

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>: PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW – FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND AND PROPOSED POLLING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES</b>		
<b>TO / ON</b>	<b>: COUNCIL</b>		<b>5 NOVEMBER 2003</b>
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	<b>: LEADER OF THE COUNCIL</b>		
<b>STATUS</b>	<b>: FOR PUBLICATION</b>		

**1.0 TYPE OF DECISION**

1.1 What type of decision is to be taken:-

EXECUTIVE DECISION		COUNCIL DECISION	
Key		Non Key	YES

1.2 If a key decision, has it been included in the Forward Plan

Inclusion in Forward Plan	N/A	Date of Plan	
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**2.0 SUMMARY**

The Boundary Committee for England has published final recommendations for the future electoral arrangements for Bury, which are based on the Council's submitted proposals with minor changes, and has submitted them to the Electoral Commission.

The Electoral Commission will now decide whether to endorse the final recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an Order to be made not before 11 November 2003. The Commission will consider any written representations made to them by that date on the recommendations and also on the draft Order which will implement the new arrangements.

Following the publication of the final recommendations in respect of new Ward boundaries, proposals for the boundaries of Polling Districts within these Wards are detailed in the report.

### 3.0 **OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDED OPTIONS (with reasons)**

The Council is requested to decide whether or not to make any representations to the Electoral Commission on the final recommendations of the Boundary Committee for England and on the draft Order to implement the new arrangements.

The Council is also requested to approve the proposed Polling District boundaries within the new Wards as detailed in the report and to authorise the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leaders of the 3 Political Groups on the Council, to determine any necessary amendments to those boundaries if any modifications are made to Ward boundaries by the Electoral Commission.

### 4.0 **THIS REPORT HAS THE FOLLOWING IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Corporate Aims</b>	Any changes to ward boundaries to achieve electoral equality would assist in developing a stronger community spirit.
<b>Policy Framework</b>	N/A
<b>Statement by Monitoring Officer</b>	The Electoral Commission established under the Political Parties, Election and Referendums Act 2000 is under a duty to conduct electoral reviews at periodic intervals. The review for Bury commenced in May 2002.
<b>Statement by Director of Finance and E-Government</b>	Any expenditure incurred in relation to the preparation of the submission to the BCE will be contained within existing budget.  If the final recommendations are endorsed by the Electoral Commission, there will be extra costs in relation to the three additional Councillors from June 2004.
<b>Human Resource IT/Land and Property Implications</b>	N/A
<b>Wards/Area Boards affected</b>	All Wards

**Scrutiny Panel's Interest**

N/A

**Consultations**

Leaders of the three political parties on the Council have previously received a copy of the Final Recommendations Report and Maps.

All Members of the Council have previously received a copy of the Final Recommendations Report.

**Call-in**

**Briefings**

Executive Members/ Chair		Chief Executive	
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**5.0 BACKGROUND**

- 5.1 The Periodic Electoral Review for Bury commenced in May 2002 (Stage 1). The Council considered a report at its meeting on 26 June 2002, which set out the statutory provisions, review timetable and general guidelines on Council's size for Metropolitan Districts. At that meeting, the Council proposed that the number of wards within the Borough be increased from 16 to 17, with the Council consisting of 51 Councillors. Following a consultation process, the Council considered a further report on 12 September 2002 and approved the submission of a proposal based on 17 Wards which contained details of proposed Ward Boundaries.
- 5.2 The Boundary Committee considered the proposals received (Stage 2) and published a draft recommendations report and invited representations on that report (Stage 3). The Council considered a report on the draft recommendations at its meeting on 9 April 2003 and decided to support the draft recommendations of the Boundary Committee.
- 5.3 The Boundary Committee has considered the representations received following the publication of the draft recommendations and has now submitted its final recommendations to the Electoral Commission (Stage 4).

**6.0 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT**

- 6.1 The Final Recommendations Report sets out details of the current electoral arrangements, the draft recommendations, the responses to the consultation, an analysis of electorate forecasts, council size and electoral arrangements and final recommendations on a ward by ward basis. Large scale maps of the proposed Ward Boundaries were appended to the Report.
- 6.2 All Members of the Council have been sent a copy of the Final Recommendations Report entitled 'Future Electoral Arrangements for Bury' and the Leaders of the 3

political groups on the Council have received a copy of the relevant maps showing the proposed Ward Boundaries.

6.3 The Boundary Committee has published the availability of the Report in the local press.

6.4 Copies of the Report and Maps have been made available in all local libraries and at Bury Town Hall.

## **7.0 FINDINGS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE**

7.1 The Boundary Committee has found that the current electoral arrangements provide unequal representation of electors in Bury:

- In 5 of the 16 wards the number of electors represented by each councillor varies by more than 10% from the average for the borough, and 3 wards vary by more than 20% from the average;
- by 2006 this situation is expected to improve slightly, with the number of electors per councillor forecast to vary by more than 10% from the average in five wards and by more than 20% in one ward.

## **8.0 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE**

8.1 The Boundary Committee's main final recommendations for future electoral arrangements are that:

- Bury Metropolitan Borough Council should have 51 councillors, three more than at present.
- There should be 17 wards, instead of 16 as at present.
- The boundaries of all of the existing wards should be modified, resulting in a net increase of one ward.

8.2 The purpose of the proposals is to ensure that, in future, each councillor represents approximately the same number of electors, bearing in mind local circumstances, viz:-

- In all of the proposed 17 wards the number of electors per councillor would vary by no more than 9% from the borough average, both initially and by 2006.

8.3 The Final Recommendations are based on the draft recommendations, as amended for drafting errors, subject to 2 minor boundary amendments to North Manor Ward as follows:-

- (a) Transfer of properties on the northern side of Turton Road from North Manor Ward to Tottington Ward.
- (b) Transfer of properties to the north of Bolton Road West and on Redisher Close and Park Road from Ramsbottom Ward to North Manor Ward.

8.4 The following table shows how the Final Recommendations would affect electoral equality, comparing them with the current arrangements (based on 2001 electorate figures) and with forecast electorates for the year 2006:-

	2001 Electorate		2006 Electorate	
	Current Arrangements	Final Recommendations	Current Arrangements	Final Recommendations
Number of councillors	48	51	48	51
Number of wards	16	17	16	17
Average number of electors per councillor	2,915	2,744	2,931	2,759
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	5	0	5	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	3	0	1	0

## **9.0 ELECTORAL COMMISSION – IMPLEMENTATION AND ORDER**

9.1 The Boundary Committee has now fulfilled its statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 1992 (as amended) and it now falls to the Electoral Commission to decide whether to give effect to the Committee's final recommendations, with or without modification, and to implement them by means of an order.

9.2 A draft Order is included as Appendix C to the Final Recommendations Report. Such an Order will not be made before 11 November 2003. During that time, any further correspondence or representations can be sent to The Secretary of the Electoral Commission.

9.3 The focus of the Order is article 3 which provides for:-

- the abolition of all the existing Wards and the creation of 17 new Wards with the names set out in the schedule.

9.4 Article 4 of the Order provides for:-

- all out elections in 2004.
- all Councillors currently holding office to retire on the fourth day after the election day in 2004 and the newly elected Councillors to come into office on that date. The date of the election is 10 June 2004.
- transitional arrangements to return to the normal retirements by thirds cycle.

## **10.0 POLLING DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**

10.1 Following the publication of the Final Recommendations of the Boundary Committee, which includes the boundaries of the new Wards, an exercise has been undertaken to divide each of the new Wards into Polling Districts for electoral purposes.

10.2 Maps detailing the proposed Polling District boundaries for each Ward are attached as Appendices to this report.

## **11.0 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 The Council is requested to consider whether or not to endorse the Boundary Committee's Final Recommendations and whether it wishes to make any comments on the first draft of the Order.
- 11.2 The Council is also requested to consider and determine the Polling District boundaries for each Ward.

### ***Background documents:***

Electoral Guidance and Procedural Advice – Periodic Electoral Review April 2002  
Future Electoral Arrangements for Bury – Final Recommendations

### ***For further information on the details of this report, please contact:***

Jayne Hammond, Director of Legal and Democratic Services  
Telephone Number: 0161 253 5220

Ken Cowell, Democratic Services Manager  
Telephone Number: 0161 253 5126