

## Executive summary

# Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Kettering in Northamptonshire

The Boundary Committee for England is the body responsible for conducting electoral reviews of local authorities. A further electoral review of Kettering is being undertaken to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the borough. It aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each borough councillor is approximately the same. The Electoral Commission directed the Boundary Committee to undertake this review on 2 June 2004.

### Current electoral arrangements

Under the existing arrangements, 11 wards currently have electoral variances of more than 10% from the borough average. The development that the Borough Council forecast for the five-year period that occurred between 1996 and 2001 during the last review was realised in some areas. However, in some rural areas less development occurred than was anticipated and in Slade ward further development has resulted in a particularly poor level of electoral equality.

Every review is conducted in four stages as outlined in the table below.

### Draft recommendations

We proposed that Kettering Borough Council should be served by 36 councillors, nine fewer than at present,

representing 17 wards. We recommended that the boundaries of all of the existing wards should be changed, except Slade ward which should be retained. As a result of our district warding we proposed new parish wards in Desborough.

### Responses to consultation

Our draft recommendations were generally supported although we received some proposed amendments to the boundaries of wards in Kettering town from the Borough Council. The Labour Group on the Council opposed the reduction in council size and two other respondents also considered the council size should not be reduced. A number of respondents reiterated their Stage One comments in relation to the existing Queen Eleanor ward which they considered

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	30 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	21 June 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	13 September 2005	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

should be retained. We received proposals to change three of the ward names outlined in our draft recommendations.

## Analysis and final recommendations

### Electorate figures

During Stage One the Borough Council forecast an 8% increase of the electorate and stated that it expected most of the growth to be in Kettering town, Desborough, Rothwell and the existing Slade ward. We received no further information in relation to these figures during Stage Three.

### Council size

The Borough Council supported our proposal to reduce the council size from 45 to 36 members. The Labour Group objected to this reduction and the Borough Council's Stage One argument which supported a decrease in council size. Two other respondents also objected to a reduction in council size. We do not consider there is merit in reconsidering council size at this stage and are confirming our draft recommendation for a council size of 36 as final.

### General analysis

We are proposing to confirm the boundaries of all of the wards outlined in our draft recommendations. We do not consider that we received sufficient justification in any of

the Stage Three submissions to move away from our draft recommendations which provide good levels of electoral equality in the areas where alterations were proposed. We do however propose to rename the proposed Central and Rural East wards as William Knibb and Queen Eleanor & Buccleuch respectively.

### What happens next?

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in the full report should be sent to the Electoral Commission through the contact details below. The Commission will not make an Order implementing them before **27 June 2006**. 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)**

The contact details above should only be used for implementation purposes.

### Further information

The full report is available to download at [www.boundarycommittee.org.uk](http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk)