

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND

FINAL
RECOMMENDATIONS
ON THE FUTURE
ELECTORAL
ARRANGEMENTS FOR
CUMBRIA COUNTY
COUNCIL

*Report to the Secretary of State for the
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

November 1999

LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

The Local Government Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament. Our task is to review and make recommendations to the Government on whether there should be changes to the structure of local government, the boundaries of individual local authority areas, and their electoral arrangements.

Members of the Commission are:

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

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

We are statutorily required to review periodically the electoral arrangements – such as the number of councillors representing electors in each area and the number and boundaries of electoral divisions, or wards – of every principal local authority in England. In broad terms our objective is to ensure that the number of electors represented by each councillor in an area is as nearly as possible the same, taking into account local circumstances. We can recommend changes to division boundaries, and the number of councillors and division names.

This report sets out the Commission's final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Cumbria County Council.

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Local Government Commission for England

30 November 1999

Dear Secretary of State

On 5 January 1999 the Commission began a periodic electoral review of Cumbria County Council under the Local Government Act 1992. We published our draft recommendations in June 1999 and undertook an eleven-week period of consultation.

We have now prepared our final recommendations in the light of the consultation. We have substantially confirmed our draft recommendations, although some modifications have been made (see paragraphs 152-153) in the light of further evidence. This report sets out our final recommendations for changes to the electoral arrangements of Cumbria County Council.

We recommend that Cumbria County Council should be served by 84 councillors representing 84 divisions, and that changes should be made to division boundaries in order to improve electoral equality, having regard to the statutory criteria.

We note that you have set out in the White Paper *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People* (Cm 4014, HMSO), legislative proposals for a number of changes to local authority electoral arrangements. However, until such time as that new legislation is in place we are obliged to conduct our work in accordance with current legislation, and to continue our current approach to periodic electoral reviews.

I would like to thank members and officers of the County Council and other local people who have contributed to the review. Their co-operation and assistance have been very much appreciated by Commissioners and staff.

Yours sincerely

PROFESSOR MALCOLM GRANT
Chairman

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of Cumbria County Council on 5 January 1999. We published our draft recommendations for electoral arrangements on 29 June 1999, after which we undertook an eleven-week period of consultation.

- **This report summarises the representations we received during consultation on our draft recommendations, and offers our final recommendations to the Secretary of State.**

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

- **in 32 of the 83 divisions, each of which is represented by a single councillor, the average number of electors per councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the county, and 14 divisions vary by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **by 2004 electoral equality is expected to worsen, with the number of electors forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 43 divisions and by more than 20 per cent in 18 divisions.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 152-153) are that:

- **Cumbria County Council should have 84 councillors, one more than at present, representing 84 divisions;**
- **as the divisions are based on district wards which have themselves changed as a result of the recent district reviews, the boundaries of all divisions except Botcherby, Cartmel, Denton Holme, Grange, Harraby, High Furness, Lakes, Low Furness, Millom, Seascale & Whicham and Upperby will be subject to change.**

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

- **In 65 of the proposed 84 divisions the number of electors would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the county average, with three divisions, Keswick & Derwent, Millom and Mirehouse, varying by more than 20 per cent from the average.**
- **This improved electoral equality is forecast to continue, with the number of electors in 66 divisions expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the county in 2004, of which two divisions are expected to vary by more than 20 per cent.**

All further correspondence on these recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be addressed to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, who will not make an order implementing the Commission's recommendations earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State:

**The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU**

Figure 1:
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
ALLERDALE DISTRICT	
1 Aspatia & Wharrels	Aspatia ward; Boltons ward; Wharrels ward
2 Bowness, Thursby & Caldbeck	Marsh ward; Wampool ward; Warnell ward; Waver ward (part – the parishes of Dundraw, Holme East Waver and Kirkbridge)
3 Cockermouth East	All Saints ward; Crummock ward
4 Cockermouth West	Christchurch ward; Dalton ward
5 Dearham & Broughton	Ellen ward; Broughton St Bridget's ward
6 Harrington, Clifton & Stainburn	Clifton ward; Harrington ward; Stainburn ward
7 Keswick & Derwent	Derwent Valley ward; Keswick ward
8 Maryport East	Ellenborough ward; Ewanrigg ward (part - the parish of Maryport)
9 Maryport West	Ewanrigg ward (part – the parish of Broughton Moor); Flimby ward; Netherhall ward
10 Moorclose	Moorclose ward
11 Moss Bay	Moss Bay ward
12 St John's	St John's ward
13 St Michael's	St Michael's ward
14 Seaton	Seaton ward
15 Solway Coast	Holme ward; Silloth ward; Solway ward
16 Wigton	Waver ward (part – the parishes of Waverton and Woodside); Wigton ward
BARROW BOROUGH	
17 Dalton North	Dalton North ward
18 Dalton South	Dalton South ward
19 Hawcoat	Hawcoat ward
20 Hindpool	Central ward (part); Hindpool ward

Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
21 Newbarns	Newbarns ward
22 Old Barrow	Barrow Island ward; Central ward (part)
23 Ormsgill	Ormsgill ward
24 Parkside	Parkside ward
25 Risedale	Central ward (part); Risedale ward
26 Roosecote	Roosecote ward
27 Walney North	Walney North ward
28 Walney South	Walney South ward
CARLISLE CITY	
29 Belah	Belah ward
30 Belle Vue	Belle Vue ward
31 Botcherby	<i>Unchanged</i> (Botcherby ward)
32 Brampton & Gilsand	Brampton ward; Irthing ward
33 Castle	Castle ward
34 Currock	Currock ward
35 Dalston & Cummersdale	Burgh ward (part – the parishes of Burgh by Sands and Orton); Dalston ward
36 Denton Holme	<i>Unchanged</i> (Denton Holme ward)
37 Harraby	<i>Unchanged</i> (Harraby ward)
38 Longtown & Bewcastle	Longtown & Rockcliffe ward; Burgh ward (part - Beaumont parish); Lyne ward (part – the parishes of Bewcastle, Kirklington Middle, Nicholforest and Solport); Stanwix Rural ward (part – the parish of Kingmoor)
39 Morton	Morton ward
40 St Aidans	St Aidans ward

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Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
41 Stanwix & Irthington	Great Corby & Geltsdale ward (part – Talkin parish ward of Hayton parish); Hayton ward (part – Corby Hill and Hayton parish wards of Hayton parish); Lyne ward (part – the parishes of Hethersgill and Stapleton); Stanwix Rural ward (part – the parishes of Irthington, Scaleby and Stanwix Rural)
42 Stanwix Urban	Stanwix Urban ward
43 Upperby	<i>Unchanged</i> (Upperby ward)
44 Wetheral	Great Corby & Geltsdale ward (part – the parishes of Castle Carrock, Carlatton, Cumrew, Cumwhitton and Geltsdale, and Great Corby parish ward of Wetheral parish); Hayton ward (part – Heads Nook parish ward of Hayton parish); Wetheral ward
45 Yewdale	Yewdale ward
COPELAND BOROUGH	
46 Bransty	Bransty ward; Harbour ward (part)
47 Cleator Moor North & Frizington	Cleator Moor North ward; Frizington ward
48 Cleator Moor South & Egremont	Cleator Moor South ward; Egremont South ward
49 Distington & Moresby	Distington ward; Moresby ward
50 Gosforth & Ennerdale	Beckermest ward; Ennerdale ward; Gosforth ward
51 Hensingham & Arlecdon	Arlecdon ward; Hensingham ward
52 Hillcrest	Harbour ward (part); Hillcrest ward
53 Kells & Sandwith	Harbour ward (part); Kells ward (part); St Bees ward (part – Rottingham parish ward of St Bees parish); Sandwith ward
54 Millom	Haverigg ward (part – the Haverigg parish ward of Millom parish); Holborn Hill ward; Newtown ward
55 Mirehouse	Mirehouse ward; Egremont North ward (part – Ingwell parish ward of St Bees parish)
56 St Bees & Egremont	Egremont North ward (part – Egremont North parish ward of Egremont parish); St Bees ward (part – St Bees parish ward of St Bees parish)

Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
57 Seascale & Whicham	Bootle ward; Haverigg ward (part – the Haverigg parish ward of Millom Without parish); Millom Without ward; Seascale ward
EDEN DISTRICT	
58 Appleby	Appleby ward; Appleby Bongate ward; Long Marton ward; Warcop ward
59 AlsnFellside	Alston Moor ward; Hartside ward; Kirkoswald ward; Langwathby ward
60 Eden Fellside	Askham ward; Shap ward; Ullswater ward
61 Hesket	Greystoke ward; Hesket ward; Skelton ward
62 Kirkby Stephen	Brough ward; Crosby Ravensworth ward; Kirkby Stephen ward; Orton with Tebay ward; Ravenstonedale ward
63 Penrith East	Penrith Carleton ward; Penrith East ward; Penrith Pategill ward
64 Penrith North	Lazonby ward; Penrith North ward
65 Penrith Rural	Dacre ward; Eamont ward; Kirkby Thore ward; Morland ward
66 Penrith West	Penrith South ward; Penrith West ward
SOUTH LAKELAND DISTRICT	
67 Cartmel	Cartmel ward; Coniston ward (part – the West parish ward of Colton parish); Hawkshead ward (part – the Central and East parish wards of Colton parish); Holker ward; Staveley in-Cartmel ward (part – the parishes of Broughton East and Haverthwaite)
68 Grange	Grange ward; Lyth Valley ward (part – Upper Allithwaite parish); Staveley-in-Cartmel ward (part – the parishes of Cartmel Fell and Staveley-in-Cartmel)
69 High Furness	Broughton ward; Coniston ward (part – the parishes of Blawith & Subberthwaite, Coniston, Skelwith and Torver); Crake Valley ward (part – the parish of Lowick), Hawkshead ward (part – the parishes of Claife, Hawkshead and Satterthwaite)

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Figure 1 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
70 Kendal Castle	Kendal Castle ward; Kendal Heron Hill ward; Kendal Parks ward
71 Kendal Highgate	Kendal Glebelands ward; Kendal Highgate ward; Kendal Kirkland ward
72 Kendal Nether	Kendal Far Cross ward; Kendal Mintsfeet ward; Kendal Nether ward
73 Kendal South	Natland ward (part – the parishes of Hindcaster, Natland, Sedgwick, Stainton); Kendal Oxenholme ward; Kendal Stonecross ward
74 Kendal Strickland & Fell	Kendal Fell ward; Kendal Strickland ward; Kendal Underley ward
75 Kent Estuary	Arnside & Beetham ward; Milnthorpe ward
76 Lakes	<i>Unchanged</i> (Lakes Ambleside ward; Lakes Grasmere ward)
77 Low Furness	Low Furness & Swarthmoor ward; Crake Valley ward (part – the parishes of Egton with Newland, Mansriggs, Osmotherley and Pennington)
78 Lower Kentdale	Burton & Holme ward; Crooklands ward; Levens ward (part – Heversham parish)
79 Lyth Valley	Burneside ward (part – the parish of Underbarrow & Bradleyfield); Levens ward (part – the parish of Levens); Lyth Valley ward (part – the parishes of Crosthwaite & Lyth, Meathop & Ulpha and Witherslack); Natland ward (the parish of Helsington); Staveley-in-Westmorland ward (part – the parish of Crook); Windermere Bowness South ward
80 Sedbergh & Kirkby Lonsdale	Kirkby Lonsdale ward; Sedbergh ward
81 Ulverston East	Ulverston Central ward; Ulverston East ward; Ulverston Town ward
82 Ulverston West	Ulverston North ward; Ulverston South ward; Ulverston West ward
83 Upper Kent	Burneside ward (part – the parishes of Strickland Roger and Strickland Ketel); Staveley-in-Westmorland ward (part – the parishes of Hugill, Kentmere, Nether Staveley and Over Staveley); Whinfell ward

Figure 1 (continued):
 The Commission's Final Recommendations: Summary

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
84 Windermere	<i>Unchanged</i> (Windermere Applethwaite ward; Windermere Bowness North ward; Windermere Town ward)

Notes: 1 The constituent district wards are those resulting from the electoral reviews of the six Cumbria districts which were completed in 1997. Where whole district wards do not form the building blocks, constituent parishes and parish wards are listed.

2 The large map inserted at the back of the report illustrates the proposed divisions outlined above and the maps in Appendix A illustrate some of the proposed boundaries in more detail.

Figure 2:
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Cumbria

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
ALLERDALE DISTRICT					
1 Aspatria & Wharrels	1	5,355	17	5,261	14
2 Bowness, Thursby & Caldbeck	1	5,129	12	4,940	7
3 Cockermouth East	1	5,125	12	4,819	4
4 Cockermouth West	1	4,041	-12	4,226	-9
5 Dearham & Broughton	1	5,401	18	5,416	17
6 Harrington, Clifton & Stainburn	1	5,187	13	5,090	10
7 Keswick & Derwent	1	5,832	27	5,577	20
8 Maryport East	1	4,987	9	4,973	7
9 Maryport West	1	4,495	-2	4,995	8
10 Moorclose	1	3,915	-15	4,243	-8
11 Moss Bay	1	3,772	-18	3,757	-19
12 St John's	1	4,443	-3	4,231	-9
13 St Michael's	1	4,140	-10	3,974	-14
14 Seaton	1	4,010	-13	4,242	-8
15 Solway Coast	1	5,162	12	5,134	11
16 Wigton	1	4,797	4	4,866	5
BARROW BOROUGH					
17 Dalton North	1	4,714	3	4,730	2
18 Dalton South	1	4,600	0	4,547	-2
19 Hawcoat	1	4,415	-4	4,382	-5
20 Hindpool	1	4,834	5	4,855	5

Figure 2 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Cumbria

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
21 Newbarns	1	4,389	-4	4,594	-1
22 Old Barrow	1	4,544	-1	4,625	0
23 Ormsgill	1	4,247	-8	4,134	-11
24 Parkside	1	4,158	-9	4,037	-13
25 Risedale	1	4,823	5	4,723	2
26 Roosecote	1	4,213	-8	4,378	-5
27 Walney North	1	4,293	-7	4,209	-9
28 Walney South	1	4,474	-3	4,400	-5
CARLISLE CITY					
29 Belah	1	4,918	7	4,731	2
30 Belle Vue	1	4,519	-2	4,430	-4
31 Botcherby	1	4,385	-5	4,383	-5
32 Brampton & Gilsand	1	4,924	7	4,943	7
33 Castle	1	4,451	-3	4,373	-6
34 Currock	1	4,427	-4	4,304	-7
35 Dalston & Cummersdale	1	5,113	11	5,457	18
36 Denton Holme	1	4,518	-2	4,412	-5
37 Harraby	1	4,566	-1	5,079	10
38 Longtown & Bewcastle	1	4,951	8	4,928	6
39 Morton	1	4,925	7	5,076	10
40 St Aidans	1	4,660	1	4,401	-5
41 Stanwix & Irthington	1	4,750	3	4,788	3
42 Stanwix Urban	1	4,624	1	4,614	0

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Figure 2 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Cumbria

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
43 Upperby	1	4,291	-7	4,233	-9
44 Wetheral	1	4,981	8	4,843	5
45 Yewdale	1	4,808	5	4,808	4
COPELAND BOROUGH					
46 Bransty	1	4,427	-4	5,145	11
47 Cleator Moor North & Frizington	1	5,166	12	5,238	13
48 Cleator Moor South & Egremont	1	5,236	14	5,080	10
49 Distington & Moresby	1	4,240	-8	4,145	-10
50 Gosforth & Ennerdale	1	4,239	-8	4,046	-13
51 Hensingham & Arlecdon	1	4,374	-5	4,311	-7
52 Hillcrest	1	4,335	-6	4,238	-8
53 Kells & Sandwith	1	3,948	-14	3,789	-18
54 Millom	1	5,626	22	5,777	25
55 Mirehouse	1	3,635	-21	3,444	-26
56 St Bees & Egremont	1	4,242	-8	4,196	-9
57 Seascale & Whicham	1	4,847	6	4,722	2
EDEN DISTRICT					
58 Appleby	1	4,159	-9	4,624	0
59 Alston & Fellside	1	4,742	3	5,202	12
60 Eden Fellside	1	4,362	-5	4,294	-7
61 Hesketh	1	4,423	-4	4,484	-3
62 Kirkby Stephen	1	4,742	3	4,869	5

Figure 2 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Cumbria

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
63 Penrith East	1	4,218	-8	4,318	-7
64 Penrith North	1	4,469	-3	4,411	-5
65 Penrith Rural	1	4,087	-11	4,275	-8
66 Penrith West	1	4,031	-12	3,905	-16
SOUTH LAKELAND DISTRICT					
67 Cartmel	1	4,406	-4	4,398	-5
68 Grange	1	4,857	6	5,002	8
69 High Furness	1	4,394	-4	4,289	-7
70 Kendal Castle	1	4,582	0	5,048	9
71 Kendal Highgate	1	4,552	-1	4,458	-4
72 Kendal Nether	1	4,732	3	5,349	16
73 Kendal South	1	4,525	-1	4,814	4
74 Kendal Strickland & Fell	1	4,524	-2	4,989	8
75 Kent Estuary	1	5,095	11	5,077	10
76 Lakes	1	4,645	1	4,489	-3
77 Low Furness	1	4,587	0	4,824	4
78 Lower Kentdale	1	4,337	-6	4,494	-3
79 Lyth Valley	1	4,338	-6	4,299	-7
80 Sedbergh & Kirkby Lonsdale	1	4,652	1	4,749	3
81 Ulverston East	1	4,757	4	5,005	8
82 Ulverston West	1	4,615	0	4,717	2
83 Upper Kent	1	4,346	-5	4,350	-6

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Figure 2 (continued):
The Commission's Final Recommendations for Cumbria

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
84 Windermere	1	5,049	10	4,940	7
Totals	84	385,847	—	388,965	—
Averages	—	4,593	—	4,631	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Cumbria County Council's submission.

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

1. INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our final recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Cumbria County Council. Our review of the county is part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 In each two-tier county, our approach is first to complete the PERs of all the constituent districts and, when Orders for the resulting changes in those areas have been made by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, then to commence a PER of the county council's electoral arrangements. The Secretary of State made Orders for new electoral arrangements in the districts in Cumbria, which we reviewed at the start of the PER programme in 1996/97, in autumn 1999.

Our Approach to County Reviews

3 In undertaking all our PERs we must have regard to:

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

4 We also have regard to our *Guidance and Procedural Advice for Local Authorities and Other Interested Parties* (second edition published in March 1999), which we supplemented in October 1999 on our approach to county reviews.

5 We are required to make recommendations to the Secretary of State on the number of councillors who should serve on the County Council, and the number, boundaries and names of electoral

divisions. Current legislation requires that county council electoral divisions should each return one councillor. In addition, the statutory Rules set out in the 1972 Act provide that each division should be wholly contained within a single district and that division boundaries should not split unwarded parishes or parish wards.

6 In considering the approach we should take to county reviews we valued the responses to the consultation we undertook in 1995 prior to the start of our PER programme, and the more recent discussions we have had with county council officers and the Local Government Association. We have also welcomed the opportunity to brief chief officers and, on an all-party basis, members of individual county councils, about our policies and procedures.

7 In October 1999 we wrote to all county councils setting out further advice on our approach to county reviews which supplemented our March 1998 *Guidance*. First, as with all our reviews, we wish wherever possible to build on schemes which have been prepared locally on the basis of careful and effective consultation. Local interests are normally in a better position to judge what council size and configuration is most likely to secure effective and convenient local government in their areas, while allowing proper reflection of the identities and interests of local communities.

8 Second, the broad objective of PERs is then to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the county as a whole. For example, we will continue to require justification for schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any division. Any imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in exceptional circumstances, and will require strong justification.

9 Similarly, we will seek to ensure that the number of county councillors representing each district area within the county is commensurate with the district's proportion of the county's electorate.

10 Third, the Rules provide that, in considering county council electoral arrangements, we should have regard to the boundaries of district wards. We attach considerable importance to achieving coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards. Where wards or groups of wards are not coterminous with county divisions, this can cause confusion for the electorate at local elections, lead to increased election costs and, in our view, may not be conducive to effective and convenient local government.

11 We recognise, however, that we are unlikely to achieve optimum electoral equality and complete coterminosity throughout a county area. Our objective will be to achieve the best balance between the two, taking into account our statutory criteria. While the proportion of electoral divisions that will be coterminous with the boundaries of district wards is likely to vary between counties, we would normally expect coterminosity to be achieved in a significant majority of divisions.

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

13 Fourth, we are not prescriptive on council size. We start from the general assumption that the existing council size already secures effective and convenient local government in that county but we are willing to look carefully at arguments why this might not be so. However, we have found it necessary to safeguard against upward drift in the number of councillors, and we believe that any proposal for an increase in council size will need to be fully justified: in particular, we do not accept that an increase in a county's electorate should automatically result in an increase in the number of councillors, nor that changes should be made to the size of a county council simply to make it more consistent with the size of other counties.

14 Fifth, a further area of difference between county and district reviews is that we recognise it will not always be possible to avoid the creation of some county divisions which contain diverse communities, for example, combining urban and rural areas. We have generally sought to avoid this in district reviews, in order to reflect the identities

and interests of local communities. Some of the existing county council electoral divisions comprise a number of distinct communities, which is inevitable given the larger number of electors represented by each councillor, and we would expect that similar situations will continue under our recommendations in seeking the best balance between electoral equality, coterminosity and the statutory criteria.

15 Finally, before we started our county reviews, the Government published a White Paper, *Modern Local Government – In Touch with the People*, in July 1998, setting out legislative proposals for local authority electoral arrangements. The Government's proposals provided for elections by halves in alternate years for all two-tier authorities. This would mean that district and county councils would each move to a cycle of elections by halves, with elections for district councils and county councils taking place in alternate years. The White Paper also refers to local accountability being maximised where the whole electorate in a council's area is involved in elections each time they take place, thereby pointing to a pattern of two-member divisions in county councils to reflect a system of elections by halves.

16 In October 1998, we wrote to all local authorities, setting out our understanding of the White Paper proposals, following discussions with the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, the Local Government Association and the Association of London Government. In brief, we will continue to operate on the basis of existing legislation, and our present *Guidance*, until such time as the legislation changes. We have power only to recommend single-member divisions in county council areas.

17 As part of this review we may also make recommendations for change to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils in the county. However, we made some recommendations for new parish electoral arrangements as part of our district reviews. Furthermore, this is now a power that is open to district and unitary councils. We therefore only expect to put forward such recommendations during county reviews on an exceptional basis. In any event, we are not able to review the administrative boundaries between local authorities or parishes, or consider the establishment of new parish areas as part of this review.

The Review of Cumbria

18 We completed the reviews of the six district council areas in Cumbria in November 1997, and the Secretary of State has since made the Orders for the new electoral arrangements. This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of Cumbria County Council. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1980 (Report No. 400).

19 Stage One of this review began on 5 January 1999, when we wrote to Cumbria County Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified the six district councils in the county, the Cumbria Police Authority, the local authority associations, the Cumbria Association of Local Councils, parish and town councils in the county, Members of Parliament and the Member of the European Parliament with constituency interests in the county, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the County Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 29 March 1999. At Stage Two we considered all the representations received during Stage One and prepared our draft recommendations.

20 Stage Three began on 29 June 1999 with the publication of our report, *Draft Recommendations on the Future Electoral Arrangements for Cumbria County Council*, and ended on 14 September 1999. Comments were sought on our preliminary conclusions. Finally, during Stage Four we reconsidered our draft recommendations in the light of the Stage Three consultation and now publish our final recommendations.

2. CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

²¹ The county of Cumbria comprises the six districts of Allerdale, Barrow, Carlisle, Copeland, Eden and South Lakeland. With a population of approximately 486,163 (1999), covering nearly 681,000 hectares, the county has a population density of 0.7 persons per hectare. The county borders the Irish Sea to the west, Lancashire to the south, and Northumberland, Durham and North Yorkshire to the east. The county town of Carlisle is situated in the north-east of the county, close to the Scottish border. The county contains 275 parishes.

²² This review commenced on 5 January 1999 and Stage One was completed on 29 March 1999. The submission received from the County Council was therefore based on the 1999 electoral register. The existing county divisions are based on the pattern of district wards that existed prior to 1998, before the Commission's PERs of all Cumbrian districts and the implementation of its recommendations for changes to electoral arrangements in those districts. Accordingly, given the changes to district wards which are now reflected in the current electoral register, it was not practicable for the County Council to express its existing electoral arrangements in terms of 1999 data. It has therefore used 1998 data in providing details of its current electoral arrangements and 1999 data as the basis for its proposed pattern of divisions. In the circumstances, we accept that this is the most practicable approach.

²³ Although the electorate of the county has decreased slightly between 1998 and 1999, by 125 to 385,847 (February 1999), since the last review of the County Council's electoral arrangements there has been an increase in the electorate in Cumbria, with around 5 per cent more electors than two decades ago. Eden and South Lakeland districts have experienced the most growth, both with around 6,000 more electors. Barrow borough has experienced a small reduction in electorate. The Council presently has 83 members, with one member elected from each division (Figure 3).

²⁴ To compare levels of electoral inequality between divisions, we calculated the extent to which the number of electors represented by the

councillor for each division varies from the county average in percentage terms. In the text which follows, this calculation may also be described using the shorthand term 'electoral variance'.

²⁵ At present, each councillor represents an average of 4,650 electors, which the County Council forecasts will increase marginally to 4,695 by the year 2004 if the present number of councillors is maintained. However, due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors in 32 of the 83 divisions varies by more than 10 per cent from the county average, in 14 divisions by more than 20 per cent and four divisions by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Alston division, in Eden district, where the councillor represents 65 per cent fewer electors than the county average.

²⁶ As detailed previously, in considering the County Council's electoral arrangements, we must have regard to the boundaries of district wards. Following the completion of the reviews of district warding arrangements in Cumbria, we are therefore faced with a new 'starting point' for considering electoral divisions. Our proposals for county divisions will be based on the new district wards as opposed to those which existed prior to the recent reviews. In view of the effect of these new district wards and changes in the electorate over the past 20 years which have resulted in electoral imbalances across the county, changes to most, if not all, of the existing county electoral divisions are inevitable.

²⁷ In considering county council electoral arrangements, we have regard to the boundaries of district wards. The term 'coterminosity' is used throughout the report and refers to situations where the boundaries of county electoral divisions and district wards are the same, that is to say, where county divisions comprise either one or more whole district wards.

Figure 3:
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
ALLERDALE DISTRICT					
1 Aspatria	1	4,907	6	4,794	2
2 Buttermere & Derwent	1	4,968	7	4,765	2
3 Cockermouth	1	6,516	40	6,550	40
4 Dearham & Bassenthwaite	1	4,659	0	4,660	-1
5 Harrington & Salterbeck	1	3,163	-32	3,265	-30
6 Keswick & St John's	1	4,427	-5	4,243	-9
7 Maryport North	1	5,428	17	6,077	30
8 Maryport South	1	4,099	-12	3,938	-16
9 Moorclose	1	4,341	-7	4,641	-1
10 St John's	1	5,096	10	4,839	3
11 St Michael's	1	4,139	-11	3,976	-15
12 Seaton & Winscales	1	5,361	15	5,651	21
13 Silloth & Holme Abbey	1	4,939	6	4,918	5
14 Warnell	1	4,950	6	4,830	3
15 Westfield	1	3,590	-23	3,387	-28
16 Wigton	1	5,163	11	5,208	11
BARROW BOROUGH					
17 Barrow Island	1	2,385	-49	3,827	-55
18 Central	1	3,844	-17	2,117	-18
19 Dalton North	1	4,739	2	4,842	3
20 Dalton South	1	4,483	-4	4,435	-5
21 Hawcoat	1	4,598	-1	4,495	-4

Figure 3 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
22 Hindpool	1	4,215	-9	4,049	-14
23 Newbarns	1	4,676	1	4,839	3
24 Ormsgill	1	4,814	4	4,546	-3
25 Parkside	1	4,052	-13	3,845	-18
26 Risedale	1	3,605	-22	3,455	-26
27 Roosecote	1	4,402	-5	4,556	-3
28 Walney North	1	4,269	-8	4,120	-12
29 Walney South	1	4,624	-1	4,488	-4
CARLISLE CITY					
30 Belah	1	5,921	27	5,658	21
31 Belle Vue	1	4,098	-12	4,024	-14
32 Botcherby	1	4,433	-5	4,417	-6
33 Brampton & Gilsand	1	5,036	8	5,035	7
34 Currock	1	4,384	-6	4,252	-9
35 Dalston & Cummersdale	1	5,382	16	5,704	22
36 Denton Holme	1	4,513	-3	4,396	-6
37 Harraby	1	4,619	-1	5,116	9
38 Kingmoor & Houghton	1	5,353	15	5,380	15
39 Longtown & Bewcastle	1	4,178	-10	4,143	-12
40 Morton	1	3,759	-19	3,970	-15
41 St Aidans	1	4,483	-4	4,223	-10
42 Stanwix Urban	1	4,709	1	4,682	0
43 Trinity	1	4,380	-6	4,295	-8

continued overleaf

Figure 3 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
44 Upperby	1	4,292	-8	4,223	-10
45 Wetheral	1	4,942	6	4,794	2
46 Yewdale	1	5,548	19	5,489	17
COPELAND BOROUGH					
47 Bransty	1	5,100	10	5,936	27
48 Cleator Moor North	1	5,143	11	5,238	12
49 Cleator Moor South	1	4,210	-9	4,095	-13
50 Distington & Moresby	1	4,323	-7	4,145	-12
51 Egremont	1	6,030	30	5,758	23
52 Hensingham	1	3,826	-18	3,497	-25
53 Hillcrest	1	4,029	-13	3,889	-17
54 Kells	1	3,754	-19	3,478	-26
55 Millom	1	5,651	22	5,777	23
56 Mirehouse	1	2,931	-37	2,766	-41
57 Seascale & Whicham	1	4,814	4	4,722	1
58 St Bees & Gosforth	1	4,917	6	4,831	3
EDEN DISTRICT					
59 Alston	1	1,629	-65	1,894	-60
60 Appleby	1	4,899	5	5,555	19
61 Greystoke & Mungrisdale	1	4,705	1	4,642	-1
62 Hesketh & Kirkoswald	1	5,881	26	6,333	35
63 Kirkby Stephen	1	4,688	1	4,868	4
64 Lowther & Shap	1	5,320	14	5,498	17
65 Penrith North West	1	5,338	15	5,472	17

Figure 3 (continued):
Existing Electoral Arrangements

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1998)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
66 Penrith South East	1	6,033	30	6,121	31
SOUTH LAKELAND DISTRICT					
67 Cartmel	1	4,457	-4	4,484	-4
68 Crooklands	1	4,850	4	5,144	10
69 Far Cross	1	4,688	1	5,541	18
70 Grange	1	4,883	5	5,068	8
71 High Furness	1	4,407	-5	4,337	-7
72 Highgate	1	5,705	23	5,618	20
73 Kent Estuary	1	5,015	8	5,041	8
74 Lakes	1	4,641	0	4,522	-4
75 Low Furness	1	4,594	-1	4,871	4
76 Lyth Valley	1	4,661	0	4,647	-1
77 Nether	1	5,884	27	6,488	38
78 Sedbergh & Kirkby Lonsdale	1	4,941	6	5,088	9
79 Strickland & Fell	1	4,734	2	5,234	12
80 Ulverston East	1	4,240	-9	4,544	-3
81 Ulverston West	1	5,086	9	5,212	11
82 Upper Kent	1	4,426	-5	4,465	-5
83 Windermere	1	5,057	9	4,989	6
Totals	83	385,972	—	388,965	—
Averages	—	4,650	—	4,686	—

Source: Electorate figures are based on Cumbria County Council's submission.

Note: Each division is represented by a single councillor; hence the electorate columns denote the number of electors represented by each councillor. The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors represented by each councillor varies from the average for the county. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1998, electors in Alston division in Eden were relatively over-represented by 65 per cent, while electors in Cockermouth division in Allerdale were significantly under-represented by 40 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3. DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

28 During Stage One we received 18 representations, from the County Council, 11 parish councils, Westmorland & Lonsdale Constituency Labour Party and four county councillors. The County Council submitted a county-wide scheme. 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 Cumbria County Council*.

29 Our draft recommendations were based primarily on the County Council's scheme, which we considered in the most part achieved a good balance between electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity. We endorsed the County Council's recommendations for Barrow but proposed moving away from the County's scheme to differing degrees in the other five districts. We put forward our own proposals and adopted those of other respondents where we judged that a more equitable level of representation and accurate reflection of local opinion could be achieved. We proposed that:

- (a) Cumbria County Council should be served by 84 councillors;
- (b) there should be 84 electoral divisions, involving changes to the boundaries of all but 12 of the existing divisions.

Draft Recommendation

Cumbria County Council should comprise 84 councillors serving the same number of divisions.

30 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 63 of the 84 electoral divisions varying by no more than 10 per cent from the county average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to continue, with only 23 of the divisions expected to vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average in 2004.

4. RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

31 During the consultation on our draft recommendations report we received 49 representations, including comments from the County Council, three local Labour parties, four local Conservative parties, Carlisle City Council, Copeland Borough Council and Eden District Council, a number of parish and town councils, an MP, several councillors and three residents. All representations may be inspected at the offices of the County Council and the Commission by appointment. A list of respondents is available on request from the Commission.

Cumbria County Council

32 In its Stage Three submission the County Council generally welcomed the Commission's proposals, particularly in Carlisle, Eden and South Lakeland. It proposed, however, that the number of members representing Barrow borough should remain at 13, involving an increase in the council size to 85, one more than was proposed by the County Council at Stage One. Additionally, the County Council proposed modifying the draft recommendations for Allerdale district, Carlisle City, Copeland borough, Eden district and South Lakeland district. The County Council agreed that Allerdale is entitled to 16 rather than 17 county councillors, based on the 1999 and 2004 electorate, and in the light of this proposed modifying 10 of the 16 divisions included in the draft recommendations. The revised proposals would provide 75 per cent coterminosity between county divisions and district wards, good electoral equality and, in the County Council's opinion, a better reflection of communities.

33 In Barrow, the County Council amended its Stage One proposal and allocated 13 councillors for the borough, with the additional councillor representing the existing Barrow Island division, so that all the county divisions would be coterminous with borough wards.

34 The County Council supported the majority of the proposals for Carlisle but included in its submission a revision of its electorate forecasts for Dalston & Cummersdale division. In the light of the lower forecast growth the County recommended that its Stage One proposals for Dalston & Cummersdale, Longtown & Bewcastle

and Stanwix & Irthlington divisions be adopted, to provide electoral equality and meet the statutory criteria.

35 In Copeland, the County Council supported nine of the 12 divisions included in the draft recommendations, proposing an alternative scheme for mid-Copeland. The proposals would require additional parish warding for Egremont parish and reduce coterminosity between borough wards and county divisions.

36 In Eden, the County Council "welcomed the proposals for Eden district", but proposed that Appleby division be modified to include Asby parish and that a number of divisions be renamed. In South Lakeland, the County Council stated that it accepted "the geographic boundaries for the South Lakeland area", proposing only that one division be renamed.

Labour Parties

37 The Workington Constituency Labour Party opposed the draft recommendations for Allerdale, stating that the County Council's 2004 electorate forecasts were incorrect and that Allerdale is entitled to 17 rather than 16 county councillors. It proposed modifications to the proposed Flimby & Seaton, Maryport North and Stainburn & Harrington divisions, on the basis that in the draft recommendations the divisions would not reflect community identities.

38 Copeland Constituency Labour Party supported nine of the 12 Copeland divisions included in the draft recommendations. However, it opposed the Commission's proposals for the divisions of Cleator Moor South & Egremont, Gosforth & Ennerdale and St Bees & Egremont, on the basis that the constituent communities would have no community interest and poor transport links. It proposed alternative electoral arrangements for the area.

39 Eden District Labour Group proposed modifying Penrith East, Penrith South and Penrith West divisions, in order that urban and rural settlements would be included in separate divisions.

Conservative Groups

40 The Conservative Party (North West Region) supported the Commission's proposal to increase the total council size from 83 to 84 and reduce the representation in Barrow from 13 to 12 councillors. It also generally supported the modifications proposed by the County Council at Stage Three for Allerdale, Carlisle, Eden and South Lakeland, but proposed its own modifications to divisions in Copeland.

41 The Stage Three submission of the Conservatives on Cumbria County Council reflected that of the Conservative Party (North West Region), in part supporting the County Council's Stage Three submission and proposing alternative arrangements for Copeland. The Conservative Association for the Barrow & Furness Constituency expressed support for the Commission's proposal to reduce the number of county councillors serving Barrow from 13 to 12.

42 Copeland Conservative Association proposed that Whitehaven town centre be incorporated in a single division as it "is one integral community unit". It proposed that Harbour and Kells wards be included in a single division and that the existing Gosforth & St Bees division be preserved, on the basis that the transport links between communities in the new division would be unsatisfactory.

District and Borough Councils

43 Carlisle City Council objected to the proposed Dalston & Cummersdale, Longtown & Bewcastle and Stanwix & Irthlington divisions, arguing that they would lack community identity, stating that the County Council's Stage One proposals for this area would be "a better solution to the problem of rural boundaries". Additionally, it questioned the County Council's Stage One electorate forecasts for this area and indicated that divisions could be named more appropriately.

44 Copeland Borough Council submitted a detailed borough-wide scheme that utilised parishes and parish wards as building blocks. The proposed changes would affect 11 of the 12 divisions included in the draft recommendations, with all divisions having an electoral variance of less than 10 per cent. These proposals would not secure a high degree of coterminosity between county divisions and borough wards.

45 Eden District Council proposed modifying Penrith East, Penrith South and Penrith West divisions to "better meet the criteria of reflecting the identities and interests of local communities, and the provision of effective and convenient local government".

Parish and Town Councils

46 We received representations direct from 20 parish councils and six town councils. In Allerdale district, Plumbland and Seaton parish councils supported the draft recommendations. Cockermouth and Maryport town councils both objected to the proposed electoral arrangements in their respective towns. Cockermouth Town Council objected to the town being divided between divisions and proposed that it be represented by two county councillors. Maryport Town Council proposed that Maryport town be divided into two divisions. Oughterside & Allerby Parish Council opposed the Aspatria & Wharrels division for community identity reasons, proposing an alternative arrangement for the area, and Blindcrake Parish Council opposed our draft recommendations on the basis that "community identity would be lost if the Parish was linked with an urban area". Bowness-on-Solway and Waverton parish councils opposed the Allerdale North East division on the basis that it would not provide a good level of electoral equality or reflect community identities in the area. Holme St Cuthbert Parish Council stated that the Commission's proposals were preferable to those of the County Council, but expressed concern that Bowness and Holme East Waver parishes would be included in a division with parishes which have no coastal boundaries. Holme Abbey Parish Council stated that if the existing arrangements were not acceptable, then as little departure from them as possible would be preferable. Wigton Town Council asked that the status quo be maintained, and Aspatria Town Council expressed support for the County Council's Stage One proposals. The Parish Council of St John's Castlerigg & Wythburn queried the Commission's approach to devising electoral arrangements for rural and urban communities.

47 In Barrow-in-Furness borough, Dalton with Newton Town Council supported the draft recommendations for Barrow borough, adding that "in a democracy which believes in 'One Man One Vote' why should the vote of a Barrow Islander carry twice the weight of a Daltonian or any other elector".

48 In Carlisle City, Arthuret Parish Council opposed the Longtown & Bewcastle division on the basis that it would combine parishes of differing profiles; it also indicated that the constituent parishes would be separated by a river and cover a large geographical area. Kirklington Parish Council also opposed the Longtown & Bewcastle division on the basis that it would link parishes with “no natural affinity”, instead proposing that the parish be included in the Stanwix & Irthlington division.

49 In Copeland borough, St Bees Parish Council opposed our recommendation to divide the parish between three divisions, arguing that it would damage community identities in the area and provide unsatisfactory coterminosity. Lamplugh Parish Council supported the Commission’s proposal to link it with other rural parishes, but was concerned that Gosforth & Ennerdale division would be divided by the Fells. As an alternative, it proposed that Lamplugh parish be linked with Distington and Moresby parishes.

50 In Eden district, Morland Parish Council expressed support for the County Council’s Stage One Appleby division, but added that any proposal to separate Morland and Newby parishes would damage community ties. Newby Parish Council also opposed any proposal to split Morland and Newby parishes, submitting a petition of signatures to that effect. Asby Parish Council proposed that it form part of Appleby division, and Alston Moor Parish Council objected to the recommendations on the grounds that electoral equality had taken precedence over community identity.

51 In South Lakeland district, Grange-over-Sands Town Council supported our draft recommendations. Heversham Parish Council, however, argued that the proposal to separate Heversham and Levens parishes would be “inconsistent with recent changes in district boundaries”.

Members of Parliament

52 John Hutton, MP for Barrow and Furness, opposed the draft recommendations for Barrow Island, Central, Hindpool and Risedale divisions. Mr Hutton urged the Commission to revise its draft recommendation with regard to Barrow Island division and allow it to remain unchanged for reasons of community identity.

Other Representations

53 We received a further 11 representations, from five county councillors, three district councillors and three local residents. Councillor Johnston, member for Silloth & Holme Abbey division in Allerdale, expressed support for Bowness-on-Solway Parish Council’s Stage Three submission. Councillor Edgar, member for Wigton division in Allerdale, opposed the draft recommendations for Wigton, Woodside and Waverton parishes, expressing concern that they would separate a coherent community. Councillor Richardson, member for Hawcoat division in Barrow, supported the proposal to reduce the number of councillors serving Barrow-in-Furness from 13 to 12; however, Councillor Nicholson, member for Barrow Island division, opposed the new Barrow Island & Central division for reasons of community identity, attaching a submission of 879 signatures in support of his views. Councillor Strike, member for Seascale & Whicham division in Copeland, proposed that Wasdale remain part of Gosforth & St Bees division, rather than Seascale & Whicham division. Councillor Knox, member for Mirehouse ward in Copeland borough, supported the County Council’s Stage Three proposals for Copeland borough. Councillor Graham, member for Hillcrest ward in Copeland borough, opposed the draft recommendations for Whitehaven, proposing an alternative arrangement. Councillor Spendlove, member for Crake Valley ward in South Lakeland district, objected to the proposal to include Lowick parish in High Furness division and separate the parishes of Pennington and Swarthmoor.

54 We also received submissions from three local residents. A resident of Aikton objected to the proposed Longtown & Bewcastle division in Carlisle, and a resident of Egremont in Copeland objected to the proposals for Egremont, arguing that they would not reflect community identity. A resident of Barrow Island in Barrow borough initially opposed the draft recommendations, but having received an explanation of our proposal recognised the need to modify the existing Barrow Island division to facilitate electoral equality, but proposed that it be renamed Old Barrow.

5. ANALYSIS AND FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

55 As with our reviews of districts, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for Cumbria County Council is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to the statutory criteria set out in the Local Government Act 1992 – the need to secure effective and convenient local government, and reflect the interests and identities of local communities – and Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972, which refers to the number of electors being “as nearly as may be, the same in every division of the county”.

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

57 We have discussed in Chapter One the additional parameters which apply to reviews of county council electoral arrangements and the need to have regard to the boundaries of district wards and coterminosity. We will also seek to ensure that the number of county councillors representing each district council area within the county is commensurate with the district’s proportion of the county’s electorate.

58 It is impractical to design an electoral scheme which provides for exactly the same number of electors in every division of a county. 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.

59 Our *Guidance* states that we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, especially when also seeking to achieve coterminosity in order to facilitate convenient and effective local government. However, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review.

60 We therefore recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as the boundaries of district wards and community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an imbalance of over 10 per cent in any division. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in exceptional circumstances and will require strong justification.

Electorate Forecasts

61 The County Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2004, projecting a marginal increase in the electorate of under 1 per cent, from 385,847 to 389,714, over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It expected most of the growth to be in the Dalston area, south of Carlisle, and in Kendal town. The County Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates. Advice from the County Council on the likely effect on electorates of changes to division boundaries has been obtained. In our draft recommendations report we accepted that this is an inexact science and, having given consideration to forecast electorates, we were satisfied that they represented the best estimates that could be made at the time.

62 At Stage Three the County Council included a recalculation of its 2004 electorate forecasts for the Dalston & Cummersdale division in Carlisle City. The Council stated that the original forecast for the area was based upon the “potential for development”, estimated to be 1,025 units. Since this original figure was calculated the County Council has reviewed the situation. Based upon the current completion rate of units in this particular development it is now thought that only 250 units will be completed by 2004. The Commission has consulted with the County Council and Carlisle City Council on this issue and we are satisfied that

the revised figure is an accurate forecast for the division. We have also consulted with the County Council regarding its forecast electorate for Allerdale, in the light of comments received at Stage Three, and remain satisfied that the original figures supplied are accurate. We received no further comments regarding the County Council's electorate forecasts for 2004 and, with the exception outlined above, remain satisfied that the original forecasts represent the best estimates presently available.

Council Size

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

64 Cumbria County Council presently has 83 members. The Commission does not generally seek a substantial increase or decrease in council size but is prepared to consider the case for change where there is persuasive evidence. At Stage One the County Council proposed a council of 84 members, arguing that, although this council size continues to be above the indicative range, due to the geography and population distribution any scheme based on a smaller council size would be liable to produce large electoral variances if a reasonable degree of coterminosity were to be achieved.

65 In our draft recommendations report we considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received. We concluded that the achievement of electoral equality, the statutory criteria and coterminosity would best be met by a council size of 84 members.

66 At Stage Three the County Council submitted a county-wide scheme based on an 85-member council, one more member than was proposed at Stage One, with the additional councillor representing the existing Barrow Island division. This proposal would result in significant electoral inequality in Barrow. Although we note local concerns regarding community identities in Barrow we have not been persuaded by the evidence submitted at Stage Three that such a high level of electoral inequality is justified. We have also not been persuaded that an increase in council size

would facilitate a county-wide scheme which would provide improved electoral equality, increased coterminosity or a better reflection of community identities. We are therefore confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 84 as final.

Electoral Arrangements

67 As set out in our draft recommendations report, we carefully considered all the representations received at Stage One, including the county-wide scheme from the County Council. From these representations, some considerations emerged which helped to inform us when preparing our draft recommendations. As detailed above, we concluded that a council size of 84 would provide a fair level of representation across the county and facilitate a good electoral scheme.

68 We acknowledged the positive approach taken by the County Council in putting forward proposals for new electoral arrangements which would improve the severe imbalances which exist across the county. However, we noted that under the County Council's scheme there would be a relatively low degree of coterminosity, with only 54 per cent of divisions coterminous with district wards. As outlined above, we seek to achieve coterminosity between the boundaries of divisions and wards in formulating new county electoral arrangements, where possible, as this can be conducive to the provision of effective and convenient local government.

69 Second, we noted that, under an 84-member scheme, the Council proposed that there should be an increase in the number of councillors representing Allerdale from 16 to 17. However, we calculated that the district warrants 16.5 councillors currently, reducing to 16.3 in 2004. Furthermore, the Council proposed that Eden district should continue to be represented by eight councillors, despite the current number of electors justifying 8.5 councillors, increasing to 8.7 in 2004. Accordingly, Allerdale is entitled to only 16 county members, while Eden is entitled to an additional, ninth member. Consequently, while proposing to adopt elements of the County Council's proposal, we also attempted to reflect other representations received, and put forward our own proposals in those areas where we believed that improvements could be made to provide fairer representation across the county as a whole, together with higher levels of coterminosity.

70 We have reviewed our draft recommendations in the light of further evidence and the representations received during Stage Three. Taking all relevant factors into account, we have concluded that the optimum level of electoral equality can be achieved across Cumbria, having regard to the statutory criteria, with a council size of 84, one more than at present (see also the section earlier in this chapter relating to council size). The submissions received from parish and town councils and other local interests have been valuable in drawing up our final proposals. They highlighted specific local issues, particularly in terms of local community identities and interests.

71 The general response to our draft recommendations has been favourable, with the proposals for Carlisle, Eden and South Lakeland commanding some local support. Respondents proposed only minimal change to the division boundaries and names in these areas. However, a number of contentious issues have arisen regarding our proposals for Allerdale, Barrow and Copeland. The majority of those who wrote during Stage Three asserted that community identities would be damaged as a result of the implementation of our draft recommendations. The details of our consideration of these views and our final recommendations are set out in the text below.

72 The six district areas in Cumbria are considered in turn, as follows:

- (a) Allerdale district;
- (b) Barrow-in-Furness borough;
- (c) Carlisle city;
- (d) Copeland borough;
- (e) Eden district;
- (f) South Lakeland district.

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

Allerdale district

74 Under the current arrangements, Allerdale district is represented by 16 county councillors serving 16 divisions: Aspatria, Buttermere & Derwent, Cockermouth, Dearham & Bassenthwaite, Harrington & Salterbeck, Keswick & St John's, Maryport North, Maryport South, Moorclose, St John's, St Michael's, Seaton & Winscales, Silloth &

Holme Abbey, Warnell, Westfield and Wigton. There is a relatively high degree of electoral imbalance, with the number of electors represented by each councillor in eight divisions varying by more than 10 per cent from the average, and in three of these divisions, Cockermouth, Harrington & Salterbeck and Westfield, varying by more than 20 per cent from the average.

75 At Stage One the County Council proposed that the number of divisions and councillors representing the district should be increased from 16 to 17. It proposed that there should be four divisions covering the Workington town wards of Moorclose, Moss Bay, St John's and St Michael's, together with a division combining Stainburn and Harrington wards. It further proposed that the wards of Clifton and Seaton should be combined to form a new Clifton & Seaton division, that the wards of Ellenborough and Netherhall should be combined to form a modified Maryport North division, and that the wards of Ewanrigg and Flimby be combined to form a modified Maryport South division.

76 The Council considered the town of Cockermouth to be too large to be represented by one division. It therefore proposed combining Christchurch ward with the parishes of Brigham and Broughton in a new West Cockermouth & Broughton division and combining All Saints ward with the parishes of Bridekirk and Papcastle in a new East Cockermouth & Bridekirk division, retaining the river as the boundary between the two divisions. The Council proposed a division covering Wigton ward and a division covering Keswick ward.

77 For the remaining five divisions the Council proposed divisions with good levels of electoral equality, which it stated would reflect community identities. It proposed that the parishes of All Hallows, Bedwaldeth & Snittlegarth, Blennerhasset & Torpenhow, Blindcrake, Bothel & Threapland, Crosscanonby, Dearham, Gilcruix and Plumbland should be combined to form a new Dearham division and that the parishes of Allonby, Aspatria, Bromfield, Hayton & Mealo, Holme St Cuthbert, Oughterside & Allerby and Westnewton be combined to form a new Aspatria & Solway Coast division. It also proposed that Wampool ward be combined with the parishes Holme Abbey, Holme Low and Silloth-on-Solway to form a new Silloth division. It further proposed combining the wards of Marsh, Warnell and Wampool to form a

new Marsh, Warnell & Wampool division. Finally, it proposed that part of Boltons, Crummock wards and Dalton and Derwent Valley wards should form a new Crummock & Derwent division. Under the County Council's proposals 10 of the 17 divisions would be coterminous, with eight divisions having an electoral variance of more than 10 per cent and no division varying by more than 20 per cent. By 2004, eight of the proposed divisions would vary by more than 10 per cent, with the number of electors represented by the councillor in the proposed Maryport North division 31 per cent above the average, due to growth in the area.

78 We received seven further representations in relation to Allerdale district. Holme Abbey Parish Council opposed any proposals which would link it with Wigton, and Aikton Parish Council stated that the current Warnell division is too geographically large, hindering effective representation. Cockermouth Town Council supported the County Council's proposal for two coterminous divisions for Cockermouth, and Maryport Town Council supported retaining two divisions for Maryport. Waverton and Woodside parish councils objected to any proposal to include them in a division with Silloth parish, outlining similar community and geographical arguments. Councillor Johnston (member for Silloth & Holme Abbey division) objected to the County Council's proposals for Silloth, Holme & Waver division on community identity grounds, proposing alternative boundaries for part of the district.

79 After carefully considering all the representations received regarding proposals for Allerdale, we noted that, under a county-wide proposal for 84 councillors, Allerdale is entitled to 16.5 councillors in 1999. However, by 2004 this has reduced to 16.3 councillors. Accordingly, we considered that Allerdale district should be represented by 16 councillors, as at present, and devised a scheme for 16 divisions, reflecting the County Council's proposals where possible, while providing improved coterminosity elsewhere.

80 We proposed adopting the County Council's proposals for the divisions of Keswick, Moorclose, Moss Bay, St John's, St Michael's and Wigton. However, we proposed combining the wards of Clifton, Harrington and Stainburn to form a new Harrington & Stainburn division, combining the wards of Flimby and Seaton to form a new Flimby & Seaton division, and combining Ewanrigg and Netherall wards to form a modified Maryport

North division. Additionally, we proposed combining Ellen and Ellenborough wards in a new Ellen & Ellenborough division. In the north of the district, we proposed combining the wards of Holme, Silloth and Solway to form a new Solway Coast division and combining the wards of Marsh, Wampool, Warnell and Waver to form a new Allerdale North East division.

81 In the remainder of the district, we proposed using a combination of parishes and wards to form new divisions which would achieve electoral equality while providing a reasonable reflection of community interests in the area. We agreed with the County Council that Cockermouth is too large to be represented by one division and therefore proposed combining All Saints division with the parishes of Blindcrake and Setmurthy to form a new East Cockermouth division. We also proposed combining Christchurch ward with the parishes of Brigham and Broughton to form a new Cockermouth West division. Additionally, we proposed combining the wards of Aspatria and Wharrells together with the parishes of Bridekirk and Gilcrux to form a new Aspatria & Wharrells division. Finally, we proposed combining the wards of Crummock (less the parishes of Blindcrake and Setmurthy), Dalton and Derwent Valley and the parishes of Bassenthwaite and Underskiddaw in a new Crummock & Derwent division.

82 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors in six of the proposed 16 divisions would vary by 10 per cent or less from the county average, with one division, Allerdale North East varying by more than 20 per cent. This level of electoral equality would generally be maintained by 2004, with six divisions varying by 10 per cent or less and all but two divisions, Maryport North and Flimby & Seaton, varying by less than 20 per cent. While we recognised the electoral imbalance which would remain in these wards, we considered that this was in part due to the total level of representation which the district merits, that is, between 16 and 17 councillors. These recommendations would also involve a degree of over-representation in Workington, in order to achieve coterminosity, which would result in higher levels of under-representation in the remainder of the district. Under these proposals 12 out of 16 divisions would be coterminous with district wards.

83 At Stage Three Cumbria County Council supported the Commission's proposal for 16 county councillors in Allerdale; it also supported

the boundaries of six of the 16 divisions included in the draft recommendations: Moorclose, Moss Bay, St John's, St Michael's, Harrington & Stainburn and Solway Coast. However, it proposed that Wigton division be modified to include Waverton and Woodside parishes, that Maryport be divided into two divisions and that the district wards and parishes in the south of the district, including Cockermouth, be reconfigured to better reflect community identities. The proposals would result in 12 coterminous divisions and would provide for a high level of electoral equality. The Conservative Party (North West Region) and the Conservatives on Cumbria County Council supported the County Council's Stage Three proposals for Allerdale, particularly for Waverton and Woodside parishes to be included in a division with Wigton.

84 Workington Constituency Labour Party opposed the draft recommendations for Allerdale district, arguing that the County Council's electorate forecasts were inaccurate, and that Allerdale is therefore entitled to 17 rather than 16 county councillors. It proposed that Stainburn & Harrington, Flimby & Seaton and Maryport North divisions be modified to better reflect community identities.

85 Plumbland Parish Council supported the draft recommendations and Seaton Parish Council supported our proposal for a new Flimby & Seaton division. Aspatria Town Council supported the County Council's Stage One representation to include Aspatria and Solway district wards in a single division. Both Blindcrake Parish Council and Cockermouth Town Council opposed the draft recommendations on the grounds that they would not reflect community identities. Cockermouth Town Council proposed that the town be represented by two county councillors and that its external parish boundary be modified. Maryport Town Council proposed that Maryport be divided into two divisions, with Maryport East ward comprising Ellenborough and Ewanrigg wards (less Broughton Moor parish) and Maryport West ward comprising Netherall and Flimby wards and Broughton Moor parish. Oughterside & Allerby Parish Council opposed the new Aspatria & Wharrels division on the basis that it would undermine existing community ties. As an alternative it proposed that the parishes of Allonby, Aspatria, Bromfield, Hayton & Mealo, Holme St Cuthbert, Oughterside & Allerby and Westnewtown should form a new Solway & Aspatria division. Bowness-on-Solway and

Waverton parish councils objected to the proposed Allerdale North East division on the grounds that it would not achieve good electoral equality or reflect community ties. Waverton Parish Council and Wigton Town Council proposed that the existing community ties between Waverton, Wigton and Woodside parishes be retained. Holme St Cuthbert Parish Council expressed concern that Bowness and Holme East Waver parishes would be included in a division with parishes which have no coastal boundaries. Holme Abbey Parish Council asked that modifications to the existing electoral arrangements be kept to a minimum. The Parish Council of St John's Castlerigg & Wythburn stated that "when finalising the boundary for the Parish a 'Rural' aspect be considered rather than an 'Urban' boundary".

86 Councillor Johnston, member for Silloth & Holme Abbey division, expressed support for Bowness-on-Solway Parish Council's Stage Three submission. Councillor Edgar, member for Wigton division, opposed the recommendations for Wigton, Woodside and Waverton parishes, expressing concern that a coherent community would be split.

87 We have carefully considered the Stage Three representations and note that the majority of respondents, including the County Council, supported our proposal for 16 rather than 17 divisions in Allerdale. However, we have also noted Workington Constituency Labour Party's proposal for 17 councillors in Allerdale. As detailed earlier in the report, we have consulted the County Council regarding its electorate forecasts for 2004 and, with the exception of Carlisle, remain satisfied that they represent the most accurate estimate available at this time. We therefore continue to consider that Allerdale is entitled to 16 rather than 17 county councillors.

88 We have noted that the County Council's Stage Three scheme, which would include modifications to 10 of the 16 divisions included in the draft recommendations, would improve electoral equality while retaining the same level of coterminosity across the district (75 per cent) as our draft recommendations. The proposals also command a significant degree of local support, including from the North West Conservative Party and the Conservatives on Cumbria County Council. Specifically, the proposals include modifications to Wigton division, to better reflect community interests and provide improved

electoral equality, and they enjoy local support from Wigton Town Council, Waverton and Woodside parish councils and Councillor Edgar, member for the existing Wigton division. The proposal to create two divisions of Maryport East and Maryport West reflects Maryport Town Council's Stage Three proposals in this area entirely. The proposal to modify Keswick division to include Above Derwent and Borrowdale parishes would command the support of St John's Castlerigg & Wythburn Parish Council.

89 We have noted Cockermouth Town Council's recommendation that Cockermouth be represented by two county councillors. It is important to note that the current electorate of Cockermouth is approximately 6,500, which if represented by two county councillors would result in the Cockermouth area being over-represented by some 30 per cent. We have not been persuaded by the evidence provided at Stage Three regarding community identities that such electoral inequality is justified and therefore do not propose that Cockermouth should be represented by two councillors. We have also attempted to address the concerns of parishes in north Allerdale that under the draft recommendations Bowness-on-Solway and Holme East Waver parishes would be included in a division with parishes that have no coastal boundaries. A number of respondents have also stated that a Solway & Aspatria division would better reflect local communities. However, it is important to note that we considered both these options at Stage One of the review and have been unable to formulate a scheme that would facilitate this arrangement of parishes and provide electoral equality and coterminosity across the borough as a whole. Neither have we received any locally generated scheme that would do so. In considering the electoral arrangements, we are unable to consider any area in isolation, but must be aware of the overall impact of local preferences.

90 In the light of all the evidence received during Stage Three, we propose that our draft recommendations be modified to reflect the County Council's Stage Three proposals for Allerdale as detailed in paragraph 83 above. These proposals would improve upon the electoral equality achieved under the draft recommendations, with 11 divisions varying by more than 10 per cent from the county average initially, with one division having an electoral variance of more than 20 per cent, improving to six divisions varying by more than 10 per cent in 2004, but all divisions have variances of 20 per cent or less. Twelve of the 16 divisions

would be coterminous with district wards, as in the draft recommendations.

Barrow-in-Furness borough

91 Under the current arrangements Barrow-in-Furness borough is represented by 13 county councillors serving 13 divisions: Barrow Island, Central, Dalton North, Dalton South, Hawcoat, Hindpool, Newbarns, Ormsgill, Parkside, Risedale, Roosecote, Walney North and Walney South. There is a high degree of electoral imbalance in these divisions, with the number of electors represented by each councillor in five divisions varying by more than 20 per cent from the average for the county and in one division, Barrow Island, by more than 40 per cent.

92 At Stage One the County Council considered that, given the size of the electorate and an 84-member council, Barrow borough should be represented by 12 councillors, one less than at present. The Council noted that Barrow Island, which is generally regarded as being a distinct community, has an electorate of 2,385, which results in the division having an electoral variance of 49 per cent below the average. Accordingly, the County Council proposed that Barrow Island division should be combined with part of Central division, with the remainder of Central division being included in Hindpool and Risedale divisions, giving three non-coterminous divisions in Barrow town.

93 In the remainder of the borough, the County Council proposed nine divisions, coterminous with the remaining nine borough wards. Under the Council's proposals the number of electors in all but two divisions would vary by less than 10 per cent from the county average in 2004. The number of electors in Ormsgill and Parkside divisions would be 11 per cent below and 13 per cent below the average respectively in 2004.

94 Dalton with Newton Town Council supported the County Council's Stage One proposal for Barrow Island & Central division. Barrow Island Residents' Association, supported by Councillor Wood, member for Barrow Island ward, considered that there should continue to be a separate division for Barrow Island, stating that the area is physically separate from the rest of the town and has special representational needs.

95 After carefully considering the representations received, we considered that the County Council's

proposals provided good levels of electoral equality throughout the borough and a high degree of coterminosity. While we acknowledged the view of local people that the Barrow Island division be retained on the grounds of community identity, this would result in the division, and the borough area as a whole, being over-represented. We therefore adopted the County Council's proposals as part of our draft recommendations.

96 In its Stage Three submission the County Council, in a change to its Stage One proposal, opposed our draft recommendations for 12 divisions in Barrow. Instead, the Council proposed that Barrow be represented by 13 councillors, and that the 13 divisions be coterminous with the 13 borough wards. The North West Conservatives and Conservative Association for the Barrow & Furness Constituency supported the draft recommendations for Barrow, including the proposal that Barrow be represented by 12 county councillors. Dalton with Newton Town Council supported the proposed Barrow Island & Central division on the grounds that this would provide better electoral equality, and suggested that the division be renamed Old Barrow.

97 John Hutton, MP for Barrow and Furness, opposed our recommendations for the Barrow Island, Central, Hindpool and Risedale divisions, arguing that they would not provide natural boundaries or coterminosity between borough wards and county divisions, nor would they reflect community identities. Councillor Richardson, member for Hawcoat division, supported the new Barrow Island & Central division. Councillor Nicholson, member for Barrow Island division, objected to the proposed division on community identity grounds and proposed that the existing division be preserved, a petition of 879 signatures in support of his views was attached to his submission. A local resident initially opposed our draft recommendations, but having received an explanation of our proposal recognised the need to modify the existing Barrow Island division to achieve electoral equality, but proposed that the new division be renamed Old Barrow.

98 In considering the Stage Three representations we have noted the significantly differing responses to our draft recommendations for Barrow. Although we note the County Council's decision to depart from its Stage One submission and propose 13 rather than 12 divisions in Barrow (with

Barrow Island retaining its own councillor), our draft recommendation to allocate Barrow 12 county councillors, the County Council's Stage One proposal, would provide good electoral equality, allocate the appropriate level of representation for the borough as a whole and the Barrow Island area in particular, and has commanded some local support at Stage Three. We are therefore not minded to depart from our draft recommendation to allocate 12 councillors for Barrow borough.

99 In addressing local concerns regarding the representation of Barrow Island at county level it is important to note that, based on a council size of 84, the average number of electors per county councillor would be 4,593, while the county councillor for Barrow Island currently represents 2,385 electors, some 49 per cent less than the average. Although we have carefully analysed the Stage Three evidence concerning community identities in this area and coterminosity between county divisions and borough wards, we have not been persuaded that an electoral variance of 49 per cent is justified when a principle of British democracy is that each elector's vote has equal weight. Additionally, we note that the constituent communities of the new Barrow Island & Central division are not wholly dissimilar in profile, both including parts of Vickers/GEC Marine Works and facing similar concerns at both a social and industrial level, and the physical distance between wards is small and bridged by a significant road. Accordingly, and in light of some local support for our proposals, we are confirming our draft recommendation for a Barrow Island & Central division as final.

100 We received no further representations regarding the draft proposals for Barrow. We therefore confirm the boundaries included in our draft recommendations, based upon 12 electoral divisions in Barrow, as final. However, we do propose that Barrow Island & Central division be renamed Old Barrow. The number of electors per councillor and the degree of coterminosity between borough wards and county divisions would remain unchanged from the draft recommendations.

Carlisle city

101 At present Carlisle City is represented by 17 county councillors, serving the 17 divisions of Belah, Belle Vue, Botcherby, Brampton & Gilsland, Currock, Dalston & Cummersdale, Denton

Holme, Harraby, Kingmoor & Houghton, Longtown & Bewcastle, Morton, St Aidans, Stanwix Urban, Trinity, Upperby, Wetheral and Yewdale. There is currently a reasonable level of electoral equality in the district, with the number of electors in all but one division, Belah, varying by less than 20 per cent from the average for the county. By 2004 it was projected that two divisions would vary by more than 20 per cent, with Dalston & Cummersdale division varying by more than 30 per cent, due to substantial development in the area.

¹⁰² At Stage One the County Council proposed that the district should continue to be represented by a total of 17 councillors with 12 divisions covering the city, coterminous with each of the 12 city wards. Elsewhere, the County Council proposed five divisions. Brampton & Gilsand division would be coterminous with Brampton and Irthing wards, while the remaining four divisions would comprise a combination of district wards, parishes and existing parish wards to provide improved levels of electoral equality. Specifically, it proposed that Longtown & Rockcliffe ward should be combined with the parishes of Beaumont, Bewcastle, Kingmoor, Kirklington Middle, Nicholforest and Solport to form a modified Longtown & Bewcastle division. It also proposed that Dalston ward should be combined with the parishes of Burgh by Sands and Orton in a modified Dalston & Cummersdale division. It further proposed that the parishes of Carlatten, Castle Carrock, Cumrew, Cumwhitton, Geltsdale and Wetheral, and Heads Nook parish ward of Hayton parish, should be combined to form a modified Wetheral division. Finally, it proposed a new Stanwix & Irthington division comprising the remainder of the parish of Hayton (the parish wards of Corby, Hayton and Talkin) with Stanwix Rural ward and the parishes of Hethersgill and Stapleton.

¹⁰³ Under the County Council's proposals 13 of the 17 divisions would be coterminous with district wards. All divisions, except Dalston & Cummersdale, would have an electoral variance of less than 10 per cent in 1999. Dalston & Cummersdale division would initially be 11 per cent above the average, increasing significantly to 34 per cent above the average in 2004, under the figures provided at Stage One. No other submissions were received for Carlisle.

¹⁰⁴ At Stage Two we considered that the County Council's scheme provided improved levels of

electoral equality and coterminosity, particularly in the city. However, we considered that the electoral variance in Dalston & Cummersdale division by 2004 could be further improved. We therefore proposed that the parishes of Burgh by Sands and Orton should be included in Longtown & Bewcastle division. This would result in Dalston & Cummersdale division being slightly over-represented initially but having an electoral variance of less than 10 per cent by 2004. Additionally, Dalston & Cummersdale division would also be coterminous with Dalston ward. Longtown & Bewcastle division would, however, be under-represented and we therefore proposed transferring the parishes of Kingmoor and Kirklington Middle to Stanwix & Irthington division. There would be no consequential change to the County Council's proposals for the divisions covering Carlisle City or those of Brampton & Gilsand and Wetheral.

¹⁰⁵ Under our draft recommendations, and based on the electorate forecasts provided by the County Council at Stage One, 14 of the 17 divisions would be coterminous, three divisions would vary initially by more than 10 per cent and no divisions would vary by more than 20 per cent (two divisions would vary by more than 10 per cent and none by more than 20 per cent in 2004).

¹⁰⁶ In its Stage Three submission the County Council included a recalculation of its 2004 electorate forecasts for Cummersdale parish. It stated that the original forecast for this area had been based upon the "potential for development", originally estimated to be 1,025 units. However, based upon the current completion rate of units in the development, the Council estimated that only 250 units will have been completed by 2004. In the light of this revision the County Council resubmitted its Stage One proposals for Dalston & Cummersdale, Longtown & Bewcastle and Stanwix & Irthington divisions, on the basis that this configuration of parishes would provide good electoral equality and meet the statutory criteria.

¹⁰⁷ Carlisle City Council objected to the proposed Dalston & Cummersdale, Longtown & Bewcastle and Stanwix & Irthington divisions, on the basis that they would lack community focus and be too

appropriately. The North West Conservative Party and the Conservative Group on Cumbria County Council also expressed support for the County Council's Stage One proposals for Carlisle City.

108 Arthuret Parish Council opposed the modified Longtown & Bewcastle division on the basis that the constituent parishes of the division would be separated by a river, cover a large geographical area and be of differing profile. A resident of Aikton also objected to the modified Longtown & Bewcastle division on the basis that it would be divided by a tidal river.

109 As detailed earlier, after consideration of the evidence and consultation with the County Council and Carlisle City Council, the Commission is minded to accept the County Council's revised electorate forecast figures for Cummersdale parish.

110 We have noted the concerns expressed by other Stage Three respondents and consider that many of them would be addressed under the County Council's Stage One proposals for Dalston & Cummersdale, Longtown & Bewcastle and Stanwix & Irthlington divisions. We are satisfied that the County Council's proposals for this area would provide good electoral equality under the revised forecasts, would achieve a high level of coterminosity and would command a substantial degree of local support. However, in the light of comments from Arthuret Parish Council and a local resident regarding the fact that the Longtown & Bewcastle division would be divided by the River Eden, we considered including Beaumont parish, situated to the south of the river, in Dalston & Cummersdale division rather than Longtown & Bewcastle. However, such a proposal would result in Dalston & Cummersdale division being 26 per cent under-represented. We do not consider that this variance is acceptable in the light of our recommendations elsewhere in the county. Under our final recommendations 14 of the 17 divisions would be coterminous, and no divisions would vary by more than 10 per cent initially (one division would vary by more than 10 per cent and none by more than 20 per cent in 2004).

Copeland borough

111 Under the current arrangements Copeland borough is represented by 12 county councillors, serving the 12 divisions of Bransty, Cleator Moor North, Cleator Moor South, Distington & Moresby, Egremont, Hensingham, Hillcrest, Kells,

Millom, Mirehouse, Seascale & Whicham and St Bees & Gosforth. There is a high degree of electoral imbalance in these divisions, with the number of electors represented by each councillor in three divisions varying by more than 20 per cent from the average for the county.

112 At Stage One the County Council proposed that the borough should retain 12 councillors. The Council stated that the town of Whitehaven alone merits four councillors, although this would result in the town being slightly under-represented. However, due to the electorate sizes in each of the seven borough wards covering Whitehaven, the Council stated "that it was not possible to combine whole borough wards to produce four divisions". Instead, it proposed that there should be five divisions which would also include areas just outside the town. It proposed combining Bransty ward with part of Harbour ward to form a modified Bransty division; combining Hillcrest ward with part of Harbour ward to form a modified Hillcrest division; and combining the wards of Kells and Sandwith and part of Harbour ward with Rottington parish ward of St Bees ward to form a new Kells & Sandwith division. It further proposed a division combining Mirehouse ward with Ingwell parish ward of St Bees and the Moor Row area of Egremont parish (which would necessitate additional parish warding for Egremont parish). The Council also proposed combining the town ward of Hensingham with Arlecdon ward to form a division. To the north of Whitehaven town, the Council proposed a modified Distington & Moresby division coterminous with the two district wards of the same name.

113 In the mid-Copeland area the Council proposed that the parishes of Gosforth, Haile, Lowside Quarter, Nether Wasdale, Ponsonby, St Bees (excluding the parish wards of Ingwell and Rottington), St Bridget Beckermest and St John Beckermest should be combined to form a modified St Bees & Gosforth division. It also proposed that Egremont North and Egremont South parish wards should be combined to form a modified Egremont division; that part of Cleator Moor North ward (the area bounded by Whitehaven Road, Leconfield Street, High Street and Jacktrees Road) and Frizington ward be combined to form a new Cleator Moor North & Frizington division, and that part of Cleator Moor North ward (less the area described above) and the parishes of Ennerdale & Kinniside and Lamplugh, together with the Bigrigg part of Egremont parish, be

combined to form a modified Cleator Moor South division. These proposals would necessitate a number of new parish wards in the area.

114 Millom division currently comprises the three borough wards of Haverigg, Holborn Hill and Newtown and is comparatively under-represented. The Council stated that Millom is a “coherent ... but remote urban community” and considered that combining part of the town with the surrounding rural area would not best reflect the statutory criteria. Accordingly, the County Council proposed retaining a division covering Millom parish, with Millom Without parish ward being included in a modified Seascale & Whicham division. The Council’s proposed Seascale & Whicham division would additionally comprise the parishes of Bootle, Drigg & Carleton, Eskdale, Irton with Santon, Muncaster, Seascale, Ulpha, Waberthwaite and Whicham.

115 Under the County Council’s proposals 10 of the 12 divisions would have an electoral variance of less than 10 per cent, with Millom division varying by 22 per cent. By 2004 six divisions would vary by less than 10 per cent, with Millom retaining an imbalance of over 20 per cent. Two of the 12 divisions, Distington & Moresby and Millom, would be coterminous with district wards.

116 We also received submissions from one parish council and two county councillors in Copeland borough. Lamplugh Parish Council opposed the division name of Cleator Moor South, and Councillor Banks, member for Cleator Moor South, considered that the wards of Cleator Moor North and Egremont should not be combined in a division for community identity reasons. Councillor Calvin, member for Hensingham & Mirehouse East, proposed no change to the current division, stating that it combines areas which have strong community links.

117 We considered that the County Council’s proposals generally provided good levels of electoral equality in the borough, we recognised that the building blocks of borough wards cannot easily be combined. In particular, in Whitehaven we noted that the borough wards have a wide range of electorates, necessitating a pattern of non-coterminous divisions if electoral variances are to be kept to a minimum. We considered that the County Council’s proposals for the town met the criteria laid down in our Guidance, while retaining all constituent wards, except Harbour, intact.

Accordingly, we adopted the County Council’s proposals for the four Whitehaven divisions covering the majority of the town, as well as Hensingham & Arlecdon division. We also adopted the County Council’s proposal for Distington & Moresby division.

118 However, we considered that a higher degree of coterminosity could be achieved in most of the borough, obviating the need to further ward parishes. We proposed that a modified Mirehouse division should comprise Mirehouse ward and Ingwell parish ward of St Bees parish (but not the Moor Row area as put forward by the County Council), and that St Bees and Egremont North wards (except Ingwell parish ward) should form a new Egremont & St Bees division. We also proposed creating a new Cleator Moor South & Egremont division, comprising the two borough wards of Cleator Moor South and Egremont South, and a new Cleator Moor North & Frizington division, comprising the borough wards of those names. We also proposed a new Gosforth & Ennerdale division comprising the wards of Beckermest, Ennerdale and Gosforth. However, we agreed with the County Council that, due to the geography and community identity of Millom, there should be a single division covering only Millom parish despite a relatively high electoral imbalance. Haverigg parish ward of Millom Without parish would be included in a modified Seascale & Whicham division, with the wards of Bootle, Millom Without and Seascale.

119 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors represented by each councillor would vary by less than 10 per cent in seven of the 12 divisions, with two divisions, Millom and Mirehouse, varying by more than 20 per cent from the county average. In 2004 the number of electors represented by each councillor in four divisions would vary by less than 10 per cent from the county average and in two by more than 20 per cent. Four of the 12 proposed divisions would be coterminous with borough wards. While the levels of electoral equality would be slightly worse under our proposals, we consider that this is outweighed by the increase in coterminosity and the fact that these proposals would not involve further parish warding.

120 At Stage Three the County Council expressed support for nine of the 12 divisions proposed for Copeland, but recommended modifications to our proposed Cleator Moor South & Egremont,

Gosforth & Ennerdale and St Bees & Egremont divisions. The proposals would include the creation of an additional Egremont parish ward incorporating the settlements of Bigrigg and Moor Row, to be included in a division with Cleator Moor South and Ennerdale wards. The remainder of Egremont parish (Egremont South parish ward and part of the existing Egremont North parish ward) would form a division, and St Bees, Beckermeth and Gosforth wards would comprise another division.

¹²¹ Copeland Borough Council proposed significant modifications to the draft recommendations for Copeland with divisions based entirely upon parishes and parish wards, rather than borough wards. The proposals would affect 11 of the 12 proposed divisions and provide excellent electoral equality across the borough, but coterminosity would be minimal. Copeland Constituency Labour Party also supported nine of the 12 divisions proposed for Copeland in our draft recommendations and objected to the proposed Cleator Moor South & Egremont, Gosforth & Ennerdale and St Bees & Egremont divisions for reasons of community identity. It proposed alternative arrangements for these divisions that were similar to the County Council's.

¹²² The North West Conservative Party and the Conservatives on Cumbria County Council proposed that Harbour and Kells wards (which cover Whitehaven town centre) be included in a single division on the basis that this arrangement would better reflect community identities. Additionally, both groups expressed support for the County Council's Stage Three proposals for mid-Copeland. Copeland Conservative Association also proposed that the wards of Harbour and Kells form a single division to better reflect community identity, but added that the existing Gosforth & St Bees division should be retained, as transport links between the constituent communities of the new division would prove problematic.

¹²³ St Bees Parish Council objected to the distribution of the parish between three divisions, arguing that it would damage community identities and provide poor coterminosity. Lamplugh Parish Council supported the proposal to link it with other rural parishes, but expressed concern that the proposed Gosforth & Ennerdale division would be divided by the Fells. As an alternative, it proposed that the parish be linked with Distington and Moresby parishes.

¹²⁴ Councillor Strike, member for Seascale & Whicham division, proposed that Wasdale (in Gosforth ward) remain part of Gosforth & St Bees division, rather than Seascale & Whicham division. Councillor Graham, member for Hillcrest ward, objected to the draft recommendations for Whitehaven for reasons of community identity, while Councillor Knox, member for Mirehouse ward, supported the County Council's Stage Three proposals for Mirehouse. A resident of Egremont argued that Egremont should "become one entity".

¹²⁵ We have carefully considered all the Stage Three representations regarding Copeland and note that the majority of our proposals have commanded some local support, including from the County Council. We have, however, reconsidered our recommendations in the light of further evidence. The County Council's proposal to re-ward Egremont parish, solely for the purpose of the county review, is similar to its Stage One submission. As was outlined in our draft recommendations, we do not consider that the additional warding of parishes provides for convenient and effective local government. Additionally, we remain unconvinced that this proposal would better reflect communities, strengthen community ties or facilitate coterminosity. We are therefore not minded to endorse the County Council's Stage Three proposals for the mid-Copeland area.

¹²⁶ We have noted that Copeland Borough Council's Stage Three scheme would require significant departure from the draft recommendations. Although we acknowledge the excellent electoral equality provided by the scheme, we are concerned that it would not utilise borough wards as building blocks for county divisions and therefore would not facilitate coterminosity and hence convenient and effective local government. Additionally, we have not been persuaded by the Stage Three evidence that the new scheme would better reflect communities. We are therefore not minded to adopt Copeland Borough Council's Stage Three proposals as part of our final recommendations.

¹²⁷ In addressing local concerns regarding the communities of Egremont, St Bees and Whitehaven, it is important to note that throughout this review neither the Commission nor local interests have been able to devise an electoral scheme that would facilitate county divisions which would be coterminous with these communities, while continuing to provide good

electoral equality and reflecting the statutory criteria across the borough. We have considered the proposal to include Lamplugh parish in a division with Distington and Moresby parishes. We have been unable to devise an alternative arrangement that would address this concern. We also note that no locally generated scheme has provided us with an alternative to our draft recommendations in this area that would provide a better balance between electoral equality and coterminosity than our draft recommendations. In the light of this and some local support for our draft recommendations in Copeland, we propose that they be endorsed as final (see Map A2 in Appendix A). The electoral equality and coterminosity would remain unchanged from our draft recommendations.

Eden district

¹²⁸ Under the current arrangements Eden district is represented by eight county councillors, serving the eight divisions of Alston, Appleby, Greystoke & Mungrisdale, Hesketh & Kirkoswald, Kirkby Stephen, Lowther & Shap, Penrith North West and Penrith South East. There are considerable electoral imbalances within the district, with the number of electors in three of the eight divisions varying by more than 20 per cent from the average for the county, and in one division, Alston, by more than 60 per cent.

¹²⁹ At Stage One the County Council proposed that there should continue to be eight divisions in Eden, and noted that the current Alston division is significantly over-represented. It also stated that to combine the six town wards of Penrith to form two divisions would leave the area under-represented, while dividing it into three divisions would leave the area over-represented. The Council therefore proposed three divisions covering the town wards and part of the surrounding rural area. Specifically, it proposed that Penrith North division should comprise Carleton, Penrith East and part of Penrith North wards, together with Great Salkeld parish; Penrith South division should comprise Pategill and Penrith South wards together with the parishes of Brougham, Clifton, Stockbridge & Tirril and Yanwath & Eamont Bridge; and Penrith West division should comprise Dacre, Penrith West and part of Penrith North wards.

¹³⁰ In the remainder of the district, the County Council proposed that Alston ward should be combined with the wards of Hartside, Langwathby

and Long Marton (except Crackenthorpe parish), together with the parishes of Kirkby Thore and Newbiggin, to provide for improved levels of representation. It proposed creating a modified Kirkby Stephen division, comprising the wards of Brough, Kirkby Stephen, Orton with Tebay and Ravenstonedale, together with Asby parish. It also proposed combining the wards of Ashkam, Greystoke, Shap and Ullswater together with the parishes of Great Strickland, Little Strickland, Newby and Thrimby in a new Eden Fells division. It further proposed a new Lazonby & Hesketh division comprising the wards of Hesketh, Kirkoswald and Skelton together with Lazonby parish. Finally, the Council proposed that the wards of Appleby, Appleby Bongate and Warcop, together with the parishes of Bolton Cliburn, Colby, Crackenthorpe, Crosby Ravensworth, King's Meaburn, Morland and Sleagill, should be combined to form a modified Appleby ward.

¹³¹ Under the County Council's scheme the number of electors in seven of the eight divisions would vary by 10 per cent or less from the county average, with Alston & East Fellside division varying by 11 per cent. However, by 2004 three of the eight divisions would vary by more than 10 per cent, with Alston & East Fellside varying by 20 per cent. None of the eight divisions would be coterminous with district wards.

¹³² We received representations from two parish councils in Eden district, including Alston Moor Parish Council who objected to the County Council's proposal to include Alston Moor with the East Fellside parishes. Brougham Parish Council proposed both an eight-member and a nine-member scheme for the whole district, stating that, given the size of the electorate in Eden, the area should be represented by nine members. Both of its options would provide complete coterminosity between divisions and district wards.

¹³³ In formulating our draft recommendations we carefully considered the County Council's proposals for the new divisions for Eden together with the other representations received and noted that, under a county size of 84 councillors, Eden is entitled to 8.5 councillors in 1999, but by 2004 this would increase to 8.7 councillors. Accordingly, we considered that Eden should be represented by nine councillors. In considering alternative options for a nine-member pattern, we noted that the proposal provided by Brougham Parish Council for nine divisions had merit. First, it provided for

complete coterminosity between divisions and wards across the district. Second, it addressed the issue of over-representation in Alston by combining the area with neighbouring parishes, reflecting in part the County Council's proposal for this division. Third, the proposal achieved a good level of electoral equality, with the number of electors represented by each councillor varying by less than 10 per cent from the average in seven of the nine divisions, with no divisions varying by more than 20 per cent (with similar levels of electoral equality in 2004). Furthermore, we considered that a locally generated proposal which meets the statutory criteria has advantages over alternative proposals which could be formulated by the Commission.

¹³⁴ Accordingly, we adopted Brougham Parish Council's proposals for nine divisions as part of our draft recommendations, with a modification to two divisions in Penrith, outlined below. Specifically, outside Penrith, this proposal would provide for an Appleby division comprising the wards of Appleby, Appleby Bongate, Long Marton and Warcop; an Alston & Fellside division comprising the wards of Alston, Hartside, Kirkoswald and Langwathby; an Eden Fells division comprising the wards of Askham, Crosby Ravensworth, Shap and Ullswater; a Hesket division comprising the wards of Greystoke, Hesket and Skelton; and a Kirkby Stephen division comprising the wards of Brough, Kirkby Stephen, Orton with Tebay and Ravenstonedale.

¹³⁵ There would be four divisions covering Penrith town and part of the rural area. However, under the Parish Council's proposals for Penrith East the constituent wards of Kirkby Thore, Morland and Penrith East would result in a detached division (a division in two parts which are not connected geographically). We therefore proposed an alternative configuration for the wards of Penrith East and Penrith South which would comprise adjoining wards while retaining good levels of electoral equality. Specifically, we proposed a new Penrith East division combining the wards of Penrith East and Penrith South; a Penrith North division combining the wards of Lazonby and Penrith North; a Penrith South division combining the wards of Kirkby Thore, Morland, Penrith Carleton and Penrith Pategill; and a Penrith West division combining the wards of Dacre, Eamont and Penrith West. These proposals would provide much improved levels of electoral equality while facilitating coterminous divisions throughout the

district, and we therefore adopted them as part of our draft recommendations.

¹³⁶ At Stage Three the County Council generally accepted our draft recommendations but proposed that Asby parish be included in the modified Appleby division for reasons of community identity. It also proposed that seven of the nine divisions be renamed. Eden District Council proposed that Penrith East, Penrith South and Penrith West divisions be modified to better reflect community interests. Under its proposals Penrith East division would comprise Penrith Carleton, Penrith Pategill and Penrith East wards while Penrith West division would comprise Penrith South and Penrith West wards. A new Penrith Rural division would comprise Dacre, Kirkby Thore, Morland and Eamont wards. The District Council asserted that these proposals would continue to facilitate total coterminosity across the district, provide marginally better electoral equality than the draft recommendations and better reflect local communities.

¹³⁷ The North West Conservative Party and the Conservatives on Cumbria County Council supported the County Council's Stage Three recommendations for Eden District. Eden District Labour Group's Stage Three proposals wholly reflected those of Eden District Council. Alston Moor Parish Council opposed the draft recommendations on the basis that electoral equality had taken precedence over the reflection of community identities, and Asby Parish Council proposed that Asby parish be included in the modified Appleby division. Morland Parish Council expressed support for the County Council's Stage One proposal for a modified Appleby division, but added that any proposal to separate Morland and Newby parishes would damage community ties. Newby Parish Council also opposed any proposal to separate Morland and Newby parishes, and submitted a petition to this effect.

¹³⁸ In considering the Stage Three representations for Eden, we noted the proposal to include Asby parish in the modified Appleby division. Although such a proposal would result in a slight improvement in electoral equality, it would reduce coterminosity. We have not been convinced by the evidence that this proposal would better meet the statutory criteria and are concerned that it would create a geographically large Appleby division. However, we propose that Eden District Council's recommendation to modify the Penrith divisions

be included as part of our final recommendations. The new arrangement would facilitate the inclusion of rural and urban communities in separate divisions, retain coterminosity throughout the district and marginally improve on the electoral equality achieved under our draft recommendations. We also propose that Alton Fellside division be renamed Alston & East Fellside, that Eden Fellside division be renamed Eden Lakes and that Hesket division be renamed Greystoke & Hesket, as proposed by the County Council. Under our final recommendations the electoral variances of only two divisions would vary by more than 10 per cent from the county average (unchanged in 2004); no division would vary by more than 20 per cent initially or in 2004. All the county divisions would be coterminous with district wards.

South Lakeland district

¹³⁹ Under the current arrangements South Lakeland district is represented by 17 county councillors, serving the 17 divisions of Cartmel, Crooklands, Far Cross, Grange, High Furness, Highgate, Kent Estuary, Lakes, Low Furness, Lyth Valley, Nether, Sedbergh & Kirby Lonsdale, Strickland & Fell, Ulverston East, Ulverston West, Upper Kent and Windermere. There is a degree of electoral imbalance within the district, with the number of electors in three of the 17 divisions varying by more than 20 per cent from the average for the county.

¹⁴⁰ At Stage One the County Council proposed that, under a council size of 84 members, South Lakeland should be represented by 18 councillors, an increase of one. The Council considered proposals for four distinct areas – Kendal, Ulverston, Windermere and the remaining rural parts of the district. In Kendal, the Council noted that the town is currently represented four councillors, although the size of the electorate justifies 4.5 councillors. Accordingly, it proposed five divisions for the town, four of which would be coterminous with the district wards, retaining the river as a boundary between divisions, while the remaining division would include part of Natland ward to the south. Specifically, it proposed combining the wards of Castle, Far Cross and Mintsfeet to form a new Kendal Castle division; combining the wards of Glebelands, Highgate and Kirkland to form a new Kendal Highgate division; combining the wards of Heron Hill, Nether and Parks to form a new Kendal Nether division; combining the wards of Fell, Strickland and

Underley to form a modified Strickland & Fell division; and combining the wards of Natland (except Helsington parish), Oxenholme and Stonecross to form a new Kendal South division.

¹⁴¹ In Ulverston, the Council proposed combining the wards of Ulverston Central, Ulverston East and Ulverston Town to form a coterminous Ulverston East division and combining the wards of Ulverston North, Ulverston West and Ulverston South to form a coterminous Ulverston West division. The Council also proposed retaining Windermere division, comprising the three wards of Windermere Applethwaite, Bowness North and Windermere Town. The Council proposed two further coterminous divisions: Lakes division comprising the wards of Lakes Ambleside and Lakes Grasmere, and Sedbergh & Kirkby Lonsdale division comprising the wards of Sedbergh and Kirkby Lonsdale.

¹⁴² For the remaining eight rural divisions the Council proposed combining district wards and parishes to form county divisions which would provide for high levels of electoral equality. Specifically, it proposed that Grange ward and the parishes of Cartmel Fell, Staveley-in-Cartmel and Upper Allithwaite should be combined to form a modified Grange division. It proposed that Crooklands ward should be combined with the parishes of Burton, Heversham and Holme to form a modified Crooklands division. The Council also proposed that the parishes of Arnside, Beetham and Milnthorpe should be combined to form a modified Kent Estuary division. It further proposed a modified Lyth Valley division combining Windermere Bowness South ward with the parishes of Crook, Crosthwaite & Lyth, Helsington, Levens, Meathop & Ulpha, Underbarrow & Bradleyfield and Witherslack; and a modified Upper Kent division comprising Whinfell ward and the parishes of Hugill, Kentmere, Nether Staveley, Over Staveley, Strickland Ketel and Strickland Roger.

¹⁴³ Finally, the Council proposed three divisions covering the south-eastern part of the district. Cartmel division would combine the wards of Cartmel and Holker together with the parish of Broughton East and Colton East parish ward of Colton parish; Low Furness division would combine the parishes of Aldingham, Egton-with-Newland, Mansriggs, Osmotherly, Pennington and Urswick; and High Furness division would comprise the wards of Broughton and Coniston

(except Colton East parish ward of Colton parish) together with the parishes of Claife, Hawkshead, Lowick and Satterthwaite.

144 Under the County Council's proposals the number of electors represented by each councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent in all divisions except Kent Estuary which would vary by 11 per cent from the average. By 2004 one division, Kendal Castle, would have an electoral variance of 21 per cent above the average, as a result of growth in the area.

145 We received two further submissions commenting on the arrangements for South Lakeland at Stage One. Windermere Parish Council supported the County Council's proposals for Windermere division. Westmorland & Lonsdale Constituency Labour Party put forward a scheme for 15 divisions (its area of influence does not cover the south-west part of the district), with divisions that generally reflected the County Council's scheme.

146 We considered that, given the size of the electorate, South Lakeland should be represented by 18 councillors. We endorsed the County Council's proposals except those for a new Kendal Castle division where there would be considerable electoral inequality in 2004, so we considered alternative configurations for this area.

147 We proposed combining the wards of Castle, Heron Hill and Parks to form a modified Castle division and combining the wards of Far Cross, Mintsfeet and Nether to form a modified Nether division. This option would provide improved levels of electoral equality and wholly coterminous divisions while retaining the river as a boundary. Under our draft recommendations the number of electors represented by each councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent in 17 of the 18 divisions, with Kent Valley division varying by 11 per cent. By 2004 all divisions except Nether would vary by 10 per cent or less; Nether division would vary by 15 per cent.

148 At Stage Three the County Council expressed support for the proposed division boundaries in South Lakeland but proposed that Crooklands division be renamed Lower Kentdale. The North West Conservatives and the Conservatives on Cumbria County Council supported this submission. Grange-over-Sands Town Council supported the draft recommendations for South Lakeland; however, Heversham Parish Council

argued that the proposal to separate Herversham and Levens parishes would be "inconsistent with recent changes in district boundaries".

149 Councillor Spendlove, member for Crake Valley ward, objected to the proposal to include Lowick parish in High Furness division and expressed concern that the draft recommendations would not wholly reflect community identities.

150 We have carefully considered the Stage Three representations regarding the proposals for South Lakeland and note the significant amount of local support expressed for our draft recommendations. In considering alternative arrangements we have noted that including Levens parish in Crooklands division, as proposed by Heversham Parish Council, would result in Lyth Valley division being 24 per cent over-represented. Although we note local concerns regarding the community identity of Levens parish we have not been persuaded to endorse such electoral inequality in the light of general support for the draft recommendations.

151 We have also considered the proposal to include Lowick parish in Low Furness division, as proposed by Councillor Spendlove, but note that although it would provide a higher level of coterminosity than the draft recommendations it would marginally worsen electoral equality. We are also concerned at the absence of any further local support for this proposal. We do not therefore propose any modifications to division boundaries in South Lakeland but are endorsing the County Council's proposal to rename Crooklands division Lower Kentdale. The electoral equality and coterminosity achieved in South Lakeland remain unchanged from the draft recommendations.

Conclusions

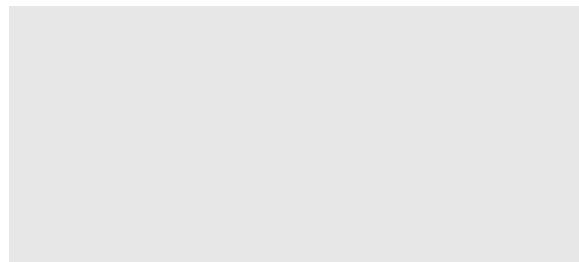
152 Having considered all the representations and evidence received in response to our consultation report, we propose that:

- (a) there should be an increase in council size from 83 to 84, serving 84 divisions;
- (b) changes should be made to the boundaries of most (72) of the existing divisions.

153 We have decided to substantially endorse our draft recommendations, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) in Allerdale district, that 10 of the 16 divisions included in the draft recommendations be modified to provide improved electoral equality and a better reflection of community identities; some consequential division name changes are also proposed;
- (b) in Barrow borough, that the new Barrow Island & Central division be renamed Old Barrow;
- (c) in Carlisle City, that Dalston & Cummersdale, Longtown & Bewcastle and Stanwix & Irthington divisions be modified;
- (d) in Eden district, that Penrith East, Penrith South and Penrith West divisions be modified, that Penrith South division be renamed Penrith Rural and that a further three divisions be renamed;
- (e) in South Lakeland district, that Crooklands division be renamed Lower Kentdale.

per cent from the county average from 14 to three. By 2004 only two divisions are forecast to vary by more than 20 per cent from the average. The recommendations are set out in Appendix D.



¹⁵⁴ Figure 4 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements, based on 1999 electorate figures and with forecast electorates for the year 2004.

¹⁵⁵ As shown in Figure 4, our draft recommendations for Cumbria County Council would result in a reduction in the number of divisions with an electoral variance of more than 20

6. NEXT STEPS

157 Having completed our review of electoral arrangements for Cumbria County Council and submitted our final recommendations to the Secretary of State, we have fulfilled our statutory obligation under the Local Government Act 1992.

158 It now falls to the Secretary of State to decide whether to give effect to our recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order. Such an order will not be made earlier than six weeks from the date that our recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State.

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

The Secretary of State
Department of the Environment,
Transport and the Regions
Local Government Sponsorship Division
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

APPENDIX A

Final Recommendations for Cumbria: Detailed Mapping

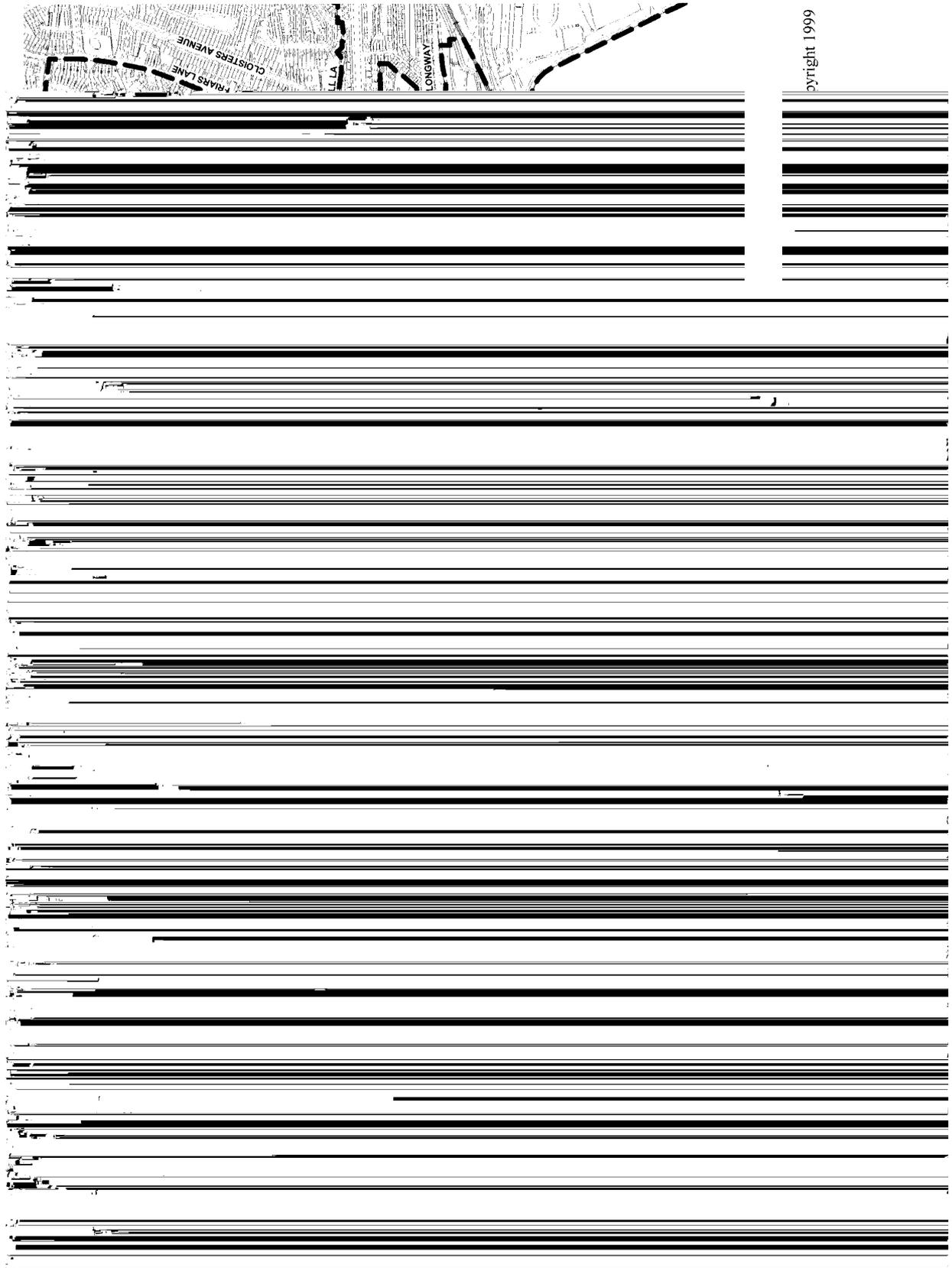
The following maps illustrate the Commission's proposed ward boundaries for Cumbria.

Map A1 illustrates the proposed boundary between the divisions of Old Barrow, Hindpool and Risedale in Barrow town.

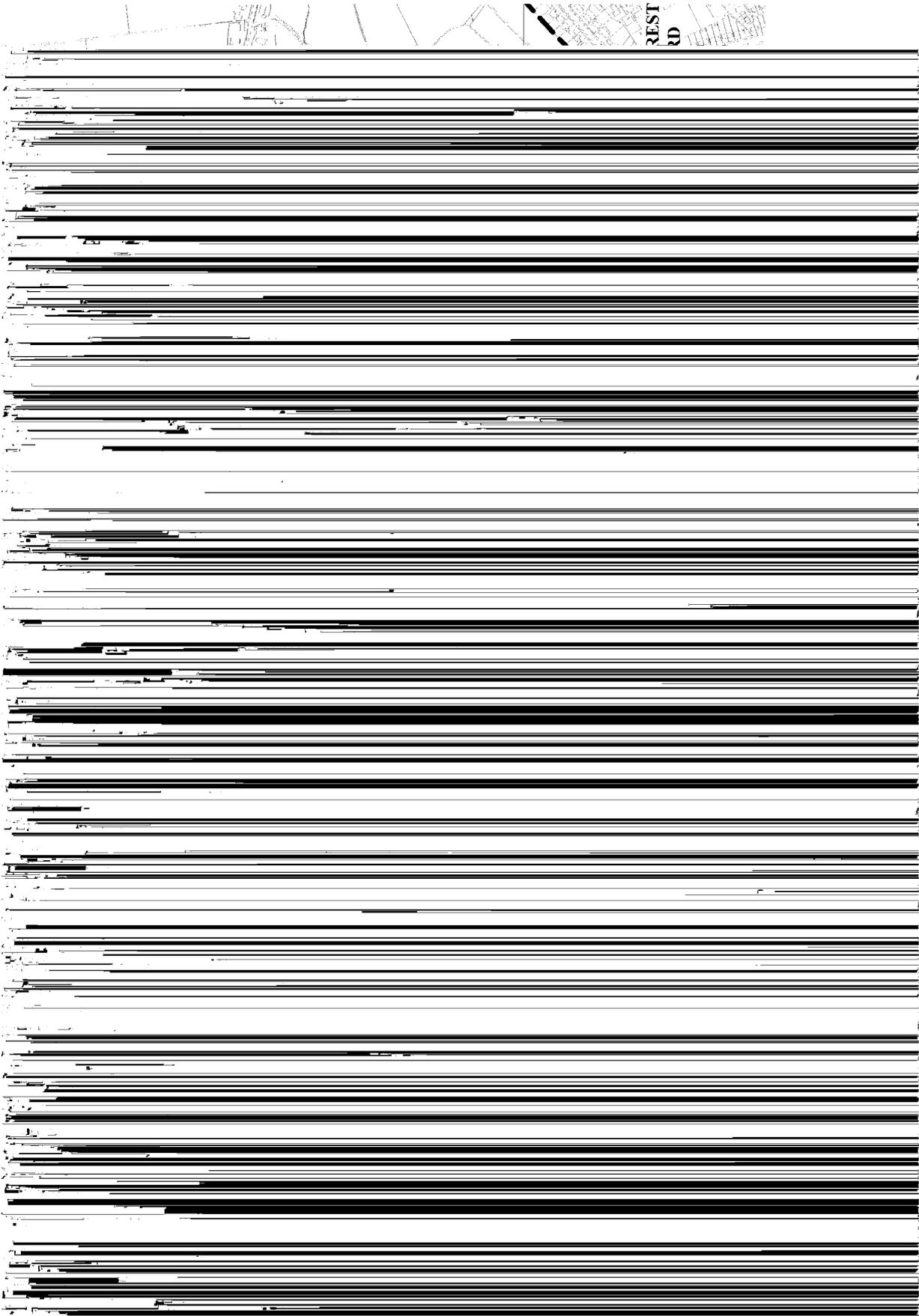
Map A2 illustrates the proposed boundary between the divisions of Bransty, Hillcrest, Kells and Mirehouse in Whitehaven town.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates, in outline form, the Commission's proposed divisions for Cumbria, including constituent district wards and parishes.

Map A1:
Proposed boundary between the divisions of Old Barrow, Hindpool and Risedale in Barrow town



*Map A2:
Proposed boundary between the divisions of Bransty, Kells, Hillcrest and Mirehouse in
Whitehaven*



APPENDIX B

Draft Recommendations for Cumbria (June 1999)

Our final recommendation, detailed in Figures 1 and 2, differ from those we put forward as draft recommendations in respect of 17 divisions where our draft proposals are set out below. The only other change from draft to final recommendations, which is not included in Figures B1 and B2, is that we propose to rename Crooklands division as Lower Kendale.

*Figure B1:
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary*

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
ALLERDALE DISTRICT	
Allerdale North East	Marsh ward; Wampool ward; Warnell ward; Waver ward
Aspatria & Wharrels	Aspatria ward; Boltons ward (part – the parishes of Bewaldeth & Snittlegarth, Boltons and Ireby & Uldale); Broughton St Brigit's ward (part – Bridekirk parish); Wharrels ward
Cockermouth East	All Saints ward; Crummock ward (part – the parishes of Blindcrake and Setmurthy)
Cockermouth West	Broughton St Brigit's ward (part – the parishes of Brigham, Broughton and Papcastle); Christchurch ward
Crummock & Derwent	Boltons ward (part – the parishes of Bassenthwaite and Underskiddaw); Crummock ward (part – the parishes of Blindbothel, Buttermere, Embleton, Lorton, Loweswater and Wythop); Dalton ward; Derwent Valley ward
Ellen & Ellenborough	Ellen ward; Ellenborough ward
Flimby & Seaton	Flimby ward; Seaton ward
Keswick	Keswick ward
Maryport North	Ewanrigg ward; Netherall ward
Wigton	Wigton ward

continued overleaf

*Figure B1 (continued):
The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary*

Division name (by district council area)	Constituent district wards
CARLISLE CITY	
Dalston & Cummersdale	Dalston ward
Longtown & Bewcastle	Burgh ward; Longtown & Rockcliffe ward; Lyne ward (part – the parishes of Bewcastle, Nicholforest and Solport)
Stanwix & Irthington	Great Corby & Geltsdale ward (part – Talkin parish ward of Hayton parish); Hayton ward (part – Corby Hill and Hayton parish wards of Hayton parish); Lyne ward (part – the parishes of Kirklington Middle, Hethersgill and Stapleton); Stanwix Rural ward
EDEN DISTRICT	
Penrith East	Kirkby Thore ward; Morland ward; Penrith Carleton ward; Penrith Pategill ward
Penrith North	Lazonby ward; Penrith North ward
Penrith South	Penrith East ward; Penrith South ward
Penrith West	Dacre ward; Eamont ward; Penrith West ward

Note: The constituent district wards are those resulting from the electoral reviews of the six Cumbria districts which were completed in 1997. Where whole district wards do not form the building blocks, constituent parishes and parish wards are listed.

Figure B2:
The Commission's Draft Recommendations for Cumbria

Division name (by district council area)	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Variance from average %
ALLERDALE DISTRICT					
Allerdale North East	1	5,793	26	5,566	20
Aspatria & Wharrels	1	5,213	13	5,113	10
Cockermouth East	1	4,179	-9	3,927	-15
Cockermouth West	1	5,235	14	5,433	17
Crummock & Derwent	1	4,237	-8	4,031	-13
Ellen & Ellenborough	1	5,287	15	5,518	19
Flimby & Seaton	1	5,335	16	5,604	21
Keswick	1	4,459	-3	4,270	-8
Maryport North	1	5,301	15	5,610	21
Wigton	1	4,133	-10	4,240	-9
CARLISLE CITY					
Dalston & Cummersdale	1	3,952	-14	5,045	9
Longtown & Bewcastle	1	5,497	20	5,474	18
Stanwix & Irthington	1	5,365	17	5,405	17
EDEN DISTRICT					
Penrith East	1	4,083	-11	4,442	-4
Penrith North	1	4,469	-3	4,411	-5
Penrith South	1	4,049	-12	3,823	-18
Penrith West	1	4,204	-8	4,233	-9

Source: Electorate figures are based on Cumbria County Council's submission.

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

