

# Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for South Tyneside

Report to The Electoral Commission

*October 2003*

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Report no. 361

# Contents

	Page
What is The Boundary Committee For England?	5
Summary	7
1 Introduction	11
2 Current electoral arrangements	13
3 Draft recommendations	17
4 Responses to consultation	19
5 Analysis and final recommendations	21
6 What happens next?	33
Appendices	
A Final recommendations for South Tyneside: Detailed mapping	35
B Guide to interpreting the first draft of the electoral Order	37
C First draft of electoral change Order for South Tyneside	39



# What is The Boundary Committee for England?

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

Members of the Committee are:

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

Archie Gall (Director)

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

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



# Summary

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

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

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

- **in six of the 20 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the borough and two wards vary by more than 20%;**
- **by 2006 this situation is expected to worsen, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in eight wards and by more than 20% in two wards.**

Our main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements (see Tables 1 and 2 and paragraphs 84-85) are that:

- **South Tyneside Borough Council should have 54 councillors, six fewer than at present;**
- **there should be 18 wards, instead of 20 as at present;**
- **the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net reduction of two.**

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

- **In all of the proposed 18 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 10% from the borough average.**
- **This improved level of electoral equality is forecast to continue with no wards expected to vary by more than 9% from the average for the borough in 2006.**

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

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

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

*Table 1: Final recommendations: Summary*

<b>Ward name</b>	<b>Number of councillors</b>	<b>Constituent areas</b>	<b>Large map reference</b>
1 Beacon & Bents	3	Part of Beacon & Bents ward; part of Rekendyke ward	Map 2
2 Bede	3	Part of Bede ward; part of Biddick Hall ward; part of Fellgate & Hedworth ward; part of Tynedock & Simonside ward	Map 1
3 Boldon Colliery	3	Part of Boldon Colliery ward; part of Cleadon & East Boldon ward	Maps 1 and 2
4 Brockley & Biddick	3	Part of All Saints ward; part of Biddick Hall ward	Maps 1 and 2
5 Cleadon & East Boldon	3	Part of Boldon Colliery ward; part of Cleadon & East Boldon ward; part of Cleadon Park ward	Maps 1 and 2
6 Cleadon Park	3	Part of Cleadon Park ward; part of West Park ward; part of Whiteleas ward	Map 2
7 Fellgate & Hedworth	3	Part of Fellgate & Hedworth ward	Map 1
8 Harton	3	Part of Harton ward; part of West Park ward	Map 2
9 Hebburn North	3	Part of Hebburn Quay ward; part of Monkton ward	Map 1
10 Hebburn South	3	Part of Hebburn Quay ward; part of Hebburn South ward	Map 1
11 Horsley Hill	3	Part of Beacon & Bents ward; part of Horsley Hill ward; part of Westoe ward	Map 2
12 Monkton	3	Part of Hebburn South ward; part of Monkton ward; part of Primrose ward	Map 1
13 Primrose	3	Part of Bede ward; part of Hebburn Quay ward; part of Primrose ward	Map 1
14 Simonside & Rekendyke	3	Part of Rekendyke ward; part of Tyne Dock & Simonside ward	Maps 1 and 2
15 West Park	3	Part of All Saints ward; part of Westoe ward; part of West Park ward	Map 2
16 Westoe	3	Part of Horsley Hill ward; part of Rekendyke ward; part of Westoe ward; part of West Park ward	Map 2
17 Whitburn & Marsden	3	Part of Cleadon & East Boldon ward; part of Cleadon Park ward; part of Whitburn & Marsden ward	Map 2
18 Whiteleas	3	Part of All Saints ward; part of Whiteleas ward	Map 2

*Notes:*

- 1) *The borough is unparished.*
- 2) *The wards on the above table are illustrated on Map 2 and the large maps.*

Table 2: Final recommendations for South Tyneside

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 Beacon & Bents	3	7,094	2,365	9	6,930	2,310	6
2 Bede	3	6,147	2,049	-5	6,157	2,052	-6
3 Boldon Colliery	3	7,169	2,390	10	7,099	2,366	9
4 Brockley & Biddick	3	6,535	2,178	0	6,640	2,213	2
5 Cleadon & East Boldon	3	7,060	2,353	9	6,983	2,328	7
6 Cleadon Park	3	5,966	1,989	-8	6,049	2,016	-7
7 Fellgate & Hedworth	3	6,153	2,051	-5	6,316	2,105	-3
8 Harton	3	6,836	2,279	5	6,779	2,260	4
9 Hebburn North	3	6,261	2,087	-4	6,281	2,094	-4
10 Hebburn South	3	6,316	2,105	-3	6,259	2,086	-4
11 Horsley Hill	3	6,115	2,038	-6	6,827	2,276	5
12 Monkton	3	6,584	2,195	1	6,584	2,195	1
13 Primrose	3	6,468	2,156	-1	6,468	2,156	-1
14 Simonside & Rekendyke	3	6,611	2,204	2	6,514	2,171	0
15 West Park	3	6,346	2,115	-2	6,252	2,084	-4
16 Westoe	3	6,822	2,274	5	6,765	2,255	4
17 Whitburn & Marsden	3	5,989	1,996	-8	5,912	1,971	-9
18 Whiteleas	3	6,591	2,197	1	6,534	2,178	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>117,074</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>117,349</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,168</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,173</b>	<b>-</b>

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



# 1 Introduction

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

2 This is our first review of the electoral arrangements of South Tyneside. South Tyneside's last review was undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, which reported to the Secretary of State in October 1979 (Report no. 355).

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

- the statutory criteria contained in section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended by SI 2001 No. 3692), i.e. the need to:
  - reflect the identities and interests of local communities;
  - secure effective and convenient local government; and
  - achieve equality of representation.
- Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972.
- The general duty set out in section 71(1) of the Race Relations Act 1996 and the Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, May 2002), i.e. to have due regard to:
  - eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
  - promote equality of opportunity; and
  - promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

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

5 Our task is to make recommendations on the number of councillors who should serve on a council, and the number, boundaries and names of wards.

6 The broad objective of PERs is to achieve, so far as possible, equal representation across the district as a whole. Schemes which would result in, or retain, an electoral imbalance of over 10% in any ward will have to be fully justified. Any imbalances of 20% or more should only arise in the most exceptional circumstances, and will require the strongest justification.

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

8 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 there is no limit to the number of councillors which can be returned from each metropolitan borough/city ward. However, the figure must be divisible by three. In practice, all metropolitan borough/city wards currently return three councillors. Where our recommendation is for multi-member wards, we believe that the number

of councillors to be returned from each ward should not exceed three, other than in very exceptional circumstances. Numbers in excess of three could lead to an unacceptable dilution of accountability to the electorate and we have not, to date, prescribed any wards with more than three councillors.

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

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

## 2 Current electoral arrangements

11 The metropolitan borough of South Tyneside is situated to the south of the River Tyne and bounded by the North Sea to its east, and to the west and south by the boroughs of Gateshead and Sunderland. The borough incorporates the towns of South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn but also a number of small villages and an attractive coastline, which includes a two-mile stretch managed by the National Trust. The borough is unparished.

12 The electorate of the borough is 117,074 (December 2001). The Council presently has 60 members who are elected from 20 wards. All wards are represented by three-members.

13 At present, each councillor represents an average of 1,951 electors, which the Borough Council forecasts will increase to 1,956 by the year 2006 if the present number of councillors is maintained. Due to demographic and other changes over the past two decades, the number of electors per councillor in six of the 20 wards varies by more than 10% from the borough average and two wards by more than 20%. The worst imbalances are in Cleadon & East Boldon and Tyne Dock & Simonside wards where each of the three councillors represents 25% more and 25% fewer electors than the borough average respectively.

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

*Map 1: Existing wards in South Tyneside*

Table 3: Existing electoral arrangements

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2001)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2006)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1 All Saints	3	5,576	1,859	-5	5,534	1,845	-5
2 Beacon & Bents	3	5,779	1,926	-1	6,646	2,215	14
3 Bede	3	5,323	1,774	-9	5,283	1,761	-10
4 Biddick Hall	3	5,103	1,701	-13	5,065	1,688	-13
5 Boldon Colliery	3	6,926	2,309	18	6,874	2,291	17
6 Cleadon & East Boldon	3	7,301	2,434	25	7,247	2,416	24
7 Cleadon Park	3	5,762	1,921	-2	5,719	1,906	-2
8 Fellgate & Hedworth	3	6,662	2,221	14	6,647	2,216	14
9 Harton	3	5,478	1,826	-6	5,437	1,812	-7
10 Hebburn Quay	3	6,103	2,034	4	6,057	2,019	3
11 Hebburn South	3	4,832	1,611	-17	4,796	1,599	-18
12 Horsley Hill	3	6,072	2,024	4	6,027	2,009	3
13 Monkton	3	6,453	2,151	10	6,405	2,135	9
14 Primrose	3	6,455	2,152	10	6,612	2,204	13
15 Rekendyke	3	5,589	1,863	-5	5,547	1,849	-5
16 Tyne Dock & Simonside	3	4,370	1,457	-25	4,337	1,446	-26
17 Westoe	3	6,436	2,145	10	6,388	2,129	9
18 West Park	3	5,711	1,904	-2	5,668	1,889	-3
19 Whiteleas	3	5,754	1,918	-2	5,711	1,904	-2
20 Whitburn & Marsden	3	5,389	1,796	-8	5,349	1,783	-9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>117,074</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>117,349</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Averages</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,951</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,956</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. For example, in 2001, electors in Tyne Dock & Simonside ward were relatively over-represented by 25%, while electors in Cleadon & East Boldon ward were relatively under-represented by 25%. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.



### 3 Draft recommendations

15 During Stage One six representations were received, including borough-wide schemes from South Tyneside Borough Council, South Tyneside Liberal Democrats and South Shields Progressive Association. We also received representations from South Shields Conservative Association, a residents association and a local resident. In the light of these representations and evidence available to us, we reached preliminary conclusions which were set out in our report, *Draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for South Tyneside*.

16 Our draft recommendations were based on the Borough Council's proposals. However, we found it necessary to move away from the Borough Council's scheme in a number of areas in order to secure the correct allocation of councillors in the four distinct areas of the borough and to achieve an improved level of electoral equality. We proposed that:

- South Tyneside Borough Council should be served by 54 councillors, compared with the current 60, representing 18 wards, two fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.

*Draft recommendation*

South Tyneside Borough Council should comprise 54 councillors, serving 18 wards.

17 Our proposals would have resulted in significant improvements in electoral equality, with the number of electors per councillor in 17 of the 18 wards varying by no more than 10% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality was forecast to improve further, with no ward varying by more than 10% from the average in 2006.



## 4 Responses to consultation

18 During the consultation on the draft recommendations report, 71 representations were received. A list of all respondents is available from us on request. All representations may be inspected at our offices and those of South Tyneside Borough Council.

### South Tyneside Borough Council

19 The Borough Council proposed two boundary amendments and four ward name amendments.

### South Shields Progressive Association

20 South Shields Progressive Association proposed a number of amendments in the South Shields area.

### Other representations

21 A further 69 representations were received in response to our draft recommendations from an MP, three local political groups, four local organisations, four councillors and 57 residents.

22 South Shields Conservative Association objected to the proposed boundaries of Horsley Hill ward and proposed boundary amendments to the proposed Westoe ward. South Shields Constituency Labour Party generally supported the draft recommendations but proposed two boundary amendments. Horsley Hill Labour Party objected to our proposals in the south of the proposed Horsley Hill ward. David Miliband MP objected to our proposals in the Horsley Hill and Simonside areas. Residents Reviving Rekendyke objected to our proposals in their area supported by a 27-signature petition. Trinity House Social Centre proposed that the name Rekendyke be maintained as a ward name in the area. Horsley Hill Residents Association objected to our proposals in their area. South Tyneside Local Government Committee generally supported our proposals but objected to our proposals in the Horsley Hill and Simonside areas.

23 Councillor Malcolm generally supported our proposals but objected to our proposals in the Horsley Hill and Simonside areas. His submission was supported by a petition for the Horsley Hill area, signed by 101 local residents, and 20 tear-off slips and by a petition for the Simonside area, signed by 242 local residents, and 144 tear-off slips. We received a further submission from Councillor Malcolm jointly signed with Councillors Meeks and Hobson which supported two areas of our proposals in the Westoe area but objected to our proposals in the Horsley Hill area. Councillor Clare objected to our proposals in the Simonside area proposing that any "additional equalisation should come from the reconstitution of the boundaries within the wards of Hebburn and Jarrow". Councillor Kidd, in a letter also signed by Councillors Forster and Waggott commented on our proposed Brockley & Biddick ward.

24 We received 23 tear-off slips directly objecting to our proposals in the Simonside area and 21 tear-off slips objecting to our proposals in the Horsley Hill area. Two local residents objected to our proposals in the All Saints area while a further resident forwarded proforma letters containing 62 signatures also objecting to our proposals in the area. A local resident forwarded a petition numbering 177 signatures objecting to our proposals in the Harton Moor area. Two local residents objected to our proposals in the Simonside area, two local residents objected to our proposals in the Rekendyke area, three local residents supported the South Shields Progressive Association proposals for 16 wards, a local resident supported our proposals in the Westoe area and a further resident commented generally about voting in the area.



## 5 Analysis and final recommendations

25 As described earlier, our prime objective in considering the most appropriate electoral arrangements for South Tyneside is to achieve electoral equality. In doing so we have regard to section 13(5) of the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended): the need to secure effective and convenient local government; reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and secure the matters referred to in paragraph 3(2)(a) of Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 (equality of representation). Schedule 11 to the Local Government Act 1972 refers to the number of electors per councillor being “as nearly as may be, the same in every ward of the district or borough”.

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

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

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

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

### Electorate forecasts

30 Since 1975 there has been a 9% decrease in the electorate of South Tyneside borough. The Borough Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2006, projecting an increase in the electorate of approximately 0.25% from 117,074 to 117,349 over the five-year period from 2001 to 2006. It expects most of the growth to be in Beacon & Bents ward. In order to prepare these forecasts, the Council estimated rates and locations of housing development with regard to structure and local plans, the expected rate of building over the five-year period and assumed occupancy rates.

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

### Council size

32 South Tyneside Borough Council presently has 60 members. Both the Borough Council and Liberal Democrats proposed a council of 54 members, which constitutes a reduction of six members. The South Shields Progressive Association proposed a council of 48 members, 12 fewer than at present, serving 16 wards. The Borough Council stated that although there had

been a general reduction in the number of council meetings since the introduction of the new management structure a significant amount of councillors' time is taken up by informal meetings and briefings. It argued that under the new executive arrangements all councillors carry out an important representational role and that the role of councillors had changed significantly since the last electoral review in 1979. It stated that 50.2% of those that responded to its consultation exercise had specifically supported an 18-ward option and that only 55% of those that favoured neither of its consultation proposals had supported a solution involving fewer than 18 wards. It argued that although councillors had lost their traditional committee roles, non-executive members continued to have a significant role in the formulation of policies and strategies. It stated that it was also likely that the number of members on the three main Regulatory/Appeals Committees would be reduced from 17 to 15 as part of the modernisation process and that the experience of the pilot arrangements had shown that smaller committees were required to improve efficiency.

33 South Shields Progressive Association stated that comparisons with the traditional committee system indicate a reduction in the role of councillors in decision making and that there has been a 39% reduction in the number of committees with the removal of delegated responsibilities. It also outlined the results of its own consultation exercise which showed 63% of those responding in support of a 16-ward option.

34 We carefully considered the evidence submitted as to the most appropriate council size for South Tyneside. We noted the proposals of the South Shields Progressive Association for a reduction in council size of 12 members but in the light of alternative options have not found the level of argumentation sufficiently compelling to propose such a large reduction. We have also noted that a reduction in council size to 54 members has the support of the majority of the council in the form of the Council and Liberal Democrat submissions and has secured a degree of support during the Council's consultation exercise.

35 During Stage Three we received representations from three local residents supporting the South Shields Progressive Association's Stage One proposal for 48 councillors representing 16 wards.

36 We carefully considered the representations received but noted that they added no further argumentation as to how the council would function under 48 councillors. Therefore we propose confirming our draft proposals for 54 councillors representing 18 wards.

## Electoral arrangements

37 As already explained, both the Borough Council and Liberal Democrats proposed a council of 54 members, which constitutes a reduction of six members. While the schemes were different, they both sought to keep the 'distinct' areas of Hebburn, Jarrow, South Shields and the Villages separate. However, we noted that both schemes gave these areas the incorrect allocation of councillors. Under the Council's proposals Hebburn was allocated nine members, but was only entitled to eight, Jarrow was allocated nine members, but was only entitled to eight, South Shields was allocated 27, but was entitled to 28. Only the Villages area were given their correct allocation, of nine members. The Liberal Democrats did not provide the correct allocation in any of the areas. Under its proposals Hebburn was allocated nine members, but was only entitled to eight, Jarrow was allocated nine members, but was only entitled to eight, South Shields was allocated 27, but was entitled to 28, and the Villages were allocated nine members, but were entitled to 10. We noted that the proposals of the Borough Council were set out in response to the results of its public consultation, the Liberal Democrats proposals were set out in response to the support in the Borough Council's consultation exercise for an 18-ward structure and the South Shields Progressive Association consulted on a 16-ward option. We could not consider the warding arrangements of the South Shields Progressive Association having accepted the argument for a council size of 54 members, as their proposals were based on a different council

size to the two other full submissions, and as such, adopting its warding pattern would result in unacceptable levels of electoral inequality.

38 We noted that under both schemes, in addition to the misallocation of councillors, high levels of electoral inequality remained. Therefore, we found it necessary to look at the boundaries of the 'distinct' areas, Hebburn, Jarrow, South Shields and the Villages. We calculated that we would need to transfer approximately 2,000 electors from the South Shields area to the Hebburn and Jarrow areas and redistribute them accordingly. This also meant the consequential redistribution of electors in the South Shields area in order to achieve acceptable levels of electoral equality.

39 When considering the appropriate warding pattern for South Tyneside we were mindful that any transfer of electors from the South Shields area to the Hebburn and Jarrow areas would have to reflect the statutory criteria and would have an effect on proposed warding patterns across the borough. Having looked at possible areas we concluded that the area of the current Biddick Hall ward to the south of John Reid Road and north of the railway line and the area of the current Tyne Dock & Simonside ward west of Drummond Crescent and Dame Flora Robson Avenue would best facilitate this transfer. We therefore carefully considered the respective merits of the schemes submitted to us by the Borough Council and the Liberal Democrats and concluded that the Borough Council's proposals would better facilitate a borough-wide warding pattern than those of the Liberal Democrats.

40 At Stage Three we received a number of objections to our proposals in the South Shields area, particularly in the Simonside area, proposals designed to secure the correct allocation of councillors in the Hebburn, Jarrow and South Shields areas.

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

- I. Bede, Fellgate & Hedworth, Hebburn Quay, Hebburn South, Monkton and Primrose wards (pages 23, 24, 25 and 26);
- II. All Saints, Beacon & Bents, Biddick Hall, Cleadon Park, Harton, Horsley Hill, Rekendyke, Tyne Dock & Simonside, Westoe, West Park and Whiteleas wards (pages 26, 27, 28 and 29);
- III. Boldon Colliery, Cleadon & East Boldon and Whitburn & Marsden wards (pages 29 and 30).

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

### **Bede, Fellgate & Hedworth, Hebburn Quay, Hebburn South, Monkton and Primrose wards**

43 These six wards are located in the west and south-west of the borough. Hebburn Quay, Hebburn South and Monkton wards form the Hebburn area and currently have 4% more, 17% fewer and 10% more electors per councillor than the borough average (3% more, 18% fewer and 9% more in 2006).

44 Bede, Fellgate & Hedworth and Primrose wards form the Jarrow area and currently have 9% fewer, 14% more and 10% more electors per councillor than the borough average (10% fewer, 14% more and 13% more in 2006).

45 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed a six-ward configuration for the area. Its proposed Hebburn North and Hebburn South wards were based on the existing wards. The Borough Council proposed that the eastern boundary be amended slightly to run to the west of

Marine Drive south of Monkton Lane. It also proposed transferring the area of the current Monkton ward north of Victoria Road East, west of Black Road, Ralph Street and Railway Street to its proposed Hebburn North ward. It proposed that the boundary then run east along the railway line and north on High Lane Row and on to the River Tyne. Its proposed Monkton ward comprised that part of the current ward to the south of Victoria Road East, south of and including St Oswalds Junior and Infant School, west of Beech Street and south of the railway line. It also comprised the area to the south of Albert Road, west of Bede Burn Road and the area west of Featherstone Grove and Durham Grove in the current Primrose ward and that part of the current Hebburn South ward previously mentioned.

46 The Borough Council's proposed Fellgate & Hedworth comprised the current ward less the area to the north of Hedworth Lane which it proposed be transferred to its proposed Bede ward. Its proposed Primrose ward comprised the current Primrose ward less the areas to be transferred to the proposed Monkton ward and an area to the east of the river, Springwell Road and Monkton Terrace which it proposed be transferred to its proposed Bede ward. It also proposed that the area to the west of Staple Road in the current Bede ward, to the east of High Lane Road in the current Hebburn Quay ward and to the north of Hedgeley Road, to the east of West Street and to the west of Hazel Street in the current Monkton ward, be transferred to its proposed Primrose ward. Its proposed Bede ward comprised the areas previously mentioned plus an area of the current Tyne Dock & Simonside ward to the north of Jarrow Road.

47 The Liberal Democrats proposed a similar configuration of six wards for this area: Bede, Fellgate & Hedworth, Hebburn North, Hebburn South, Monkton and Primrose.

48 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. As mentioned previously we noted that both full schemes for the area did not provide for the correct allocation of councillors for the Hebburn and Jarrow areas. We therefore concluded that, in order to secure the correct allocation for the area and to improve upon the poor levels of electoral equality, we would be required to transfer approximately 2,000 electors from either the South Shields area or the Villages area. Having considered the options we concluded that the transfer of electors from the South Shields area would consequentially secure the correct allocation of councillors in the Hebburn and Jarrow areas and South Shields area. We proposed basing our draft recommendations for the area on the proposals of the Borough Council as we were of the view that they would better facilitate the proposals for the borough as a whole. We were also of the view that the Council's proposals would better facilitate the transfer of electors from the South Shields area. However, we proposed a number of boundary amendments to redistribute the extra 2,000 electors in the area in order to secure good levels of electoral equality and better reflect community identity.

49 In order to secure the correct allocation for the Hebburn and Jarrow areas we proposed transferring the area of the Borough Council's proposed Brockley & Biddick ward to the west of the railway line and the area of the Council's proposed Simonside ward to the west of Drummond Crescent and Avrey Avenue to the proposed Bede ward. While our proposal to transfer electors from the proposed Simonside ward was recognised as not being ideal we considered that it was the least damaging option available to us in order to secure the correct allocation of councillors in the borough under a council size of 54. We also proposed that the western boundary of the proposed Bede ward be amended to run north along the River Don, Leam Lane, the A19 and Priory Road as we considered that this would maintain the properties to the west of Priory Road within the same ward and would not isolate the properties south of Cemetery Road from the remainder of the proposed Bede ward linking them to a geographically closer area. Both of these areas would therefore be transferred to the proposed Primrose ward.

50 We proposed amending the proposed Primrose ward further in order to secure an improved level of electoral equality and to better reflect communities in the area. We proposed that the properties to the west of Kitchener Terrace and Monkton Burn and the properties between the A185 and the railway be transferred from the proposed Primrose ward to the proposed Monkton

ward and the properties to the south of the railway line to the east of Lumley Court and Coppergate Court be transferred to the proposed Hebburn North ward in order to better reflect the statutory criteria. We also proposed transferring the area to the north of Victoria Road East which the Council proposed placing in its proposed Monkton ward in the proposed Hebburn North ward in order to provide for an improved level of electoral equality and to provide for a more identifiable boundary in the area. We proposed a boundary amendment between the Council's proposed Hebburn North and Hebburn South wards in order to secure an improved level of electoral equality in the area. We proposed that the boundary be amended to run to the north of Alfred Street and St Rollox Street and then south to Victoria Road West.

51 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Bede, Fellgate & Hedworth and Hebburn North wards would have 5% fewer, 5% fewer and 4% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (6% fewer, 3% fewer and 4% fewer in 2006).

52 The proposed Hebburn South, Monkton and Primrose wards would have 3% fewer, 1% more and 1% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (4% fewer, 1% more and 1% fewer in 2006).

53 At Stage Three the Borough Council requested that we re-examine our proposal to transfer the Australia estate from the current Biddick Hall ward to the proposed Bede ward, arguing that the area has a historical association with South Shields. South Shields Constituency Labour Party objected to our proposal to transfer electors from the current Tyne Dock & Simonside ward, arguing that these electors form a close-knit community and that our proposals crossed a major trunk road, the A1300. They proposed that these electors be maintained within a proposed Simonside ward and that the boundary revert back to the A1300. They proposed that electors to the west of Chesterton Road and north of Galsworthy Road be transferred to the proposed Bede ward from the proposed Brockley & Biddick ward and that an area to the east of the A194 and south of Reed Street be transferred from the proposed Simonside ward to the proposed West Park ward. David Miliband MP also objected to the proposed transfer of electors from the Simonside area to the proposed Bede ward arguing that if the electors to the north of the A1300 were retained in Simonside ward it would only vary by 7% from the borough average.

54 Councillor Malcolm objected to the proposed transfer of electors from the proposed Simonside ward to the proposed Bede ward on community grounds. He argued that our proposals would split a strong community link in the area. He proposed as an alternative that electors to the west of Chesterton Road in the proposed Brockley & Biddick ward be transferred to the proposed Bede ward. His submission also included a petition containing 242 signatures and 144 tear-off slips objecting to our proposals in the area. Councillor Clare also objected to our proposal to transfer electors from the proposed Simonside ward to the proposed Bede ward arguing that Simonside was a strong community and does not have an established relationship with the Bede area. Councillor Kidd, in a submission also signed by Councillors Forster and Waggott, objected to the transfer of electors from the current Biddick Hall ward to the proposed Bede ward. South Tyneside Local Government Committee objected to the proposed transfer of electors from the proposed Simonside ward to the proposed Bede ward, as did two local residents. We also received 23 tear-off slips directly objecting to these proposals.

55 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We note the objections that we have received to our proposal to transfer an area of Simonside to the proposed Bede ward and have carefully considered the alternative proposal we have received. However, while we consider the alternative proposal to have some merit we have not been persuaded that it would any better reflect the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations. We have also not been persuaded that it would secure any more support in the Brockley & Biddick area than our proposals have in the Simonside area. Given that we have not been persuaded by the argumentation in this area we propose amending the eastern boundary of the proposed Simonside ward in order to provide for a more identifiable boundary (mentioned in the next section). Therefore, were we to adopt the alternative proposal this would result in the

proposed Simonside ward having an electoral variance of 11% by 2006. While we would prefer not to transfer electors between different areas of the borough, as stated in the draft recommendations, this has been necessary in order to secure the correct allocation of councillors across the borough.

56 We have also noted the submission of Councillors Kidd, Forster and Waggott. Again, while we have some sympathy we cannot view any area in isolation and must consider our proposals for the borough as a whole. As previously stated we would have preferred not to have transferred electors between areas in the borough but found this necessary in order to provide for the correct allocation of councillors across the borough.

57 Under our final recommendations the proposed Bede, Fellgate & Hedworth and Hebburn North wards would have 5% fewer, 5% fewer and 4% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (6% fewer, 3% fewer and 4% fewer in 2006).

58 The proposed Hebburn South, Monkton and Primrose wards would have 3% fewer, 1% more and 1% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (4% fewer, 1% more and 1% fewer in 2006).

### **All Saints, Beacon & Bents, Biddick Hall, Cleadon Park, Harton, Horsley Hill, Rekendyke, Tyne Dock & Simonside, Westoe, West Park and Whiteleas wards**

59 These eleven wards are located in the east of the borough and form the South Shields area. All Saints, Beacon & Bents and Biddick Hall wards currently have 5% fewer, 1% fewer and 13% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (5% fewer, 14% more and 13% fewer in 2006).

60 Cleadon Park, Harton, Horsley Hill and Rekendyke wards currently have 2% fewer, 6% fewer, 4% more and 5% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (2% fewer, 7% fewer, 3% more and 5% fewer in 2006).

61 Tyne Dock & Simonside, Westoe, West Park and Whiteleas wards currently have 25% fewer, 10% more, 2% fewer and 2% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (26% fewer, 9% more, 3% fewer and 2% fewer in 2006).

62 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed a nine-ward configuration for this area. Its proposed Brockley & Biddick ward comprised the majority of the current Biddick Hall ward less the area to the east of Benton Road and Boldon Lane which it proposed be transferred to its proposed Whiteleas ward. Its proposed Simonside ward comprised the majority of the current Tyne Dock & Simonside ward less the area it proposed transferring to its Bede ward. Additionally the proposed Simonside ward also included that area of the current Rekendyke ward to the west of Dean Road and to the south of Tudor Road and St Mark's Way. It proposed that the area to the north of Tudor Road, St Mark's Way and Chichester Road in the current Rekendyke ward be transferred to its proposed Beacon & Bents ward which would additionally comprise the majority of the current ward less the area to the south of Erskine Road east of the cemetery which it proposed transferring to its Horsley Hill ward. It proposed that the area to the south of Chichester Road be transferred to its proposed Westoe ward which also comprised the majority of the current ward less the area to the west of Marlborough Street north of Hepscott Terrace which it proposed transferring to its proposed West Park ward. It proposed that the area to the east of King George Road, north of Harton Grove in the current West Park ward and the area to the west of Highfield Road in the current Horsley Hill ward be transferred to its proposed West Park ward.

63 The Liberal Democrats proposed a similar configuration of nine wards for this area. Residents Reviving Rekendyke objected to the Borough Council's proposals arguing that they damaged a number of recognised communities. South Shields Conservative Association

commented on the Borough Council's 19-ward consultation proposal in the area and objected to the Council's 18-ward consultation proposals.

64 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. Given the proposals to transfer approximately 2,000 electors from this area to the Hebburn and Jarrow areas in order to secure the correct allocation across the borough it proved necessary to make a number of boundary amendments to secure acceptable levels of electoral equality. We proposed basing our draft recommendations on the proposals of the Borough Council as we considered that they would provide for the best balance of the statutory criteria in the area. We noted that the Council's proposed Simonside ward, less the area to be transferred to the proposed Bede ward, would secure an improved level of electoral equality. We therefore proposed adopting a modified Simonside ward in the area. However, we also noted that the Council's proposed Brockley & Biddick ward, less the area to be transferred to the proposed Bede ward, would not now secure an acceptable level of electoral equality. Therefore we proposed the transfer of those electors to the west of Egerton Road in the Borough Council's proposed West Park ward to the proposed Brockley & Biddick ward. We also proposed that Heaton Gardens be transferred to the proposed Brockley & Biddick ward from the City Council's proposed Whiteleas ward.

65 We proposed the transfer of those electors to the west of Hartington Terrace in the Council's proposed Westoe ward and north of Harton Lane, west of the A1018 in the proposed Harton ward to the proposed West Park ward in order to improve electoral equality. We also proposed the transfer of those electors to the south of Westmorland Road and Norfolk Road in the Council's proposed Horsley Hill ward to its proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward in order to secure improved levels of electoral equality in both wards. We carefully considered the proposals of Residents Reviving Rekendyke but were of the view that we could not consider any area in isolation and have looked to balance the statutory criteria in the area as a whole.

66 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Beacon & Bents, Brockley & Biddick, Cleadon Park, Harton and Horsley Hill wards would have 9% more, equal to, 7% fewer, 5% more and 11% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (6% more, 2% more, 6% fewer, 4% more and equal to in 2006).

67 The proposed Simonside, West Park, Westoe and Whiteleas wards would have 2% fewer, 2% more, 3% more and 1% more electors per councillor than the borough average (4% fewer, equal to, 2% more and equal to in 2006).

68 At Stage Three the Borough Council objected to our proposal to transfer electors from the current Horsley Hill ward to the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward. It argued that this proposal would break up an established community. It also proposed the transfer of 78 electors from the southern side of Harton Lane from the proposed Cleadon ward to the proposed West Park ward arguing that the boundary runs along the centre of the road when more logically it should run to the rear of the properties. It proposed that Simonside ward be renamed Simonside & Rekendyke ward, that Brockley & Biddick ward be renamed Biddick & All Saints ward and that Beacon & Bents ward be renamed St Hilda ward.

69 South Shields Progressive Association commented on the proposed Simonside, West Park, Cleadon Park, Westoe and Harton wards. It proposed that the Metro railway line be utilised between the proposed Simonside and West Park wards and between the proposed Simonside and Westoe wards. It proposed that the properties to the south west of Dean Road be transferred to the proposed West Park ward from the proposed Simonside ward and that the properties to the east of Chichester Road in the proposed Simonside ward be transferred to the proposed Westoe ward. It also proposed that the properties of the southern side of Harton Lane be transferred to the proposed West Park ward. It proposed that the boundary between the proposed West Park and Westoe wards be redrawn to run along Blagdon Avenue and north along Banbury Terrace. It further proposed the transfer of electors from the proposed Harton ward to the proposed Cleadon Park ward in order to improve electoral equality. It proposed that

those electors bounded by Prince Edward Road, Centenary Avenue and East Avenue be transferred to the proposed Cleadon Park ward.

70 South Shields Conservative Association supported the proposed boundaries for Horsley Hill ward. It proposed that the area of the proposed Westoe ward bounded by Dean Road to the south, Chichester Road to the north and Westoe Road to the east be transferred to the proposed Simonside ward, arguing that people in the area share ties with the Simonside area. It also proposed that the area between the west of Warwick Road and south of Cauldwell be retained in the proposed Westoe ward, arguing that our proposals created a 'ragged' boundary and would cause confusion. It stated that it would be logical that the area bounded by Cauldwell Avenue, Mortimer Road and King Georges Road be transferred to the proposed Westoe ward which would create a 'neat boundary'. They further proposed that to compensate for this the area to the south of Dean Road could be transferred from the proposed Simonside ward to the proposed West Park ward. It argued that their proposals better preserved local identities and more natural boundaries.

71 South Shields Constituency Labour Party objected to our proposal to transfer the Westmoreland area of Horsley Hill to the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward. They argued that the proposal split an identified community and that given the village nature of the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward the boundary should revert to the A1300 trunk road. Horsley Hill Labour Party supported the inclusion of the Westoe Crown development and the area to the east of Ecclestone Road within the proposed Horsley Hill ward. However, they objected to the proposal to transfer the Westmoreland area to the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward and argued that the proposal would split a close-knit community. David Miliband MP also objected to our proposals in the Horsley Hill area for similar reasons, as did South Tyneside Local Government Committee. Horsley Hill Residents Association also objected to our proposal to transfer the Westmoreland area to the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward but supported the proposed inclusion of the Westoe Colliery Crown estate within the proposed Horsley Hill ward. Councillor Malcolm objected to our proposal for the Westmoreland area and forwarded a petition of objection with ten signatures and 20 tear-off slips also objecting to this proposal. A further submission from Councillor Malcolm co-signed by Councillors Meeks and Hobson also objected to our proposal to transfer the Westmoreland area to the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward. In addition we also received 21 tear-off slips, also objecting to this proposal.

72 We received two proforma letters directly and were forwarded 62 signed proforma letters objecting to our proposals in the All Saints area. They proposed that we reconsider our proposals, arguing that the present ward boundaries were sensible and that the community lacks association with surrounding areas. We received a petition with 177 signatures objecting to the transfer of electors from the Harton Moor area in the current West Park ward to the proposed Cleadon Park ward, arguing that the area has benefited from a close relationship with its local councillors. Residents Reviving Rekendyke objected to our proposals in their area and proposed that the Rekendyke name be utilised. The submission was supported by a petition numbering 26 signatures. Trinity House Social Centre also proposed that the Rekendyke name be retained arguing that it is very much part of the borough's heritage. A further two local residents also objected to our proposals in the Rekendyke area. A local resident supported our proposed West Park ward.

73 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three. We note the objections to the proposed boundary between Horsley Hill and Whitburn & Marsden wards and have been persuaded that the boundary does split an identifiable community. We are also of the view that the A1300 forms a barrier between the two areas of the proposed ward and therefore propose that the boundary between the two wards follow this road. We have also noted the proposals that the properties on Harton Road which we propose be part of Cleadon ward be transferred to the proposed West Park ward. We are of the view that this amendment would better reflect community identity in the area than our draft recommendations and therefore propose adopting it as part of our final recommendations. We have also noted the proposals of

South Shields Progressive Association in the area and have been persuaded that their proposals to transfer the area to the west of the Metroline in the proposed West Park ward to the proposed Simonside ward and the area to the west of the Metroline in the proposed Simonside ward to the proposed Westoe ward would provide for a more identifiable boundary in the area. We have considered its other proposals in the area, and as mentioned previously, propose amending our proposals between the proposed West Park and Cleadon wards and Horsley Hill and Whitburn & Marsden wards. However, we have not been persuaded by the levels of argumentation provided to adopt its proposals between the proposed West Park and Westoe wards and between the proposed Harton and Cleadon wards. Similarly we have not been sufficiently persuaded by the level of argumentation provided by South Shields Conservative Association in the area and are not persuaded that the proposals would better reflect the statutory criteria than our draft recommendations.

74 We note the objections of local residents to our proposals in the All Saints area. However, while we sympathise with the views received we cannot view any area in isolation and must consider our proposals for the area as a whole. Similarly, while we also have sympathy with the views of local residents on the Harton Moor estate we note that if we were to transfer the area to the proposed West Park ward the proposed Cleadon Park ward would have 17% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average by 2006, a variance that we consider to be too large in such a built-up area given the reasonable levels of electoral equality that can otherwise be achieved in the area. We note the representations received regarding the Rekendyke area and while ideally we would wish to include the entire area within a single ward, as stated previously, we cannot view any area in isolation. However, given the proposals received, we are of the view that changing the proposed ward name of Simonside to Simonside & Rekendyke would better reflect the composite parts of the ward. We have also considered the other proposed ward name changes but have not been persuaded that they would secure local support.

75 Under our final recommendations the proposed Beacon & Bents, Brockley & Biddick, Cleadon Park, Harton and Horsley Hill wards would have 9% more, equal to, 8% fewer, 5% more and 6% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (6% more, 2% more, 7% fewer, 4% more and 5% more in 2006).

76 The proposed Simonside & Rekendyke, West Park, Westoe and Whiteleas wards would have 2% more, 2% fewer, 5% more and 1% more electors per councillor than the borough average (equal to, 4% fewer, 4% more and equal to in 2006).

### **Boldon Colliery, Cleadon & East Boldon and Whitburn & Marsden wards**

77 These three wards are situated in the south and south-east of the borough and make up the Villages area. Boldon Colliery, Cleadon & East Boldon and Whitburn & Marsden wards currently have 18% more, 25% more and 8% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (17% more, 24% more and 9% fewer in 2006).

78 At Stage One the Borough Council proposed a revised warding pattern for the three wards in the area. Its proposed Boldon Colliery ward comprised much of the existing ward less the area to the south of Dipe Lane and additionally including the area of the current Cleadon & East Boldon ward west of Ravensbourne Avenue and Kendal Drive and north of Langdale Way. Its proposed Cleadon & East Boldon ward comprised the majority of the current ward less the area to be transferred to the proposed Boldon Colliery ward and an area to the south of Moor Lane, east of Shields Road to be transferred to the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward. It additionally included the area to be transferred from the current Boldon Colliery and an area to the south of Quarty Lane in the current Cleadon Park ward. Its proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward comprised the current ward and the areas previously mentioned. The Liberal Democrats proposed a similar configuration of three wards for this area.

79 We carefully considered the representations received at Stage One. We noted that the Borough Council's proposals for the area secured the correct allocation of councillors and generally reflected community identity. We noted that the Liberal Democrats' proposals would also generally reflect community identity in the area but that they had over-allocated the number of councillors their area merited. Therefore we proposed adopting the Borough Council's proposed Boldon Colliery, Cleadon & East Boldon and Whitburn & Marsden wards subject to two boundary amendments to improve electoral equality in the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward and to better reflect community identity between the proposed Boldon Colliery and Cleadon & East Boldon wards. We proposed amending the boundary between the proposed Whitburn & Marsden and Horsley Hill wards (mentioned previously) and also proposed that all the properties on Dipe Lane be included within the proposed Boldon Colliery ward.

80 Under our draft recommendations the proposed Boldon Colliery, Cleadon & East Boldon and Whitburn & Marsden wards would have 10% more, 9% more and 3% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (9% more, 7% more and 5% fewer in 2006).

81 At Stage Three the Borough Council proposed that Boldon Colliery ward be renamed Boldon Colliery & West Boldon ward. With the exception of those proposals received regarding the proposed boundary between the proposed Horsley Hill and Whitburn & Marsden wards (mentioned previously) we did not receive any further submissions for this area.

82 We have carefully considered the representations received at Stage Three and propose that the boundary between the proposed Horsley Hill and Whitburn & Marsden wards be redrawn to run along the A1300 as proposed as part of the Borough Council's Stage One proposals (mentioned previously). We have carefully considered the Borough Council's ward name amendment but have not been persuaded that this would secure local support. Therefore we propose confirming the proposed Boldon Colliery and Cleadon & East Boldon wards as final and the proposed Whitburn & Marsden ward subject to the boundary amendment mentioned in the previous section.

83 Under our final recommendations the proposed Boldon Colliery, Cleadon & East Boldon and Whitburn & Marsden wards would have 10% more, 9% more and 8% fewer electors per councillor than the borough average (9% more, 7% more and 9% fewer in 2006).

## Electoral cycle

84 Under section 7(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, all Metropolitan borough/cities have a system of elections by thirds.

## Conclusions

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

- we propose boundary amendments between the proposed Simonside and Westoe wards, Simonside and West Park wards, Cleadon Park and West Park wards and Horsley Hill and Whitburn & Marsden wards;
- we propose that Simonside ward be renamed Simonside & Rekendyke ward.

86 We conclude that, in South Tyneside:

- there should be a reduction in council size from 60 to 54;
- there should be 18 wards, two fewer than at present;
- the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified.

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

Table 4: Comparison of current and recommended electoral arrangements

	2001 electorate		2006 electorate	
	Current arrangements	Final recommendations	Current arrangements	Final recommendations
Number of councillors	60	54	60	54
Number of wards	20	18	20	18
Average number of electors per councillor	1,951	2,168	1,956	2,173
Number of wards with a variance more than 10 per cent from the average	6	0	8	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20 per cent from the average	2	0	2	0

88 As Table 4 shows, our recommendations would result in a reduction in the number of wards with an electoral variance of more than 10% from 6 to none, with no wards varying by more than 20% from the borough average. This level of electoral equality would improve further by 2006, with no wards varying by more than 9% from the average. We conclude that our recommendations would best meet the statutory criteria.

*Final recommendation*

South Tyneside Borough Council should comprise 54 councillors serving 18 wards, as detailed and named in Tables 1 and 2, and illustrated on Map 2 and in Appendix A and the large maps.

*Map 2: Final recommendations for South Tyneside*

## 6 What happens next?

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

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

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

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

**Fax: 020 7271 0667**

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



# Appendix A

## Final recommendations for South Tyneside: **Detailed mapping**

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

**Map A1** illustrates, in outline form, the proposed ward boundaries within the borough and indicates the areas which are shown in more detail on the large maps.

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

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

# Appendix B

## Guide to interpreting the first draft of the Electoral Change Order

### **Preamble**

This describes the process by which the Statutory Instrument will be made, and under which powers. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decides not to modify the Final Recommendations.

### **Citation and Commencement**

This defines the name of the Statutory Instrument and sets the dates on which it will come into force.

### **Interpretation**

This defines terms that are used in the Statutory Instrument.

### **Wards of the Borough of South Tyneside**

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

### **Elections of the council of the Borough of South Tyneside**

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

### **Maps**

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

### **Electoral Registers**

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

### **Revocation**

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

### **Explanatory Note**

This explains the purpose of each article. Text in square brackets will be removed if The Electoral Commission decides not to modify the Final Recommendations.



# Appendix C

## First Draft of the Electoral Change Order for South Tyneside

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### STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2003 No.**

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT, ENGLAND**

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

*Made* - - - - - 2003

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Citation and commencement**

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

(2) This Order shall come into force –

- 
- (a) The Boundary Committee for England is a committee of the Electoral Commission, established by the Electoral Commission in accordance with section 14 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The Local Government Commission for England (Transfer of Functions) Order 2001 (S.I. 2001/3962) transferred to the Electoral Commission the functions of the Local Government Commission for England.
- (b) 1992 c.19. This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.
- (c) The Electoral Commission was established by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (c.41). The functions of the Secretary of State, under sections 13 to 15 and 17 of the Local Government Act 1992 (c.19), to the extent that they relate to electoral changes within the meaning of that Act, were transferred with modifications to the Electoral Commission on 1st April 2002 (S.I. 2001/3962).
- (d) The metropolitan district of South Tyneside has the status of a borough.
- (e) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962 and also otherwise in ways not relevant to this Order.
- (f) This section has been amended by S.I. 2001/3962.

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

### **Interpretation**

#### **2. In this Order –**

“borough means the borough of South Tyneside;

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

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

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

### **Wards of the borough of South Tyneside**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(4) Of the councillors elected in 2004 –

- (a) the first to retire shall, subject to paragraphs (6) and (7), be the councillor elected by the smallest number of votes; and
- (b) the second to retire shall, subject to those paragraphs, be the councillor elected by the next smallest number of votes.

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

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

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(a) See the Borough of South Tyneside (Electoral Arrangements) Order 1980 (S.I. 1980/430).

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

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



Harton	Whitburn and Marsden
Hebburn North	Whiteleas

### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

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

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

The modifications are *indicate the modifications*.

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

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

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

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

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

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