

# **Third Statutory Review of Electoral Arrangements**

## **Fife Council Area**

**Report to the Secretary of State for Scotland**

**Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland**

Report Number F98021  
September 1998

## **Third Statutory Review of Electoral Arrangements Fife Council Area**

### **Introduction**

1. The Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 determined that on and after 1 April 1996, Scotland should be divided into local government areas as named and described in Schedule I to the Act and that, for each area, there should be a council consisting of a convener and councillors. It further determined that each council should have all the functions exercised immediately before 1 April in relation to their area by any existing regional, islands or district council.

2. On 1 April 1996 all local government areas existing immediately before that date which were regions and districts and all regional and district councils ceased to exist.

3. Schedule 2 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 also established that every local government area (other than areas of the old islands councils) should be divided into such electoral wards as may be specified in a direction made by the Secretary of State after carrying out such consultations as he considered appropriate. Those wards were to apply for the purpose of any election of councillors held before 'the relevant year of election' (defined as meaning the first year of ordinary election of councillors for the area in question occurring after the making of an order constituting the new electoral wards of that local government area in consequence of the review currently being undertaken by the Commission). In accordance with procedures that applied prior to the reorganisation in 1975, the views of councils were invited. Thereafter, the Secretary of State determined that, for the purpose of any election of councillors before the relevant year of election, 92 electoral wards were appropriate for Fife local government area. Additionally, the proposed wards should be as described in the report of the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland to the Secretary of State for Scotland on its second statutory review of electoral arrangements for Dunfermline District dated 14 February 1994 (34 wards), Kirkcaldy District dated 10 January 1994 - (40 wards), and North East Fife District dated 14 September 1994 - (18 wards).

### **Origin and Commencement of the Review**

4. The Commission has a statutory duty under section 14 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to undertake periodic reviews of local authority electoral arrangements. The Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 amended section 20 and schedule 5 of the 1973 Act, directing that:

as soon as practicable after 1 April 1996, the Boundary Commission shall-

review the electoral arrangements for all local government areas for the purpose of considering the future electoral arrangements for those areas; and

formulate proposals for those arrangements.

5. This, therefore, is one of the statutory reviews required in terms of section 16(2) and Schedule 5 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended.

6. On 22 March 1996, the Scottish Office Development Department gave local authorities advance notice of the intention of the Commission to carry out a third statutory review of electoral arrangements. On 29 March 1996, we wrote to all councils to announce the commencement of the third statutory review of electoral arrangements and to explain the procedures to be followed. We also gave notice of the commencement of the review to all Community Councils, Electoral Registration Officers, Members of Parliament with a constituency interest and the Scottish headquarters of the political parties. In addition, public notice of the commencement of the review, which included an invitation to interested parties to apply to us for a copy of our consultation letter to councils, was given in newspapers.

## **Background**

7. During the passage through Parliament of the 1994 Act, there was cross-Party understanding that we would review the number of councillors and boundaries of electoral wards for each council in time for changes to be implemented for the 1999 local elections. This was seen to be important because at the time of reorganisation, as mentioned above, the Secretary of State defined the electoral wards for the new councils and to a great extent based these on existing district wards. It was, however, recognised that using the existing district wards led to some councils being significantly over-represented in relation to other areas. Further, it also led to councillors within the same local authority areas representing wards with significantly different numbers of electors. Accordingly, our review was seen as important to ensure equity in representation across and within all local authorities. Further, the new authorities were now responsible for the provision of the full range of all services and, accordingly, consideration had to be given to determining an appropriate number of councillors for service provision to be effectively managed.

8. This review is, therefore, the first conducted by us which sets out to determine the appropriate number of councillors required for councils to operate efficiently and to establish the boundaries of electoral wards. To achieve both objectives our review was conducted in 2 main stages:

identification of a suitable methodology for determining numbers of councillors which, applied across all local authority areas, would be seen to be equitable and consistent; and

the division of each local authority area into the appropriate number of electoral wards in accordance with the statutory rules.

9. A copy of the statutory rules to be employed by us and the Secretary of State in considering proposals for electoral arrangements is provided at Appendix A.

## **Number of Councillors**

10. In formulating proposals for the number of councillors we have been guided by two main principles:

effective management of councils; and

equity amongst electors.

11. We recognised that the number of councillors is crucial because there is, undoubtedly, some number below which it would be impossible for a council to discharge its duty to deliver services to its population and, conversely, there is also some number above which a council becomes unwieldy and cumbersome. We were influenced in this respect by the prior considerations of two other bodies.

12. The Royal Commission on Local Government in Scotland 1966-69, under the Chairmanship of the Rt. Hon. Lord Wheatley, provided a basis by which the number of regional councillors and the size of constituency to be represented might be determined by taking into account the fact that population density varies widely in Scotland as a whole and within regions. The then accepted view was that council size should not generally exceed 75 members. In England and Wales the Redcliffe-Maude Commission, which reported to Parliament in 1969, also drew attention to the management problems of large councils and endorsed the recommendation of The Committee on the Management of Local Government that a maximum number of 75 councillors should be set.

13. After careful consideration we concluded that, in the Scottish context and to provide additional flexibility, an upper limit of 80 councillors should be set. We also concluded that a minimum number of councillors should be set, recognising that even the smallest local government areas are now responsible for a wide range of functions. Accordingly, we decided that the minimum number of councillors should be 18. Further, these limits should apply to all councils.

14. Regarding equity as between voters, we considered that ideally each elector's vote should possess the same weight and significance in local government elections throughout the country; furthermore, ideally, there should be similar mutual accessibility between electors and councillors. However, since Scotland is a country of great diversity, both geographically and demographically, a fact reflected in the areas for which councils created by the Act of 1994 are

responsible, and since we are satisfied that, in the interests of good local government, the number of councillors in any council must fall within certain limits, we concluded that these ideals are unattainable in practice. In this situation, recognising that a fair degree of homogeneity exists within certain groups of councils, which exhibit broadly similar geographic and demographic characteristics, we resolved to strive for equity in the senses mentioned within these groups, so far as that is possible within the constraints of the legislation under which we operate.

15. We, therefore, proposed a methodology which initially categorised council areas by density and distribution of population using data available from the 1991 Census of Population. Having classified council areas according to these criteria and adjusted the ratio of electors to each councillor to take account of similar characteristics, we have been able to achieve a broad equity of electorate across and within all council areas.

16. In our letter of 29 March 1996, all councils were informed of the proposed methodology and future pattern of representation for their council area. Councils were requested to make any representations they wished on numbers of councillors by 29 April 1996 so that a meeting could be arranged with the Deputy Chairman and Secretary to discuss the pattern of representation and any matters regarding our review that the Council wished to raise. Following visits to all councils by the Deputy Chairman and Secretary to discuss the proposed methodology and to consider alternatives which could be applied across Scotland, no alternative methodologies were offered but a number of councils suggested that the underlying classification should be amended to include an additional category.

17. At our meeting of 17 June 1996, we re-examined the criteria to be used to categorise mainland councils with similar characteristics in light of the representations made by a number of councils. We concluded that there should be 6 rather than 5 categories. The final categorisation of similar mainland councils was then agreed as follows:

- Category 1 Large Cities Glasgow and Edinburgh.
- Category 2 Cities Aberdeen and Dundee.
- Category 3 Authorities with less than 60% of the population living outwith settlements of 10,000 or more persons **AND** an overall population density of one person or more per hectare.
- Category 4 Authorities with **EITHER** 60% or more of the population living outwith settlements of 10,000 or more persons **OR** an overall population density of less than one person per hectare.
- Category 5 Authorities with 60% or more of the population living outwith settlements of 10,000 or more persons **AND** an overall population density of less than one person per hectare.

- Category 6 Authorities with 60% or more of the population living outwith settlements of 10,000 or more persons **AND** an overall population density of less than 0.2 persons per hectare.

18. In addition to the 6 categories we then determined the ratio of councillors to electorate for mainland councils that would allow for efficient management and appropriate representation, as set out in paragraphs 11 - 14 above, and considered that the following would be appropriate:

- Category 1 1:6,000
- Category 2 1:4,000
- Category 3 1:3,500
- Category 4 1:3,000
- Category 5 1:2,500
- Category 6 1:2,000

19. On 20 June 1996 we wrote to all mainland councils informing them of the revised criteria for determining councillor numbers and inviting them to prepare a draft scheme of electoral arrangements for their Council area. Following upon that, Aberdeen City Council brought a petition for Judicial Review of the decision taken by us at our meeting of 17 June 1996 in the Court of Session. In it they sought a decree of declarator that that decision in relation to them was unlawful, ultra vires and null and void; they also sought a decree of reduction of the decision in relation to them and certain ancillary remedies. We resisted this petition, which was dismissed by the Court on 20 December 1996 after a hearing.

20. We considered the ratio of councillors to electors for the 3 islands councils at our meeting of 26 August 1996 and concluded that the appropriate ratio would be 1:750. On 28 August 1996 we wrote to these councils informing them of our decision.

## **Fife Council's Proposals**

21. On 3 July 1996 Fife Council expressed disappointment at the proposed level of representation for the Council area and the prospect of changes taking place so soon after local government reorganisation. Concern was also expressed at the timescale set for completing the review but the Council stated that it had set in motion the process of producing a draft scheme of electorate for 78 members.

22. Officers of the Commission had regular contact with the Council regarding preparation of draft proposals for a scheme of electoral representation. By February 1997, the Council prepared four draft schemes of electoral representation and an amendment to its fourth scheme. However, elected members had been unable to agree a consensus submission to the Commission. Following discussions with senior Council officials, officers of the Commission agreed to accept all of the draft schemes so far considered, so that the Commission could move towards preparing

provisional proposals. Accordingly, copies of the various draft schemes and associated correspondence were provided for the Commission's consideration on 14 February 1997.

23. Seven representations, received by the Commission in response to the Council's draft schemes, are set out below.

24. Tayport Ferryport-on-Craig Community Council stated that Tayport was in an unique geographical situation which did not easily fit with any other community. It considered also that the division of another community, Leuchars, to achieve electoral parity, carried bureaucracy to the extreme.

25. A letter was received from a resident of Kirkcaldy intimating a preference for either option 1 or 2 of the Council's draft proposals.

26. Councillor Woods stated that, having consulted many of his constituents, he believed option 4 of the Council's draft proposals was the only acceptable alternative. It encompassed the community of Pitteuchar and met the aspirations of the local people. He also enclosed a petition supporting the retention of Pitteuchar as a distinct community.

27. Two letters were received which requested that Pathcondie be included in the same ward as Monimail and Letham. Melville House should be retained within the same ward to maintain the close ties between the school and the communities.

28. Monimail Community Council requested that the boundary for Ladybank and Stratheden Ward should be the West March boundary of Pathcondie Farm.

29. Dalgety Bay and Hillend Community Council strongly objected to option 4. It advised that some years ago the residents of Hillend and Fordell requested a link with Dalgety Bay rather than Inverkeithing and a reversal of the position would not be welcomed.

30. A detailed examination of the various draft schemes indicated that it would not be possible to accept any scheme in its entirety because of problems associated with electoral parity and/or boundary definitions. Further, it was clear that it would be necessary to group small communities to achieve parity and it would not be possible to take account of all local preferences expressed during the Council's consultation exercise. We concluded, therefore, that Wards 1 -61 and Wards 62 -78, as set out in Scheme 1 and Scheme 4 by the Council, offered the best basis from which our provisional proposals could be developed. Accordingly, these wards, subject to amendments which sought to improve parity and/or ward boundary definitions, formed the basis of our provisional proposals for revised electoral arrangements.

31. We noted that, during the Council's extensive consultation exercise, a substantial volume of representations had been made and, where practicable, the Council had adopted the changes which, by and large, were incorporated into Schemes 4 and 4A. We decided, therefore, to await public reaction to our provisional proposals before considering further the representations

received by the Council and the few representations which had been directed to the Commission, which are set out above.

## **Publication of Commission's Provisional Proposals**

32. Public notice was given of the publication of our provisional proposals on 27 November 1997. Fife Council was asked to make available for inspection at its offices copies of the electoral ward boundary descriptions, electoral statistics and illustrative maps. Additionally, copies of our proposals were sent to all who had received our consultation letter or had expressed an interest. We asked that any comments should be made to the Commission by 29 December 1997.

## **Consideration of Representations**

33. Thirty eight representations were received:

- **The Council** wrote to say that its Policy and Resources Committee had unanimously agreed to make no further recommendations, proposals, or amendments regarding the Commission's provisional proposals. Individual elected members had, however, been encouraged to write directly to the Commission.

A number of minor boundary changes which, it was stated, would have no significance in terms of electorate but would resolve some anomalous boundaries and address Council concerns with administrative arrangements, were requested by Council officials. We agreed to accept minor amendments where there was no adverse impact on electoral parity and where boundaries continued to follow well defined lines.

- **Cairneyhill Community Council** drew attention to new housing developments which it considered might affect the forecast electorate figures for Ward 4. It was also thought that the developments demonstrated that the position of the ward boundary to the east south and west of Cairneyhill would be crucial.

We noted that a number of the developments were at the stage of initial consideration and that forecasts prepared by the Council were 'best estimates' using information available at the time of producing its draft schemes of electorate. We concluded that the Council's forecast of electorate was acceptable and that the boundaries in the area should remain.

- **Touch Community Council** objected to the omission of Touch, which has the largest concentration of population, from the name of Ward 10. It considered that the proposed designation suggested a rural ward, despite the fact that Touch was part of Dunfermline and wished to remain so. Further, the Community Council stated that Hill of Beath and other unrelated areas had been included in Ward 10 but that they would be more naturally associated with Cowdenbeath.

With regard to the ward name, our general policy is to adopt names designated by the Council and, accordingly, we were unable to agree to the change proposed. We carefully considered the association of settlements in Ward 10 and concluded that the provisional proposals provided the best solution bearing in mind the wider Council area. Accordingly, we were not prepared to amend the provisional proposals in this area because of the significantly adverse impact on electoral parity of the suggested alternatives.

- **Rosyth East Labour Party** submitted details of alternative electoral arrangements for Rosyth.

We carefully considered the revised boundary proposals for Wards 15,16 and 17 and sought confirmation of the electorate data from the Council. We noted that adoption of the proposed changes resulted in divergences from electoral parity of 17%, -12% and -5% compared with 2%, -2% and 0% in our provisional proposals and, accordingly, we were not prepared to accept the changes.

- **Rosyth Community Council** stated a preference for the status quo but recognised that this would not be possible. It supported the division of Rosyth referred to in Rosyth East Labour Party's representation.

As we mention above, we were unable to accept the proposed changes.

- **Kelty Branch Labour Party** expressed deep concern about the provisional proposals. It stated that Kelty had a strong sense of cohesion and its own individuality and was an expanding community, attracting people from outwith Fife as well as from within. Both schools were full. It urged the retention of two councillors for the village because the volume of work was already too heavy.

The Branch opposed any proposal which divided Kelty and associated part of the village with Cowdenbeath. Those who lived in the southern part of Kelty used the same facilities as those in the north, and did not look to Cowdenbeath. Residents of Kelty were more likely to shop or use leisure facilities in Dunfermline, Kinross, Perth or Edinburgh than in Cowdenbeath. It believed that the proposed association with Cowdenbeath would lead to issues and concerns of south Kelty being subsumed by those of Cowdenbeath. The concerns were endorsed by Dunfermline East Constituency Labour Party and both local councillors.

We carefully considered the points raised by the Party. We noted that, whilst the electorate of Kelty was too large to be contained within a single ward, it was insufficient to justify two wards. We concluded, therefore, that our provisional proposals for the area were appropriate and we were not prepared to amend our proposals because of the adverse effect on electoral parity of the suggested alternatives.

- **Dunfermline East Constituency Labour Party** wrote to support Rosyth, Kelty and Aberdour, and Crossgates Branches of the Labour Party regarding Wards 16, 17, 24, 25 and 29.

We noted the Party's comments.

- **Councillor Chapman** wrote to request that an area of Rosyth known as Camdean be kept entirely within Ward 16. He was aware that other groups had suggested that this area should be associated with Limekilns and Pitreavie in Ward 15 but believed that this was for political gain.

We noted the Councillor's comments.

- **Councillor Eadie** wrote to support the submission by Dunfermline East Constituency Labour Party which, she considered, was logical and sensible. However, the Councillor suggested that there was a danger of the community fragmenting if the proposed alternative arrangements for Rosyth were accepted without further amendment. Therefore, to compensate for the loss of electorate from Ward 15 under the Party's proposal, the village of Crombie in Ward 2 should be included in Ward 15. The Councillor considered that historical links between Crombie, Limekilns and Charlestown were strong; villagers attended a doctor's surgery in Limekilns, children attended nursery in Limekilns and there was public transport between the villages.

The Councillor suggested that, were Crombie to remain within Ward 2 as proposed under the provisional proposals, the elected member would face considerable difficulties coping with 4 or 5 Community Councils and Surgeries. Her experience of having to cope with 6 Community Councils and Residents' Associations indicated that it was extremely difficult to maintain a continuity of attendance at meetings.

Councillor Eadie also provided details of a development at Grange Drive, Dunfermline within EW 15 which, she considered, potentially produced another 300/400 electors.

We noted the Councillor's views but concluded that it was not possible, in the interests of electoral parity, to accommodate the changes requested. We noted also the concerns regarding the number of Community Councils with which an elected

member might be required to work and concluded that Community Council boundaries were not subject to statutory rules concerning electoral parity and could not be a constraint on our considerations of areas appropriate for election of councillors to Fife Council. We noted concerns about housing developments but concluded that the Council's electorate forecasts at 2001 were acceptable.

- **Councillor Cook** wrote to request that the eastern boundary of Ward 18 be adjusted to incorporate electors in Glebe Park, (3lebe Terrace, Witchknowe Terrace and part of Hope Street The electors in these areas were within the former Royal Burgh of Inverkeithing and the amendment would make polling arrangements easier.

When examining the proposed amendment we noted that the boundary between Wards 18 and 19 followed the line of a tunnel on the east coast railway line. We, therefore, concluded that the boundary set out in the Council's original proposals should be adopted and noted that this change effected the amendment sought by Councillor Cook.

- **Dalgety Bay and Hillend Community Council** wrote to object to the proposals which it suggested took no account of the natural boundary lines of Wards 20 and 21 or the preferences of the residents of Hillend village. The Community Council stated that a coat of arms had been awarded by the Court of the Lord Lyon in 1996 and suggested that the village and Dalgety Bay should be associated within the same ward.

The Community Council also intimated that it would be very disappointed if the new Dalgety Bay railway halt which, along with Fife Councillors for Dalgety Bay East and West, it had been committed to procuring for the residents of Dalgety Bay and Hillend, was located within Ward 19. Further, the Community Council felt that Ward 21 seemed to encroach on the natural boundary line for Dalgety Bay and suggested that a more suitable boundary could be drawn.

- **Councillor Herbert** made a representation requesting that Hillend remain part of Ward 20 on the grounds that it formed a natural community with Dalgety Bay. He stated that residents of Hillend had, a number of years previously, voted to be part of the Dalgety Bay community and that this was reflected in the last review of electoral arrangements. The Councillor also requested that the Dalgety Bay railway halt should fall within Ward 20.

We carefully considered the changes proposed by the Community Council and Councillor Herbert and agreed to amend our provisional proposals accordingly. However, we concluded also that, in the interests of maintaining electoral parity, the boundary between Wards 20 and 21 should be adjusted.

- **Crossgates & Mossgreen Community Council** commented that the consultation period was not long enough and that a map showing the changes should have been sent direct to the Community Council.

Whilst the Community Council agreed that the provisional proposals, unlike earlier proposals, did not split the village of Crossgates, it objected to Crossgates being associated with the Moss-side area of Cowdenbeath and with Annfield, Fordell Castle, etc. Concern was also expressed that the issues affecting Moss-side are entirely different from those which affect Crossgates.

The Community Council supported Option 2 produced by Fife Council which linked Crossgates and Mossgreen with Hill of Beath and Halbeath. It believed that Option 2 produced a ward with 3 villages which, excluding Hill of Beath, shared the same doctor's surgery and Primary School and associated three mining villages which have similar outlooks and historical links. Further, the Community Council stated that it would support the retention of the existing boundary with Aberdour. The Community Council believed that Crossgates should be part of a ward with other areas which retained similar interests and outlooks, and not just part of a number crunching exercise.

We noted the Community Council's remarks regarding the period of consultation and provision of maps.

We considered whether it would be possible or practicable to revise the boundaries to address the issues raised by the Community Council. A detailed examination determined that there were no acceptable alternative which would not involve substantial amendments to surrounding wards and we were, therefore, not prepared to revise our provisional proposals in this area. We also noted that in other Council areas Community Council boundaries were not constrained by electoral ward boundaries and that elsewhere it was not unusual for councillors to represent a constituency with diverse areas of interest.

- **Councillor Rowley** stated that the proposals failed to take account of the level of housing development in Kelty and would result in Ward 25 being far too large in terms of electorate. He accepted that Kelty did not justify 2 wards on its own and that the Kelty Oakfield Ward would need to be part of a wider area. However, the Councillor wanted a greater part of Kelty to be included within Ward 24 and believed that, if account was taken of new developments which were omitted from the proposals, this would allow the division of Kelty along Blair Street, Main Street and Bath Street. He considered that it was important to retain two elected members. The provisional proposals, if adopted, would disadvantage Kelty and leave it with only one voice on the Council.

As mentioned earlier in this report, we remain of the view that the Council's electorate forecasts at 2001 are acceptable. Further, because of the adverse effect

on electoral parity, we were not prepared to adopt the proposal that a larger part of Kelty be included in Ward 24.

- **Aberdour, Crossgates and Mossgreen Branch of the Labour Party** wrote to draw attention to difficulties which it believed would arise if the provisional proposals were implemented. The greater part of Council services are managed and delivered on an area basis. Aberdour lies within West Fife area and Burntisland in Central. Councillors representing the existing wards participate in the devolved area structure within which their respective wards are situated. The Party suggested that, if the proposals are implemented, either the Councillor for Ward 29 would need to participate in both area management committees, which would result in his or her workload doubling, or the service delivery area boundary would need to be changed. The Party, therefore, requested that Aberdour should continue to be part of a ward wholly within the West Fife area.

We noted the Party's comments, but concluded that areas designated by the Council for the delivery of services, which were not subject to the rules concerning local electoral arrangements, could not unduly influence the consideration of revised electoral arrangements, particularly when such recognition constrained the application of the statutory rule regarding electoral parity. We were, therefore, not prepared to amend our proposals in this area.

- **Councillor MacDougall** expressed concern at the division of Burntisland into two wards and believed that this would have a negative impact. He suggested that the people of the town would prefer to continue to have the town represented by one elected member.

We noted the Councillor's views but were not prepared to amend our proposals in this area because of the adverse effect on electoral parity.

- **Aberdour Community Council** made representation to express concern at the provisional proposals which would break Aberdour's community and historical ties with Dunfermline, Inverkeithing and West Fife. It suggested that the proposed electoral arrangements for this area were incompatible with the statutory rules.

The Community Council stated that the most easily identifiable boundary to the east of Aberdour, which also separated Central Fife from the West Fife administrative areas and had been used as an electoral ward boundary for many years, was the Starley Burn. It commented also that the proposed boundary to the west meant that the elected member who represented the nearest resident population would no longer have direct responsibility for the industrial complex of Braefoot Bay marine terminal, a major risk to the community because of the volume and hazardous nature of products being shipped. The Community Council was worried about the potential remoteness of public scrutiny of an industry known for its secretive behaviour and record of shipping incidents. The

Community Council believed that Braefoot should remain within the Aberdour Ward in the interests of public safety.

Further, concern was expressed that splitting the ward between two Parliamentary Constituencies and two service delivery areas would lead to duplication of administrative effort, confusion of policies and wasted effort. Whilst it understood the rationale of equality of electorate, the Community Council would seek to hold the fabric of its society together in a manner compatible with their current and historical culture. The link with Crossgates was logical; a link with Dalgety Bay East would recognise the evolution of that new town. Conversely, the link with West Burntisland owed nothing to local ties.

We noted that the Community Council considered that we had failed to apply the statutory rules concerning the fixing of boundaries and community ties. A detailed examination of the request that Starley Burn be used as an electoral ward boundary determined that there was no acceptable alternative which would not involve substantial amendments to surrounding wards and we were, therefore, not prepared to revise our provisional proposals.

We noted the Community Council's comments concerning the Braefoot Bay marine terminal and agreed to accept the proposed change.

With regard to concerns about electoral wards lying within two Parliamentary Constituencies and service delivery areas we noted that Parliamentary boundaries and areas designated by the Council for service delivery could not constrain our considerations of local electoral arrangements if adhering to these boundaries had an adverse impact on electoral parity.

- **Councillor Beveridge** considered that the proposed changes to the present Aberdour and Crossgates ward were unrealistic and did not take account of the feelings of the community. Reference was made to 156 electors in Crossgates and 74 in Aberdour who, she believed, had not been taken into account. The Councillor considered that taking this additional electorate into account would bring the electorate of the present Aberdour and Crossgates ward to between 3,359 (-6%) and 3,377 (-6%).

The Councillor stated that the proposed Ward 29 would straddle the boundary of two Parliamentary Constituencies and that this would double the work of the elected member. The Councillor submitted 4 alternative proposals for the Aberdour/Crossgates area, of which the status quo was the preferred option.

The Councillor advised that the electorate of Crossgates would also prefer the status quo and did not wish to be associated with Cowdenbeath. Their initial response was for Crossgates to be associated with Hill of Beath and Halbeath with which they share a Primary School and Doctor.

We carefully considered the issues raised by the Councillor in respect of forecast electorate and concluded that the Council's forecast was acceptable.

After careful examination of the suggested alternatives, we were not prepared to accept any of the proposed changes because of the adverse effect on electoral parity or, in the case of the Crossgates, Hill of Beath and Halbeath proposal, because there was no acceptable alternative which would not involve substantial amendments to adjoining areas.

- **Fife Council's Kirkcaldy West Community Forum** stated that Redcraigs, Blackcraigs and Chapel did not identify with Carden Village, nor did they share any community interests. It considered that these communities would be isolated from the areas within Kirkcaldy with which they identify and to attend a Councillor's surgery in Cardenden or Chapel would mean a bus journey for electorate from one or other of the communities. It believed that the advantage of breaking down parochialism would be negated by the difficulties and lack of community identity that both areas would experience. Members of the Forum requested that the matter be reconsidered so that Craigs and Chapel could remain with the rest of Kirkcaldy Town.

We noted the Forum's comments but, after careful examination of the area, concluded that there was no acceptable alternative which would not involve substantial amendments to surrounding wards and we were, therefore, not prepared to revise our provisional proposals.

- **Cardenden and Kinglassie Community Council** stated that both the Commission's proposal to associate part of the community with the northern part of Kirkcaldy and the earlier proposals produced by the Council which linked the area with Glenrothes or Lochgelly were unacceptable. It recognised that boundary changes were inevitable but requested that the status quo should prevail in its area.
- The Community Council considered that the reduction of the number of councillors for Fife Council and creation of electoral parity to give each councillor 3,500 electors was an idealistic approach which took no account of areas with common or geographical links. It also suggested that, as a Scottish Parliament was to be created, Parliamentary, Local Government and Community Council boundaries should have a common theme.

We noted the Community Council's comments regarding boundaries but concluded that retention of the status quo was not possible. We further noted that Parliamentary and Community Council boundaries, which are not subject to the statutory rules regarding local electoral arrangements, were not for our consideration.

- **Star Community Council** wrote to object to the proposals on the grounds that Star is a rural community with strong traditional links with Markinch. It stated that Star has no cultural, historical or geographical links with Windyates or Balgonie and in previous reviews the area had been placed in the same ward as Markinch. Star people did not use any services in either Windyates or Balgonie and, therefore, the Community Council considered that the village might be better linked to St Andrews. Conversely, Star had various communication links with Markinch, residents shopped there, many attended its church and the local nursery was located at Markinch Primary School. Markinch had been a traditional source of employment. The Community Council considered that there were no sound reasons for not associating the communities in the same ward. The only reason for separation appeared to be a desire to achieve equality of electorate. The Community Council requested that, because of the statutory rule concerning local ties, Star should re-associated with Markinch.

We noted that acceptance of the Community Council's proposals would result in divergence from parity in Wards 51 and 52 of -13% and 11% respectively, compared with -4% and 2% in our provisional proposals. Accordingly we were not prepared to amend our proposals in this area.

- A letter was received requesting that Thornton, which had no connection with Glenrothes, should be associated with Kirkcaldy East and the Wemyss villages. This would reflect the current position which has served the village well.
- **Thornton Community Council** wrote to object to the proposals associating Thornton, Stenton and Finglassie South in the same ward. It suggested that linking Thornton with "new town" areas, where there was higher incomes and no old housing, was not acceptable. The Community Council considered that Thornton was a rural area and that the current arrangements which associated three ex-mining villages with similar problems in one electoral division, was the most appropriate solution. It supported retention of the status quo.
- **Councillor Young** stated his support for the objections raised by Thornton Community Council.

We considered the representations concerning Thornton and concluded that retaining the existing ward structure in this area was not acceptable.

- **Freuchie Community Council** wrote to support option 2 of the Council's proposals which divided Howe of Fife by associating Freuchie, Falkland and Kingskettle within one electoral ward. It considered that the electoral ward proposed under the provisional proposals was scattered, unwieldy and disparate in comparison to the arrangements preferred by the Community Council. The Community Council also believed that a councillor representing Freuchie, Falkland and Kettle would have a far more coherent point of view to put forward

with no concomitant disadvantages. Such an arrangement would also have advantages elsewhere in the area.

We noted the Community Council's preference for option 2 of the proposals produced by Fife Council but agreed with our earlier conclusions that adoption of the Council's Scheme 4 for electoral wards 1 – 61 and Scheme 1 for electoral wards 62 – 78 produced the best overall solution for Fife Council area.

- **Councillor Arbuckle** objected to the adverse effect that adoption of the provisional proposals would have on existing structures within the area. The Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo Community Council, which represented the whole of the existing ward, was set up 20 years ago to take a wider view of the issues affecting the area. Auchtermuchty, Dunshalt, Gateside and Strathmiglo, the four main communities, were represented and there was cohesion within the present area which has been created by employment, transport links, community facilities, health and medical provisions and education. The Councillor saw no natural linkage between Auchtermuchty and Ladybank and believed that any need to increase the electorate of the existing ward could be achieved by adding Collesie.

We carefully considered the Councillor's representation. We also noted that, in developing proposals for revised electoral arrangements, we could not be constrained by boundaries of Community Council areas etc. which were a matter for the Council. With respect to the suggested alternative, we concluded that the proposal would involve substantial amendments to adjoining wards and we were, therefore, not prepared to revise our provisional proposals.

- **Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo Community Council** stated that the consultation was too short and that holding it over the Christmas period presented Community Councils with major problems in arranging meetings to discuss the proposals. It also had difficulty in identifying the location of Collesie Village because of the scale of the maps used.

The Community Council supported retention of the status quo for the Auchtermuchty/Strathmiglo area. It considered that the present association of Auchtermuchty, Strathmiglo, Dunshalt and Gateside under one Community Council worked well. Fife Council's recent decision to leave this Community Council unchanged in their new "Scheme for Community Councils" confirmed this view. Community Councils are an essential part of the democratic process. Changes to electoral wards should make sure that the ability to continue to operate in partnership with a councillor is maintained and consideration should be given to the mechanics of how that representation might be undertaken.

We noted the Community Council's comments regarding the consultation process and maps.

With regard to the Community Council's request for retention of the status quo, we concluded that this was not practicable and that our provisional proposals offered the best solution for revised electoral arrangements over the Council area as a whole. We noted also that Community Council boundaries, which were not subject to the statutory rules regarding local electoral arrangements, could not be a constraint on consideration of revised electoral arrangements and elsewhere it was not unusual for councillors to represent a constituency with diverse areas of interest. We were, therefore, not prepared to amend our provisional proposals in this area because of the adverse effect which the retention of the existing boundary would have on electoral parity.

- **Ceres and Kemback Community Council** referred to the history behind the civil parishes of Ceres and Kemback and how the parishes had influenced electoral arrangements in the past, prior to 1975. It regretted that, since 1975, the practice of keeping the Community Council area, comprising the civil parishes of Ceres and Kemback, within one ward was not continued. It acknowledged that the provisional proposals were an improvement on earlier schemes. However, the Community Council strenuously opposed the departure from the use of parish boundaries as electoral ward boundaries and requested that the integrity of the Ceres and Kemback parish boundaries be restored and that each parish be placed wholly within one electoral ward as has always happened in the past.

We noted the Community Council's comments and concluded that we could not be constrained by the historical boundaries of civil parishes in considering revised electoral arrangements. We noted also that making the suggested changes would have an adverse effect on electoral parity and, therefore, we were not prepared to amend our provisional proposals in this area.

- **Councillor Melville** expressed astonishment at the proposals, stating that in all 4 options submitted by the Council Strathkinness was included in St Andrews West with the ward boundary running along the Lade Braes (the historical boundary) to the west. She referred to the Public Inquiry at the time of the second statutory review of electoral arrangements which concluded, against the wishes of the electorate of Strathkinness, to associate the village with St Andrews West rather than with Gleneden and Crail. The residents of Strathkinness accepted the change. There was no justification for moving the village for the second time in three years. Councillor Melville strongly urged the Commission to think again and retain Strathkinness village as part of the St Andrews West Ward.
- **Strathkinness Community Council** believed that, because of the close proximity of the village to St Andrews, the interests of the inhabitants would be best served by a councillor who was directly involved with the town. Further, the Community Council considered that, with some minor adjustments to the wards covering the

coastal communities -and their immediate landward areas, Strathkinness could be allowed to remain linked to St Andrews West

- **Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council** wrote to object to aspects of the provisional proposals and to suggest alternative boundaries which it saw as being more in conformity with the principles laid down in the statute. It advised that records indicated that registration of student voters had often been patchy and inconsistent and, although the position had recently improved, the Community Council suggested that its alternative proposals for St Andrews took account of the remaining inconsistencies in the electoral register. It accepted that it was not possible to consider the town of St Andrews in isolation from the adjacent rural wards and considered that its alternative proposals would meet with greater acceptance in the areas concerned than would the provisional proposals.

The Community Council proposed that Guardbridge should move from Ward 71 to Ward 70, Kemback and Dairsie from Ward 70 to Ward 75 and Strathkinness from Ward 75 to Ward 71. Changes would also be necessary to the proposed boundaries within St Andrews. The Community Council considered that its alternative produced easily identifiable and well defined boundaries and acceptable electoral figures. It recognised that no solution in rural areas would please everybody, but believed that its solution would be acceptable to Strathkinness residents and provided a compact Ward 70.

The Community Council questioned the Council's projection of electorate for North East Fife, referring to the increase of 8,318 electors in Fife North East Parliamentary constituency between 1983 and 1997. It was suggested that the rate of growth was significantly slower in Fife Central, Dunfermline East and Dunfermline West and that the electorate of Kirkcaldy had reduced. The Community Council believed that North East Fife would be under-represented in 2001 by 0.4 of a councillor.

We carefully considered all of the above representations concerning the Strathkinness and St Andrews area. We asked Fife Council to comment proposals submitted by the Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council and the assertions concerning the accuracy of the forecast electorate contained in the provisional proposals. The Council stated that the 1996 electorate figures submitted by the Community Council appeared to be accurate. Although the Council might accept that the projected electorate for North East Fife constituency could be considered pessimistic, it advised that the figures had been based on the central government projections. However, it noted that, if the projections were indeed pessimistic, the volume of error, as the Community Council acknowledged, would not justify an additional ward.

After careful consideration of the proposed amendments to our provisional proposals we concluded that the Community Council's alternative proposals in

this area should be adopted as our final recommendations. We noted that the changes would also address the representations received from Councillor Melville and Strathkinness Community Council.

- **Colinsburgh and Kilconquhar Community Council** objected to the twin villages being separated and located within different wards. Although the Community Council accepted that the community ties between the two villages need not be affected, it did not understand why closely knit villages within a mile of each other should be required to work with different councillors with resultant duplication of effort at Community Council and other meetings. A straw poll taken in both villages showed a strong desire to retain the status quo. Further, the Community Council suggested that the population of Kilconquhar would hardly create a serious statistical imbalance.

We carefully considered the changes proposed by the Community Council and sought confirmation from the Council in respect of the electorate. We observed that associating Colinsburgh with Kilconquhar in Ward 76 would result in divergences from parity of 11% and -17% in Wards 76 and 78 respectively. Associating Kilconquhar with Colinsburgh in Ward 78 would result in divergences from parity of -9% and 3% respectively. Because our provisional proposals produced a better balance of electorate in these wards we were not prepared to accept amendments which would have had a significantly adverse effect on electoral parity.

- **Councillor Braid** wrote to say that for many years Craigiewells, Abercrombie, Lochview Cottages and Stenton Farm had been associated with and recognised as part of St Monans Ward. He considered it ridiculous now to have these properties included in the proposed Largo Ward.

Examination of our provisional proposals confirmed that the properties mentioned were contained within Ward 77, Elie, St Monans & Pittenweem.

- A letter expressed concern at the reduction in the level of representation for Fife Council and considered that the provisional proposals stuck too rigidly to achieving parity. It was stated that, although such an approach might be acceptable in urban areas such as Edinburgh and Dundee, the diverse nature of the urban concentrations within Fife, which are spread over a largely rural expanse, required a less stringent approach to attempting to achieve equal numbers of electorate within every electoral ward, An alternative methodology was submitted based upon dividing Fife Council area into the three District areas which existed previously, and seeking to achieve parity within each district to within  $\pm 5\%$ .

Comments were made relating to composition of wards and local ties in the provisional proposals. It was asserted that, were full account taken of representations made to the Commission, significant changes to the ward

boundaries in our provisional proposals would be required and divergences from parity would increase in many of the affected areas.

We noted that the methodology proposed resulted in electoral parity being applied within the constraints of three sub-areas which was not acceptable within the terms of the statutory rules concerning revised electoral arrangements. We were not obliged to adopt suggested changes which, we concluded, adversely affected our provisional proposals for the Council area.

- **North East Fife Liberal Democrats** stated that they broadly supported the provisional proposals as they affected Cupar, North Fife, St Andrews, Leuchars, Balmullo and Kemback and the East Neuk. They were, however, concerned that the proposed boundaries deviate from the existing Parliamentary constituency boundary.

With regard to the proposed arrangements for Wards 62 – 64, they suggested that these were unacceptable because they split a number of community ties and this had been overwhelmingly rejected by the communities concerned when proposals were first published by the Council. The Liberal Democrats preferred options 4 and 4a prepared by the Council, which maintained community links in the area.

The proposal to move Strathkinness from St Andrews West to Crail and Cameron was rejected. It was considered that this would break the local ties between Strathkinness and St Andrews in favour of a rather artificial link between Strathkinness and the distant coastal town of Crail. Given its extensive rural nature, the Party considered that it would not be unreasonable for a ward comprising of Crail and Cameron to be below parity. The increased electorate of St Andrews, under its preferred arrangements, could be shared between the other wards within St Andrews.

The Party proposed that Kilconquhar should be transferred from Ward 76 to Ward 78 to maintain local ties.

We noted that Parliamentary Constituency boundaries were not for our consideration and could not constrain our considerations of revised electoral arrangement for the Council area.

The Party's preference for option 4 of the proposals produced by Fife Council in respect of Wards 62-64 was noted. We confirmed, however, that adoption of the Council's Scheme 4 for electoral Wards 1-61 and Scheme I for electoral Wards 62-78, with amendments set out in our provisional proposals, should remain as the basis of our considerations of revised electoral arrangements for Fife Council area.

With regard to Strathkinness, we noted that our acceptance of the alternative proposals submitted by the Royal Burgh of St Andrews Community Council resolved the issues raised. However, we were not prepared to accept the request for Kilconquhar to be transferred to Ward 78 because of the adverse effect on electoral parity.

- **Councillor Tolson** stated that he believed the Commission had done an extremely good job in very difficult circumstances. Elected members had been unable to agree any of the various draft proposals prepared by the Council and this indicated that the drawing of electoral boundaries should be taken out of the political arena. The Councillor was pleased that the provisional proposals had maintained community links between Pitcorthie, Bellyeoman and Garvock.

We noted the councillor's comments.

- **Menzies Campbell MP** wrote to advise that he had received copies of representations from Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo and Ceres and District Community Councils. Mr Campbell was supportive of the Community Councils' views and requested that the Commission give the fullest consideration to the representations in the next stage of the review.

We noted Mr Campbell's comments. Representations from the Community Councils are discussed above.

## **Final Recommendation**

34. Having conducted the third statutory review of electoral arrangements for Fife Council area in accordance with the procedures described above, we recommend that future electoral arrangements for the said Council should provide for a Council of 78 members.

35. The designation of the electoral wards that we recommend for Fife Council, together with information which we have received from the Council as to the 1996 electorate and forecast 2001 electorate of the proposed wards, are set out at Appendix B to this report.

36. The boundaries of the proposed electoral wards are described in Appendix C and the following illustrative maps accompany this report:

<b>Map</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Scale</b>
1A	Fife Council Area	1:50,000
1B	Fife Council Area	1:50,000
2	Dunfermline/Inverkeithing	1:10,000
3	Cowdenbeath/Lochgelly	1:10,000

4	Dalgety Bay/Burntisland	1:10,000
5	Glenrothes	1:10,000
6	Kirkcaldy	1:10,000
7	Methil/Leven	1:10,000
8	Cupar	1:10,000

## Appendix B

### Fife Council Area Proposed Electoral Wards

Number	Name	Electorate	
		1996 (Actual)	2001 (Estimated)
a	b	c	d
1	Kincardine, Culross and Low Valleyfield	3,303	3,398
2	Blairhall, High Valleyfield and Torryburn	3,513	3,552
3	Oakley, Saline and Steelend	3,491	3,550
4	Cairneyhill, Carnock and Milesmark	3,541	3,650
5	Crossford and Dunfermline Central	3,631	3,750
6	Baldridgeburn	3,620	3,700
7	Wellwood and Headwell	3,699	3,700
8	Townhill and Bellyeoman	3,053	3,500
9	Garvock and Carnegie	3,628	3,700
10	Halbeath, Hill of Beath and Kingseat	3,279	3,492
11	Woodmill	3,486	3,700
12	Linburn	3,310	3,700
13	Brucefield and Netherton	3,535	3,550
14	Pitcorthie	3,556	3,550
15	Limekilns and Pitreavie	3,468	3,500
16	Rosyth West	3,479	3,500
17	Rosyth East	3,671	3,600
18	Inverkeithing West and Rosyth South	3,296	3,605
19	Inverkeithing East and North Queensferry	3,326	3,370
20	Dalgety Bay West and Hillend	3,374	3,710
21	Dalgety Bay East	3,662	3,705
22	Crossgates and Mosside	3,452	3,550
23	Cowdenbeath Central	3,728	3,650
24	Oakfield and Cowdenbeath North	3,603	3,708
25	Kelty	3,621	3,600
26	Ballingry and Lochore	3,901	3,750
27	Crosshill and Lochgelly North	3,767	3,700
28	Lumphinnans and Lochgelly South	3,569	3,500
29	Aberdour and Burntisland West	3,444	3,510
30	Auchtertool and Burntisland East	3,364	3,450
31	Kinghorn and Inveriel	3,455	3,500
32	Linktown and Kirkcaldy Central	3,670	3,625
33	Raith and Longbraes	3,553	3,600

34	Bennochty and Valley	3,755	3,650
35	Templehall East	3,522	3,550
36	Templehall West	3,549	3,475
37	Cardenden, Cluny and Chapel	3,611	3,500
38	Kinglassie, Bowhill and Dundonald	3,816	3,700
39	Dunnikier	3,355	3,475
40	Hayfield and Balsusney	3,547	3,500

Number	Name	Electorate	
		1996 (Actual)	2001 (Estimated)
a	b	c	d
41	Smeaton and Overton	3,668	3,600
42	Glebe Park, Pathhead and Sinclairtown	3,515	3,525
43	Dysart and Gallatown	3,752	3,700
44	Wemyss and Muiredge	3,777	3,700
45	Buckhaven and Denbeath	3,676	3,550
46	Methilhill	3,674	3,550
47	Methil	3,663	3,550
48	Leven East	3,629	3,600
49	Leven West and Kirkland	3,322	3,450
50	Kennoway	3,395	3,500
51	Windygates, Star and Balgonie	3,322	3,450
52	Markinch and Woodside East	3,717	3,650
53	Auchmuty and Woodside West	3,730	3,650
54	Pitteuchar and Finglassie North	3,720	3,650
55	Thornton, Stenton and Finglassie South	3,467	3,600
56	Caskieberran and Rimpleton	3,705	3,600
57	Newcastle and Tanshall	3,590	3,500
58	South Parks and Macedonia	3,782	3,650
59	Leslie and Whinnyknowe	3,483	3,600
60	Balgeddie and Collydean	3,506	3,600
61	Cadham, Pitcoudie and Balfarg	3,722	3,750
62	Falkland, Freuchie and Strathmiglo	3,624	3,604
63	Auchtermuchty and Ladybank	3,561	3,531
64	Kettle, Springfield and Ceres	3,530	3,492
65	Cupar South	3,351	3,399
66	Cupar North	3,565	3,575
67	Newburgh and Tay Coast	3,602	3,572
68	Newport-on-Tay and Wormit	3,590	3,600
69	Tayport and Motray	3,484	3,534
70	Leuchars, Balmullo and Gaurdbridge	3,351	3,442

71	Strathkinness, and St Andrews West	3,351	3,442
72	St Andrews Central	3,475	3,500
73	St Andrews South	3,493	3,582
74	St Andrews South East	3,464	3,588
75	Crail, Cameron and Kemback	3,659	3,645
76	Anstruther and East Neuk Landward	3,560	3,550
77	Elie, St Monans and Pittenweem	3,590	3,550
78	Largo	3,346	3,406
	Total	277,138	279,450