

Draft Recommendations on the
future electoral arrangements for
East Staffordshire

May 2000

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 CBE (Deputy Chairman)
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Peter Brokenshire
Pamela Gordon
Robin Gray
Robert Hughes CBE

Barbara Stephens (Chief Executive)

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

This report sets out the Commission's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of East Staffordshire.

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A large map illustrating the existing and proposed ward boundaries for Burton upon Trent is inserted inside the back cover of the report.

SUMMARY

The Commission began a review of the electoral arrangements for East Staffordshire on 28 September 1999.

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

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

- **in 19 of the 25 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, nine wards vary by more than 20 per cent from the average and six wards vary by more than 30 per cent;**
- **by 2004 electoral equality is not expected to improve, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average in 19 wards and by more than 20 per cent in 10 wards and by more than 30 per cent in six wards.**

Our main draft recommendations for future electoral arrangements (Figures 1 and 2 and paragraphs 135-136) are that:

- **East Staffordshire Borough Council should have 39 councillors, seven fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 20 wards, instead of 25 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of 22 of the existing wards should be modified, and three wards should retain their existing boundaries;**
- **elections should continue to take place every four years.**

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

- **In 14 of the proposed 20 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the borough average, and the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 20 per cent in all but two wards.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is expected to improve further, with the number of electors per councillor in 18 wards expected to vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough in 2004, and the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 20 per cent in all but one ward.**

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

- **revised warding arrangements and the re-distribution of councillors for Uttoxeter Town Council and the parishes of Outwoods and Stretton.**

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

- **We will consult on our draft recommendations for eight weeks from 9 May 2000. Because we take this consultation very seriously, we may move away from our draft recommendations in the light of Stage Three responses. It is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, *whether or not* they agree with our draft recommendations.**
- **After considering local views, we will decide whether to modify our draft recommendations and then make our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions.**
- **It will then be for the Secretary of State to accept, modify or reject our final recommendations. He will also determine when any changes come into effect.**

You should express your views by writing directly to the Commission at the address below by 3 July 2000:

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Figure 1: The Commission's Draft Recommendations: Summary

Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
1 Abbey	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Croxden, Leigh and Uttoxeter Rural)	Map 2
2 Anglesey (in Burton upon Trent)	2	Broadway ward (part); Uxbridge ward (part)	Large map
3 Bagots	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Abbots Bromley, Blithfield and Kingstone)	Map 2
4 Branston	3	Branston ward (part – Branston parish); Outwoods ward (part – Outwoods South ward as proposed of Outwoods parish)	Large map
5 Brizlincote (in Burton upon Trent)	2	Stapenhill ward (part)	Large map
6 Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	1	Burton ward; Broadway ward (part); Uxbridge ward (part)	Large map
7 Crown	1	Crown ward (part – the parishes of Draycott in the Clay and Marchington); Tutbury & Hanbury ward (part – Hanbury parish)	Map 2
8 Eton Park (in Burton upon Trent)	2	Eton ward; Stretton ward (part – Stretton South East ward as proposed of Stretton parish); Victoria ward (part)	Large map
9 Heath (in Uttoxeter)	2	Heath ward of Uttoxeter town; Town ward (part – Town ward of Uttoxeter town (part))	Maps 2 and A2
10 Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	3	Horniglow ward (part); Shobnall ward (part); Stretton ward (part – Stretton South Central ward as proposed of Stretton parish)	Large map
11 Needwood	2	Needwood ward; Branston ward (part – Tatenhill parish)	Map 2
12 Rolleston on Dove	1	<i>Unchanged</i> (Rolleston on Dove parish)	Map 2
13 Shobnall (in Burton upon Trent)	2	Shobnall ward (part); Victoria ward (part)	Large map
14 Stapenhill (in Burton upon Trent)	3	Edgehill ward; Waterside ward; Stapenhill ward (part)	Large map
15 Stretton	3	Stretton ward (Stretton ward as proposed of Stretton parish); Horniglow ward (part)	Large Map
16 Town (in Uttoxeter)	2	Town ward (part – Town ward of Uttoxeter town (part))	Maps 2 and A2

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Constituent areas	Map reference
17	Tutbury & Outwoods	2	Outwoods ward (part – Anslow parish and Outwoods North ward as proposed of Outwoods parish); Tutbury & Hanbury ward (part – Tutbury parish)	Large Map
18	Weaver & Churnet	2	Churnet ward (the parishes of Denstone and Rocester); Weaver ward (the parishes of Ellastone, Mayfield, Okeover, Ramshorn, Stanton and Wootton)	Map 2
19	Winshill (in Burton upon Trent)	3	Winshill ward; Stapenhill ward (part)	Large map
20	Yoxall	1	Yoxall ward; Crown ward (part – Newborough parish)	Map 2

Notes: 1 Burton upon Trent is the only unparished part of the borough and comprises the eight wards indicated above.

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

Figure 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for East Staffordshire

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	1	2,150	2,150	7	2,110	2,110	3
2 Anglesey (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,274	2,137	6	4,093	2,047	0
3 Bagots	1	2,013	2,013	0	2,019	2,019	-1
4 Branston	3	4,710	1,570	-22	5,871	1,957	-4
5 Brizlincote (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,798	1,899	-6	3,972	1,986	-3
6 Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	1	1,641	1,641	-18	1,974	1,974	-4
7 Crown	1	2,061	2,061	2	2,001	2,001	-2
8 Eton Park (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,779	1,890	-6	3,956	1,978	-3
9 Heath (in Uttoxeter)	2	4,600	2,300	14	4,468	2,234	9
10 Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	3	5,973	1,991	-1	5,669	1,890	-8
11 Needwood	2	4,411	2,206	10	4,403	2,202	8
12 Rolleston on Dove	1	2,505	2,505	24	2,551	2,551	25
13 Shobnall (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,481	2,241	11	4,289	2,145	5
14 Stapenhill (in Burton upon Trent)	3	6,093	2,031	1	5,895	1,965	-4
15 Stretton	3	5,818	1,939	-4	5,967	1,989	-3
16 Town (in Uttoxeter)	2	4,175	2,088	4	4,501	2,251	10
17 Tutbury & Outwoods	2	4,245	2,123	5	4,288	2,144	5
18 Weaver & Churnet	2	3,621	1,811	-10	3,643	1,822	-11
19 Winshill (in Burton upon Trent)	3	6,155	2,052	2	6,072	2,024	-1
20 Yoxall	1	1,982	1,982	-2	1,985	1,985	-3
Totals	39	78,485	-	-	79,727	-	-
Averages	-	-	2,012	-	-	2,044	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on East Staffordshire Borough Council's submission.

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

1 INTRODUCTION

1 This report contains our draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for the borough of East Staffordshire on which we are now consulting. We are reviewing the eight districts in Staffordshire and the City of Stoke-on-Trent as part of our programme of periodic electoral reviews (PERs) of all 386 principal local authority areas in England. Our programme started in 1996 and is currently expected to be completed by 2004.

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of East Staffordshire. The last such review was undertaken by our predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), which reported to the Secretary of State in 1977 (Report No. 189). The electoral arrangements of Staffordshire County Council were last reviewed in 1980 (Report No. 386). We expect to review the County Council's electoral arrangements shortly after completion of the district reviews in order to enable orders to be made by the Secretary of State in time for the 2005 county elections.

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

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

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

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

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

7 The broad objective of PERs is then to achieve, so far as practicable, equality of representation across the district as a whole. For example, we will require particular justification for schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10 per cent in any ward. Any

imbalances of 20 per cent or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

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

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

Figure 3: Stages of the Review

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

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

11 Following publication of the White Paper, we advised all authorities in our 1999/2000 PER programme, including the Staffordshire districts, that until any direction is received from the Secretary of State, the Commission would continue to maintain its current approach to PERs as set out in the October 1999 *Guidance*. Nevertheless, we considered that local authorities and other interested parties might wish to have regard to the Secretary of State’s intentions and legislative proposals in formulating electoral schemes as part of PERs of their areas. The proposals are now being taken forward in a Local Government Bill published in December 1999 and are currently being considered by Parliament.

12 Stage One began on 28 September 1999, when we wrote to East Staffordshire Borough Council inviting proposals for future electoral arrangements. We also notified Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Police Authority, the local authority associations, Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, parish and town councils in the borough, the Members of Parliament with constituency interests in the borough and the Members of the European Parliament for the West Midlands Region, and the headquarters of the main political parties. We placed a notice in the local press, issued a press release and invited the Borough Council to publicise the review further. The closing date for receipt of representations, the end of Stage One, was 10 January 2000.

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

14 Stage Three began on 9 May 2000 and will end on 3 July 2000. This stage involves publishing the draft recommendations in this report and public consultation on them. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations.**

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

2 CURRENT ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

16 The borough of East Staffordshire borders Lichfield district to the south, Stafford borough to the west, Staffordshire Moorlands district to the north and Derbyshire Dales district to the west. Over half of the electors in the borough live in the town of Burton upon Trent, which contains several major breweries. There are also a number of other industries – such as rubber manufacture, food processing and engineering – which have all experienced growth in the town over recent years. The market town of Uttoxeter is the only other sizeable settlement in the borough, and is the home to the nationally renowned Uttoxeter National Hunt racecourse. The plant machinery manufacturer JC Bamford (JCB) is also based in the borough.

17 The remainder of the borough is predominantly rural and is topographically diverse. The borough contains 31 parishes, and Burton upon Trent town is the only part of the borough not parished.

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

19 The electorate of the borough is 78,485 (February 1999). The Council presently has 46 members who are elected from 25 wards. Three of the wards are each represented by three councillors, 15 are each represented by two councillors and seven are single-member wards. The whole Council is elected every four years.

20 Since the last electoral review there has been an increase in the electorate in East Staffordshire borough, with around 10 per cent more electors than two decades ago as a result of new housing development. The most notable increases have been in Stapenhill and Stretton wards, which have around 2,000 and 3,000 more electors respectively than 20 years ago.

21 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,706 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,733 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 per councillor in 19 of the 25 wards varies by more than 10 per cent from the borough average, of which nine wards vary by more than 20 per cent and six wards vary by more than 30 per cent. The worst imbalance is in Stretton ward where each councillor represents 77 per cent more electors than the borough average.

Map 1: Existing Wards in East Staffordshire

Figure 4: Existing Electoral Arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Abbey	1	2,150	2,150	26	2,110	2,110	22
2 Bagots	1	2,013	2,013	18	2,019	2,019	16
3 Branston	2	4,865	2,433	43	6,147	3,074	77
4 Broadway (in Burton upon Trent)	2	2,852	1,426	-16	2,814	1,407	-19
5 Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	1	1,143	1,143	-33	1,409	1,409	-19
6 Churnet	1	1,965	1,965	15	2,051	2,051	18
7 Crown	1	1,954	1,954	15	1,884	1,884	9
8 Edgehill (in Burton upon Trent)	2	2,809	1,405	-18	2,682	1,341	-23
9 Eton (in Burton upon Trent)	2	2,738	1,369	-20	2,748	1,374	-21
10 Heath (in Uttoxeter)	3	4,457	1,486	-13	4,325	1,442	-17
11 Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	3	4,661	1,554	-9	4,475	1,492	-14
12 Needwood	2	3,901	1,951	14	3,799	1,900	10
13 Outwoods	2	2,052	1,026	-40	2,083	1,042	-40
14 Rolleston on Dove	2	2,505	1,253	-27	2,551	1,276	-26
15 Shobnall (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,302	1,651	-3	3,242	1,621	-6
16 Stapenhill (in Burton upon Trent)	2	5,405	2,703	58	5,515	2,758	59
17 Stretton	2	6,023	3,012	77	6,339	3,170	83
18 Town (in Uttoxeter)	2	4,318	2,159	27	4,644	2,322	34
19 Tutbury & Hanbury	2	2,997	1,499	-12	2,991	1,496	-14
20 Uxbridge (in Burton Upon Trent)	2	1,920	960	-44	1,844	922	-47
21 Victoria (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,327	1,664	-3	3,077	1,539	-11
22 Waterside (in Burton upon Trent)	2	2,988	1,494	-12	2,917	1,459	-16

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
23 Weaver	1	1,656	1,656	-3	1,592	1,592	-8
24 Winshill (in Burton upon Trent)	3	4,844	1,615	-5	4,825	1,608	-7
25 Yoxall	1	1,640	1,640	-4	1,644	1,644	-5
Totals	46	78,485	-	-	79,727	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,706	-	-	1,733	-

Source: *Electorate figures are based on information provided by East Staffordshire Borough Council*

Note: *The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 1999, electors in Uxbridge ward were relatively over-represented by 44 per cent, while electors in Crown ward were relatively under-represented by 15 per cent. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.*

3 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

22 At the start of the review we invited members of the public and other interested parties to write to us giving their views on the future electoral arrangements for East Staffordshire Borough Council and its constituent parish and town councils.

23 During this initial stage of the review, officers from the Commission visited the area and met with officers and members from the Borough Council. We are most grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 60 representations during Stage One, including two borough-wide schemes from the Borough Council, and the Conservative and Liberal Democrat groups, all of which may be inspected at the offices of the Borough Council and the Commission.

East Staffordshire Borough Council

24 The Borough Council proposed a council of 39 members, seven fewer than at present, serving 21 wards, compared to the existing 25. The Council proposed that Burton upon Trent should be represented by 18 members and Uttoxeter by four members. In addition, it put forward an alternative option for four wards, to achieve a better level of electoral equality than under its preferred proposal. The Borough Council consulted widely on its proposal and advertised the review in its Community Newsletter.

25 Under the Borough Council's proposals all but six wards would have an electoral imbalance of no more than 10 per cent from the average, while the number of electors per councillor in one ward would vary by more than 20 per cent from the average. Under its alternative option, only five wards would have an electoral imbalance of more than 10 per cent from the average, and no ward would have an imbalance greater than 20 per cent. The Council's proposals are summarised at Appendix B.

East Staffordshire Borough Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups

26 The Conservative and Liberal Democrat groups on the Borough Council ('the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats') put forward a joint submission for future electoral arrangements for the borough. They proposed a council of 41 members, five fewer than at present. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that Burton upon Trent should be represented by 19 members, and Uttoxeter by five members.

27 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also proposed reducing the number of councillors for the borough, but argued that a council size of 41 would achieve a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the Borough Council's proposal for a 39-member council. They also argued that three-member wards should be "avoided wherever possible" on the grounds that they lead to "ineffective representation". Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal, the number of electors per councillor in all but seven wards would vary by no more than 10 per cent from the average. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal is summarised at Appendix B.

Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association

28 Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association expressed concern about the Borough Council's proposal for Rolleston on Dove ward, and the consultation process with parish councils.

Parish and Town Councils

29 We received representations from seven parish and town councils. Branston Parish Council supported the retention of Branston ward's existing arrangements. Marchington Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposed reduction in council size, and expressed concern regarding the Borough Council's proposed warding arrangements for its local area. Outwoods Parish Council proposed that Outwoods parish should continue to be part of a two-member ward, and objected to the Borough Council's proposal to include part of the parish in Branston ward.

30 Rolleston on Dove Parish Council proposed that Rolleston on Dove should be separately represented in a single ward. Tatenhill Parish Council proposed that Tatenhill should form part of a rural ward, rather than be part of Branston ward. Tutbury Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposals, arguing that Tutbury should be represented in a single ward. Uttoxeter Town Council proposed that Town ward should be represented by three councillors, one more than at present.

Other Representations

31 We received a further 50 representations from local interest groups and residents. Burton Conservative Association supported the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal. East Staffordshire Labour Party supported the Borough Council's scheme. Anslow Lane Residents' Association, Rolleston Civic Trust, Rolleston Allotment Society, a borough councillor and 30 local residents objected to the Borough Council's proposal to include part of Rolleston on Dove parish in a revised Outwoods ward. In addition, 14 residents forwarded a proforma letter issued by Doveside Women's Institute, opposing the Borough Council's proposed warding arrangements for Rolleston on Dove.

4 ANALYSIS AND DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

32 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for East Staffordshire 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 per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

33 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.

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

35 Our *Guidance* states that we accept that the achievement of absolute electoral equality for the authority as a whole is likely to be unattainable, we consider that, if electoral imbalances are to be kept to the minimum, the objective of electoral equality should be the starting point in any review. We therefore strongly recommend that, in formulating electoral schemes, local authorities and other interested parties should start from the standpoint of electoral equality, and then make adjustments to reflect relevant factors, such as community identity. Regard must also be had to five-year forecasts of changes in electorates. We will require particular justification for schemes which result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance over 10 per cent in any ward. Any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

Electorate Forecasts

36 Different views have been expressed on likely five-year electorate forecasts for East Staffordshire. The Borough Council submitted an electorate forecast, projecting an increase in the electorate of around 2 per cent from 78,485 to 79,727 over the five-year period from 1999 to 2004. It stated that the methodology it had used to develop its electoral projections were consistent with Staffordshire County Council’s data, which have also been used by other borough councils in Staffordshire. The Borough Council expects most of the growth to be in Branston ward, which it projected would have an additional 1,200 electors by 2004. In addition, it projected that the number of electors in Uttoxeter town would increase by 200.

37 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats submitted alternative electoral projections for the next five years, forecasting an increase in the electorate of around 3 per cent. They argued that the Borough Council had under-estimated likely housing development and probable occupancy

rates in Branston ward and Uttoxeter town. They projected that the number of electors in their proposed Branston ward would increase by around 1,700 over the next five years, while the number of electors in Uttoxeter town would increase by some 800. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' projections for their proposed Brizlincote ward also differed by 55 electors from the Borough Council's projections for the area. Their projections for the remaining wards in the borough were identical to the Borough Council's.

38 We carefully considered the alternative electorate projections, together with the supporting argumentation put forward, and sought further clarification from both the Borough Council, and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. We consider that the Borough Council's projections for Branston and Uttoxeter take account of all residential development that can be reasonably expected to be occupied by electors over the next five years. The Council has estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates.

39 Furthermore, we note that the Borough Council's methodology is consistent with the methodology used by other boroughs in Staffordshire, and that it takes account of the trend for a decline in the average household size. We are not persuaded that there is sufficient evidence that the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' projected housing development will be completed by 2004, or that their suggested electorate: population ratio is likely to be achieved.

40 We accept that forecasting electorates is an inexact science and, having given consideration to both sets of electoral forecasts, are content that the Borough Council's figures represent the best estimates that can reasonably be made at this time. However, we would welcome further evidence on electorate forecasts during Stage Three.

Council Size

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

42 East Staffordshire Borough Council presently has 46 members. The Borough Council proposed a council of 39 members, which it argued would reflect ongoing changes to the Council's internal political management structure. It stated that, subject to a local consultation exercise, it intended to establish an executive committee of nine members, together with five scrutiny panels that would each comprise six members.

43 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also proposed a reduction in council size, but they argued that a council of 41 members would secure a better level of representation for communities within the borough. They argued that the Borough Council's proposed internal management structure was likely to be "transitional". In addition, we received a representation from East Staffordshire Labour Party supporting the Borough Council's proposed council size, while Burton Conservative Association supported the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposed council size. Marchington Parish Council and a local resident opposed a significant reduction in council size, arguing that it would "erode the political structure".

44 Having considered the size and distribution of the electorate, the geography and other characteristics of the area, together with the representations received, we have concluded that the achievement of electoral equality and the statutory criteria would best be met by a council of 39 members. We note that both borough-wide proposals would provide much improved levels of electoral equality and would each result in a reduction in council size. We consider that the Borough Council has considered alternative internal political management structures, and has developed a structure that it considers would best provide effective and convenient local government. Furthermore, we do not consider that this new internal management structure would necessarily erode the accountability and accessibility of councillors, and we are content to endorse a council of 39 councillors.

Electoral Arrangements

45 We have carefully considered the two borough-wide schemes put forward by the Borough Council, and jointly by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. From these representations, some considerations have emerged that have informed us when preparing our draft recommendations. First, as already indicated, there was consensus between all groups on the Borough Council that there should be a reduction in council size. Second, both schemes proposed retaining the boundaries of four rural wards, and the boundaries of several of the other wards put forward in the borough-wide submissions were also broadly similar. Third, we have noted the arguments put to us regarding the interests and identities of communities in the borough. We have sought to reflect such considerations in our draft recommendations where it would be consistent with our objective of achieving reasonable levels of electoral equality.

46 Finally, there is the issue of political advantage. To a greater or lesser extent there is a political dimension to each PER, with party groupings putting forward competing electoral schemes for our consideration. These may owe more to achieving a desired political outcome at local elections than to providing effective and convenient local governance of an area. We have therefore been vigilant in considering the proposals submitted.

47 We are persuaded that the balance of evidence supports the Borough Council's proposed electoral arrangements and, as a consequence, we have substantially based our draft recommendations on its proposal. As indicated previously, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats argued that three-member wards would not provide effective and convenient local government for East Staffordshire. However, we do not consider that three-member wards necessarily result in "ineffective representation", or that such wards inhibit the representation of electors' identities and interests. We have therefore discounted this argument from our considerations.

48 We consider that the Borough Council's proposal generally achieves a good balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, utilises strong and easily identifiable boundaries in the urban areas, and better reflects the separate identities of communities adjoining Burton upon Trent than the proposal submitted by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. However, we propose departing from the Borough Council's scheme in relation to seven wards, where we intend putting forward the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal together with our own modifications.

49 Overall, our draft recommendations would provide for much improved electoral equality throughout the borough, with the number of wards with an electoral imbalance greater than 10 per cent from the average being reduced from 19 to six, and the number of wards with an electoral imbalance greater than 20 per cent being reduced from nine to two. This level of improved electoral equality is projected to further improve over the next five years, with only two wards projected to have an electoral imbalance greater than 10 per cent, and one ward projected to have an electoral imbalance greater than 20 per cent by 2004.

50 For borough warding purposes, the following areas, based on existing wards, are considered in turn:

- (a) Burton upon Trent
 - Edgehill, Stapenhill, Waterside and Winshill wards;
 - Broadway, Burton and Uxbridge wards;
 - Eton, Horniglow, Shobnall and Victoria wards;
- (b) Rolleston on Dove and Stretton wards;
- (c) Branston, Needwood and Outwoods wards;
- (d) Crown, Tutbury & Hanbury and Yoxall wards;
- (e) Heath and Town wards (in Uttoxeter);
- (f) Abbey, Bagots, Churnet and Weaver wards;

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

Burton upon Trent (11 wards)

52 Burton upon Trent comprises just over half of the borough's total electorate and is intersected by the River Trent, the Birmingham to Derby railway line and the A38. At present, the town is unparished, and is represented by 11 borough wards, seven of which have an electoral imbalance of more than 10 per cent from the borough average.

53 The Borough Council has recently undertaken a review of the town with a view to creating parish councils. It stated that it intends to "recommence" the parishing of Burton upon Trent, subsequent to the completion of the periodic electoral review, so that the boundaries of the new parishes in Burton upon Trent will reflect the revised borough wards. The Borough Council also propose to "reconcile any boundary discrepancies with adjoining parish areas" following the completion of the periodic electoral review.

Edgehill, Stapenhill, Waterside and Winshill wards

54 Edgehill, Stapenhill, Waterside and Winshill wards are situated in the east of Burton upon Trent, and are bounded to the west by the River Trent and to the east by the county boundary with Derbyshire. Under current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in Edgehill, Waterside and Winshill wards varies by 18 per cent, 12 per cent and 5 per cent fewer than the borough average respectively, while the number of electors per councillor in Stapenhill ward

varies by 58 per cent more than the average. Edgehill, Stapenhill and Waterside wards are each represented by two councillors, while Winshill ward is represented by three councillors, under a 46-member council.

55 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that Edgehill and Waterside wards should be combined with the part of Stapenhill ward to the south-west of Spring Terrace Road, to form a revised Stapenhill ward. It also proposed that a new Brizlincote ward should comprise the rest of the existing Stapenhill ward, less the area north of Stapenhill cemetery and Tower Woods, which it proposed should be included in an expanded Winshill ward. Stapenhill and Winshill wards would each be represented by three councillors, while Brizlincote would be represented by two councillors.

56 Under the Borough Council's proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Brizlincote, Stapenhill and Winshill wards would vary by 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 2 per cent from the borough average respectively. This improved level of electoral equality is projected to be largely unchanged over the next five years.

57 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that the parts of Edgehill and Waterside wards to the south of Heath Road and Saxon Street should be combined to form a new Waterside & Edgehill ward. They suggested that the northern parts of these wards should be combined with the part of Stapenhill ward to the south of Scalpcliff Hill, and to the west of Derwent Road and Redwood Drive, to form a revised Stapenhill ward. They proposed that the rest of the existing Stapenhill ward should be combined with the part of Winshill ward that includes Bearwood Hill Road and Eldon Street, while Winshill's ward boundaries should be substantially retained. All four wards would each be represented by two councillors.

58 Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal, the number of electors per councillors in Brizlincote ward would vary by 1 per cent less than the borough average, while the number of electors per councillors in Stapenhill, Waterside & Edgehill and Winshill would vary by 9 per cent, 7 per cent and 3 per cent more than the average respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to improve further over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor in all four wards projected to vary by no more than 4 per cent from the average by 2004, under a 41-member council.

59 Having carefully considered the representations received we note that both proposals would retain the River Trent as a ward boundary, and we concur with this view. However, while both proposals would provide much improved levels of electoral equality, we consider that the Borough Council's proposals achieve a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, and we are content to endorse them as our draft recommendations without modification.

60 We consider that the Borough Council's proposals provide stronger and more easily identifiable boundaries than the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal. In particular, we consider that the Borough Council's proposal to utilise the borders of Stapenhill Cemetery and Tower Woods as a ward boundary has merit. We are not persuaded that the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposed Brizlincote ward would reflect community ties as well as the Council's proposal, as their proposed ward boundary would straddle the cemetery and the woods.

In addition, we consider that the Borough Council's proposal to utilise the northern edge of school playing fields, together with significant roads, as the boundary between the proposed Brizlincote and Stapenhill wards has merit, and note that the alternative proposal would utilise minor residential roads as a ward boundary.

61 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Brizlincote, Stapenhill and Winshill wards would vary by 6 per cent, 1 per cent and 2 per cent from the borough average respectively. This level of improved electoral equality is expected to continue over the next five years.

Broadway, Burton and Uxbridge wards

62 Broadway, Burton and Uxbridge wards are situated in the centre of Burton upon Trent, and are bounded to the east by the River Trent and to the west by the Birmingham to Derby railway line. Under current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in Broadway, Burton and Uxbridge wards varies by 16 per cent, 33 per cent and 44 per cent less than the borough average respectively. Broadway and Uxbridge wards are each represented by two councillors, while Burton ward is represented by one councillor.

63 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that all three wards should be combined to form a new three-member Burton ward. Under this proposal the number of electors per councillor in Burton ward would vary by 2 per cent from the average. This level of electoral equality is projected to be largely unchanged over the next five years.

64 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that a revised Burton ward should include parts of Broadway and Uxbridge wards, together with the whole of the existing Burton ward. They proposed that a new Anglesey ward should comprise the rest of Broadway and Uxbridge wards, with Evershed Way, Wood Street and Watson Street forming the boundary between the two new wards. Burton ward would be represented by one councillor, while Anglesey would be represented by two councillors.

65 Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Anglesey and Burton wards would vary by 12 per cent and 14 per cent from the borough average respectively, under a council size of 41. This level of electoral imbalance is projected to improve significantly over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor in both wards projected to vary by no more than 5 per cent from the average.

66 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we note that both proposals would result in good levels of electoral equality, under a council size of 39, and have merit. However, we consider that the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal achieves the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria as it would provide separate representation for electors in the south of the town centre. We have not been persuaded that the Borough Council's proposals would satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of communities in central Burton upon Trent, and consider that its proposed Burton ward would contain a number of diverse communities. We therefore propose adopting the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal as our draft recommendations.

67 Under our draft recommendations for a 39-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Anglesey and Burton wards would vary by 6 per cent more than the borough average, and 18 per cent less than the average respectively. This level of electoral imbalance is projected to improve over the next five years as a result of residential development. By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Anglesey would be equal to the average, while the number of electors per councillor in Burton ward would vary by 3 per cent from the average for the borough.

Eton, Horniglow, Shobnall and Victoria wards

68 Eton, Horniglow, Shobnall and Victoria wards are located in the west of Burton upon Trent and contain a combination of residential and employment areas. Under current arrangements the number of electors per councillor in Eton, Horniglow, Shobnall and Victoria wards varies by 20 per cent, 9 per cent, 3 per cent and 3 per cent less than the borough average respectively.

69 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that Victoria ward should be divided between adjoining wards. It proposed that Shobnall ward's northern boundary should follow Victoria Road, Dallow Street, the A38 and the southern edge of Outwoods Park, with Shobnall ward's remaining boundaries being retained. It proposed that a new Eton Park ward should utilise the Birmingham to Derby railway line and the A38 as ward boundaries, and include the part of Stretton parish to the south of Hillfield Lane, and the part of Victoria ward to the north of Dallow Street.

70 In addition, it proposed that a revised Horniglow ward should include all of Harper Avenue, part of which is situated in Stretton parish, together with the part of Victoria ward to the west of the A38, part of Shobnall ward centred on Queen's Hospital, together with the majority of the existing Horniglow ward. It also suggested combining part of Horniglow ward with Stretton ward. Eton Park and Shobnall wards would each be represented by two councillors, while Horniglow would be represented by three councillors.

71 The Borough Council also put forward an alternative option for Horniglow ward, which would additionally transfer Lower Outwoods Road from Outwoods parish to Horniglow ward to improve electoral equality. Under this proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Horniglow ward would vary by 2 per cent from the borough average.

72 Under the Borough Council's preferred option, the number of electors per councillor in Eton Park and Horniglow wards would vary by 6 per cent and 1 per cent less than the average respectively, while the number of electors per councillor in Shobnall ward would vary by 11 per cent more than the average. By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Eton Park, Horniglow and Shobnall wards would vary by 3 per cent, 8 per cent and 5 per cent from the average respectively.

73 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats also suggested that parts of Victoria ward should be included in adjacent wards. Their proposed St Paul's ward was broadly similar to the Borough Council's proposed Shobnall ward, but utilised the A38 for the length of its western boundary, and also included the area bounded by Dallow Street and the A511 Horniglow Street. Their

proposed Eton Park ward would include the existing Eton ward, together with part of Victoria ward and the area of Stretton parish bounded by the A38, the River Dove and the Birmingham to Derby railway line. They proposed that the section of Beech Lane to the east of the A38 should continue to be included in Stretton ward.

74 They also proposed that the existing Horniglow ward should be broadly retained. However, they suggested that Charnwood Road and contiguous roads should be included in a new Belvedere & Henhurst ward, which would also include the parts of Shobnall and Victoria wards to the west of the A38, together with Outwoods parish. All three wards would be represented by two councillors.

75 Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal the number of electors per councillor in Eton Park ward would vary by 7 per cent less than the borough average, while the number of electors per councillor in Horniglow and St Paul's wards would vary by 8 per cent and 14 per cent more than the average respectively. By 2004, all three wards would have an electoral imbalance of no more than 8 per cent from the average.

76 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we note that both proposals achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality. In addition, both schemes would divide Victoria ward, which we consider contains a number of separate communities, whose interests and identities would be better reflected under alternative electoral arrangements. We note that there is agreement that the Birmingham to Derby railway line and the A38 form strong and easily identifiable boundaries, and we concur with this view.

77 On the balance of evidence received at Stage One, we consider that the Borough Council's preferred option would provide better electoral arrangements in this area and we are content to substantially endorse them as our draft recommendations. We consider that the Borough Council's proposed Eton Park ward would achieve a reasonable level of electoral equality while including similar communities, whereas the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal would include a significant part of Stretton parish in Eton Park ward. We are not persuaded that the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal would satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of electors either in Stretton parish or in their proposed Eton Park ward.

78 In addition, we consider that the Borough Council's proposed Horniglow ward would achieve the optimum balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. In particular, we consider that its proposal to make minor modifications to the ward boundary between Horniglow and Stretton wards has merit, as the affected areas have no direct communication links with the existing wards in which they are currently included. Furthermore, while the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal would reflect Stretton's existing parish boundary in this area, we understand that the Borough Council intends to review the boundaries of parishes adjoining Burton upon Trent to correct minor anomalies such as this.

79 We have not been persuaded that the Borough Council's alternative option for Horniglow ward would achieve a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations.

80 Under our draft recommendations the number of electors per councillors in Eton Park and Horniglow wards would vary by 6 per cent and 1 per cent less than the borough average respectively, while the number of electors per councillors in and Shobnall ward would vary by 11 per cent more than the average. By 2004, all three wards are each projected to have an electoral variance less than 8 per cent from the average.

Rolleston on Dove and Stretton wards

81 Rolleston on Dove and Stretton wards are both situated to the north of Burton upon Trent. They contain the parishes of Rolleston on Dove and Stretton respectively. Under current arrangements both wards have high levels of electoral inequality, with the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston on Dove and Stretton wards varying by 27 per cent and 77 per cent from the borough average respectively, under a council of 46 members. Both wards are each represented by two councillors.

82 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed minor modifications to Stretton's ward boundaries with wards in Burton upon Trent, as detailed previously. It proposed that the rest of Stretton parish should form a revised Stretton ward, to be represented by three councillors, one more than at present. It put forward two alternative proposals for warding arrangements for Rolleston on Dove ward. In its preferred option, it argued that an area to the west of Rolleston on Dove village, including Anslow Lane and the east side of Knowles Hill and the adjacent rural area, should be included in a revised Outwoods ward to improve electoral equality in both wards. Its second option provided a further improvement to the level of electoral equality by additionally transferring Beacon Road and all of Knowles Hill to a revised Outwoods ward. Under both proposals Rolleston on Dove ward would be represented by one councillor, while Stretton ward would be represented by three councillors.

83 Under the Borough Council's preferred option, the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston on Dove would vary by 16 per cent more than the borough average, while the number of electors per councillor in Stretton ward would vary by 4 per cent less than the average. Under the Borough Council's alternative option, the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston on Dove ward would vary by 7 per cent more than the average, while the number of electors per councillor in Stretton ward would vary by 4 per cent less than the average, under a 39-member council. Over the next five years, this level of electoral imbalance is projected to be largely unchanged under both proposals.

84 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that Stretton ward should include the majority of Stretton parish, less the area bounded by the A38 and the River Dove, which they proposed should be included in a new Eton Park ward in Burton upon Trent. They also argued that the "new development" bounded by Beacon Road and Bitham Lane, together with an area including the east side of Tutbury Road and part of Britannia Drive, should be transferred from Stretton ward to a new Rolleston ward, which would include Rolleston on Dove parish. Both wards would each be represented by two councillors, under a 41-member council.

85 Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston and Stretton wards would each vary by 6 per cent more than the average.

By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston and Stretton wards is projected to vary by 5 per cent and 4 per cent from the average respectively.

86 We received 50 representations relating to this area from parish councils, local groups and residents. Rolleston on Dove Parish Council and a borough councillor objected to the Borough Council's proposal to divide Rolleston on Dove parish between two borough wards. They argued that the Anslow Lane area is in the "heart of the village" and that Rolleston on Dove forms a "distinct community". Their preference was for Rolleston on Dove parish to continue to form a separate borough ward and be represented by one councillor, one less than at present. They argued that an alternative option would be for the part of Stretton ward contained within the John of Rolleston School catchment area to be included in a revised two-member Rolleston ward, as proposed by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats. The Borough Councillor also suggested that a revised Rolleston on Dove ward could be coterminous with the boundary of Rolleston on Dove parish, less Tutbury Road and Lodge Hill, which would be included in Outwoods ward.

87 Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, Anslow Lane Residents' Association, Rolleston Civic Trust and Rolleston on Dove Allotment Society and 30 local residents also argued that the Borough Council's proposal would not reflect the interests and identities of electors in Rolleston on Dove. In addition, we received a further 14 proforma letters objecting to the Borough Council's proposal to split Rolleston on Dove between two borough wards. Furthermore, a large number of respondents in this area expressed concern that any proposal to combine Rolleston on Dove parish with adjoining areas would encourage residential development in areas adjacent to Rolleston on Dove parish.

88 Having carefully considered the representations received, we consider that the Borough Council's proposed Stretton ward would achieve an optimum balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. As indicated previously, we consider that the Borough Council's proposal would provide a strong and easily identifiable boundary. In particular, we note that its proposed Stretton ward would include Knightsbridge Way and adjoining roads, which can only be accessed from Stretton ward, while it would unite Harper Avenue in Horniglow ward. We are also aware that the Borough Council intends to review the boundaries of parishes adjoining Burton upon Trent to correct minor anomalies such as this.

89 We have considered the alternative proposals for Rolleston on Dove ward, and we note that neither of the borough-wide proposals has achieved a high degree of local support in this area. We have therefore considered alternative warding arrangements. We note that there is broad agreement among the majority of respondents that Rolleston on Dove parish should be wholly contained in a single borough ward, and we concur with this view. We consider that Rolleston on Dove is a distinct and separate community on the edge of the borough, and that it appears to have little in common with surrounding areas. Under a council size of 39, Rolleston on Dove parish would merit 1.2 councillors in both 1999 and 2004.

90 In the light of the evidence put forward at Stage One, and after visiting the area, we have come to the view that Rolleston on Dove parish should continue to be coterminous with the boundary of Rolleston on Dove ward, and that this ward should be represented by one member, one less than at present. While this proposal would result in a high degree of electoral imbalance,

with the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston on Dove ward varying by 24 per cent more than the average, we note that maintaining the current ward, albeit with a degree of under-representation, has a measure of local support. We consider that it achieves a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than the alternative proposals, and are therefore adopting it as our draft recommendation.

91 In our judgement, none of the alternative proposals put forward at Stage One reflects the interests and identities of communities to a satisfactory degree. We consider that Rolleston on Dove is a cohesive community, and that the Borough Council's proposals would not reflect Rolleston on Dove's interests and identities. We consider that the Anslow Lane area is a constituent part of that community, and we note that it is separated from Outwoods parish by over two miles of agricultural land.

92 Equally, while the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposed Rolleston ward achieves a reasonable level of electoral equality, we do not consider that it would satisfactorily represent the identities and interests of electors in the part of Stretton parish that would be combined in a ward with Rolleston on Dove parish. In particular, we consider that the area bounded by Beacon Road and Bitham Lane, and the area including Britannia Drive, have good communication links with the rest of Stretton parish, and note that the established properties on Beacon Road and Bitham Lane have historical links with the Stretton parish. Furthermore, we note that this area is divided from Rolleston on Dove village by Craythorne Golf Course. While it could be argued that the newer housing in this area may have a similar socio-economic profile to housing in Rolleston on Dove parish, we do not consider that this necessarily equates with a shared community interest and identity.

93 However, we are concerned that our proposal for Rolleston on Dove ward would provide an exceptionally high level of electoral imbalance, with electors being under-represented by 24 per cent. Our *Guidance* states that "any imbalances of 20 per cent and over should arise only in the most exceptional of circumstances". While we have received some indication that our proposal would be acceptable locally, we would welcome alternative proposals at Stage Three from local people that would secure equality of representation while also reflecting the interests and identities of communities.

94 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Rolleston on Dove and Stretton wards would vary by 24 per cent more than the average and 4 per cent less than the average respectively. By 2004, the number of electors per councillors in Rolleston on Dove and Stretton wards would vary by 25 per cent more than the average and 3 per cent less than the average respectively.

Branston, Needwood and Outwoods wards

95 Branston, Needwood and Outwoods wards are all adjacent to Burton upon Trent. Branston ward comprises the parishes of Branston and Tatenhill, Needwood ward contains the parishes of Barton-under-Needwood, Dunstall and Wychnor, while Outwoods ward contains the parishes of Anslow and Outwoods.

96 Under current arrangements for a 46-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Branston, Needwood and Outwoods wards varies by 43 per cent, 14 per cent and 40 per cent from the borough average respectively. This level of electoral inequality is projected to remain largely unchanged in Needwood and Outwoods wards over the next five years, but is expected to significantly deteriorate in Branston ward as a result of housing development. By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Branston ward is projected to vary by 77 per cent more than the average.

97 The Borough Council put forward two alternative options for Outwoods ward under a 39-member council. In its preferred option, it suggested that Forest Road and Henhurst Hill in Outwoods parish should be included in a revised Branston ward, with the rest of Outwoods parish being combined with Anslow parish, the rural part of Tutbury parish less the area to the west of Redhill Lane, and the western part of Rolleston on Dove ward to form a revised Outwoods ward. Its second option was broadly similar, but additionally transferred Green Lane and Ironwalls Lane from the urban part of Tutbury parish to Outwoods ward. It also proposed that Lower Outwoods Road and contiguous roads should be transferred from Outwoods parish to Horniglow ward. Under the Borough Council's second option, the number of electors per councillor in Outwoods ward would vary by 6 per cent from the average.

98 The Council suggested that Branston ward should comprise Branston parish together with part of Outwoods parish as detailed above, while Tatenhill parish should be combined with the parishes of Barton-under-Needwood, Dunstall and Wychnor to form a revised Needwood ward. Under the Borough Council's proposals Branston ward would be represented by three councillors, Needwood ward represented by two councillors and Outwoods by one councillor.

99 Under the Borough Council's preferred option, the number of electors per councillor in Branston and Outwoods wards would vary by 22 per cent and 1 per cent less than the borough average, while the number of electors per councillor in Needwood ward would vary by 10 per cent more than the average. The level of electoral equality in Outwoods and Needwood wards is projected to remain largely unchanged over the next five years. However, the level of electoral imbalance is expected to significantly improve in Branston ward, due to housing development, with the number of electors per councillor projected to vary by 4 per cent from the average by 2004.

100 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that part of Outwoods parish should be included in a new Belvedere & Henhurst ward as detailed previously, while Anslow parish and the rest of Outwoods parish would be combined with Tutbury & Hanbury ward to form a new Tutbury Rural ward. They proposed that a revised Branston ward should be represented by three councillors and comprise Branston parish together with Tatenhill parish, less Rangemore village and the Henhurst Hill polling district. They also proposed that the existing Needwood ward should be retained, and represented by two councillors as at present.

101 Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Branston ward would vary by 30 per cent less than the average, while Needwood ward would vary by 2 per cent more than the average. By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Branston and Needwood wards is projected to vary by 10 per cent and 2 per cent less than the average respectively.

102 Branston Parish Council argued that the existing Branston ward should be retained, or alternatively, failing that, the area to the east of Main Street in Tatenhill parish could be transferred from Branston ward to an adjoining ward. Tatenhill Parish Council proposed that the parish should form part of a rural ward and should not continue to form part of Branston ward, as it is predominantly urban in nature. Outwoods Parish Council argued that Outwoods parish should continue to be represented in a two-member ward, and objected to the Borough Council's proposal to include Forest Road in a revised Branston ward.

103 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we note that there is no consensus over the most appropriate warding arrangements for this area. We note that both borough-wide proposals would result in improved levels of electoral equality, particularly over the next five years. In our judgement, the Borough Council's proposed Branston ward achieves the best possible electoral arrangements in this area. We note that the proposed Branston ward would include the whole of the parish of Branston, while Tatenhill would be wholly represented in Needwood ward, and we consider that this proposal achieves a reasonable level of electoral equality while better reflecting the interests and identities of communities in this area. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal would result in a higher level of electoral inequality, while the parishes of Branston and Tatenhill would each be split between two borough wards. We are therefore endorsing the Borough Council's proposed Branston ward as our draft recommendation.

104 We also propose adopting the Borough Council's proposed Needwood ward as we are content that it would achieve the better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria than either the existing electoral arrangements or the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal. We consider that Tatenhill parish has strong communication links with communities in Needwood ward and note that the Borough Council's proposal reflects the preference expressed by Tatenhill Parish Council that Tatenhill be represented in a rural ward.

105 Furthermore, we consider that the alternative proposal put forward by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats would not satisfactorily reflect the interests and identities of communities in this area. Their proposals would include part of Tatenhill in a revised Yoxall ward, and it would not be possible for electors in this part of Tatenhill to travel to the remainder of the proposed Yoxall ward without travelling through part of the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposed Needwood ward. We have therefore not been persuaded that this proposal would offer the best possible electoral arrangements for this area.

106 However, we do not consider that the Borough Council's proposed Outwoods ward would achieve the best possible balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, as it would combine communities which have few links and it would not reflect the preference expressed by Outwoods Parish Council that it form part of a two-member ward. Neither are we persuaded that the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal to combine parts of Outwoods parish with a ward in Burton upon Trent would provide better electoral arrangements, as indicated previously.

107 We are therefore proposing alternative arrangements for this area. We propose that a new Tutbury & Outwoods ward should comprise the parishes of Anslow and Tutbury, together with

the part of Outwoods parish less Forest Road. We consider that this proposed ward would contain communities which share good communication links and common identities and interests. However, we would welcome further evidence from local people and groups during Stage Three.

108 We have considered retaining Outwoods parish in a single ward, as proposed by Outwoods Parish Council. However, this would result in a high level of electoral inequality in Branston and Tutbury & Outwoods wards both now and in 2004, with the number of electors per councillor varying by 28 per cent and 13 per cent from the average respectively. This level of electoral inequality is projected to marginally improve, however the number of electors per councillor in Branston and Outwoods wards would still vary by 10 per cent and 12 per cent from the average respectively by 2004. We do not consider that this high level of electoral equality is necessary, neither are we persuaded on the evidence put forward at Stage One that the Borough Council's proposal to include Forest Road in Branston ward would adversely affect the interests and identities of communities to a significant degree.

109 Under our draft recommendations for a 39-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Branston, Needwood and Tutbury & Outwoods wards would vary by 22 per cent, 8 per cent and 3 per cent respectively from the average. By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Branston, Needwood and Tutbury & Outwoods ward is projected to vary by 4 per cent, 8 per cent and 5 per cent from the average respectively.

Crown, Tutbury & Hanbury and Yoxall wards

110 Crown ward comprises the parishes of Draycott in the Clay, Marchington and Newborough; Hanbury & Tutbury ward contains the parishes of Hanbury and Tutbury, and Yoxall ward comprises Hoar Cross and Yoxall parishes. Crown and Yoxall wards are each represented by one councillor, while Tutbury & Hanbury ward is represented by two councillors. Under current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor in Crown, Tutbury & Hanbury and Yoxall wards varies by 15 per cent, 12 per cent and 4 per cent from the average respectively, under a council size of 46.

111 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed that a revised Crown ward should include the parishes of Draycott in the Clay, Hanbury and Marchington, together with the part of Tutbury parish to the west of Redhill Lane. It suggested that Newborough parish should be transferred to a revised Yoxall ward. It also proposed that a new Tutbury ward should include the village of Tutbury itself, while the rural part of Tutbury parish less the area to the west of Redhill Lane would be included in a revised Outwoods ward. It also put forward an alternative proposal for Tutbury ward which would achieve a better level of electoral equality than its preferred option. It suggested that Green Lane, in the urban part of Tutbury parish, could be included in its proposed Outwoods ward.

112 Under the Borough Council's preferred proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Crown, Tutbury and Yoxall wards would vary by 5 per cent, 19 per cent and 2 per cent from the average respectively. Under its alternative proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Tutbury ward would vary by 11 per cent from the average. All three wards would each be represented by one councillor. The level of electoral equality under both proposals is expected to be largely unchanged over the next five years.

113 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed that Crown ward should retain its existing electoral arrangements, while Tutbury & Hanbury ward would be combined with Anslow parish and part of Outwood parish in a new Tutbury Rural ward. It suggested that part of Tatenhill parish should be transferred to Yoxall ward. Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal, the number of electors per councillor in Crown, Tutbury Rural and Yoxall wards would vary by 2 per cent, 6 per cent and 2 per cent from the average respectively.

114 We also received representations from four parish councils. Marchington Parish Council objected to the Borough Council's proposed Crown ward, arguing that while Hanbury parish has "close associations" with Draycott in the Clay parish, no such links exist between Hanbury and Marchington parishes. Outwoods Parish Council argued that it should continue to form part of a two-member ward. Tatenhill Parish Council suggested that Tatenhill should form part of a rural ward, while Tutbury Parish Council argued that Tutbury should form a ward "in its own right", although it accepted that the parish may need to continue to be combined with Hanbury parish. It also opposed the Borough Council's proposal to include parts of the parish in separate borough wards.

115 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we consider that both borough-wide proposals for this area would provide an improved level of electoral equality. However, as indicated previously, we have not been persuaded that either of the borough-wide proposals put forward for Tutbury parish would achieve the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria. In particular, we note that the Borough Council's proposed Tutbury ward would have a high electoral imbalance. We also consider that it would not best reflect community identities and interests by dividing the village of Tutbury from its rural hinterland. Furthermore, this proposal may be seen to provide political advantage to groups on the Borough Council. The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal, on the other hand, would be dependent upon us adopting their proposal to combine parts of Outwoods parish and Burton upon Trent, which we have not endorsed.

116 We therefore examined alternative electoral arrangements in this area. We propose that a new Tutbury & Outwoods ward should comprise the parishes of Anslow and Tutbury, together with Outwoods parish, less Forest Road, which would be included in Branston ward as detailed previously. We consider that this proposal would achieve the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria, as it would provide a significantly improved level of electoral equality while appearing to combine communities with similar identities and interests.

117 We propose adopting the Borough Council's proposed Crown and Yoxall wards as part of our draft recommendations, subject to the modification to the boundary between Crown ward and Tutbury parish as detailed previously, as we consider that they provide better electoral arrangements than the alternative proposal. In particular, both wards would have a reasonable level of electoral equality and we consider that Newborough parish has good communication links with Yoxall ward, while Hanbury parish has strong links with Draycott in the Clay parish. As indicated previously, we have not been persuaded by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal to combine part of Tatenhill parish with Yoxall ward, as electors in Tatenhill could not travel to the rest of Yoxall ward without travelling through Needwood ward.

118 We have considered the objections of Marchington and Outwoods parish councils, but have not been persuaded on the evidence received at Stage One that any of the alternative proposals received would achieve a better balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria.

119 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Crown, Tutbury & Outwoods and Yoxall wards would vary by 2 per cent, 5 per cent and 2 per cent from the borough average respectively. This level of electoral equality is projected to be largely unchanged over the next five years. Crown and Yoxall wards would each be represented by one councillor, while Tutbury & Outwoods ward would be represented by two councillors.

Heath and Town wards (in Uttoxeter)

120 Heath and Town wards cover Uttoxeter town, and are each represented by two councillors. Under current arrangements for a 46-member council, Heath and Town wards have 13 per cent fewer and 27 per cent more electors per councillor than the average. This is projected to deteriorate further by 2004 to 17 per cent fewer and 34 per cent more than the average respectively.

121 At Stage One the Borough Council argued that Uttoxeter town should continue to be represented by two two-member wards. It suggested that Heath and Town's ward boundaries should be largely retained, but that Harvey Place, Johnson Road and adjoining roads should be transferred from Town ward to Heath ward. Under the Borough Council's proposal for a 39-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Heath and Town wards would vary by 14 per cent and 4 per cent more than the borough average respectively (and by 9 per cent and 10 per cent by 2004).

122 The Conservatives and Liberal Democrats argued that Uttoxeter town merits five councillors, under a council size of 41. They proposed that a revised Heath ward should include the part of Uttoxeter town to the north of Hawthornden Avenue, Holly Road and Johnson Road, while a new Highwood ward should include the part of town to the south of Wood Lane and the Birmingham to Derby railway line, less the Westlands Road area. They proposed that a revised Town ward should include the rest of Uttoxeter town.

123 Under the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' proposal for a 41-member council, the number of electors per councillor in Heath ward would vary by 4 per cent more than the average, while the number of electors per councillor in Highwood and Town wards would vary by 10 per cent and 20 per cent less than the average respectively. By 2004, the number of electors per councillor in Heath and Town wards would vary by 1 per cent and 18 per cent less than the borough average, while the number of electors in Highwood ward would be equal to the average. Heath and Town wards would each be represented by two councillors, while Highwood ward would be represented by one councillor.

124 Uttoxeter Town Council requested that the number of borough councillors representing the town be increased by one, to five councillors.

125 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we note that there is little agreement regarding the level of growth in Uttoxeter, and therefore on the number of councillors and wards that should represent the town. As indicated at the start of this chapter, we consider that, on balance, a council size of 39 would best achieve convenient and effective local government in East Staffordshire borough. Under a council size of 39, Uttoxeter town would merit 4.3 councillors in 1999 and 4.4 councillors in 2004. We therefore endorse the Borough Council's proposal that Uttoxeter town should continue to be represented by four councillors.

126 We consider that the Borough Council's proposal to substantially retain the boundary between Heath and Town wards has merit, as it is strong and clearly identifiable, utilising the Birmingham to Derby railway line and Holly Road. We consider that the transfer of the Johnson Road area from Town ward to Heath ward would improve electoral equality in both wards, while not having an adverse effect on the representation of the interests and identities of local communities. We therefore propose adopting the Borough Council's proposed Heath and Town wards without modification.

127 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Heath and Town wards would vary 14 per cent and 4 per cent more than the average respectively. This level of electoral equality is not projected to change significantly over the next five years, with the number of electors per councillor in Heath and Town wards expected to vary by 9 per cent and 10 per cent from the average respectively in 2004.

Abbey, Bagots, Churnet and Weaver wards

128 Abbey, Bagots, Churnet and Weaver wards are situated in the west of the borough and are predominantly rural. Abbey ward comprises the parishes of Croxden, Leigh and Uttoxeter Rural; while Bagots ward includes the parishes of Abbots Bromley, Blithfield and Kingstone; and Churnet ward contains Denstone and Rocester parishes. Weaver ward comprises the parishes of Ellastone, Mayfield, Okeover, Ramshorn, Stanton and Wootton. Under current arrangements, the number of electors per councillor in Abbey, Bagots and Churnet wards varies by 26 per cent, 18 per cent and 15 per cent more than the average respectively, while the number of electors per councillor in Weaver ward varies by 3 per cent less than the average.

129 At Stage One the Borough Council, and the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats proposed retaining Abbey, Bagots, Churnet and Weaver wards' electoral arrangements, arguing that this would provide reasonable levels of electoral equality in Abbey, Bagots and Churnet wards, while continuing to reflect their identities and interests. They argued that while Weaver ward would have a high degree of electoral imbalance, this was unavoidable as the ward is geographically isolated from the rest of the borough. They opposed enlarging Weaver ward by including an additional parish, arguing that the resulting ward would be too large for a single councillor to represent effectively, and that it would have a consequential impact on the levels of electoral equality in wards to the south of Weaver ward.

130 Under our proposed council size of 39, these proposals would result in the number of electors per councillor in Abbey ward varying by 7 per cent more than the borough average, while Churnet and Weaver wards would have 2 per cent and 18 per cent fewer than the average, and

the number of electors per councillor in Bagots ward would be equal to the average. All four wards would each be represented by one councillor.

131 Having carefully considered the representations received at Stage One, we note that both borough-wide submissions agree that the existing arrangements should continue in this area, and that the proposed Abbey, Bagots and Churnet wards would provide reasonable levels of electoral equality. We are content to endorse the proposals for Abbey and Bagots wards without modification, as we consider they would achieve the best balance between electoral equality and the statutory criteria.

132 However, we are concerned that under our proposed council size, Weaver ward would have a high degree of electoral imbalance and we have therefore considered alternative electoral arrangements. We propose combining the existing Churnet and Weaver wards to form a new Weaver & Churnet ward, to be represented by two councillors. This proposal would result in a much lower degree of electoral imbalance than the existing warding arrangements in this area. While we recognise that the proposed ward would cover a relatively large rural area, we consider that two councillors could effectively represent the interests and identities of electors in this area. In addition, this proposal would not divide any parishes or affect the levels of electoral equality in adjoining wards. However, we would welcome further evidence from local residents and interested parties at Stage Three.

133 Under our draft recommendations, the number of electors per councillor in Abbey ward would vary by 7 per cent more than the borough average, while the number of electors per councillor in Weaver & Churnet wards would vary by 10 per cent less than the average, and the number of electors per councillor in Bagots ward would be equal to the average. This level of electoral equality is projected to be largely unchanged over the next five years.

Electoral Cycle

134 At Stage One we received no proposals in relation to the electoral cycle of the borough. Accordingly, we make no recommendation for change to the present system of whole-council elections every four years.

Conclusions

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

- there should be a reduction in council size from 46 to 39;
- there should be 20 wards, five fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of 22 of the existing wards should be modified, while three should retain their existing boundaries;
- whole-council elections should continue to be held every four years.

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

- in Burton upon Trent, we propose adopting the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats' suggested Anglesey and Burton wards;
- Rolleston on Dove parish should continue to be wholly represented in a single borough ward;
- a new Tutbury & Outwoods ward should comprise the parishes of Anslow and Tutbury, together with the proposed Outwoods North ward of Outwoods parish;
- the existing Churnet and Weaver wards should be combined to form a new Weaver & Churnet ward.

137 Figure 5 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.

Figure 5: Comparison of Current and Recommended Electoral Arrangements

	1999 electorate		2004 forecast electorate	
	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations	Current arrangements	Draft recommendations
Number of councillors	46	39	46	39
Number of wards	25	22	25	22
Average number of electors per councillor	1,706	2,012	1,733	2,044
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	19	6	19	2
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	9	2	10	1

138 As shown in Figure 5, our draft recommendations for East Staffordshire Borough Council would result in a reduction in the number of wards varying by more than 10 per cent from the borough average from 19 to six, and the number of wards varying by more than 20 per cent from nine to two. By 2004 only two wards are forecast to vary by more than 10 per cent from the average for the borough, while one ward would vary by more than 20 per cent.

Draft Recommendation

East Staffordshire Borough Council should comprise 39 councillors serving 20 wards, as detailed and named in Figures 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and at Appendix A, including the large map inside the back cover. Elections should continue to be held for the whole Council.

Parish and Town Council Electoral Arrangements

139 In undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements, we are required to comply as far as is reasonably practicable with the provisions set out in Schedule 11 to the 1972 Local Government Act. The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different borough wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward of the borough. Accordingly, we propose consequential warding arrangements for Uttoxeter town and the parishes of Outwoods and Stretton to reflect the proposed borough wards.

140 Uttoxeter town is currently divided into two parish wards, Heath (represented by eight councillors) and Town (represented by seven councillors). To reflect the proposed borough warding arrangements in the town, we are proposing to modify the boundary between Heath and Town wards. We also propose that Town ward should be represented by eight councillors, one more than at present, as suggested by Uttoxeter Town Council.

Draft Recommendation

Uttoxeter Town Council should comprise 16 councillors, one more than at present, representing two wards. Heath ward would return eight town councillors, the same as at present, and Town ward would return eight councillors, one more than at present. The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on Map A2 in Appendix A.

141 The parish of Outwoods is currently served by 11 councillors and is not currently warded. Outwoods Parish Council opposed warding the parish at Stage One. We have considered retaining the parish within a single borough ward, but note that this would result in a high degree of electoral inequality in Branston and Tutbury & Outwoods wards, as detailed previously. Therefore, as a consequence of our proposals for borough wards, we propose that Outwoods parish should be divided between two wards: Outwoods North and Outwoods South.

Draft Recommendation

Outwoods Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing two wards. Outwoods North ward would return eight parish councillors and Outwoods South ward would return three councillors. The parish ward boundaries should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries in the area, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of this report.

142 Stretton parish is currently served by 11 councillors and is not warded at present. We propose uniting Harper Avenue (together with contiguous roads) in the proposed Horniglow ward, as these roads cannot be accessed from Stretton parish. In addition, we propose including the area to the south of Hillfield Lane in the proposed Eton Park ward, to provide an improved level of electoral equality. We therefore propose creating parish wards to reflect our suggested borough warding arrangements.

143 We propose that Stretton parish should comprise three parish wards: Stretton, Stretton South Central and Stretton South East. However, we understand that East Staffordshire Borough Council intends to undertake a parish review for Burton upon Trent and adjoining parishes, in order to “reconcile any boundary discrepancies”. We are unable to recommend modifications to the external boundaries of parishes unless the Secretary of State directs us to undertake a parish boundary review. However, if parish boundaries in this area were modified, subject to consultation, then the proposed parish warding arrangements described below would not be necessary.

Draft Recommendation

Stretton Parish Council should comprise 11 councillors, as at present, representing three wards. Stretton ward would return nine parish councillors while Stretton South Central and Stretton South East wards would each return one parish councillor. The boundary between the three parish wards should reflect the proposed borough ward boundaries, as illustrated and named on the large map at the back of this report.

144 We are not proposing any change to the electoral cycle of parish and town councils in the borough.

Draft Recommendation

For parish and town councils, whole-council elections should continue to take place every four years, on the same cycle as that of the Borough Council.

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

Map 2: The Commission's Draft Recommendations for East Staffordshire

5 NEXT STEPS

146 We are putting forward draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for East Staffordshire. Now it is up to the people of the area. We will take fully into account all representations received by 3 July 2000. Representations received after this date may not be taken into account. All representations will be available for public inspection by appointment at the offices of the Commission and the Borough Council, and a list of respondents will be available on request from the Commission after the end of the consultation period.

147 Views may be expressed by writing directly to us:

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

Fax: 020 7404 6142

E-mail: reviews@lgce.gov.uk

148 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations to consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with our draft recommendations. We will then submit our final recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions. After the publication of our final recommendations, all further correspondence should be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot make an order giving effect to our recommendations until six weeks after he receives them.

APPENDIX A

Draft Recommendations for East Staffordshire: Detailed Mapping

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

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

Map A2 illustrates the proposed warding of Uttoxeter town.

The **large map** inserted in the back of the report illustrates the existing and proposed warding arrangements for Burton upon Trent and adjoining areas.

Map A1: Draft Recommendations for East Staffordshire: Key Map

Map A2: Proposed Warding of Uttoxeter Town

APPENDIX B

East Staffordshire Borough Council's Proposed Electoral Arrangements

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

Figure B1: East Staffordshire Borough Council's Proposal: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	Burton ward; Broadway ward; Uxbridge ward
Churnet	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Denstone and Rocester)
Outwoods	Outwoods ward (part – Anslow parish and Outwoods North parish ward as proposed of Outwoods parish); Tutbury & Hanbury ward (part – Tutbury parish (part)); Rolleston on Dove ward (part – Rolleston on Dove parish (part))
Rolleston on Dove	Rolleston on Dove ward (part – Rolleston on Dove parish (part))
Tutbury	Tutbury & Hanbury ward (part – Tutbury parish (part))
Weaver	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Ellastone, Mayfield, Okeover, Ramshorn, Stanton and Wootton)

Figure B2: East Staffordshire Borough Council's Proposals: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	3	5,915	1,972	-2	6,067	2,022	-1
Churnet	1	1,965	1,965	-2	2,051	2,051	0
Outwoods	1	1,984	1,984	-1	2,042	2,042	0
Rolleston on Dove	1	2,328	2,328	16	2,374	2,374	16
Tutbury	1	2,396	2,396	19	2,381	2,381	16
Weaver	1	1,656	1,656	-18	1,592	1,592	-22

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by East Staffordshire Borough Council.

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

The Borough Council also submitted an alternative proposal for four wards. Our draft recommendations detailed in figures 1 and 2 differ from those put forward in the Borough Council's alternative option in five wards, where the Council's proposals were as follows:

Figure B3: East Staffordshire Borough Council's Alternative Option: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	Burton ward; Broadway ward; Uxbridge ward
Churnet	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Denstone and Rocester)
Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	Horniglow ward (part); Outwoods ward (part – Outwoods parish (part)); Stretton ward (part – Stretton South Central parish ward as proposed of Stretton parish)
Outwoods	Outwoods ward (part – Anslow parish and Outwoods parish (part)); Tutbury & Hanbury ward (part – Tutbury parish (part)); Rolleston on Dove ward (part – Rolleston on Dove parish (part))
Rolleston on Dove	Rolleston on Dove ward (part – Rolleston on Dove parish (part))
Tutbury	Tutbury & Hanbury ward (part – Tutbury parish (part))
Weaver	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Ellastone, Mayfield, Okeover, Ramshorn, Stanton and Wootton)

Figure B4: East Staffordshire Borough Council's Alternative Option: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	3	5,915	1,972	-2	6,067	2,022	-1
Churnet	1	1,965	1,965	-2	2,051	2,051	0
Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	3	6,161	2,054	2	5,837	1,946	-5
Outwoods	1	2,133	2,133	6	2,211	2,211	8
Rolleston on Dove	1	2,155	2,155	7	2,201	2,201	8
Tutbury	1	2,232	2,232	11	2,217	2,217	8
Weaver	1	1,656	1,656	-18	1,592	1,592	-22

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by East Staffordshire Borough Council.

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

The Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups' Proposed Electoral Arrangements

Figure B5: Conservative and Liberal Democrats' proposal: Constituent Areas

Ward name	Constituent areas
Abbey	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Croxden, Leigh and Uttoxeter Rural)
Anglesey	Broadway ward (part); Uxbridge ward (part)
Bagots	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Abbotts Bromley, Blithfield and Kingstone)
Belvedere & Henhurst (in Burton upon Trent)	Branston ward (part – Branston parish (part)); Horniglow ward (part); Outwoods ward (part – Outwoods parish (part)); Shobnall ward (part); Victoria ward (part)
Branston	Branston ward (part – Branston parish (part) and Tatenhill parish (part))
Brizlincote (in Burton upon Trent)	Stapenhill ward (part); Winshill ward (part)
Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	Burton ward; Broadway ward (part); Uxbridge ward (part)
Churnet	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Denstone and Rocester)
Crown	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Draycott in the Clay, Marchington and Newborough)
Eton Park (in Burton upon Trent)	Eton ward; Stretton ward (part – Stretton parish (part)); Victoria ward (part)
Heath (in Uttoxeter)	Heath ward (part – Heath parish ward part) of Uttoxeter Town)
Highwood (in Uttoxeter)	Town ward (part – Town parish ward (part) of Uttoxeter Town)
Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	Horniglow ward (part)
Needwood	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Barton under Needwood, Dunstall and Wychnor)
Rolleston	Rolleston on Dove ward; Stretton ward (part – Stretton parish (part))
St Paul's (in Burton upon Trent)	Shobnall ward (part); Victoria ward (part)
Stapenhill (in Burton upon Trent)	Edgehill ward (part); Stapenhill ward (part); Waterside ward (part)
Stretton	Stretton ward (part – Stretton parish (part))
Town (in Uttoxeter)	Heath ward (part – Heath parish ward (part) of Uttoxeter Town); Town ward (part – Town parish ward (part) of Uttoxeter Town)
Tutbury Rural	Tutbury & Hanbury ward; Outwoods ward (part – Anslow parish and Outwoods parish (part))

Ward name	Constituent areas
Waterside & Edgehill (in Burton upon Trent)	Edgehill ward (part); Waterside ward (part)
Weaver	<i>Unchanged</i> (the parishes of Ellastone, Mayfield, Okeover, Ramshorn, Stanton and Wootton)
Winshill (in Burton upon Trent)	Winshill ward (part)
Yoxall	Yoxall ward (the parishes of Hoar Cross and Yoxall); Branston ward (part – Tatenhill parish (part))

Figure B6: Conservative and Liberal Democrats' proposal: Number of Councillors and Electors by Ward

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Abbey	1	2,150	2,150	12	2,110	2,110	7
Anglesey (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,274	2,137	12	4,093	2,047	4
Bagots	1	2,013	2,013	5	2,019	2,019	2
Belvedere & Henhurst (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,953	1,977	3	3,899	1,950	-1
Branston	3	4,041	1,347	-30	5,696	1,899	-4
Brizlincote (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,788	1,894	-1	3,964	1,982	1
Burton (in Burton upon Trent)	1	1,641	1,641	-14	1,974	1,974	0
Churnet	1	1,965	1,965	3	2,051	2,051	4
Crown	1	1,954	1,954	2	1,884	1,884	-4
Eton Park (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,550	1,775	-7	3,880	1,940	-2
Heath (in Uttoxeter)	2	3,988	1,994	4	3,856	1,928	-2
Highwood (in Uttoxeter)	1	1,730	1,730	-10	1,979	1,979	0
Horniglow (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,136	2,068	8	3,956	1,978	0
Needwood	2	3,901	1,951	2	3,799	1,900	-4
Rolleston	2	4,054	2,027	6	4,072	2,036	3
St Paul's (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,365	2,183	14	4,218	2,109	7
Stapenhill (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,192	2,096	9	4,089	2,045	4
Stretton	2	4,071	2,036	6	4,058	2,029	3
Town (in Uttoxeter)	2	3,057	1,529	-20	3,734	1,867	-5
Tutbury Rural	2	4,070	2,035	6	4,028	2,014	2
Waterside & Edgehill (in Burton upon Trent)	2	4,106	2,053	7	3,937	1,969	0
Weaver	1	1,656	1,656	-13	1,592	1,592	-19
Winshill (in Burton upon Trent)	2	3,960	1,980	3	4,004	2,002	2

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (1999)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average	Electorate (2004)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Yoxall	1	1,870	1,870	-2	1,940	1,940	-2
Totals	41	78,485	-	-	80,832	-	-
Averages	-	-	1,914	-	-	1,972	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Groups on East Staffordshire Borough Council and East Staffordshire Borough Council.

Notes: 1 The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

2 Modifications have been made to the projected electorate figures for Branston, Heath, Highwood and Town wards to reflect the Borough Council's forecasts, as detailed in paragraphs 36-40.

APPENDIX C

The Statutory Provisions

Local Government Act 1992: the Commission's Role

1 Section 13(2) of the Local Government Act 1992 places a duty on the Commission to undertake periodic electoral reviews of each principal local authority area in England, and to make recommendations to the Secretary of State. Section 13(3) provides that, so far as reasonably practicable, the first such review of any area should be undertaken not less than 10 years, and not more than 15 years, after this Commission's predecessor, the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC), submitted an initial electoral review report on the county within which that area, or the larger part of the area, was located. This timetable applies to districts within shire and metropolitan counties, although not to South Yorkshire and Tyne and Wear¹. Nor does the timetable apply to London boroughs; the 1992 Act is silent on the timing of periodic electoral reviews in Greater London. Nevertheless, these areas will be included in the Commission's review programme. The Commission has no power to review the electoral arrangements of the City of London.

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

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

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

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

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

4 Unlike the LGBC, the Commission may also make recommendations for changes in respect of electoral arrangements within parish and town council areas. Accordingly, in relation to parish or town councils within a principal authority's area, the Commission may make recommendations relating to:

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

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

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

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

7 In relation to shire districts:

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

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

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

- (d) the desirability of fixing ward boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (e) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular ward boundary.

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

- (f) the number or distribution of electors in the parish is such as to make a single election of parish councillors impracticable or inconvenient; and
- (g) it is desirable that any area or areas of the parish should be separately represented on the parish council.

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

- (h) any change in the number or distribution of electors of the parish which is likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration;
- (i) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable; and
- (j) any local ties which will be broken by the fixing of any particular boundaries.

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