

Appendix 2

3. Initial proposals for the North East region

19. The North East region comprises the counties of Durham and Northumberland, the boroughs of the former Metropolitan County of Tyne and Wear, and the unitary authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees. The region currently has 29 constituencies. Of these constituencies, only five (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland, North Tyneside, Stockton South, Sunderland Central, and Tynemouth) have electorates within 5% of the electoral quota. The electorates of the remaining 24 constituencies fall below the 5% limit and, in many cases, are significantly smaller.

20. As discussed in chapter 2, following our consultation on using the regions as the basis of our initial proposals, we have taken an initial decision that the North East region is to be allocated 26 constituencies – a reduction of three on the current number.

21. In seeking to produce initial proposals for the region that would result in 26 constituencies, each with an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota, we first considered whether, and how, local government authorities could be usefully grouped into sub-regions. We were mindful of seeking to respect, where we could, the external boundaries of local authorities and natural boundaries, such as the River Tyne. Our approach in attempting to group local authorities together in sub-regions was based on both trying to respect natural boundaries, and achieving, where we could, obvious practical groupings.

22. Tyne and Wear, with an electorate of just over 828,000, could be allocated 11 constituencies within 5% of the electoral quota that would be wholly contained within its boundary. However, this would necessitate crossing the River Tyne, which we considered to be undesirable. Darlington, with an electorate of 78,463, is the only other area of

the North East that could be allocated a whole number of constituencies within its boundary. The electorates of all the other counties and unitary authorities in the North East are such that it is necessary to group them with a neighbouring county or unitary authority. Therefore we decided that we would review the whole of the North East region as one unit in order to allow for a greater range of options.

23. Our initial proposals for the North East region contain two constituencies that are wholly contained within the County of Northumberland, four constituencies that are wholly contained within the County of Durham, and nine constituencies that are wholly contained within the metropolitan boroughs of Tyne and Wear.

24. In addition, we have proposed three constituencies that cross the county boundary between Northumberland and Tyne and Wear, and one constituency that crosses the county boundary between Northumberland and Durham. In the boroughs of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, and Stockton-on-Tees we have proposed six constituencies. We propose a further constituency that contains parts of Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees, and Durham.

25. In reference to the county unitary authorities of Durham and Northumberland, the use of the term 'ward' throughout this document should be taken to mean electoral division.

26. We considered whether it would be possible to leave unchanged any of the existing constituencies that had an electorate within 5% of the electoral quota. However, in developing proposals in which the electorates of all constituencies are within 5% of the electoral quota, we have altered all the constituencies in the region.

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27. Our proposed changes to Tyne and Wear have been fairly widespread. This is largely due to the small constituency electorates across the former metropolitan county, particularly in Newcastle upon Tyne, and the relatively large electorates of the urban wards. Currently the Borough of North Tyneside and the City of Newcastle upon Tyne have five constituencies that are wholly contained within the Tyne and Wear boundary. The electorates of these two boroughs do not allow for the allocation of a whole number of constituencies without having to cross the River Tyne or the county boundary with Northumberland.

28. Our proposals create two constituencies, Newcastle upon Tyne North and Cramlington, and Whitley Bay, which contain wards of the County of Northumberland. Our proposed Whitley Bay constituency includes seven wards from the existing Tynemouth constituency, the two wards of Battle Hill and Killingworth of the Borough of North Tyneside, and the ward of Holywell of the County of Northumberland, from the existing Blyth Valley constituency. We consider that there are good communication links in this area. We propose that the town of Tynemouth not be included in the same constituency as Whitley Bay but in a new constituency called Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth.

29. Our proposed Newcastle upon Tyne North and Cramlington constituency comprises four wards of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, three wards of the Borough of North Tyneside, and six wards of the County of Northumberland, which contain the town of Cramlington. In proposing these constituencies we are attempting to ensure that the town of Cramlington is not divided between constituencies.

30. Our proposals create two constituencies - Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth,

and Newcastle upon Tyne South - based on an east/west axis along the River Tyne from the Northumberland county boundary to the North Sea coast. This arrangement ensures that a constituency is not divided by the River Tyne. The Newcastle upon Tyne East and Tynemouth constituency includes three wards from the existing Tynemouth constituency, three wards from the existing North Tyneside constituency and four wards from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne East constituency. Our proposed Newcastle upon Tyne South constituency includes the two wards of Ouseburn and South Jesmond from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne East constituency, four wards from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency and four wards from the existing Newcastle upon Tyne North constituency. We propose a new Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency that, in contrast with the existing Newcastle upon Tyne Central constituency, does not extend to the River Tyne due to the creation of our proposed Newcastle upon Tyne South constituency. This new constituency comprises eight wards of the City of Newcastle upon Tyne and two wards, Benton and Northumberland, of the Borough of North Tyneside.

31. Currently the combined metropolitan boroughs of Gateshead, South Tyneside, and Sunderland have seven constituencies. Due to the combined electorate of these boroughs we propose six constituencies that are wholly contained within this area. The existing Jarrow, Gateshead, and South Shields constituencies all have electorates that are significantly below the 5% limit. Having decided not to create a constituency that crosses the River Tyne, we propose to include the wards of Boldon Colliery, and Cleadon and East Boldon of the Borough of South Tyneside, which are in the existing Jarrow constituency, in our proposed South Shields constituency. Consequently, our Jarrow and Gateshead East constituency

includes all the wards in the existing Jarrow constituency, except for the two mentioned above, and also includes four wards from the existing Gateshead constituency.

We did consider whether there were other Gateshead wards that we could include in the constituency, but decided that the inclusion of the four we have proposed would be the most suitable.

32. We also propose a Gateshead West constituency, which includes six wards from the existing Gateshead constituency and five wards from the existing Blaydon constituency, which, due to the changes that we have proposed elsewhere in the region, would no longer exist.

33. Our proposed Washington constituency includes all the wards from the existing Washington and Sunderland West constituency, except for the Redhill ward of the City of Sunderland. It also includes the two wards of Lamesley and Birtley of the Borough of Gateshead, from the existing Blaydon constituency.

34. The existing constituency of Sunderland Central remains largely unchanged. The constituency gains the Redhill ward from the existing Washington and Sunderland West constituency but, as a consequence, the Ryhope ward of the City of Sunderland is transferred to our proposed Houghton-le-Spring constituency, the name of which has been changed from Houghton and Sunderland South. The Ryhope ward has been in a previous constituency with Houghton. We propose that Sunderland Central constituency be renamed Sunderland.

35. The County of Northumberland currently has four constituencies, all of which have very small electorates. We propose having two constituencies that are wholly within the county boundary. We considered whether a

constituency comprising large areas of the existing Berwick-upon-Tweed constituency could be extended south and westwards to Hexham, and whether the town of Morpeth could be included in a constituency with either Berwick-upon-Tweed or with Hexham. However, electoral figures and the shape of the Ulgham ward, which almost surrounds the town of Morpeth and extends to the North Sea coast, led us to include the town of Morpeth in a constituency with the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed. Consequently, our proposals result in a Berwick and Morpeth constituency that extends down the North Sea coast. Furthermore, as a result of our proposal to include the whole of the town of Cramlington within a constituency that includes wards from the City of Newcastle upon Tyne, we propose a new Blyth and Ashington constituency which includes the town of Bedlington, and extends to the coastal communities of Seaton Sluice in the south and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea in the north.

36. We propose a Hexham constituency that extends from the newly created Rothbury ward to just south of the A69, but not extending as far as the Durham county boundary. This proposed constituency, in order to have an electorate that is within 5% of the electoral quota, crosses the county boundary between the County of Northumberland and the Borough of Gateshead, and includes the following three wards from the existing Blaydon constituency: Ryton, Crookhill and Stella; Crawcrook and Greenside; and Chopwell and Rowlands Gill, of the Borough of Gateshead. This arrangement results in the proposed Hexham constituency being the largest in England in terms of area, at 2,603.85 square kilometres. (Legislation states that no constituency can be larger than 13,000 square kilometres.)

37. The County of Durham currently has six constituencies. Our proposals create four

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constituencies wholly contained within the county, one constituency that contains two wards from the County of Northumberland, and one constituency that contains wards from the County of Durham, the Borough of Darlington, and the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.

38. We propose a Consett and Barnard Castle constituency that crosses the county boundary between Northumberland and County Durham by including the wards of Haltwhistle and South Tynedale. The constituency also includes a number of wards from the existing North West Durham and Bishop Auckland constituencies. Although this constituency is very rural in nature, there are a number of roads across the county boundary that link the north and south of the constituency.

39. We propose a significantly altered Bishop Auckland constituency which includes the towns of Crook and Spennymoor. Our proposed constituency no longer extends westwards to the boundary with Cumbria. Our proposed Chester-le-Street constituency is similar to the existing North Durham constituency and includes all the wards from that constituency as well as the Burnopfield and Dipton ward from the existing North West Durham constituency. We propose the change of name as we consider that it suitably reflects the community in this part of County Durham.

40. Our proposed Durham constituency now includes the Ferryhill and Trimdon wards but does not extend beyond the west of Brandon, as the existing constituency does. Our proposed Easington constituency remains largely unchanged, but with the inclusion of the Thornley and Wingate wards from the existing Sedgefield constituency; this has been done to increase its electorate.

41. In the Borough of Darlington we propose a Darlington constituency that includes all the

wards in the existing Darlington constituency and the wards of Heighington and Coniscliffe, and Hurworth, which are currently in the Sedgefield constituency.

42. We propose a Sedgefield and Yarm constituency that crosses the county boundaries between the County of Durham and the Borough of Darlington, and the County of Durham and the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees. It includes the Middleton St George, and Sadberge and Whessoe wards of the Borough of Darlington. To compensate for the transfer of the Heighington and Coniscliffe, and Hurworth wards to our proposed Darlington constituency, we have extended our proposed Sedgefield and Yarm constituency to include wards to the west and south of the town of Stockton-on-Tees, including the towns of Yarm and Ingleby Barwick from the existing Stockton South constituency. This proposed constituency is served by major roads that link the parts of the two boroughs and county that are included in the constituency.

43. As a result of the changes we have made, four wards from the existing Stockton South constituency have been included in a new Stockton and Billingham constituency. This enables almost all of the town of Stockton-on-Tees to be included in a single constituency. The three wards of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees, which cover the Thornaby-on-Tees area, are now included in our proposed Middlesbrough constituency.

44. Eleven wards from the existing Middlesbrough constituency are included in our proposed Middlesbrough constituency. In addition, our proposed Middlesbrough constituency includes the two wards of Ladgate and Marton of the Borough of Middlesbrough, from the existing Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency, and three wards of the Borough

of Stockton-on-Tees, which are in the existing Stockton South constituency. Four wards from the existing Middlesbrough constituency are included in our proposed Redcar constituency.

45. As a consequence of our changes, our proposed Redcar constituency also contains the Park End ward of the Borough of Middlesbrough, from the existing Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland constituency. The three wards of Normanby, Ormesby, and St Germain's of the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland are included in our proposed Middlesbrough South and Guisborough constituency which, apart from these additions and the transfer of the Park End ward, is unaltered. We propose that this new constituency's name be changed from Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland.

46. Our proposed Hartlepool constituency has just one change from the existing constituency - the addition of the Billingham North ward of the Borough of Stockton-on-Tees.