



E-mail: maelor.Williams@middlesbrough.gov.uk

8 February, 2012

Mr Danny Edwards, Review Officer.
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
3rd Floor, Layden House,
76-86 Turnmill Street,
London. EC1M 5 LG

Dear Mr Edwards,

Review of Middlesbrough Council Ward Boundaries

I have been told that the above review is soon to take place. I have noted that a similar comparatively recent review of Ward boundaries in Hartlepool Unitary Council resulted in a major reduction in the number of Wards and the number of Councillors.

I assume that the Commission will be seeking a similar major reduction in the number of Councillors and Wards in Middlesbrough. (In Middlesbrough, however, there is no equivalent demand for 'election by thirds'.) Please find enclosed my attempt to achieve a significant reduction in the number of Middlesbrough Councillors in a logical way which ensures the number of electors per Councillor is ~~the~~ approximately the same within +/- 5%. The result is a mixture of mainly two member Wards and 4 three member Wards which, wherever possible, roughly reflects either the size of a distinct community or the area enclosing a group of smaller communities in the town.

The resulting proposal reduces the number of Ward Councillors from 48 to 38 (over 20% reduction) and the number of Wards from 23 to 17 Wards. The proposal has 13 two member Wards and 4 three member Wards.

11 of the 17 proposed Wards are within the +/- 5% from the average number of electors. Two Wards with the highest variations of - 6.1% are Wards where significant housing developments are planned in the near future.

I hope my approach to the review is on the right lines and that you will therefore find it useful.

Yours sincerely,

B Maelor Williams

Maelor Williams
Councillor, Stainton & Thornton Ward

2012 Boundary Commission Review of Middlesbrough Council Ward Boundaries

The following study is offered as a possible outcome of the forthcoming Review by the Boundary Commission of the Middlesbrough Council Ward boundaries.

At present, Middlesbrough Council has 48 Ward Councillors representing 101,424 electors. The average number of electors per Ward Councillor is therefore 2113.

Recently, the Boundary Commission approved a reduction from 47 to 33 Ward Councillors for Hartlepool Unitary Council. For a population of approximately 70,000 electors, the average number of electors per Ward Councillor is to be 2121.

Despite Middlesbrough Council at present having slightly less than the average number of electors than is intended for Hartlepool, the Boundary Commission is expected to seek a significant reduction in the number of Ward Councillors in Middlesbrough.

Middlesbrough is somewhat unusual because it has three very distinct areas divided by important internal boundaries. These internal boundaries are the A174 Parkway which separates South Middlesbrough and the Middlesbrough to Whitby railway line which separates East Middlesbrough from the large remaining north and west area of the town. At present, South Middlesbrough (without the electors in Marton Ward north of Ladgate Lane) has 25687 electors, East Middlesbrough has 21333 electors and the remaining north and west area of the town has 54404 electors.

The table below shows the present numbers and the effect of reducing the number of Ward Councillors on the average number of electors per Councillor and the theoretical number of Ward Councillors to represent the electors in the three distinct areas of the town.

Total No of Ward Cllrs	Average No of electors/Cllr	Theoretical No of Ward Cllrs needed for		
		South M'bro	East M'bro	North & West M'bro
48	2113	12	10	26
41	2474	10.4	8.6	22.0
40	2536	10.1	8.4	21.5
39	2600	9.9	8.2	20.9
38	2669	9.6	8.0	20.4
37	2741	9.4	7.8	19.8
36	2817	9.1	7.6	19.3
35	2898	8.9	7.4	18.8
34	2983	8.6	7.2	18.2
33	3073	8.4	6.9	17.7

The closest all three right hand columns are to a whole number of Councillors is when the total number of Ward Councillors is 38. Rounding up 9.6 to 10 Councillors for South Middlesbrough would allow for some future growth in the number of electors for that area. There would be 8 Councillors for East Middlesbrough and 20 for the remaining north and west area of the town where some reduction in the number of electors may be projected.

Starting in South Middlesbrough, the 25687 electors divided by 10 gives the average number of electors per Councillor to aim for as 2569. A two seat Ward would ideally have 5138 electors and a three seat Ward 7707 electors. The present Nunthorpe, Marton and Marton West Wards together have 12093 electors (excluding the approx 99 electors north of Ladgate Lane). The present Coulby Newham, Hemlington and Stainton & Thornton Wards together have 13594 electors. For these two areas to each have 5 councillors, the number of electors needs to be closer. The most appropriate way to achieve this would be to transfer the 560 electors in Ash Hill, Longhirst, Pine hill and Woodvale from Coulby Newham to the Marton area. This would mean the Marton, Marton West and Nunthorpe area total would increase to 12653 and the Coulby Newham, Hemlington and Stainton & Thornton area total would reduce to 13034. It is then possible to consider a larger two seat Nunthorpe Ward and a three seat Marton Ward to the east and a larger two seat Hemlington Ward and a three seat Coulby Newham & Stainton Ward surrounding the whole of Hemlington to the west.

The present Nunthorpe Ward has 4005 electors. For a larger two seat Nunthorpe Ward, approximately $5138 - 4005 = 1133$ extra electors would be required. I suggest the extra electors should come from transferring the southern half of the present Marton West polling district VCM. This would provide approximately 1050 electors. A new two seat Nunthorpe Ward would then have around $4005 + 1050 = 5055$ electors. This would allow for some of the new housing development in Nunthorpe. The variation from the town average of 2669 per councillor would be $- 5.3\%$.

The present Marton Ward has 3899 electors. Without the electors north of Ladgate Lane this reduces to approximately 3800. Marton West Ward at present has 4288 electors but without the 1050 transferred to a new larger Nunthorpe Ward and adding the 560 electors transferred from Coulby Newham Ward, the total becomes 7598 electors for a new three seat Marton Ward. The variation from the town average of 2669 electors per councillor would be $- 5.1\%$.

The whole of Hemlington including the SBM polling district from Stainton & Thornton Ward has $4257 + 1255 = 5512$ electors. This is very close to the ideal 5138 electors for a two seat Ward in South Middlesbrough. A new two seat Hemlington Ward would have 5512 electors. The variation of this total from the town average is $+3.3\%$.

The present Coulby Newham Ward has 6996 electors but without the 560 electors transferred to the new Marton Ward, this reduces to 6436 electors. By then adding the 1086 electors in Stainton & Thornton polling district SAM, the total increases to 7522 electors for a new three seat Coulby Newham & Stainton Ward in a horseshoe shape around Hemlington. The variation of this total from the town average would be $- 6.1\%$. This would allow for some housing development at Hemlington Grange.

In East Middlesbrough, the 21333 electors divided by 8 gives the average number of electors per Councillor to aim for as 2667. A two seat Ward would ideally have 5333 electors and a three seat Ward 8000 electors. The reduction in the number of Councillors from the present 10 to 8 suggests that a reduction from 5 two seat Wards to 4 two seat Wards would be a more acceptable outcome than 2 three seat Wards and one 2 seat Ward.

The present Park End Ward has 4597 electors and clear boundaries on three sides formed by the railway line, Ladgate Lane and Ormesby Road. This is 736 electors less than the ideal number for a new two seat Ward. Extending the northern boundary up to

and including both sides of Crossfell Road would add approximately 697 electors. The new two seat Park End Ward would then have 5294 electors, The variation from the town average would be - 0.8%. No name change would be required.

The present Beckfield Ward has 3699 electors and also has clear boundaries on three sides formed by Ormesby Road, Ladgate Lane on to Normanby Road, and the Borough boundary. This is 1634 electors less than the ideal number for a new two seat Ward. The northern boundary would have to be extended into most of the JB polling district of the present Thorntree Ward. A new northern boundary for an enlarged Beckfield Ward could be drawn from the north side of the Unity City Academy and the MTLIC, along the south side of the cemetery, along the north side of Thorntree Primary School and south of the houses in the first section of Roworth Road to the Borough boundary. This would add 1360 electors. The new two seat Beckfield Ward would then have 5059 electors. The variation from the town average would be - 5.2%. Probably, no change in name would be required.

The present Thorntree Ward 4303 electors without the 1360 electors transferred to the New Beckfield Ward leaves 2943 electors to which could be added the 309 electors in EC & 1852 electors in ED polling districts of the present N Ormesby & Brambles Farm Ward to get 5104 electors. A further 410 electors could be found from those living south of Homerton Road in the present Pallister polling district IC minus the 139 electors living north of Homerton Road transferred to Pallister polling district IC. The new two seat Ward would then have 5375 electors. The variation from the town average would be +0.7%. An appropriate name for this new Ward would be Thorntree & Brambles Farm Ward.

The fourth new Ward in East Middlesbrough would be the area which includes North Ormesby electors in polling districts EA and EB totalling 2229, most of the present Pallister electors in polling district IA excluding those living along and south of Crossfell Road i.e. $2453 - 697 = 1756$, all of the 529 electors in Pallister polling district IB and the 1362 electors in Pallister polling district IC except the 410 electors living south of Homerton Road but adding 139 electors living north of Homerton Road i.e. $1362 - 410 + 139 = 1091$ electors. The new two seat Ward total would be 5605 electors. The variation from the town average would be +5.0%. An appropriate name for this new Ward would be North Ormesby & Pallister Ward.

In north and west Middlesbrough, the 54404 electors divided by 20 gives the average number of electors per councillor to aim for as 2720. A two seat Ward would ideally have 5440 electors and a three seat Ward 8160 electors.

At present Ladgate Ward has 4186 electors. When the approximately 99 electors from Marton Ward are added, this becomes 4285 electors. This is too few for a new two seat Ward. However, with the present Beechwood Ward 3892 electors, the two together would have 8177 electors to create a new three seat Ward. The variation from the town average would be + 2.1%. A new name would be needed for this new three seat Ward.

The present Brookfield, Kader and Acklam Wards have a total of 13725 electors. This is close to the 13601 electors that are ideally required for 5 Councillors. However, by excluding the 895 electors in the triangle south of Mandale Road and including the 186 electors from the even numbers along Green Lane and Emmerson Avenue the total of 13016 electors would allow for some future housing off Low Lane and Ladgate Lane. Since electors living on both sides of Acklam Road refer to the area as 'Acklam', it would seem better to extend Acklam Ward mainly from the present Kader Ward to

become a new three seat Ward. Brookfield would only require a small extension from the present Kader Ward to form a new two seat Ward.

The present Brookfield Ward has 4761 electors. A closer approach to the 5440 ideal number for a new two seat Ward would be to add the part of the present Kader Ward polling district PC west of and including Virginia Gardens i.e. $4761 + 250 = 5011$ electors in the new two seat Ward. The variation from the town average would be -6.1%. This would allow for some future housing off Low Lane.

The present Acklam Ward 4849 electors plus the 186 electors from the even numbers along Green Lane and Emmerson Avenue, plus the remaining 912 electors from Kader polling district PA not in the triangle south of Mandale Road, plus the 1227 and 297 electors in Kader polling districts PB and PD, plus the remaining 534 electors in Kader polling district PC gives a total of 8005 electors in a new three seat Acklam Ward. The variation from the town average would be 0.0%.

The present Ayresome Ward has 4630 electors. If the 895 electors from the triangle south of Mandale Road are included, the total becomes 5525 electors to become a new two seat Ward. The variation from the town average would be + 3.5%. No change of name would be needed.

The present Linthorpe Ward and Park Ward have a well defined northern boundary along Ayresome Street and Park Road North and have a total of 11494 electors. After deducting the 186 electors from the even numbers along Green lane and Emmerson Avenue the total becomes 11308 electors. The ideal number for two new two seat Wards is 10880 electors. I suggest that the approximately 1000 electors in the triangle between Roman Road, Ayresome Street and Ayresome Park Road are transferred from the present Linthorpe Ward polling district FA to enlarge Park Ward. Also, a smaller area of 410 electors east of The Avenue could be transferred to Clairville Ward.

A new two seat Linthorpe Ward would then have $7161 - 186 - \text{approximately } 1000 - 410 = 5565$ electors. The variation from the town average would be + 4.3%. No change of name would be needed.

The new two seat Park Ward would have $4333 + \text{approximately } 1000 = 5333$ electors. The variation from the town average would be - 0.1%. No change of name would be needed.

The present Gresham Ward has 5651 electors. Without any change of boundaries, this could become a new two seat Gresham Ward. The variation from the town average would be +5.9%.

The number of electors remaining is the present Middlehaven Ward 2272 electors, the present University Ward 4081 electors, the present Clairville Ward 3874 electors plus the 410 electors transferred to Clairville Ward. This totals 10637 electors. This is roughly the number required for two new two seat Wards. It is difficult to suggest a boundary between these two new Wards. Clairville Ward $3874 + 410 = 4284$ electors needs approximately 1034 electors i.e.60% of the present University Ward polling district DB. This might be a line along Breckon Hill Road. The remainder of the present University Ward north of Breckon Hill Road, Park Vale Road and Albert Park with the whole of the present Middlehaven Ward would make up the final town centre Ward.

If 1250 electors are transferred from polling district DB into Clairville Ward, i.e. if it is extended northwards east of Park Vale Road to Wellesley Road, it would have approximately 5534 electors. The variation from the town average would be + 3.7%.

The new town Centre Ward north of Albert Park, Park Vale Road and Wellesley Road would have approximately 5603 electors. The variation from the town average would be +5.0%%.

In summary, the proposed new Wards would be: -

Acklam Ward	3 Councillors	8005 electors	0.0% variation
Ayresome Ward	2 Councillors	5525 electors	+ 3.5%
Beckfield Ward	2 Councillors	5059 electors	- 5.2%
Beechwood & Ladgate Ward	3 Councillors	8177 electors	+ 2.1%
Brookfield Ward	2 Councillors	5011 electors	- 6.1%
Clairville Ward	2 Councillors	5534 electors	+ 3.7%
Coulby Newham & Stainton Ward	3 Councillors	7522 electors	- 6.1%
Gresham Ward	2 Councillors	5651 electors	+ 5.9%
Hemlington Ward	2 Councillors	5512 electors	+ 3.3%
Linthorpe Ward	2 Councillors	5565 electors	+4.3%
Marton Ward	3 Councillors	7598 electors	- 5.1%
North Ormesby & Pallister Ward	2 Councillors	5605 electors	+ 5.0%
Nunthorpe Ward	2 Councillors	5055 electors	- 5.3%
Park Ward	2 Councillors	5333 electors	- 0.1%
Park End Ward	2 Councillors	5294 electors	- 0.8%
Thorntree & Brambles Farm Ward	2 Councillors	5375 electors	+ 0.7%
Town Centre Ward	2 Councillors	5603 electors	+5.0%
Total: - 17 Wards	38 Councillors	101424 electors	


Maelor Williams

ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel was held on 6 February 2012.

PRESENT: Councillor Williams (Chair), Councillors Arundale, Hubbard, Hussain, Lowes, J Sharrocks and Taylor.

OFFICERS: P Clarke, A Crawford, D Gittins, S Harker and K Whitwell.

****COUNCILLORS PRESENT BY INVITATION:** Councillor Brunton, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board.

****DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this point of the meeting.

****MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel held on 16 January 2012 were taken as read and approved as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Page 3, Line 7, remove "Interim Urban Policy and Implementation Manager" and replace with "Planning Services Manager".

THE TRANSPORT ELEMENT OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report to outline the purpose of the meeting, which was to provide the Panel with further information in relation to the current topic.

The Planning Services Manager outlined his presentation to Panel which covered how the Authority would take the Local Development Framework (LDF) forward, looking at future developments and opportunities in the town, planning applications in south Middlesbrough, and the infrastructure needed to develop these opportunities.

The existing LDF was adopted in February 2010 and the main issue currently was that the housing allocations were not being delivered. The Government required the Council to have a five-year housing land supply but at the present time had only one year's supply available. This situation had triggered the need to review the LDF as the Council could be open to challenge from the Government. Housing was not being delivered as planned as result of the current economic climate, developers being unable to fund projects, people being unable to obtain mortgages and the houses that were being built were not suitable to meet people's aspirations.

Recent building in Middlesbrough had been primarily two bedroomed homes rather than three or four bedroomed semi and detached houses. As a result, this section of the population was leaving Middlesbrough to live elsewhere on sites where their needs were met.

The first stage in the process of reviewing the LDF was to produce an "Issues and Options" paper which would shape the future allocation to bring forward and this would go out for consultation in spring 2012. Specific sites would then be identified in late summer, followed by public examination. The reviewed LDF would be adopted in two years' time.

Key issues for consideration included infrastructure requirements such as transport, schools and other community facilities, how much housing was required and whether it was needed on the urban regeneration sites or on green-field sites. If the necessary infrastructure was not in place this could impact on the delivery of these development sites and restrict bringing them forward.

If the Council did not provide land for development, developers would be likely to go elsewhere as had happened previously. If appropriate housing was not provided the town would still experience all the problems associated with people coming into the town, but not the benefits.

The impact on the town's transport network would still be apparent as people would still commute into the town for work.

The Government had developed a Community Infrastructure Levy which could be applied to each property built to help fund infrastructure. However, the Council had not yet used this approach as it could deter developers from coming into the town.

As part of the review, the Council was in discussion with the Highways Agency to look at long term solutions with regard to transport issues around the sites allocated, the numbers of houses needed and the appropriate infrastructure, for example, new roads and rail links. It was also important to consider the impact of developments across the Tees Valley as a whole and not just in Middlesbrough in isolation.

Another key area was to consider funding mechanisms such as the Affordable Housing Scheme to recycle money into regeneration areas to help move them forward as well. Several planning applications had recently been approved in south Middlesbrough, although final approval from the Highways Agency was still awaited. New infrastructure was already in place in the Middlehaven area of the town, which was now awaiting development.

The Council was keen to ensure that any developments identified in the review would benefit public transport solutions more than the current road network. The Council did not want to encourage more road traffic but look to other solutions such as rail and bus links. It was sometimes difficult to get transport operators to run a service to new estates. As part of a bid for Local Sustainable Transport the Council had identified a programme to fund a bus service for three years that would operate between the Bus Station and Riverside Park. It was hoped that as more new businesses opened up in Riverside Park, people would use the bus service and eventually it could become a commercial service.

Until the Issues and Options stage of the review was complete it was difficult to identify what housing and what strategy should be adopted going forward and which sites to allocate. The Strategic Plan Viability Assessments had been out to consultation in summer 2011 and set out the sites from which the Council was likely to allocate housing but there could be others identified through the consultation process.

Following discussion, Panel Members identified the transport infrastructure in south Middlesbrough and access to Middlehaven as the two main areas it wished to focus on for this scrutiny.

AGREED that:

1. A report identifying the transport conditions attached to the planning permission for the recent housing applications approved in south Middlesbrough would be presented to the next meeting of the Panel.
2. A copy of the Draft Transport Strategy for Middlehaven would be provided at the next meeting.
3. The Chair and Vice Chair would meet with the Scrutiny Support Officer to draft Terms of Reference for the scrutiny for consideration at the next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel was scheduled for Monday 27 February 2012 at 2.00pm in the Spencer Room.

NOTED



e-mail: maelor_williams@middlesbrough.gov.uk

28 May, 2012

LG Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG



Dear Sir/Madam,

Electoral Review of Middlesbrough – Council Size

I wish to disagree with the main conclusion of the recent Council submission to the Commission with respect to the future Council size.

I am disturbed that Councillors have had little or no opportunity to debate the political implications of a change to the size of the Council. Only 8 Councillors were present at the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting that approved the paper as the Council's submission.

I would have preferred that the Mayor or the Executive had taken a lead and proposed the technical analysis as a motion to full Council. There could then have been a 'political' debate on the future size of the Council.

Whereas I accept the analysis "that there will be a requirement to fill approximately 120 seats on Committees under the revised Committee structure", I do not accept the further conclusion that there will therefore be a "requirement for a minimum of 40 members and this does not include the Executive Committee". Since the elected Mayor has suggested he would appoint 6 Executive Members, this means the Council size would be 47 Members including the Mayor i.e. a reduction of only 2 Members. However, there are Members who choose or are able to serve on more than three Committees and others who choose to serve on fewer Committees. The requirement to fill approximately 120 seats on Committees is therefore only a very rough guide when deciding the most appropriate size for the Council.

The workload of the Council has reduced in recent years because it no longer has a major housing function, no longer runs any Elderly Peoples Homes or its own Children's Homes and has only taken on some minor Licensing duties, responsibility for Public Health and Health Scrutiny. I therefore believe that the public will expect a significant reduction in the size of the future Council.

In my opinion therefore, and using the technical analysis as just a rough guide, I believe a 10% reduction in the size of the Council i.e. from 48 to 43 ward members is the minimum reduction that I would be willing to defend. I would have preferred the opportunity to try and convince my fellow Councillors that 43 Ward Councillors plus the elected Mayor would be an acceptable size for a future Middlesbrough Council.

Yours faithfully,



Maelor Williams,
Liberal Democrat Councillor, Stainton & Thornton Ward