Road. The Cabinet's proposed Monkseaton South ward was based on the existing Seatonville ward and included the area from the existing Monkseaton ward as detailed above. It would also include New York village from the existing Collingwood ward. The Preston Grange area would be transferred to its proposed Collingwood ward from Seatonville ward. Its proposed Whitley Bay ward was based on the existing ward, but also included the area south of Eastbourne Gardens from the existing St Mary's ward as there are 'community links across Maine Drive.'

115 The Council proposed renaming the same two wards as the Cabinet, but proposed different ward boundaries, and alterations to the other two wards. The Council's proposed St Mary's ward would include Earsdon village 'which identifies more with the coast than the valley.' This represented the only change proposed to this ward. Its proposed Monkseaton North ward was based on the existing Monkseaton ward, but only included the area to the north of the railway line. The southern boundary would follow the railway line from West Monkseaton Station to Marden Road. It would then follow this road and then Park Avenue. Its proposed Monkseaton North ward would include part of Whitley Bay ward and that part of the existing Monkseaton ward south of the railway would be transferred to its proposed Monkseaton South ward. Its proposed Monkseaton South ward was based on the existing Seatonville ward and would include the area south of the railway line from the existing Monkseaton ward. The area south of Rake Lane would be transferred to the proposed Collingwood and Preston wards from the existing Seatonville ward. Its proposed Whitley Bay ward brought 'together the town' by including that part of the existing Cullercoats ward north of Farrington Road, Mast Lane and Marden Avenue.

116 The Mayor of North Tyneside's submission supported the Cabinet's proposals. He stated that the area of St Mary's ward to be transferred to the proposed Monkseaton North ward has 'a natural affinity with Monkseaton ward, having very similar characteristics.' Commenting on the proposed Monkseaton South ward, he stated that the Preston Grange estate 'has always looked to the North Shields area, rather than the Whitley Bay area.' The communities of Earsdon and South Wellfield would be transferred to the proposed St Mary's ward from the existing Valley ward as 'these two communities are separated from the rest of Valley ward by open fields, and naturally look towards the coast.' The Mayor then stated that Whitley Bay ward 'is a well-established and cohesive ward, centred on Whitley Bay town centre' and that the small change

proposed was to improve electoral equality. The Mayor also detailed his concerns over the Council's proposals.

117 Councillor Jackson proposed a number of amendments to the existing Monkseaton ward. The new development around Newsteads Drive would be transferred to St Mary's ward from Monkseaton ward as it 'forms part of the recent developments in St Mary's ward' and has 'no direct link to the rest of Monkseaton'. The South Wellfield area would be included in the proposed Monkseaton North ward, which was based on the existing Monkseaton ward. Councillor Jackson also argued that the area south of the Metro line was 'part of the same estate, with the same historic and cultural background' as the area to the north of the Metro line and should remain in the proposed Monkseaton North ward. He stated that 'the area between Churchill Playing Fields and the seafront is really part of Whitley Bay' and so Councillor Jackson proposed that this area be included in Whitley Bay ward. He stated that 'Whitley Bay town and Monkseaton village might be contiguous now but they are not the same community by any definition or criterion.'

118 We received a submission from a local resident stating that New York village is a long-established community that is split into two wards under the existing arrangements. It was argued that 'it would be of benefit to all the residents of New York, if the village were reunited under one electoral ward'. The opinion was expressed that the village has more in common with the other areas of Collingwood ward than with those of Seatonville ward. A local resident objected to the Council's proposal to divide Cullercoats and Whitley Bay wards. We received three other submissions from local residents, also objecting to these proposals and supporting the Cabinet's proposals.

119 Having carefully considered all representations received in Stage One for the east of the borough, we decided to put forward our own proposals for this area. We based our proposals on evidence for Monkseaton ward submitted by Councillor Jackson, although we were unable to reflect his views in their entirety as his proposals did not provide for good electoral equality in the surrounding wards. When we first looked at this area, we began by considering using the Metro line as a boundary, as proposed by the Council. However, in light of Councillor Jackson's submission and having visited the area, we came to the conclusion that this would not best meet the statutory criteria as it would divide the community of Monkseaton. We also noted that links across the Metro line are good and we did not feel that the Metro line was the most suitable boundary in this area. Based on the evidence included in Councillor Jackson's submission and having visited the area, we considered that the Cabinet's proposals for this area placed too much emphasis on achieving good electoral equality at the expense of community identity, despite the further evidence provided by the Mayor. In particular, we were concerned that the Cabinet's proposed Monkseaton North ward would divide established communities.

120 We also concurred with Councillor Jackson that access between the constituent parts of the existing Monkseaton ward is not satisfactory, and we departed from the Cabinet and Council's proposals as we considered that they did not sufficiently address the poor links between the east and west of the existing ward. We included part of the area of housing to the west of Churchill playing fields in St Mary's ward and part in Whitley Bay ward to reflect its proximity to these wards. Our proposed boundary would run to the north of the properties along Windsor Gardens West and Windsor Gardens, before running northwards along Ilfracombe Gardens, to the north of the properties along Bounemouth Gardens, to the west of houses along Briar Avenue and then to the north of the properties along Davison Avenue until it reached the sea. We considered that this warding arrangement would improve electoral equality and we considered that the playing fields provide a strong boundary between the proposed Monkseaton North ward and St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards, a fact that was not taken into account by either the Cabinet or the Council, but was outlined by Councillor Jackson. We transferred the areas of Earsdon and South Wellfield from the existing Valley ward, as proposed by the Cabinet and supported by the Mayor. However, we transferred them into the proposed Monkseaton North ward to reflect the best access routes for these areas. We noted that Councillor Jackson

proposed transferring South Wellfield village into Monkseaton North ward to reflect its links with this area, and considered that Earsdon village should also be included for the same reason.

121 Our proposed St Mary's ward was based on the existing ward, with one modification to its south-east boundary with the proposed Monkseaton North and Whitley Bay wards as detailed previously. Our proposed Whitley Bay ward was also based on the existing ward, but we proposed that its south-west boundary should follow the Metro line. We considered that the Metro line provided a good boundary owing to there being few crossing points in this area. Our proposed Whitley Bay ward would also include areas of housing from the existing Monkseaton and St Mary's wards to unite these coastal communities in one ward. We proposed this modification to improve electoral equality in light of our proposals for the surrounding wards. We proposed that Seatonville ward be renamed Monkseaton South ward and included the area to the west of the Metro line currently in Whitley Bay ward. The village of New York and Murton area would be transferred to Collingwood ward, as described earlier, and the boundary of the proposed Collingwood and Monkseaton South wards would run to the west of North Tyneside General Hospital, behind Cleehill Drive, along Malvern Road and then to the north of the properties along Heybrook Avenue before rejoining the existing boundary on Beach Road. In light of evidence provided by Councillor Jackson, we considered that our proposals offered the best warding arrangements for this area as they used strong boundaries and provided for good levels of electoral equality. However, we stated that we would welcome comments from local people at Stage Three.

122 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards would both have councillor:elector ratios equal to the borough average (3% and 4% below by 2006). The proposed Monkseaton North ward would have a councillor:elector ratio 8% above the borough average (4% above by 2006) and the proposed Monkseaton South ward would have a councillor:elector ratio 2% below the borough average, both initially and by 2006.

123 At Stage Three we received 19 submissions regarding this area. The Mayor and the Conservatives opposed the proposed wards in this area. They argued that the proposed Monkseaton South ward 'would bring three disparate communities together in one entirely artificial ward: Monkseaton village (part), Preston Grange (part) and Whitley Bay town centre (part). Links between these three communities are poor'. They stated that the draft recommendations would divide the communities between Area Forums, Chambers of Trade and local schools. They objected to the 'proposal to split the area around Holywell Avenue and Queens Road between Whitley Bay and St Mary's wards' because 'this area has been included in a Monkseaton ward for many years, and many residents in this area do look to Monkseaton for shopping and leisure purposes.' They stated that their 'objections centre mainly on [our] proposal to split Preston Grange and Whitley Bay town centre, and the consequent creation of a Monkseaton South ward which badly reflects community links in the area.'

124 Councillor Bell objected to the proposed division of Preston Grange estate, as discussed in the previous section, and opposed the proposed Monkseaton South ward. He supported the transfer of the Murton and New York communities out of the ward, but stated that the part of Whitley Bay town centre to be included in the proposed Monkseaton South ward has nothing in common 'with the western outskirts of Monkseaton.' He considered that we had placed too much emphasis on 'the desire to accommodate equal representation only throughout the borough.'

125 Councillor Jackson withdrew his Stage One submission at Stage Three and stated his support for the Cabinet's Stage One submission. He argued that 'the area around Marden Road South has no community based links with any part of Monkseaton and is remote from the village. All its orientation is towards Whitley Bay.' He considered that 'Preston Grange is part of North Shields, with no traditional or present community links to Monkseaton' and 'the area between Churchill playing fields and Ilfracombe Gardens is a definite entity and must not be split. The same is true of the area between Ilfracombe Gardens and The Links.'

126 Councillors McIntyre, Smith and Fairs (all representing Whitley Bay ward) objected to the proposed Whitley Bay ward. They argued that our 'proposals will remove an historic and integral part of Whitley Bay and place it with part of Preston Grange, which is an area of North Shields.' They pointed out that 'half of Whitley Bay Metro station will be in a ward which covers part of North Shields' and argued that the Metro line is not a good boundary as 'Whitley Bay town centre can be immediately accessed by three major crossing points: Marden Road, Whitley Bay Metro station footbridge and Burnside Road.' They stated that they support the Cabinet's Stage One submission. They also stated that 'Preston Grange has always looked to North Shields town centre for the majority of its shopping, health and commercial needs.' They gave examples of North Shields estate agents covering Preston Grange and that main bus routes run between the two areas. Other evidence provided was that 'Preston Grange is part of the North Shields Area Forum', links which are also recognised by the local Primary Care Trust, and the local schools pyramid. In conclusion, they considered that there are 'no historic or community ties' between the Whitley Bay and Preston Grange areas.

127 Mr Cosgrove put forward his own proposals for these wards, supported by Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party, Alan Campbell MP and Councillor Stringfellow. He proposed uniting Preston Grange estate in his proposed Marden ward (discussed in the following section). His proposed Whitley Bay ward would be centred on the existing ward, with minor amendments to improve electoral equality. His proposed Monkseaton South ward was based on the existing Seatonville ward and would include the West Monkseaton area to the west of Earsdon Road and south of Wilton Drive, and the Hotspur Avenue and Lovaine Avenue area in the east of the ward. His proposed Monkseaton North ward was bounded by Earsdon Road, Monkseaton Drive and Front Street, which becomes Marine Avenue. His proposed St Mary's ward included the area north of Monkseaton Drive and the communities of Earsdon and South Wellfield.

128 Alan Campbell MP stated that Mr Cosgrove's proposals 'pay regard to local communities, both present and past, and importantly remove some of the anomalies which exist in the current situation.' He provided argumentation in support of these proposed wards, considering that they provided a better community 'fit' and used stronger boundaries than the draft recommendations. Councillor Stringfellow (Riverside ward) stated that her 'local knowledge of the area ... supports the social, geographical and "common sense" changes put forward by Mr Cosgrove.' She also pointed out that 'those proposals have the merit of being a neater "statistical fit".' Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party stated that they 'wholly agree that his submission is a realistic document that balances the need for community coherence and numerical quotas.'

129 We received a further 11 submissions from local residents objecting to the proposed Whitley Bay ward. It was argued that 'Whitley Bay is a well-established community therefore should not be split in two.'

130 After careful consideration of all representations received regarding this area, we are proposing significant amendments to our draft recommendations to provide a better reflection of community identity and to improve electoral equality in light of our decision to unite Preston Grange estate in the proposed Collingwood ward, as already discussed. In light of the withdrawal of Councillor Jackson's Stage One submission (on which we based our draft recommendations) and the level of evidence in the representations received at Stage Three, we have reconsidered our recommendations for this area and are proposing amended Monkseaton North, Monkseaton South, St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards.

131 Firstly, we propose uniting Whitley Bay town in a single ward. This is largely a return to the existing arrangement and reflects the views of the Mayor and the Conservatives, Councillors Bell, Fairs, Jackson, McIntyre, Smith and Stringfellow, Mr Cosgrove, Alan Campbell MP, Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party and 11 local residents, who argued that Whitley Bay is a long-established community. We have been persuaded that the Metro line (used as a boundary in the draft recommendations) does not divide the communities to its east and west as there are

three major crossing points, detailed by the ward councillors. They also argued that the area to the south-west of the Metro line in Whitley Bay has no links with the Preston Grange estate. We concur that these two areas are not well-linked by roads, having revisited the area, and have been persuaded that community links are poor between the two. The existing ward uses strong and easily identifiable boundaries and we therefore propose that the amended boundary runs along Marine Avenue, to the east of properties along Marmion Terrace and Kingsley Avenue, to the east of the cricket ground, south of Marden Quarry Nature Reserve and along Burnside Road, North View, Eskdale Terrace and Cliffe Road to the sea. However, this amendment would result in retaining the existing Whitley Bay ward with an electoral variance of -12% by 2006. We do not consider that this level of electoral equality is justified in an urban area such as this and are therefore proposing a minor amendment to the northern boundary of Whitley Bay ward to improve electoral equality. We propose that the northern boundary run up Ilfracombe Gardens, run east along Eastbourne Gardens before running along Watt's Slope to the sea. Having visited the area, we consider that this area to be transferred into an amended Whitley Bay ward has good links with the rest of the proposed Whitley Bay ward and therefore consider that our revised Whitley Bay ward provides a good level of electoral equality while reflecting community identities and using strong boundaries.

132 Our decision to unite Preston Grange estate in the proposed Collingwood ward has already been discussed, and we noted the argumentation that this estate had few community links with Monkseaton. As a result of this amendment and the amendment to the proposed Whitley Bay ward described above, we had to reconsider our proposed Monkseaton South ward to improve electoral equality as this ward would otherwise be over-represented by 33% by 2006. To improve electoral equality in the light of our amendments, we propose including the West Monkseaton community and the area to the south of the properties on Otterburn Avenue in an amended Monkseaton South ward, as proposed by Mr Cosgrove and supported by Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party, Alan Campbell MP and Councillor Stringfellow. The boundary of the proposed ward would run south of the properties on Otterburn Avenue and the north-eastern boundary would be Earsdon Road. We were concerned about the links between the West Monkseaton community and the area to the south. However, having visited the area, we noted that Earsdon Road links the two areas and is a major arterial route which provides both a strong boundary and a good link between the two areas. In amending this ward, we have also taken account of comments made by Councillor Bell.

133 We also noted the comments from Councillor Jackson that Churchill playing fields do not provide a good boundary to the proposed Monkseaton North ward and comments from the Mayor and the Conservatives, Councillor Jackson and Mr Cosgrove that the area south of Monkseaton Drive is very much part of Monkseaton and looks to Monkseaton for its services. Again, having visited the area we noted that Monkseaton Drive and Marine Avenue are main arterial routes and would provide strong boundaries. Therefore, in light of the community identity arguments received and to facilitate our other proposed amendments in the area, we propose that the area south of Monkseaton Drive and north of Marine Avenue and the western half of Eastbourne Gardens be united in an amended Monkseaton North ward. This amended Monkseaton North ward is based on Mr Cosgrove's proposal and we consider that it provides for good electoral equality, while reflecting community identity and provides strong, easily identifiable boundaries. Finally, as a result of our amendments in this area, and as proposed by Mr Cosgrove, we are proposing an amended St Mary's ward to include the area north of Monkseaton Drive and the communities of Earsdon and South Wellfield.

134 We recognise that these amendments represent a significant departure from the draft recommendations, but consider that they provide a better balance between the statutory criteria than the draft recommendations. We also note that our proposals are very similar to those put forward by the Cabinet at Stage One. We have revisited the area and consider that our proposals provide a better reflection of community identity in the area, are based on locally generated proposals and still provide for acceptable levels of electoral equality.

135 Under our final recommendations, the proposed Monkseaton North, Monkseaton South, St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards would have councillor:elector ratios 2%, 2%, 1% and 4% below the borough average (6%, 3%, 4% and 7% below by 2006).

### **Cullercoats, North Shields and Tynemouth wards**

136 The existing Cullercoats, North Shields and Tynemouth wards are located in the south-east of the borough. Under the existing arrangements, councillor:elector ratio in Cullercoats and North Shields wards is 5% and 17% above the borough average respectively (2% and 17% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in Tynemouth ward is 5% below the borough average (6% below by 2006).

137 At Stage One the Cabinet proposed one new ward in this area and modifications to one other ward. The Cabinet proposed retaining Cullercoats ward, as it 'is about the ideal size.' It proposed several changes to the existing North Shields ward, which it proposed renaming Preston ward. It proposed the transfer of all of central North Shields town south of the Metro line to its proposed Riverside ward, the transfer of central North Shields town between the Metro line and Albion Road to its proposed Chirton ward and the transfer of the area east of Military Road to its proposed Tynemouth ward. Its proposed Tynemouth ward included this small area as it 'straightens the existing border and brings the electorate closer to the average.'

138 The Council proposed two new wards and modifications to the remaining ward in this area. It proposed a new Preston ward to include the Marden area from the existing Cullercoats ward, the majority of the Preston Grange area from the existing Seatonville ward and the Preston area from the existing North Shields ward. Its proposed North Shields ward brought 'the central areas of North Shields together.' The Monks Wood and Preston areas, together with the area south of Albion Road, would be transferred out of North Shields ward, but its proposed ward boundary with Tynemouth ward was extended to include part of the existing Tynemouth ward. This area was separated from the rest of the Tynemouth community by Northumberland Park and a steep bank. Its proposed Coast ward was based on the existing Tynemouth ward which the Council stated was 'designed to reflect the common interests of the southern coastal communities in Tynemouth and Cullercoats.' It included that part of the existing Cullercoats ward south of Marden Avenue and Mast Lane and that part of the existing North Shields ward to the east of Howard Street. The area to the west of Northumberland Park, currently in Tynemouth ward, would be transferred to its proposed North Shields ward.

139 The Mayor of North Tyneside supported the Cabinet's proposals. He argued that the existing Cullercoats ward's 'current electorate is very close to the average, and it forms an historic and easily identifiable community.' He stated that the riverside area of the existing North Shields ward 'has more logical links with the riverside wards of Chirton and Riverside.' He supported the change of name for this ward. He also argued that the existing Tynemouth ward 'is a very well established and historic ward, which includes the village of Tynemouth.' The minor amendment proposed by the Cabinet would be 'to provide for better electoral equality.' The Mayor also expressed his concerns over the Council's proposals for this area. He argued that the Council's proposed Coast ward 'would see the historic village of Cullercoats split in two'. He stated that 'these are three entirely different, historic and separately identifiable communities.' The Mayor objected to the Council's proposed Preston ward as it would divide the village in two. It would also divide the Preston Grange area in two and cross two main roads, one of which is a dual carriageway. He stated that the Council's proposed North Shields ward 'would result in Preston village being split from the rest of northern North Shields, to which it has clear and historic links.'

140 After careful consideration of all representations received during Stage One, we adopted the Cabinet's proposals to retain the existing Cullercoats ward. We also noted the support of the Mayor for the Cabinet's proposed Cullercoats ward. We considered that the existing ward uses good boundaries and unites similar communities in a single ward, as well as providing for good

electoral equality. However, we proposed one minor modification to the existing Cullercoats ward to tie the ward boundary to better ground detail. We adopted the Cabinet's Tynemouth ward, with two modifications to improve electoral equality and better reflect local communities by adjusting the boundary to accommodate access routes. Firstly, we adopted the Council's proposed boundary between Tynemouth and Riverside wards as we considered it to better reflect community identities. We also modified the Cabinet's proposed boundary between Tynemouth and Preston wards to better reflect access routes. We proposed that the boundary between Preston and Tynemouth wards run to the east of Haswell Gardens and then to the north of Brock Farm Court before running up Blanchland Terrace as proposed by the Cabinet. We adopted the Cabinet's Preston ward as it united the community of Preston in a single ward, with this one modification. We considered that the Cabinet's proposals for this area better reflected local communities than the Council's proposals, which would divide the Preston and North Shields areas into four separate wards. We also noted that the Cabinet's proposals were supported by the Mayor and had received some local support

141 Under our draft recommendations, the proposed Cullercoats and Tynemouth wards would both have councillor:elector ratios 5% above the borough average (2% and 4% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Preston ward would be 4% below the borough average (5% below by 2006).

142 At Stage Three we received four submissions regarding this area. Mr Cosgrove put forward his proposed Coast, Marden and North Shields wards. His proposed Marden ward included Preston Grange estate with the western boundary of the proposed ward following the existing line, the northern, eastern and southern boundaries following Hampton Road and Shaftesbury Crescent, The Broadway road and Beach Road, running to the south of Monks Wood, respectively. The boundary of his proposed Coast ward would run up John Street, along Station Road, north along the Metro line, west along Burnside Road, south along The Broadway road, around Southlands School and then to the east of Tynemouth Golf Course and Northumberland Park to the sea. His proposed North Shields ward would lie to the south-west of these two wards with the western boundary running to the east of Preston Cemetery, along Walton Avenue, east along Cleveland Road and to the west of properties along Grosvenor Place, Alma Place and Frank Place. It would then run south down Church Way and Norfolk Street to the sea. Alan Campbell MP argued that these wards 'have the advantage of [being] a good numerical fit as well as paying as much regard as possible to historic communities.' Tynemouth Constituency Labour Party and Councillor Stringfellow (Riverside ward) also provided support for these proposals.

143 After careful consideration of all representations received at Stage Three, we are endorsing our draft recommendations as final with one minor amendment. We propose that the boundary between the proposed Collingwood and Preston wards follow Beach Road to reflect access routes, as previously discussed. We considered Mr Cosgrove's proposals for the area, but concluded that adopting this revised warding pattern would essentially result in a new scheme for the east of the borough and we did not consider that the evidence and argumentation justified this, especially given the lack of consultation that would be possible at this stage. We also noted the support we have received for our proposed wards.

144 Under our final recommendations, the proposed Cullercoats and Tynemouth wards would both have councillor:elector ratios 5% above the borough average (2% and 4% above by 2006). The councillor:elector ratio in the proposed Preston ward would be 4% below the borough average (5% below by 2006).

## Electoral cycle

145 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all metropolitan authorities have a system of elections by thirds.

## Conclusions

146 Having carefully considered all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we have decided substantially to endorse those draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- in the north-east of the borough we propose significant amendments to the proposed Collingwood, Monkseaton North, Monkseaton South, Preston, St Mary's and Whitley Bay wards to better reflect community identities and interests;
- in the north-west of the borough we propose amendments to the boundary between the proposed Camperdown and Weetslade wards to better reflect community identities and to reflect access routes;
- in the south-west of the borough we propose an amendment to the boundary between the proposed Battle Hill and Northumberland wards to unite Kings estate in a single ward.

147 We conclude that, in North Tyneside:

- there should be a council size of 60, the same as at present;
- there should be 20 wards, the same as at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.

148 Table 4 shows the impact of our final recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 2001 and 2006 electorate figures.

*Table 4: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements*

	2001 electorate		2006 electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	60	60	60	60
Number of wards	20	20	20	20
Average number of electors per councillor	2,414	2,414	2,394	2,394
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	9	3	10	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	6	0	4	0

149 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from nine to three, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would improve further by 2006, with no wards varying by more than 9% from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

*Final recommendation*

North Tyneside Borough Council should comprise 60 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

*Map 2: Final recommendations for North Tyneside*

## 6 What happens next?

150 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements in North Tyneside and submitted our final recommendations to The Electoral Commission, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692).

151 It is now up to The Electoral Commission to decide whether to endorse our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order. Such an Order will not be made before 2 December 2003, and The Electoral Commission will normally consider all written representations made to them by that date. They particularly welcome any comments on the first draft of the Order, which will implement the new arrangements.

152 All further correspondence concerning our recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to:

**The Secretary  
The Electoral Commission  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 2HW**

**Fax: 020 7271 0667  
Email: [implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk](mailto:implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk)  
(This address should only be used for this purpose)**



# Appendix A

## Final recommendations for North Tyneside: detailed mapping

The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for the North Tyneside area.

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed wards.

The **large maps** illustrate the proposed warding arrangements for North Tyneside.

*Map A1: Final recommendations for North Tyneside: Key map*

# Appendix B

## Guide to interpreting the first draft of the electoral change Order

### **Preamble**

This describes the process by which the Order will be made, and under which powers. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decide not to modify the final recommendations.

### **Citation and commencement**

This establishes the name of the Order and when it will come into force.

### **Interpretation**

This defines terms that are used in the Order.

### **Wards of the borough of North Tyneside**

This abolishes the existing wards, and defines the names and areas of the new wards, in conjunction with the map and the schedule.

### **Elections of the council of the borough of North Tyneside**

This sets the date on which a whole council election will be held to implement the new wards, and the dates on which councillors will retire.

### **Maps**

This requires North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council to make a print of the map available for public inspection.

### **Electoral registers**

This requires the Council to adapt the electoral register to reflect the new wards.

### **Revocation**

This revokes the Order that defines the existing wards, with the exception of the articles that established the system of election by thirds.

### **Explanatory note**

This explains the purpose of each article. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decide not to modify the final recommendations.



# Appendix C

## First draft of electoral change Order for North Tyneside

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### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2003 No.**

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENGLAND**

### The Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Changes) Order 2003

*Made* - - - - *2003*

*Coming into force in accordance with article 1(2)*

Whereas the Boundary Committee for England(a), acting pursuant to section 15(4) of the Local Government Act 1992(b), has submitted to the Electoral Commission(c) recommendations dated October 2003 on its review of the borough(d) of North Tyneside:

And whereas the Electoral Commission have decided to give effect [with modifications] to those recommendations:

And whereas a period of not less than six weeks has expired since the receipt of those recommendations:

Now, therefore, the Electoral Commission, in exercise of the powers conferred on them by sections 17(e) and 26(f) of the Local Government Act 1992, and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby make the following Order:

#### **Citation and commencement**

1.—(1) This Order may be cited as the Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Changes) Order 2003.

(2) This Order shall come into force –

(a) for the purpose of proceedings preliminary or relating to any election to be held on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004, on the day after that on which it is made;

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(a) The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, established by the Electoral Commission in accordance with section 14 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (S.I. 2001/3962) transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Local Government Commission for England.

(b) 1992 c.19. This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.

(c) The Electoral Commission was established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The functions of the Secretary of State, under sections 13 to 15 and 17 of the Local Government Act 1992 (c.19), to the extent that they relate to electoral changes within the meaning of that Act, were transferred with modifications to the Electoral Commission on 1st April 2002 (S.I. 2001/3962).

(d) The metropolitan district of North Tyneside has the status of a borough.

(e) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962 and also otherwise in ways not relevant to this Order.

(f) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.

- (b) for all other purposes, on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004.

## **Interpretation**

### **2. In this Order –**

“borough” means the borough of North Tyneside;

“existing”, in relation to a ward, means the ward as it exists on the date this Order is made; and

any reference to the map is a reference to the map marked “Map referred to in the Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Changes) Order 2003”, of which prints are available for inspection at –

- (a) the principal office of the Electoral Commission; and
- (b) the offices of North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council.

## **Wards of the borough of North Tyneside**

**3.—**(1) The existing wards of the borough(a) shall be abolished.

(2) The borough shall be divided into twenty wards which shall bear the names set out in the Schedule.

(3) Each ward shall comprise the area designated on the map by reference to the name of the ward and demarcated by red lines; and the number of councillors to be elected for each ward shall be three.

(4) Where a boundary is shown on the map as running along a road, railway line, footway, watercourse or similar geographical feature, it shall be treated as running along the centre line of the feature.

## **Elections of the council of the borough of North Tyneside**

**4.—**(1) Elections of all councillors for all wards of the borough shall be held simultaneously on the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004(b)(c).

(2) The councillors holding office for any ward of the borough immediately before the fourth day after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004 shall retire on that date and the newly elected councillors for those wards shall come into office on that date.

(3) Of the councillors elected in 2004 one shall retire in 2006, one in 2007 and one in 2008.

(4) Of the councillors elected in 2004 –

(a) the first to retire shall, subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), be the councillor elected by the smallest number of votes; and

(b) the second to retire shall, subject to those paragraphs, be the councillor elected by the next smallest number of votes.

(5) In the case of an equality of votes between any persons elected which makes it uncertain which of them is to retire in any year, the person to retire in that year shall be determined by lot.

(6) If an election of councillors for any ward is not contested, the person to retire in each year shall be determined by lot.

(7) Where under this article any question is to be determined by lot, the lot shall be drawn at the next practicable meeting of the council after the question has arisen and the drawing shall be conducted under the direction of the person presiding at the meeting.

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(a) See the Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980 (S.I. 1980/339).

(b) Article 4 provides for a single election of all the councillors and for reversion to the system of election by thirds, as established by section 7 of the Local Government Act 1972 (c.70).

(c) For the ordinary day of election of councillors of local government areas, see section 37 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c.2), amended by section 18(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c.50) and section 17 of, and paragraphs 1 and 5 of Schedule 3 to, the Greater London Authority Act 1999 (c.29).

## Maps

5. North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council shall make a print of the map marked “Map referred to in the Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Changes) Order 2003” available for inspection at its offices by any member of the public at any reasonable time.

## Electoral registers

6. The Electoral Registration Officer(a) for the borough shall make such rearrangement of, or adaptation of, the register of local government electors as may be necessary for the purposes of, and in consequence of, this Order.

## Revocation

7. The Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980(b) is revoked, save for articles 8 and 9(7).

Sealed with the seal of the Electoral Commission on the            day of            2003

Chairman of the Commission

Secretary to the Commission

## SCHEDULE

article 3

### NAMES OF WARDS

Battle Hill	Killingworth	St Mary's
Benton	Longbenton	Tynemouth
Camperdown	Monkseaton North	Valley
Chirton	Monkseaton South	Wallsend
Collingwood	Northumberland	Weetslade
Cullercoats	Preston	Whitley Bay
Howdon	Riverside	

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(a) As to electoral registration officers and the register of local government electors, *see* sections 8 to 13 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c.2).

(b) S.I.1980/339.

## **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order gives effect, [with modifications], to recommendations by the Boundary Committee for England, a committee of the Electoral Commission, for electoral changes in the borough of North Tyneside.

The modifications are *indicate the modifications*.

The changes have effect in relation to local government elections to be held on and after the ordinary day of election of councillors in 2004.

Article 3 abolishes the existing wards of the borough and provides for the creation of 20 new wards. That article and the Schedule also make provision for the names and areas of, and numbers of councillors for, the new wards.

Article 4 makes provision for a whole council election in 2004 and for reversion to the established system of election by thirds in subsequent years.

Article 6 obliges the Electoral Registration Officer to make any necessary amendments to the electoral register to reflect the new electoral arrangements.

Article 7 revokes the Borough of North Tyneside (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980, with the exception of articles 8 and 9(7).

The areas of the new borough wards are demarcated on the map described in article 2. Prints of the map may be inspected at all reasonable times at the offices of North Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council and at the principal office of the Electoral Commission at Trevelyan House, Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW.