

LOCAL GOVERNANCE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004 – REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS – DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL AREA

1. Reason for Report

This report provides information on the current position regarding the review of electoral boundaries in Dumfries and Galloway Council area.

2. Background

2.1 On 7 March 2005, the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland published its initial proposals for 13 multi-member wards within Dumfries and Galloway Council area.

2.2 The full Council agreed at its meeting on 6 May 2005 not to submit an alternative to the Boundary Commission's initial proposals. Instead, it was decided to comment on these initial proposals and the reasons given by the Commission for the differences between each proposal and the scheme developed from the aggregation of existing wards.

2.3 In the absence of a response detailing an alternative scheme, the Boundary Commission published its provisional proposals for future electoral arrangements in Dumfries and Galloway Council area on 30 June 2005. These are summarised in the table below.

Ward Number	Ward Name	Forecast Number of Electorate	Number of Elected Members
1	Ryan	10,980	4
2	Luce	7,250	3
3	Kells	7,490	3
4	Dee	6,850	3
5	Carlingwark	7,240	3
6	Urr	7,180	3
7	Dumfries	10,510	4
8	Nithsdale	10,140	4
9	Lochar	9,190	4
10	Nith	10,410	4
11	Annandale South	11,000	4
12	Annandale North	10,390	4
13	Annandale East	9,750	4

2.4 There followed a 12-week statutory public consultation period from 30 June to 22 September 2005. At the Ad-Hoc Modernising Local Government Sub-Committee meeting on 16 September 2005 it was agreed to make a further submission to the Boundary Commission.

2.5 This further representation summarised the collective views of the Area Committees during the public consultation period - copy attached at Appendix 1.

2.6 In November 2005, the Boundary Commission advised that in view of the weight of representations it had received in respect of certain of its proposals for multi-member wards, it intended to republish the proposals for certain wards in Dumfries and Galloway.

2.7 On 2 December 2005, Members were sent copies of the Boundary Commission maps showing revised proposals for Wards 1–8.

2.8 On 9 December 2005, a further revised map was sent to Members following a subsequent decision of the Boundary Commission to change the split in Stranraer with the purpose of making it slightly more equal.

3. Review of Electoral Arrangements – Revised Proposals

3.1 The revised proposals were published on 12 January 2006 and the 4-week public consultation period ends on 9 February 2006. Wards 9 to 13 of the Commission's initial draft proposals remain unchanged so are not included in the current consultation.

3.2 Maps of the revised proposals are attached at Appendix 2 and the table below summarises the details.

Ward Number	Ward Name	Forecast Number of Electorate	Number of Elected Members
1	Stranraer and North Rhins	7,780	3
2	Wigtown West	7,100	3
3	Mid-Galloway	7,560	3
4	Dee	7,630	3
5	Castle Douglas and Glenkens	7,930	3
6	Abbey	9,740	4
7	North West Dumfries	10,510	4
8	Mid & Upper Nithsdale	9,480	4

3.3 The Commission has again advised of rules to be observed in considering electoral arrangements and these are also attached at Appendix 3.

3.4 Copies of maps relating to the initial and subsequent proposals of the Boundary Commission will be made available for inspection at the meeting.

4. Next Steps

4.1 Following the period allowed for public consultation, the Commission will review its revised proposals in light of any written representations it receives and will seek additional information if necessary.

4.2 If the Commission considers that further consultations are required it may ask Scottish Ministers to appoint an Assistant Commissioner to hold a local meeting to hear representations about its revised proposals. If, however, the Commission

receives sufficient information to reach a conclusion it will formulate final proposals which will be incorporated in a Report to Scottish Ministers on the future electoral arrangements for Dumfries and Galloway Council area.

4.3 The role of the Commission in reviewing future electoral arrangements is to make recommendations to Scottish Ministers within the terms of the legislation in force. Once the Commission has submitted its Report to Scottish Ministers it is for Scottish Ministers and Parliament to determine whether recommendations are implemented, with or without modification.

4.4 The Commission is required to complete all stages of its review for all Council areas by August 2006 to allow the revised electoral arrangements to come into effect for Local Government Elections in May 2007.

5. Recommendations

Members are asked to consider:

5.1 the revised proposals for Wards 1-8; and

5.2 representations by the Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland.

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APPENDICES – 3

Background Papers:

Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004

All background papers contained in Boundary Commission file to date

THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL

**RESPONSE TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY
COMMISSION FOR SCOTLAND ON ITS PROVISIONAL PROPOSALS
FOR THE REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS
IN DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL AREA**

**Philip N Jones
Chief Executive
Dumfries and Galloway Council**

22 September 2005

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL

THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004 LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION

RESPONSE TO REVIEW OF ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS IN DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY

1. The Council's Ad-Hoc Modernising Local Government Sub-Committee at its meeting on 16 September 2005 agreed to submit representations, as part of the public consultation period, to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland on the future electoral arrangements for the Dumfries and Galloway Council area.
2. The Commission's provisional proposals were also discussed at the Council's seven Community Area Committees, at which the views of the local communities were sought. Extracts from the minutes of these meetings are also submitted.
3. The following narrative outlines the basis of the Council's representations to the Commission:

Ward 1

To comprise the existing wards 3, 4 and 5; part ward 2 – part of polling district 0203 as detailed in map – 8,112 electors – 3 Members – town of Stranraer and its environs

Ward 2

To comprise existing wards 1 and 6; part ward 2 - polling districts 0201, 0202 and part 0203 – 6,925 electors – 3 Members – although lower number of electors, this ward is predominantly rural

Ward 3

To comprise existing wards 7, 8 and 9 - 7,564 electors – 3 Members – currently linked together for administrative purposes

Ward 4

To comprise existing wards 10, 11 and 12 – 7,182 electors – 3 Members - unites the wards in Kirkcudbright

Ward 5

To comprise existing wards 13, 14 and 15 – 7,672 electors – 3 Members – unites the wards in Castle Douglas

Ward 6

To comprise existing wards 16 and 17 and part ward 18 – polling districts 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1807 and part 1805 – 7583 electors – 3 Members - unites the wards in Dalbeattie and transfers those parts of Ward 18 to the Stewartry which were transferred to Nithsdale at the last re-organisation, against public wishes.

2

Ward 7

To comprise existing wards 19, 20, 21 and 22 and part ward 30 – polling districts 3001 and 3002 – 10,025 electors – 4 Members – currently recognised as an administrative area

Ward 8

To comprise existing wards 23, 24, 25, 26 and part ward 18 – polling districts 1806 and part 1805 – 10,260 – 4 Members – area recognised by Scottish Executive as having specific need – a number of community groups operate under the North West Dumfries umbrella

Ward 9

To comprise existing wards 27, 28 and part ward 29 – polling district 2901 and part ward 35 – polling districts 3503 and 3504 – 8,163 electors – 3 Members – majority of electors close to Dumfries town centre and appropriate to link communities in polling district 3504 and Ward 28. Ward 27 and polling districts 3503 and 3504 united by plans including new bridge construction

Ward 10

To comprise existing wards 33 and 34; part ward 29 – polling district 2902 and part ward 32 – polling districts 3205 and 3206 – 7,889 electors – 3 Members – these combined are mainly residential area

Ward 11

To comprise part ward 30 – polling district 3003; ward 31 and part ward 32 – polling districts 3201, 3202, 3203 and 3204 and part ward 35 – polling districts 3501 and 3502 – 7,261 electors – 3 Members

Ward 12

To comprise existing wards 36, 37, 38, 39 and part ward 40 – polling districts 4002 and 4003 – 10,817 electors – 4 Members

Ward 13

To comprise existing wards 44, 45, 46 and 47 - 10,142 electors – 4 Members

Ward 14

To comprise existing wards 41, 42, 43 and part ward 40 – polling districts 4001, 4004 and 4005 – 9,494 electors – 4 Members

The Council now looks forward to the Commission seeking its views on all representatives received and the impact of these representations on the Commission's provisional proposals.

Philip N Jones
Chief Executive
Dumfries and Galloway Council

22 September 2005

SCHEDULE 6

RULES TO BE OBSERVED IN CONSIDERING ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS

1. (1) This schedule applies to the consideration by Scottish Ministers or the Boundary Commission of electoral arrangements for election of councillors of local government areas.

(2) Having regard to any change in the number or distribution of electors of a local government area likely to take place within the period of five years immediately following the consideration, the number calculated by dividing the number of local government electors in each electoral ward of that local government area by the number of councillors to be returned in that ward shall be, as nearly as may be, the same.

(3) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) above, in considering the electoral arrangements referred to in sub-paragraph (1) above regard shall be had to-

- (a) the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable;
- (b) any local ties which would be broken by the fixing of any particular boundary but if, in any case, there is a conflict between those criteria, greater weight shall be given to the latter.

2. The strict application of the rule stated in paragraph 1(2) above may be departed from in any area where special geographical conditions appear to render a departure desirable.