

Record of a Public Hearing held into the Provisional
Recommendations of the Local Government Boundaries
Commissioner for Northern Ireland in respect of the proposed East
Local Government District held at the Lough Moss Centre,
Carryduff on 23 January 2007

*The Assistant Commissioner, Mr Alan Money Penny, opened the
public hearing at 09.45am*

<p>Mr Alan Money Penny, Assistant Commissioner</p>	<p>Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is just after 9:45am and if it is convenient for everyone I propose to open this public hearing into the proposed Local Government District of East. My name is Alan Money Penny and I have been appointed as the Assistant Commissioner to conduct this public hearing for the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>I will just make some formal opening remarks and outline how the proceedings will be conducted. At this stage, I would remind everybody to turn off their mobile telephones and put their pagers or beepers on silent.</p> <p>The hearing will consider the Local Government Boundary Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations for the name and boundaries of proposed district of East; the name, number and boundaries of its constituent wards; and the representations made in respect of those recommendations. I will take full account of the oral and written representations made in respect of the Recommendations in submitting my written report to the Commissioner within four weeks of the close of this hearing.</p> <p>I want to emphasise that my function is independent of the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner. I am not here to defend his Provisional Recommendations. I am</p>
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here to listen to the evidence and information that is provided by interested parties in respect of the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations.

I should make it clear from the outset that I will not be able to consider any representations on matters that fall outside the legislative framework for the work of the Commissioner. For example, I cannot consider arguments for an alternative number of local government districts to the seven as set out in the legislation. My report will be independent of the Commissioner and he can either accept or reject my findings and recommendations, if any, in due course.

I am assisted today by members of the office of the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner and staff from Morrow Communications. On my left is Mandy Morrison, Secretary to the Commissioner. We have also got Crawford McIlveen, Dermot Harkin who is on his way, and outside we have Laura and Fiona. Stewart over here is looking after sound. Please approach them at any time with any queries you may have about the hearing and they will be pleased to help you to draw the matter to my attention in due course. The hearing is being recorded and the transcription will be published by the Commissioner's office as soon as it is available.

Shortly, I will adjourn the hearing for no more than 10 minutes so that I can meet those who wish to make oral representations and informally arrange an order in which they will be heard. Copies of the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations are available for consultation at the desk along with copies of the Procedure Guide. Also available are bound copies of written submissions relating to this district which have been made to the Commissioner during the eight- week consultation

period that ended on 5 January 2007.

The purpose of this hearing is substantially to obtain local views. If you have a view on the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations, this is your opportunity to make it heard. I must emphasise that what you cannot do is reserve your position and await my report. It will not be possible to make written or oral submissions to me after the hearing has concluded. I have already examined closely the written representations received thus far as part of my preparation for this hearing. I will be taking those into account in formulating my report to the Commissioner. Some of you who have made written submissions may wish to elaborate on and develop them during the course of the hearing. I welcome that because it is likely to assist me in considering and clarifying the various issues that they are addressing.

If you wish to propose elaborate or substantial counter proposals that have not already been made to the Commissioner, it would be helpful if you could inform me during the short adjournment. However, if you have already made your points fully in writing, do not feel under any obligation to make any oral submission. You may wish simply to state that you support or oppose a particular proposal for the reasons that you have already stated in writing. I can assure you that full account will be taken of the written submissions whether or not they are referred to during the course of the hearing.

As for the practical arrangements in the speaking order, I will try to accommodate people as far as I reasonably and practically can. There may be people who, due to work commitments or personal difficulties, will wish to get away as early as possible and cannot stay for long. I will try to give them priority if I possibly can. If there is anyone who

wishes to be heard and who has difficulty in being here at a particular time, please let me know so that I can try to make arrangements for a suitable time for them to be heard. I would ask people to be flexible if they can.

It has been a custom in the past to hear first from the elected Members of Parliament for the respective local government areas, the Members of the Legislative Assembly, local councillors and thereafter members of the public. There is no significance to that order, save that elected representatives often have other duties to attend to and, while not making light of people's work commitments, that is a custom that I intend to adopt in the course of this hearing.

Let me say a word about the procedure we will follow in relation to the oral submissions. You will be called to come up to the front seating in front of me and speak from where you would be sitting provided you can be heard by everybody and that what you say is relevant and material to today's proceedings. Microphones are in place. In making your submission, please could you start by stating your name and whether you are speaking in a personal capacity or in a representative capacity and, if so, for whom. Also, please could you state at the outset whether you have made a written submission. If you have a summary or note of the submission you wish to make today, could you please provide me with a copy of that and provide some copies for the secretariat and the transcribers. If you do not already have copies of your statement, please approach a member of our staff during the adjournment and they will arrange for copies to be made.

Your oral submissions will be of particular assistance if you are able to explain the reasons why you have taken a

particular position and if you are able to explain any counter proposals which you may wish to make and the reasons for that counter proposal. When you have finished your oral submission, other people may like the opportunity to put questions to you in relation to your submission and any counterproposal you may make. I too may have some questions for you as well on points of clarification.

Regarding questioning, formal cross-examination is not appropriate at a hearing of this nature. However, I am happy for people to put their questions to the speaker through myself. Similarly, for the person answering the question, I will facilitate that in the best way possible. The most important thing today is to hear the information, to hear any counterpoints and get through the hearing as efficiently as possible. I wish to emphasise that it is my hope and expectation that the hearing can be conducted in an informal manner conducive to all who wish to contribute to the proceedings being permitted to give of their best. I am sure that this will be the case.

I will touch briefly on visits to the ground. After the hearings are over I may go to view areas under consideration. If there is a particular boundary or feature that you want me to look at then please mention it during the course of your evidence. I will note that and try to arrange to go and see it.

Upon entering the room today, you will have been given an opportunity to record your attendance. If you have not already done so, would you please ensure that you do so during the short adjournment. Signing the register will also assist us should it be necessary to evacuate the building during the course of the hearing because it will enable us to check that everyone is accounted for. I have been asked to tell you that in the event of an alarm sounding it will not

be a practice, it will be the real thing and it will be necessary for us to evacuate the building in such an event.

I have been asked to remind visitors that the building is completely non-smoking. People can smoke immediately outside the building. You are advised that the public toilets including disabled toilets are outside on the right.

So far as the times of this hearing are concerned, we have two days available if necessary. I intend to break for lunch between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm and expect to finish around 5:30 pm. However, subject to how people at this hearing feel, I will not get too hung up in these times. If for example we are in the middle of a matter involving concentration in which people are focused, I would rather finish that part of the discussion. I do not intend to stop for coffee or tea breaks. However, free tea and coffee has been provided outside in the registration area and if people so wish please feel free to get up and take a break. I will, of course, stop for adjournment for issues of procedure or people feel that there is a difficulty.

That is all I want to say in my opening remarks. As I indicated earlier, I will now adjourn for about 10 minutes to take a note of the people who are intending to speak at the hearing to get an idea of the running order. Could I ask those of you who are intending to speak to come forward to Mandy and we will have a chat about the procedure that we will follow. I will need your name and that of the organisation you represent and, should you be in a representative capacity, it would also be helpful to know the aspects of the Provisional Recommendations about which you wish to speak and say whether or not you have submitted your written representation. I would also like you to give me a very general indication of the time you think you might need for speaking. I am not holding people

	<p>to that, it is just to give us an indication for the efficient timetabling of the hearing. I am aware that many of you will want to speak today but I am sure you will understand that I may have to ask some of you to wait till tomorrow. Thank you very much.</p>
	<p><i>Adjournment</i></p>
	<p>Okay, let us get things going, Councillor O'Neill.</p>
<p>Mr Eamonn O'Neill, SDLP Councillor</p>	<p>Thank you for allowing me to go first and I am sorry that I will not be able to stay for the duration. First of all, I welcome the opportunity to make a few comments in support of our submission.</p> <p>Our submission, as you know, is on behalf of the Down SDLP Councillors grouping. We have 10 members on Down Council and clearly we are very concerned about any changes that are going to take place. As is well known, the SDLP are not particularly happy with the seven model. I know you do not want to go into that, so I am not going to bother with that, but in the light of circumstances it is important that a few things be established.</p> <p>First of all, a fairly simple thing, which I think is incontrovertible, and that is about the name issue. The disappointment that we all expressed about the standard of thought that has gone into the name creation is something we would like to deal with. We are strongly of the opinion that the area, irrespective of what size it eventually will come down to after adjustments, should be called Down. And that is because of its historical connection with Down and the influence of Downpatrick as a county town. The link with St. Patrick is a very old and historical link, Mr Commissioner, and we would like to ensure that that is maintained from that historical aspect. And, of course, as we have already pointed out in our written submission, two of the existing councils that are now incorporated into this</p>

plan are both called Down: North Down and Down itself. That is the first point I wanted to reinforce.

The second point, Mr Commissioner, has to do with the National Park and its creation. Now as the consultation period is drawing to a close, and it is due to close at the end of the month as I am sure you are aware, it is becoming quite clear that there is going to be a clear majority of contributors who are in favour of the development of a National Park. What shape it will take is still not totally clear, but it seems inevitable that there will be a National Park. Therefore, the points that we outlined in our submission about maintaining the coherence and relevance of a local government area become even more important in that light.

We would be very concerned that the National Park, if it is going to be created, and all the indications as I have said indicate that, should be kept as a whole and not divided between two of the new councils. We think that that is possible to incorporate into the Down Council as a whole and the benefits of that would be considerable in terms of economic issues relating particularly to tourism with a large coastline and seaborne tourist attraction. Plus the fact that, from another economic point of view, the three major fishing ports in Northern Ireland, Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie, would all be within the ambit of one local government council, which would become a very strong spokesperson for that particular industry and try to do something about the plight of the fishing industry in Down.

Those would be some of the major advantages that we would see in this tourist, industrial and economic type approach to that district, and we would just want to make those additional supportive points to the written ones we have already made. Mr Commissioner, if you have any

	<p>questions on what I have said, or indeed on aspects of our written submission to you, I would be very pleased to try to address them.</p>
Mr Money Penny	<p>Councillor O'Neill, I have no questions but is there anybody else present who might have questions for Councillor O'Neill?</p>
Alderman Brian Wilson, North Down Council, representing the Green Party	<p>We certainly agree that the Mourne Park should not be split up, but why would you argue that it should go into Down rather than the Southern area?</p>
Mr O'Neill	<p>Thank you, Commissioner. Well, as I have outlined, it creates coherence in terms of tourism development. You would have a really fine tourist package, both in terms of the Mourne and in terms of the coastal area of Down, which we in Down Council have found works extremely well selling the Mourne and St. Patrick's country. Indeed, it is well established through the existing kingdoms of Down, which is an amalgamation of existing councils working on the tourist package for Down, and of which I believe North Down is a member. I think that that indicates clearly that there is coherence there and part of our submission was central to that coherence argument, and I think it will sustain it.</p> <p>Also, as I have indicated, there is an additional advantage from the point of view of dealing with the fishing industry on a whole and the three major ports. I think that would strengthen the fishing industry, strengthen local government's work in that area and perhaps do something to deal with the very difficult situation those people involved in the fishing industry face at the present.</p>
Mr Money Penny	<p>Are there any other questions?</p>
Dr Stephen Farry, General Secretary Alliance Party	<p>Thank you, Assistant Commissioner. Stephen Farry, representing the Alliance Party. Can I just ask Mr O'Neill to clarify which wards from the proposed South Council he would propose bringing into East to accommodate the Regional Park?</p>

Mr O'Neill	<p>As you are aware, Assistant Commissioner, there is a debate about the exact boundary of the National Park and that is not clarified yet. Clearly, to be consistent, we would want to have that boundary clearly within the new local government area. That might mean some adjustment to what we know to be the boundary at the moment and the boundary discussion is not complete yet as to what is in the "National Park".</p> <p>Our main point is that the National Park should be within one local government unit and we think that should be within the East. There is the additional benefit that this would create, in our view, just speaking as the SDLP group, a better political balance within that new council. Without that additional area, the balance is very strongly unionist with a very small nationalist presence and that would create we would think not a very healthy situation. We would prefer to see a better balance.</p>
Mr Money Penny	That is not a consideration for this hearing.
Mr O'Neill	Well, seeing as it was a question for the Alliance Party, I thought it might be included.
Dr Farry	Can I follow up, Mr Commissioner? I am speaking for the Alliance Party who are neither unionists nor nationalists. We are perfectly capable of representing the entire community's interest. Could I just clarify on the point of the boundaries of the Regional Park? Would Mr O'Neill envisage it going as far as Carlingford Lough and taking in Warrenpoint and Rostrevor?
Mr O'Neill	I think the debate about the boundary does not extend totally into Warrenpoint, it does come around the existing Rostrevor ward. It would also clearly become a debate about the inclusion of Kilkeel which currently is not considered to be within the National Park boundary, something that many of us are not happy with and we would like to see changed.
Dr Farry	The reason I am asking is that a number of those wards

	<p>essentially extend from the Lough up to the middle of the Mourne, so there may be a necessity to redraw some of those boundaries if we are not taking in the coastal areas. The concern I would have about going that far is the difficulties of service delivery issues. It may be more efficient, in terms of service delivery, to service some of those areas from a Newry-based council or sub-council rather than perhaps from Downpatrick or from Newcastle, in which, as smaller areas, it may not be sensible to invest that degree of critical mass of services. So I am just conscious of that as another consideration. Thank you.</p>
Mr O'Neill	<p>This was a point, Commissioner, that we looked at and to try to extend that argument on over to the alternative, which is to include the National Park inside what would be the new council, taking in the existing Newry and Mourne. This would mean that the administrative point would extend from the other side of Armagh to Newcastle, and this would create exactly the same problem that has been mentioned by the last speaker.</p>
Mr Money Penny	<p>Thank you Councillor O'Neill. Any further questions for him?</p>
Mr O'Neill	<p>Could I thank you, Assistant Commissioner, for facilitating me. Thank you and I hope you have an enjoyable morning.</p>
Mr Money Penny	<p>Thank you. Mr Mark Neale.</p>
Mr Mark Neale, Ulster Unionist Party	<p>Thank you, Mr. Commissioner and again, like Councillor O'Neill, I thank you for facilitating us today. I am speaking on behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party and I am really referring to the submission made by Councillor Danny Kennedy, MLA, who apologises that he personally cannot be here. So, I would ask that to be recorded.</p> <p>I find ourselves very much in broad agreement with what the SDLP has just said. Like them, we are opposed to the seven-council model which has been well rehearsed, and I would just put that on the record again. Dealing with the proposals that have been made, we too would see the</p>

current boundaries cutting the bottom half of County Down and amalgamating it with part of County Armagh as not the most sensible of proposals for many of the reasons that have already been put out.

I would take you back to the original RPA team and some of the proposals and considerations that they made. They argued, and quite rightly so, that coterminosity would be a very important feature as it would keep natural geographical features together, as it would communities.

Therefore, Mr. Commissioner, we would also go along the lines that the proposed Mourne County National Park, which is still being debated and which we are not totally signed up to, though Councillor O'Neil has made it clear that it does look likely that this is going to come about, should be within one council area.

When we discuss development, tourism, protection, management - all those issues will be best served in a one council model. And we have not even touched on that most controversial area of all — that of planning. The idea of having two councils with wide powers putting in different planning proposals and restrictions and procedures in areas such as a National Park would be nonsense. Therefore, we would strongly contend that the National Park should be in the one council area. As such we, too, would see the movement from the South area into the East area.

We as a party have made no submission currently as to the names, but I think most people agree that what is currently proposed is unacceptable. However, in line with our thinking, when you talk about geographical features, not only are we talking about the Mourne National Park but also about the County Down coastline. As already alluded

	<p>to, it is not only a tourism destination and feature but also an industrial and economic feature, and, again, it would be best served by one council. We would then be pushing for the bottom half — the wards that are being talked about in our submission are Annalong, Cranfield, Hilltown, Kilkeel, Narrow Water, Rostrevor, and Warrenpoint — all being brought into the County Down council area so that it makes a cohesive unit that would run right round down towards Newry. I think there is a logic in making that submission in totality. Kilkeel and Cranfield will be cut off by part of the National Park, so I think then it makes it logical that Rostrevor and that whole area comes in, as would Narrow Water and Warrenpoint. I would agree with you that the political questions are not relevant. We have had too much gerrymandering on political grounds and I do not think we need to touch on that. In general terms we are fully supportive of the moving of the proposed National Park area plus the associated wards into the East, as it currently is called. Thank you, Mr Commissioner.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Does anybody have any questions for Mr Neale? Mr Neale, you said that you have not submitted a recommendation regarding the name. Is there something in your mind that you had not mentioned to me?</p>
Mr Neale	<p>I would not wish to take that burden on myself, shall I say, and certainly Mr Kennedy has not given me any directions, so I will leave that to him and others.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Thank you. Could I call Mr Terry Andrews?</p>
Mr Terry Andrews, Crossgar Community Project	<p>Mr Assistant Commissioner, thank you very much for allowing me this opportunity to speak at this hearing. I made a written representation to the Commissioner's office on the 14 November.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>For those present, exactly who do you represent?</p>
Mr Terry Andrews	<p>My name is Terry Andrews and I am a community worker in Crossgar. As I said, I made a written representation to the Commissioner's office on the 14 November last year in connection with the proposed title of the new council.</p>

	<p>Many feel that the title East is cold, monolithic and it bears no connections with the County Down area that it covers.</p> <p>I propose that these titles should be scrapped and maybe the Commissioners could take on board the suggestions that I submitted: that the name of the council be Strangford Regional Council or Strand Down Regional Council, as some of the speakers have outlined County Down and the historical connections with it.</p> <p>The reason that I have submitted these two names for possible consideration is that the names originate from Strangford Lough, which is one of the largest physical waterways, and Strand Down is another solution that would in a way perpetuate the local identities of Down district and the rest of the council area and the new authority. I thank you for your permission to speak in this matter. That is all.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Thank you very much, indeed. Does anybody have any questions for Mr Andrews? Thank you very much indeed Mr Andrews. I call Dr. Stephen Farry.</p>
Dr Farry	<p>Thank you, Mr Assistant Commissioner, and like others I am grateful for the opportunity to make a presentation here today. My name is Stephen Farry. I am the General Secretary of the Alliance Party. I am speaking here representing the Alliance Party, though I should also declare that I am a member of North Down Borough Council, so I have more localised interest in matters as well.</p> <p>The first point I would make is that, like other parties, we disagree with the seven-council model, and I leave it at that. We have a fairly detailed written submission. I just want elaborate on a few of those points.</p> <p>First of all, in relation to the East Council, we think there</p>

are a number of internal boundaries that do need to be re-examined. Our preference is that in rural areas the boundaries should not cut across townlands or villages where that can be avoided. Within urban areas, boundaries should use preferably natural features such as rivers, railway lines, and where that is not available they should use arterial routes. However, we are concerned that a number of boundaries run down the middle of residential streets and cut off people within natural communities from one another. At a ward level, that may not on the face of things seem that significant. However, wards are the building blocks of DEAs and, insofar as ward boundaries are incorrectly drawn, it does limit the capacity to draw DEAs subsequent to that, because you end up having natural communities represented by different blocks of councillors with the resulting confusion that can arise.

Also, wards are sometimes used for purposes other than purely electoral matters, for example, TSN areas and also census areas. So, insofar as wards reflect natural communities, again, that is very helpful.

In terms of the specifics in relation to the East area, first of all I address the issue of name. Like others we are dissatisfied with the names that have been put forward so far. We see them as very functional and not reflecting the character of areas. I think the paucity of other suggestions of names reflects a difficulty in trying to find a name that can adequately cover the proposed areas and reflect them. With reference to matters like Strangford, Strangford refers to one part of the proposed council area and would not reflect the identity of some parts. You could see that the identity of some areas is better reflected than others. Equally the use of the name Down. Down is the name of one of the constituent councils and if we are to have potentially four current councils coming together, I think

that would strike people as being rather unfair to the identity of the other three. For that reason, we have proposed the name of East Down, which I do confess is a rather boring and functional title, but does bring in that broader County Down identity without perhaps overly leaning to one of the existing names of one of the councils.

With reference to the boundaries of the proposed East Council, we would make two points. First of all, with the boundary in relation to Belfast and Castlereagh, there is an inconsistency in that the wards from the current Castlereagh East and Castlereagh Central DEAs are proposed to be transferred into the new Belfast City Council, whereas a number of the more westerly wards are to be retained within the proposed East Council.

We think that is an inconsistent approach and that either the dual carriageway around Belfast should be used as the boundary between Belfast and the East Council, or alternatively, the current build line around Belfast should be the boundary for Belfast Council. Our preference would be to extend Belfast and to take in the currently proposed Beechill, Four Winds, and Newtownbreda wards. We feel that if the dual carriageway is used as the boundary, you are effectively cutting off what is regarded by the residents as one part of Belfast from another. People there describe themselves as living in Belfast rather than Castlereagh and not part of a wider County Down identity.

There are probably also going to be service delivery issues for any council that is trying to manage that residential area, given that most of their services will be based perhaps around somewhere like Newtownards, Comber, Downpatrick or Bangor, rather than necessarily in Belfast. It may be a lot simpler in terms of service delivery for those areas to be serviced out of Belfast. After all, the RPA is

looking to find efficiencies in how local government is managed.

Also at the southern end, we would recommend that the wards of Donard, Newcastle, Murlough and Castlewellan are transferred into the South Council. Like other speakers we do recognise that the Mourne are an important asset within Northern Ireland in tourist and recreational terms. If they are to be developed and managed to their full potential it is important that only one council has full control over the tourist matters relating to that rather than being split between two. Our preference, and we think it is simpler, is to transfer the wards around Newcastle into the South area rather than trying to transfer the wards to the south of the Mourne to the East Council. Effectively, those wards along the Carlingford Lough will be separated from the rest of that East area by the Mourne themselves, creating a major physical barrier. We think the more logical approach in terms of service delivery and also identity is for those areas to be part of a wider South Council, with the City of Newry being the natural hub from which all those areas are serviced.

Within the particulars, we have set out a number of minor changes that we believe can be made to wards that would improve the situation on the ground. I think for most of those we have set out our concerns in the written paper and I do not propose to go through those all in detail. But I am happy to elaborate upon any of those or to explain those, where either yourself, Mr Assistant Commissioner, or any other speakers, want to have some clarification.

Some of the points I would make, however, are first of all, within my own council area, the Helen's Bay village. This is currently split between two wards and, in fact, two different DEAs, which illustrates the problem of how DEAs

will in the future be drawn. That village is split almost 50/50 between the Hollywood and Bangor West areas. Under the current proposals that situation has improved where we have 90% of the village within the proposed Crawfordsburn ward, but I think the most sensible thing is for all of Helen's Bay to be united within one ward and eventually within one District Electoral Area.

Also the name for the ward in the centre of Bangor is proposed as Bangor Marina. This currently takes in the Harbour ward, which is one of the major areas of targeting social need within the North Down area. It is also proposed to be combined with the Princetown area, which is one of the most affluent areas within North Down. Whereas Bangor Marina is obviously a feature that North Down Council is very proud of, I do not think whenever that council is trying to encourage investment into the area, particularly under TSN, that Bangor Marina really captures the essence of why that investment is required. Therefore, perhaps the name Bangor Bay may be a better substitute for that ward.

The other problem I want to highlight, as well, is that a number of the proposed wards are, in essence, a dumb-bell, where you have population centres at either end of the ward with a lot of rural area in between. That creates major difficulties whenever DEAs are going to be drawn, because inevitably those wards are going to be based around one or other of the population centres, they are going to stretch across a largely empty rural area to take in the fringe of another population area. Within the North Down area there are two wards in particular where that is a major problem: one of those being the proposed Clondeboye ward, which, in fact, takes in the fringes of Hollywood and also the fringes of Bangor. In practice it actually takes in four different postal areas that are Belfast

	<p>addresses, Holywood addresses, Newtownards addresses and Bangor addresses, all within one proposed ward.</p> <p>I have a different proposal as to how that ward could be re-drawn which is effectively based around the fringes of Bangor, expanding some of the other wards to take in more of the rural area, which I believe may be a slightly more balanced approach. I will just table that with you if that is acceptable. The other ward where that is a problem is the proposed Orlock ward.</p> <p>The other point I want to make in relation to the Clandeboye ward is that, although I appreciate that these proposals are based upon the 1 December 2005 register and that future developments are not really a consideration for the Boundaries Commissioner, within the North Down area the vast majority of the new housing developments are proposed to fall within that one Clandeboye ward. One can see that, within a matter of four to five years, the population of that ward will increase dramatically and as a result the balance between the wards will be difficult within a very short period of time. Again I think that should be avoided if at all possible. So thank you very much and I will be happy to answer any questions.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Dr. Farry, I just draw to your attention that DEAs are not a consideration for determining ward boundaries. That is not within our statutory rules. Are there any questions for Dr. Farry?</p>
Mr Neale	<p>Thank you, Mr Commissioner. I just would like to pick up on the service delivery issues, which I know you also mentioned to Mr. O'Neill.</p> <p>You would of course agree, Stephen, that with the size of the current councils we are talking about, the service delivery units are going to be massive. While some arguments can be made at the fringes, I mean realistically,</p>

	no matter where you place yourself some areas are going to be extremely far away from these services.
Mr Money Penny	Mr Neale, could you just tell everybody who you are. It is just to try and keep continuity for the record.
Mr Neale	No problem. It is Mark Neale from the Ulster Unionist Party.
Dr Farry	This goes to the heart of the seven-council model and I do not want to go into great detail about the inadequacies of that, and it does create difficulties in terms of service delivery. Insofar as we are dealing with seven councils, there are always going to be difficulties and anomalies that arise in different places. I think with respect to the boundary between the proposed East and proposed South Councils, the most logical thing is to use the critical mass that is provided by the City of Newry as the service delivery base, as opposed to some of the smaller towns on the other fringes of the Mourne.
Mr Neale	It may not be a question, it may just be a comment. Obviously we, and presumably the SDLP, would argue that the inclusion within the County Down would be an equal and a strong argument in the opposite way.
Mr Money Penny	Any further questions for Dr Farry? Thank you very much. Can I call Mr Ray Kennedy?
Mr Ray Kennedy, SDLP, South Belfast	<p>Thank you, Assistant Commissioner, for giving me the opportunity to speak today. My name is Ray Kennedy from the SDLP, South Belfast. If you will forgive me, I will concentrate on the close area on the south of the City in Castlereagh Central and Castlereagh West area. I will elaborate a lot more on the written submission which Dr Alasdair McDonnell, MP has already submitted.</p> <p>In general terms the proposals should be welcomed but only as a useful starting point and an initial attempt to divide the proposed new Belfast City and East Council areas and the wards. However, I would like to put on record that substantial changes are necessary to these</p>

proposals in relation to the area around what is currently the Castlereagh District Council area. I would contend that Newtownbreda and Carryduff should no longer remain outside the Belfast City boundary. If Tullycarnet, for example, is now being proposed to be part of the revised Belfast City Council area, there is no reason why BT8 in its entirety should not be part of Belfast City Council. In fact, I would argue that Tullycarnet should be in the East Council area to balance the inclusion of Newtownbreda and Carryduff areas to Belfast City. I would recommend that you review your decision in the new Belfast City and East boundaries on the south eastern side of the Saintfield Road to include the Purdysburn and Carryduff areas.

Additionally, I believe there is no rational or logical justification for the exclusion of the Newtownbreda area, especially from the Belfast City Council area. That is the area encompassing the proposed new wards of Newtownbreda, Four Winds and Beechill, as has already been mentioned. I would ask that you now include them.

Carryduff is and always has been part of Belfast. Even stretching as far back to the early part of the last century when the numbering of the Belfast districts were defined as being from Belfast 1 to Belfast 15, with Carryduff and Newtownbreda falling into the Belfast 8 area. This was then consolidated further with the introduction of post codes. No other area in the north of Ireland had districts prior to this. Subsequent additions actually started with Belfast 16 being Dundonald and Belfast 17 being Dunmurry, which were not considered part of the Belfast City area. Belfast 1 to Belfast 15 always has been.

There are a vast number of people living in the Carryduff and Newtownbreda area who actually consider themselves to be part of Belfast, in exactly the same way that people

	<p>from Belvoir identify themselves as coming from Belvoir and from Belfast. It makes it difficult, therefore, to justify the exclusion of Carryduff and Newtownbreda from the Belfast City boundary and their inclusion in the East area. I remain committed to the assertion that the city boundary should be on the south side of Carryduff and, in so doing, include all of the Carryduff urban development within the new Belfast boundary. I would also ask you to consider changing the name of the Four Winds ward to Cairns Hill, which, I suppose, if we were to move it to the Belfast City from the East, would be a matter for the Belfast Commissioner. Cairns Hill is a much more appropriate name than Four Winds and it covers the whole area in and around from Upper Malvern and Finsbury. I have already made this point to the Assistant Commissioner last week at the public hearing in the Belfast City Hall. Thank you.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Thank you, Mr Kennedy. Has anybody any questions for him?</p>
Mr Wilson	<p>Thank you very much, Mr Commissioner. I would just like to make some general points about the whole exercise, first of all, and then perhaps go into some of the details that I have already submitted to you.</p> <p>First of all, I agree with everybody so far that the fact that there are seven councils is far too small a number and far too restrictive. Regarding the terms of reference of the allocation of the seven councils, what they are saying is that, basically, we should have similar populations in the seven council areas. This does not make sense and it restricts what we can do, for example, talking about the outskirts of Belfast with which I will deal in more detail in a moment. If you look, for example, at England you have Birmingham Council, a million people; Isles of Scilly, 3,000; Rutland 30,000. You have Cardiff which is 350,000; Merthyr Tydfil is 50,000. Again, in Glasgow has a population of 550,000 whereas Orkney has 20,000.</p>

The point I am trying to make is that there are distinct communities and we should not restrict our communities, our identities, just to reflect the statistic that says we must have 200,000 or 300,000 population in each particular area. So the terms of reference are basically restricting you in your flexibility and, as I say, I will refer to boundaries which I feel should be changed but this would obviously impinge on this criteria that they must be of similar size.

Belfast quite clearly is significantly bigger and that should be reflected in the size of Belfast Council. Glasgow is much bigger than all the other councils in Scotland and that is reflected in the fact that Glasgow City Council is ten times the size of some of the smaller councils. That is common sense. It takes into consideration people's identities with a particular thing. We talked about Carryduff and other areas where these people feel they are part of Belfast. They are serviced from Belfast. Their social life is in Belfast. So we should not say because we have got to stick to this particular limit set down by the seven-council model that we must have all of them somewhat equal. This does not reflect real life, and it does not reflect urban settlements.

So having said that, I would like to make a number of other points. Again, on the whole idea of drawing up these particular ward boundaries, it is quite clear that these ward boundaries are drawn up by bureaucrats — again, a number-crunching exercise to get 3,000, or whatever it is, in each particular ward. It does not reflect local identities, local traditional boundaries. When I come to look at the individual wards I will explain this in more detail. What we have got is a number-crunching exercise. Say we have got to get 3000, so therefore we just allocate 3000 people, totally regardless of whether it is a rural area or urban

area, cutting estates down the middle and that sort of thing. It is purely to achieve what the bureaucrats want: equal wards, equal electoral districts.

Again, one of my concerns is the way the whole allocation was carried out. For example, there was a press release carried out by Laser-Scan which claims credit for completing the review within two months when previous reviews had taken 12 months. However, previous reviews took into consideration boundaries, townlands and that sort of thing. They actually looked at the area itself, they did not just get a map and cut out the thing. They say, "We did it in two months." That is fine. It was achieved in two months. They talk about mapping, spatial technologies, ortho-photography, but there is absolutely no mention in their press statement of identity, local communities, or traditional boundaries. And, as I say, I will develop some of these issues later on. So, I am concerned about the whole way the exercise was carried out.

The review, while it is successful in designating wards of similar electoral size, has failed in respect of other criteria. For example, under Article 3 of the Order, it is required to produce ward boundaries which are readily identified and ensure that townlands are not split between wards. Those are not achieved. In fact there seems to be little effort to try to achieve them. In our initial submission to the RPA we expressed concern that a small number of councils would inevitably lead to a loss of identity and these proposals confirm my worst fears. There is no clear identity in any of the seven proposed districts. The Commissioner recognises this as they have been given totally meaningless names, names which mean absolutely nothing. East, Inner East, that sort of thing.

Again, we should be looking at traditional areas. We

	<p>should be trying to keep communities together in areas that people will identify with. Take someone living in, say, Hollywood. I do not see what particular identity they have with someone living in the Mournes. It is not trying to get districts which are realistic and which bring people together. It is just getting numbers out of a computer and basically saying, "We have 280,000 there. That is what we need, and that will do."</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>I wonder if we could address the particular issues on the name and any boundaries? We are covering a lot of history here.</p>
Mr Wilson	<p>Mr Commissioner, what I am trying to do is put into context where these identities have been split up and where they should have been created.</p>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Are we getting to that now?</p>
Mr Wilson	<p>So basically I am saying they were trying to bring together areas which have nothing in common and different attitudes, traditions, and priorities.</p> <p>First of all if we look at the East District. Again, I agree that splitting the Mournes is totally unacceptable. Certainly we support the whole idea of a National Park. We would suggest, contrary to what has been proposed before, that the Donard and Newcastle wards, and perhaps other wards, should be transferred to the South District. This would be more appropriate given their relationship with the new area and the population in that particular area, and the fact that they have very little relationship with the areas up in the north, the outskirts of Belfast, etc. It should be more appropriate to transfer them south rather than incorporate the southern wards into the East District.</p> <p>Secondly, regarding the Castlereagh wards, this is the point I was making previously. Many of these wards are basically on the outskirts of Belfast. They are totally dependent on Belfast. Traditionally the people in these</p>

areas would see themselves as people of Belfast. I would propose that the Castlereagh wards of Newtownbreda and Four Winds — and I think from what Mr Kennedy said that I would even accept a couple of others, Beechill and Carryduff, perhaps, — should be incorporated in Belfast. It should not be restricted just because we have got to have the same numbers in each of the districts. I think that the precise Castlereagh wards to be included in Belfast would have to be determined but certainly there is a very strong case, I would say, that the ones bounding the present City of Belfast should be incorporated in Belfast.

I would say that some of the ward names are inappropriate. They reflect a lack of knowledge. The person who suggested the ward names knows nothing about the actual area they are talking about. Basically, they have looked at a map and seen something from it but the name does not reflect what the people in that area feel.

The proposed ward boundaries, particularly in the present North Down area, take no account of long-established local communities, patterns of movement within the area and physical features such as railways and major roads.

Referring to the actual boundaries which the East District relates to in terms of the outskirts of Belfast, there is a proposal to take a small portion of North Down into Belfast. I think that is acceptable. However, one of the things which should have been included in the East area is Hollywood Exchange. Hollywood Exchange is included in the Belfast area when all its ties and connections are with North Down. There are strong business links with Hollywood and I would suggest that Hollywood Exchange should be incorporated in the East area.

Let us look at some specific wards here, and I am referring

mainly to the North Down area. If I could just say the boundaries people know nothing about the area. They call a ward Carnalea when, in fact, there is no part of Carnalea included in that ward. Basically, Carnalea at present is included in the Crawfordsburn ward, where it is proposed it will stay. The actual area of Carnalea is in the Crawfordsburn ward and none of the village of Carnalea is actually in the Carnalea ward. The Carnalea ward is at present split up in Springhill ward and Bangor West. I would suggest that a better name for that would be either Springhill ward, Rathmore ward or Bangor West, where Bangor West station is, perhaps, the main site within that particular ward.

I then come to the Kilcooley ward. The A2, the dual carriageway from Belfast runs right through the Kilcooley ward. There is a small section of the proposed Kilcooley ward which is, in fact, the Rathmore estate. You have the main road running through it. The people never cross the road. If you try to cross the road, you are going to get killed. The estate is Rathmore on one side and on the other side Kilcooley. However, to make up the numbers perhaps you are taking 200-300 voters from the Rathmore estate and sticking them into the Kilcooley ward. Anyone who lives on the seaward side of the A2 will rarely cross the A2 at all. They would move towards the Crawfordsburn Road and towards Bangor West. They do not move across the road in any sense, so I would suggest that that part of the Rathmore area should be incorporated in the Bangor West, or as it is proposed now, the Carnalea ward to keep that community together.

To compensate, I suggest that the Meadowvale area on the other side of the Clandeboye Road could be included in the Kilcooley ward, which it is in at present. I think that would make much more sense and it would again retain

existing communities.

Then I come to the Rathgael ward. Again it is totally inappropriate. The ward does not include Rathgael and does not include the Rathgael Road. I would suggest that this ward be extended to include the Rathgael Road and bring in Lord Warden's area and the new housing at the Juvenile Justice Centre. The situation here, you can see, is that at the present time we have two wards, one on each side of the Newtownards Road. I would suggest that we should not divide a ward through the main road like that. Again, people on one side of the Newtownards Road have different patterns of movement, different shopping habits, different communication systems. What I am saying is that the Newtownards Road should be retained as the division and the Rathgael ward should be extended along the Newtownards Road rather than across the Newtownards road. The Whitehill area, which is at present proposed in the Rathgael Road, should be added to Castle Park.

The Bryansburn ward is split by the main Belfast Road and does not reflect the movement of the area. Basically, the Bryansburn Road relates to the Princetown ward. The Bryansburn ward is split by the main Belfast Road. Again nobody who drew that up knows anything about local communities. On one side of the Belfast Road, the main area is made up of old Victorian houses and their main road into Bangor is along the Brunswick Road. They relate very closely to the Princetown ward, which is of similar culture and similar identity, whereas the other side of the Belfast Road is much more modern houses and has a totally different connection with the rest of the borough. They relate to the Newtownards Road, which I have already referred to in terms of putting them into the Rathgael ward. So, basically, the Bryansburn ward and the Princetown ward, as at the present time, should be

brought together to form one ward. It is homogenous and is within the size required.

Crawfordsburn ward — again Councillor Farry referred to this — is a nonsense. But this does not surprise me when you are just using statistics. A small portion of Helen's Bay is included in the Craigavad ward. Again, it should be included in the Crawfordsburn ward. The rest of the village is in the Crawfordsburn ward, so I would suggest that Helen's Bay should be totally in the Crawfordsburn ward.

Again the Clandeboye Ward is totally unacceptable in the way it is drawn up. It is a classic example of drawing together a number of disparate settlements just to make up the numbers. It contains the outskirts of Holywood and also contains the outskirts of Bangor. It is just a mess in between. There is nothing to identify that particular ward. It is just again a statistical exercise. That ward should be changed and the boundaries of the two Holywood wards which are proposed — Holywood Priory and Craigavad — should be re-drawn. Basically the area in the Craigantlet Hills, which is at present in the Holywood area, should be taken into the two Holywood wards. So the Clandeboye ward would be based much more on Bangor, which is where Clandeboye is, and forget about the area in Holywood, which really has no connection with Clandeboye. The remainder of the Clandeboye ward could be extended towards Newtownards on the west side of the Newtownards Road, if required, to get the appropriate numbers.

Thank you. I think that is all I wanted to say. The whole terms of reference, the way the exercise is carried out, I think was totally wrong. It basically ignores the most important things in local government, i.e., local communities. The specific wards should be looked at in

	<p>much more detail. We have a number of areas which are divided by two sides of a major road, which have no sense of identity and I think perhaps, as I have indicated, you should look at those again. Thank you.</p>
<p>Mr Money Penny</p>	<p>Thanks very much. Mr Trevor Polley.</p>
<p>Mr Trevor Polley, Chief Executive and Town Clerk, North Down Borough Council</p>	<p>Assistant Commissioner, thank you very much for the ability to attend today. My name is Trevor Polley. I am the Chief Executive and Town Clerk of North Down Borough Council. I am here today speaking on behalf of North Down Borough Council in support of the written submission that was made to the Boundaries Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations.</p> <p>Assistant Commissioner, I note your comments at the start, that it is not your role or the role of the Boundaries Commissioner to talk about the number of councils. However, I feel duty bound to point out that North Down Borough Council is firmly opposed to the proposed seven-council model for a local government in Northern Ireland. The following comments and our submissions should not in any way be construed as giving the proposal for seven councils any support or credence whatsoever.</p> <p>North Down Borough Council in putting forward their proposals adopted four over-riding principles, the first of which was that boundaries should be drawn to reflect the identity of areas. This relates not only to rural settlements and townlands but also to urban areas where identity is also important.</p> <p>Secondly, this may be achieved, in part, by using natural features. And this morning we have listened to one of the most natural features of Northern Ireland being discussed in great detail, namely, the Mountains of Mourne, and we shall come on to that later. As well as natural features, main routes also should be used, rather than perhaps</p>

using residential roads or streets.

Thirdly, the council point out that care needs to be taken in drawing boundaries where there is current and possible future development, and changes in planning policy may actually change the very nature of communities.

The final principle was that, while again it is not within the Boundaries Commissioner's remit, we should be looking at wards as building blocks and the eventual clustering of them into workable DEAs. Again, we will point out that certainly there is one area within the current North Down Council area where there is a very large rural area and peripheral urban areas. That said, those were the principles that council looked at and, really, Assistant Commissioner, I suppose we could say that the Council submission falls into two parts.

The first part which I would hope to spend most of the time on is the boundaries between East and Belfast and also the boundary between East and South. Council have made submissions to the Belfast hearing with regard to the eastern boundaries with Belfast. We intend to make a presentation to the South Commissioner as well on the Mourne Mountains issue. Can I say, as we look at the general part of the boundaries, that North Down Council considered that the proposed name East was unsuitable. And, in fact, I noted the Commissioner's statement that he was unable to suggest a name for the new Council other than East, because they could not find any geographical or historical perspective that linked all four councils. However, while council oppose the name East, North Down Borough Council did not put forward any other suggested name.

Firstly, could I mention the proposed boundary between

the East and Belfast Councils at Knocknagoney and Hollywood. Council are suggesting that this should be drawn along the Knocknagoney Road and the Old Hollywood Road, and we submitted a map to show where the area should be. The Boundaries Commissioner has included part of the current existing North Down that is at the top of the Knocknagoney Road into Belfast and it is council's submission that a much clearer and a much easier dividing line is Knocknagoney Road. We are led to believe that that is where the BT4 stops and BT18 starts, with the area on the left-hand side being BT18, which is outside what were the original Belfast boundaries. In fact, in discussions with the Secretary to the Parliamentary Commission I am led to believe that perhaps the Westminster boundary comes down that road as well. So, we would say that that boundary should be changed and that the hatched area in our map should be taken into the East.

Again, in this area, we look at the area of land that bounds what is known as Hollywood Exchange and where this is currently within the Belfast boundary. Again, council would say that this, very naturally, should be included within the East Council. And on 17 January, letters of support for this position were sent to the Boundaries Commissioner from the Bangor and Hollywood Town Centre Manager and the President of Hollywood Chamber of Commerce. I am sure, Assistant Commissioner, that those letters are on the record if you wish to look at them in greater detail. The Chamber of Commence indicates the very close links between the businesses in Hollywood Exchange and Hollywood. Also the Hollywood Exchange helps fund such things as Hollywood Arts Trust, Hollywood Jazz Festival and Hollywood Musical Week. Certainly they look at their identity to Hollywood as opposed to the Belfast area and we would certainly suggest that the boundary be re-drawn

and take this into the East area. Access to the whole of the Hollywood Exchange is only through what is currently within the North Down Borough Council area, and we would suggest that Hollywood Exchange should be taken in and included in the East area.

Council have taken a view that the boundary between Belfast and East along the current Castlereagh area should be looked at. In their submission, they say that the boundary should be drawn along the Knock dual carriageway, and again in our map the hatched area contained in E should be moved into the East area. Again, Commissioner, I note, this morning, comments from both SDLP and the Alliance and the Green Party, which would probably suggest a different solution. I think it was in terms of the comments from the Alliance Party, where they indicated that we should be looking at either the main route or the housing line. In this particular area the Boundaries Commissioner seems to have gone for a mix and match where he follows in certain parts the carriageway and in certain parts the building line. Whenever you head on up the Saintfield Road, again, he seems to revert to a main road as opposed to a building line. Council would take the view that there is inconsistency in how the boundary between what is the existing Castlereagh Council and the Belfast Council is drawn. While we have put in a solution to that we feel that that inconsistency as to how that boundary has been drawn, in terms of the Glencreagh Road as opposed to the Saintfield Road, is something that needs to be looked at. And whether it is a carriageway or whether it is a building line, it should not be a mixture of both.

Commissioner, if I could move on to the proposed boundary between the East and the South Council areas. Can I say this morning, I do not think there is any doubt

from everyone who has spoken on this matter that the Mourne Regional Park should not be split between two councils. Across the parties that seems to be the view. The principle of not splitting areas of natural beauty or of parks has already been accepted by the Commissioner when he changed the boundaries in Magilligan Strand so that the Magilligan Strand area would all be in the one council area. And it is without doubt that the Mourne Regional Park should not be split between two councils.

North Down Borough Council will differ from the views put forward this morning by South Down SDLP and by the Ulster Unionist representatives in that we believe that the Mountains of Mourne are a natural boundary between the council areas and that the land in terms of the wards Donard, Newcastle, Murlough and Castlewellan should be included into the South area. North Down has indicated that the seven-council model takes away local identity. If we feel that there is a struggle to find any common identity between Bangor and Downpatrick, there is no common identity, road linkage whatsoever whenever we head down to Warrenpoint. The proposals put forward this morning, and I have to say the comments, certainly in terms of tourism, I find interesting. However, to move seven wards from South to East means taking an electorate of 22,000 into the East area and is taking into account seven additional wards. This would require the total redrawing of the East area, because, I believe, while the Commissioner has the ability to change the number of wards, I think the maximum would be 65.

Certainly the suggestion that Donard, Newcastle, and perhaps Murlough and Castlewellan would move into the south, could be taken into account by changing the number of wards in each of those two council areas. When council looked at that they thought of the Donard ward, and it is

really impossible to separate Newcastle from the Mountains of Mourne. North Down has a particularly strong Percy French society and the prospect of the Mountains of Mourne sweeping down to the sea in another council area, I think, really was beyond the ken of some of our members. As to whether Murlough and Castlewella would also be included, again we would argue that there was a natural community identity there.

We talked about service delivery. Bangor to Warrenpoint is 56 miles. Going to the south, from Portadown council area, one of the main populations in the south, to Warrenpoint is 26 miles — about half. Really, to have a council area from Helen's Bay way down to the mouth of Carlingford Lough does not seem to be practical. The principle of Mourne Regional Park being in one council area, I think, is something that is unanimously agreed around this table, and I am sure in the written submissions that does seem to be a point that comes forward.

Assistant Commissioner, that takes us from the general boundaries of East to the proposed boundaries as they affect North Down Local Government Area. I am not going to bore you with all the submissions that we made for Bangor, Holywood, Helen's Bay, save to say that they are all in our submission and we would reiterate the comments that we have made this morning. Some of those comments have been echoed in terms of the practical areas of boundaries within the submission by the Green Party and also by the Alliance Party.

Could I, however, just take time to point out two? One is that there is an area of new housing development at Ballycrochan Road which is currently not included in the Ballycrochan ward, and I think it is in the Six Road Ends ward. We have submitted a map showing the hatched

area of development and might be bold enough to suggest that perhaps our maps were more up-to-date than the Commissioner's map whenever he was looking at that. But it is a very clear extension to the housing area in Ballycrochan and is established under B map, in fact probably under the old Bangor plan, as being an area of housing. We would point that out as an area of importance that should be changed.

The final comment I would make on the internal North Down boundaries as they exist. Again I would be reiterating the comments about the size and shape of the Clandeboye ward. It is too large. It has no identity. It has population pockets at both ends. Council have said that consideration should be given to redrawing this and that this could be achieved by increasing the areas of the Priory ward and the Craigavad wards without unduly affecting population numbers. I know Dr Farry this morning has submitted a proposed map which we have discussed. That is not council policy, I have to say, because I think the map was probably looked at in detail by Dr Farry yesterday. However, having looked at it, I think it does, in part certainly, if not in whole, increase the Priory ward, the Craigavad wards and the Bradshaw's Brae ward in land size and in very little housing. We are really up there, looking at the Craigantlet Hills, and we would suggest that that needs to be looked at. I have looked at the map from Councillor Farry and would certainly suggest to the Commissioner that that could well form a sensible change in this particular boundary. I think the figures on the map indicate that the number of households affected is certainly less than 200, from memory, and I am sure Councillor Farry or council officials at a later date would be quite happy to go through the details of that with the Commissioner, either on the ground or perhaps later on.

	<p>Commissioner, I commend the rest of our documentation. We have submitted maps where we feel that boundaries have been drawn at the wrong part of a street or the wrong part of a road, but I really do not feel that it would be appropriate to go into all the detail on that this morning. We would commend the North Down proposals to you. Thank you very much.</p>
Mr Money Penny	<p>Thanks very much, Mr Polley. Just looking at my notes here you did not make any suggestion regarding name. Your body swerve is immaculate.</p>
Mr Polley	<p>We have no council minute to suggest what any new name would be. Councillors on either side, I think, who are representative of North Down have put forward their own position. I do not think I could be rude enough to suggest that council really did not think the name was important because the seven-council model is so bad.</p>
Mr Money Penny	<p>Thank you. Any questions for Mr Polley?</p>
Mr Kennedy	<p>Hello Mr Polley, Ray Kennedy from the SDLP. I am just asking why you think the inflexibility of deciding the boundary purely either on a major road or a build line would be more appropriate than having the flexibility of looking at identities and local community identity as a way of defining boundaries.</p>
Mr Polley	<p>Assistant Commissioner, the first principle that council looked at was that boundaries should be drawn to reflect identities. Identity, first and foremost, was important. In the detailed comment we say that this may be achieved in part by using natural features and main routes on boundaries rather than dividing residential areas by using residential roads. Certainly in our submission we would take the view that the identity of the area is more important than anything else, but some of those identities are looked at on the ground by main roads. It is amazing — I think it was Alderman Wilson who commented on it — how people in Bangor feel about their identity on one side of a dual</p>

	carriageway and another. I am not heading to the dual carriageway where I happen to live.
Mr Kennedy	Sorry, I was talking mainly about the Castlereagh area.
Mr Moneypenny	Are there any further questions?
Mr Farry	Thank you, Assistant Commissioner. Can I just clarify a point in relation to the map regarding the revised Clondeboy ward? That proposal purely affects the westernmost boundary of that ward and produces a proposed remedy. That is not without prejudice to the other points that are made regarding the detail of wards and some of those again reflect the Clondeboy ward. For example, the proposed ward overruns the Newtownards Road and it actually splits the Ardvanagh Development off the Green Road in Bangor. There are a lot of things in relation to the Clondeboy ward that do need to be addressed, so that map just purely addresses the westernmost boundary as it relates to Hollywood. Thank you.
Mr Moneypenny	Are there any other points that anybody would like to raise? Anybody from the floor?
Dr Farry	In relation to a lot of the detail of these ward boundaries, I apologise if I missed this at the start. Is there an intention to visit some of these areas to try to get a sense of what some of the written submissions are actually outlining? I certainly feel that without that it is hard to get a sense of how sometimes the boundaries do arbitrarily split what are in effect natural developments.
Mr Moneypenny	I personally know some of the area quite well. There are parts of the area quite strange to me and those areas where there have been points raised which I will be visiting.
Mr Moneypenny	If there are no further points to be raised at this time and if everybody is satisfied that they have had a fair opportunity to raise questions, make their statements and all the rest, I would propose to adjourn to 2 o'clock. Thank you very

	much.
	<i>Adjournment</i>
Mr Moneypenny	It is 2:05pm and I am reconvening the public hearing into the East District.
Mr Andrews	The reason why I have come back is that I took away a copy of the maps here to study the impact that they would have on the Crossgar area. The main points of concern that I have noticed is the fact that townlands and the areas within a quarter of a mile of Crossgar itself are in the neighbouring ward of Killyleagh. For example, in Crossgar itself an area from the Killyleagh Street junction with the Derryboy Road, there is St. Comcille's school and there are a couple of estates in Whitefield and Tobar Mhuire Park that are in the Killyleagh ward. That is within the 30-mile-per-hour zone of Crossgar. Also I would like to raise a point of concern with the north west division of the proposed Crossgar ward, which is that the lakes of Lisbane and parts of Saintfield which have always been identified with the Saintfield area are going to be in Crossgar. The likes of Darragh Cross — a wee village three miles from Crossgar — is going to be included in Killyleagh. They always regard themselves as part of Crossgar and that is the point that I felt I had to come back and raise with yourselves. I just hope that you take on board what I said and thank you very much for the opportunity of airing these views on the Crossgar set-up. Thank you.
Mr Moneypenny	Thank you, Terry.
Mr Moneypenny	Could you show us this on the maps?
Mr Andrews	For example, there is Crossgar itself. That there is Drakes Bridge Road, you know, that is coming up on to the 30-mile-per-hour limit.
Mandy Morrison, Secretary Local Government Boundaries Commission	There is a large road map, which might be easier in terms of the actual ward itself and the street. It would be clearer for us so that we know exactly what you are talking about.

Mr Andrews	That is the Drakes Bridge Road. The 30-mile-per-hour signs are about here. That is where Killyleagh is coming in at the 30-mile-per-hour sign. That is the new line, that is where a wee lane runs up to the back of the monastery. There is Tobar Mhuire Park and Whitefield. That is actually within the 30-mile per hour limit, and that is going to be added to Killyleagh.
Ms Morrison	And which bit are you are suggesting should be brought in?
Mr Andrews	What I am suggesting is the likes of this area here should be brought under Crossgar itself — this is the likes of Tobar Mhuire Park and Whitefield.
Mr Money Penny	Mr Andrews, I think I have got that and thank you very much for coming back in. Are there are any other issues that you would like to raise?
Mr Andrews	No. I appreciate very much and would like to place on record the work and effort that has gone under this exercise. It is appreciated the hours that have been spent. And I give you your dues that you made the offer of a presentation, so I went away with the maps, studied them and I felt I had to come back. I am only 10 minutes down the road, so I just thought I would come back to let you know my concerns. Whether they are they taken on board is another thing but I understand that with the Commissioner's viewpoints of electorates and ward numbers and everything, it is going to be an interesting contest whenever and if it comes off.
Mr Money Penny	Thank you very much, I will take on board the comments you have made. I thank you very much for your complimentary comments. I will make sure those are passed on to the appropriate place. I take it that you are happy enough that you have said everything that you need to say?
Mr Andrews	I have said everything and of course I am speaking on the local level here. Thank you very much.

Mr Moneypenny	It is 2:12pm and I am going to adjourn this hearing until tomorrow morning at 9:30am.
	<i>Adjournment</i>
Mr Moneypenny	<p>Good morning, it is 9:50am on Wednesday, 24 January.. The last person registered was yesterday and the last submission was yesterday afternoon. I therefore intend to close this hearing having confirmed with the Secretary that no one else wishes to speak. I simply want to place on record my thanks to everyone who has helped. The Secretary, Mandy, Stewart on sound, Morrow Communications and the others who were present yesterday. My immediate task, now, is to consider carefully all of the evidence that I have heard over the past two days, as well as the written representations that were received during the recent consultation period.</p> <p>As you know, I will be compiling a report from the oral and written evidence I have received, which I am required to submit to the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner within four weeks. The report will be made publicly available together with the Commissioner's Revised Recommendations, if any, or with his Final Report. My understanding is that my report will be sent to the interested parties here today. Thank you very much, indeed.</p>