

# **LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES COMMISSION**

## **REPORT OF ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER DR. W.B. SMITH ON THE COMMISSIONER'S PROVISIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY DISTRICT**

	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Introduction	
2	Legislative framework	
3	District issues and recommendations	
4	Ward issues and recommendations	
5	General Issues	
6	Summary of recommendations	
7	Conclusion	
Appendix A	List of written representations	
Appendix B	List of oral representations	
Appendix C	DUP: proposed ward boundaries	
Appendix D	Alliance: proposed ward boundaries	

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Background

**1.1** The current review of local government boundaries in Northern Ireland was announced in a public notice on 28 July 2008. This explained the role and remit of the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner and indicated that he would in due course publish provisional recommendations and cause a public hearing to be held in each of the eleven proposed new local government districts. The notice also explained the process of public consultation on the provisional recommendations, whereby interested parties would have the opportunity to comment on and contribute to the review.

**1.2** The terms of the review are set out in the Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. A copy of the Act is available on [www.lgbc-ni.org/index/legislation.htm](http://www.lgbc-ni.org/index/legislation.htm) or from The Stationery Office.

**1.3** The provisional recommendations for the boundaries and names of the eleven new local government districts and for the number, boundaries and names of their constituent wards were published on 17 September 2008 and are accessible through the Commissioner's office website, [www.lgbc-ni.org](http://www.lgbc-ni.org). A public notice giving details of the planned public hearings was published in a number of daily and provincial newspapers. Copies of the provisional recommendations with detailed maps were made

available for inspection at district council headquarters, public libraries, Electoral Offices, the Office of the Electoral Commission and the Office of the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner.

**1.4** The public notice invited written representations on the provisional recommendations within an eight week consultation period. The closing date was 12 November 2008.

**1.5** The Commissioner received 204 written submissions from a range of respondents including political parties, elected representatives, district councils, community organisations and individual members of the public. These were available for viewing at each of the public hearing venues and can be accessed through the Commissioner's office website.

**1.6** On 4 November 2008, I was appointed as an Assistant Commissioner by the Minister of the Environment, Sammy Wilson MP MLA. My brief was to consider the written submissions on the Commissioner's provisional recommendations; to conduct a public hearing in order to ascertain local views; to assess the material provided during the consultation period and at the hearing; and to submit a report to the Commissioner with my conclusions and recommendations within four weeks of the hearing. The Commissioner subsequently invited me to report on the proposed Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

### **Written Representations**

**1.7** The Commissioner received eleven written representations on his provisional recommendations for the Antrim and Newtownabbey

district. I considered all of them carefully in advance of the public hearing and reviewed them in preparing this report. The respondents are listed at Appendix A.

## **Public Hearing**

**1.8** The public hearing for the district started in the Hilton Hotel, Templepatrick on 27 November and concluded the following day. Seventeen people attended and eight oral representations were made. Three of those who spoke had already submitted views in writing during the consultation period, and one further paper was submitted in support of the oral representations. All participants were afforded the opportunity to give their views fully and to comment on the views expressed by others. A list of those who made oral representations is attached at Appendix B. A transcript of the hearing can be viewed on the Commissioner's office website, [www.lgbc-ni.org](http://www.lgbc-ni.org).

## **Content of Report**

**1.9** This report outlines and addresses the written and oral representations made on the Commissioner's provisional recommendations for the proposed district of Antrim and Newtownabbey. It considers relevant local information and opinion on the boundary and name of the district and on the number, boundaries and names of the wards into which the Commissioner has provisionally divided the district. It details support for, objections to and counterproposals made in relation to the Commissioner's provisional recommendations. Finally, it presents my own conclusions and recommendations.

## **2. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK**

**2.1** In preparing this report I have been required to work within the legislative framework for the review and in particular the statutory rules set out in Part III of Schedule 4 to the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Boundaries) (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and the Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. The rules are as follows.

- “14.** Regard shall be had to the desirability of determining district and ward boundaries which are readily identifiable.
- 15.** A townland shall not, except where in the opinion of the Commissioner it is unavoidable, be included partly in one district or ward and partly in another.
- 16.** As far as practicable (a) a district shall not be wholly or substantially severed by the boundary of another district; and (b) a district shall not be wholly or substantially encompassed within the boundary of another district.
- 17.** In determining the number and boundaries of wards within a district regard shall be had to (a) the size, population and physical diversity of the district; and (b) the desirability that there should be a proper representation of the rural and urban electorate within the district.

**18.** (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), (a) in the district of Belfast the number of wards shall be 60; (b) in each other district the number of wards shall be 40.

(2) Where, having regard to the matters mentioned in paragraph 17, the Commissioner considers it desirable that the number of wards in any district should be more than that specified in sub-paragraph (1), the number of wards in that district may be increased by not more than 5.

(3) Where, having regard to the matters mentioned in paragraph 17, the Commissioner considers it desirable that the number of wards in any district should be fewer than that specified in sub-paragraph (1), the number of wards in that district may be decreased by not more than 5.

**19.** (1) Within any one district there shall, as far as is reasonably practicable having regard to paragraph 17, be substantially the same number of local electors in each ward.

(2) For the purposes of sub-paragraph (1) it shall be taken that the electors in each ward are the persons registered as local electors, by virtue of a qualifying address within that ward, in the register of electors last published before the making of the announcement mentioned in paragraph 6(2), 7(2) or 8(2) (as the case may be).

### **3. DISTRICT NAME AND BOUNDARY**

#### **District Name**

**3.1** Two written representations commented on the name of the district.

**3.2** The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) was content with the proposed name.

**3.3** The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) passed on for consideration without endorsement a suggestion that the new council should be named “The Six Mile Valley Council” after the feature which it said unified the two constituent areas.

**3.4** The public hearing produced no further representations on the name of the district.

#### Conclusion

**3.5** All of the relevant written representations used the term Antrim and Newtownabbey clearly and none provided any argument against it. Whilst I see some merit in the argument for giving a new council a distinctive new name, I have concluded that the name proposed by the Commissioner is more likely to be generally accepted and widely understood than the proposed alternative. It will be open to the new council once elected to consider a change of name, using whatever legislation is in place at the time.

## Recommendation

**3.6** The name of the new district should be “Antrim and Newtownabbey”.

## **District Boundary**

**3.7** Seven written representations called for the provisional district boundary to be changed:

- the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)
- the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)
- Antrim Borough Council
- Councillor Thomas Burns MLA (SDLP representative for South Antrim and a member of Antrim Borough Council)
- Kenny Brown
- Desmond Fulton
- Belfast High School

Peter King spoke on behalf of the DUP at the hearing.

**3.8** The DUP and the UUP both called for the Belfast boundary to be extended northwards to include wholly or partly the wards of Rathcoole, Whitehouse, O’Neill and Valley. The UUP proposed the transfer of all four wards in their totality. The DUP proposed an alternative boundary line based on O’Neill Road and Station Road (B513) which would leave the northernmost parts of Rathcoole and Whitehouse in Antrim and Newtownabbey.

**3.9** The DUP also proposed that a small part of Grange ward should be transferred in from Mid Antrim.

**3.10** Antrim Borough Council registered its interest in asking for the portion of the Lough Neagh shoreline currently in the Lisburn City Council area to be transferred in. Members also felt that consideration should be given to the transfer in of Kells from Mid Antrim.

**3.11** Councillor Burns proposed that not only the shoreline but the entire Glenavy ward and part of Stoneyford should be transferred in from Lisburn.

**3.12** Kenny Brown and Desmond Fulton called for the community of Greenisland to be transferred in from Mid Antrim.

**3.13** Belfast High School requested a change in the boundary between Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus to bring the entire school estate into the new district.

**3.14** Seven written or oral representations either supported the Commissioner's provisional recommendations in whole or in part, or explicitly opposed changes proposed by others:

- Newtownabbey Borough Council
- Antrim Borough Council
- Lisburn City Council (represented at the hearing by Karen Blair, Michael Gordon and Colin McClintock)
- Councillor Billy Webb (Alliance, Newtownabbey)
- Councillor Peter O'Hagan (SDLP, Lisburn)

- the Alliance Party (represented at the hearing by Councillor David Ford MLA and Michael Carchrie Campbell)
- Joan Cosgrove (Newtownabbey Senior Citizens' Forum)

**3.15** Newtownabbey Borough Council supported all the provisional boundaries.

**3.16** Apart from the changes outlined at 3.10 above, Antrim Borough Council accepted the provisional district boundary and requested that the new council's area should not be reduced in any way from that in the Provisional Recommendations Report.

**3.17** At the hearing, Councillor Burns spoke to his written proposal. Lisburn City Council and Councillor O'Hagan argued against the proposed transfer of any part of Glenavy and Stoneyford.

**3.18** Councillor Webb, the Alliance Party and Joan Cosgrove argued against the DUP and UUP proposals to transfer Rathcoole, Whitehouse, O'Neill and Valley wards wholly or partly to Belfast.

**3.19** The Alliance Party also submitted a proposal for a change in the district boundary at Tildarg.

#### Extending Belfast Northward

**3.20** In their written submission, the DUP noted that the Provisional Recommendations Report included boundary changes to provide for Belfast's actual physical expansion to the south, east, and west, and questioned whether it was consistent not similarly to

acknowledge the city's expansion northward. They did not consider the M2 from Bellevue to Greencastle to be an appropriate boundary and proposed an alternative which would run from the M2 close to O'Neill Road, down O'Neill Road and Station Road (B513) to the Shore Road. The Commissioner's provisional line for the Whitehouse ward would complete the Belfast boundary to Belfast Lough.

**3.21** In support of this proposal the DUP pointed to long-standing community linkages between Bawnmore and Rathcoole and Belfast. The housing estates in these localities had been built to deal with the overflow from the redevelopment of inner Belfast, and had later absorbed refugees from the civil conflict. Many of their residents had kept social ties with the city, which was their primary source of employment. They were part of the catchment area for schools in north Belfast, and were fully integrated into Belfast's transport system. These linkages had been officially recognised in that these localities were represented on the North Belfast Partnership Board and included in the work of the North Belfast Community Action Unit and of the Belfast Regeneration Office. Given that the new councils would have increased responsibilities for urban regeneration, the proposed transfer would be in these communities' best interest.

**3.22** The UUP proposed that the wards of Valley, O'Neill, Rathcoole and Whitehouse should be transferred in their entirety to Belfast, on the ground that this would better reflect the identities and interests of the people who lived there. It would also align the local government and parliamentary constituency boundaries.

**3.23** If accepted, the DUP and UUP proposals would require either that the number of wards in Belfast (60) and Antrim and Newtownabbey (40) should be changed or that the provisional ward boundaries should be redrawn to satisfy the requirement of paragraph 19(1) that “Within any one district there shall, as far as reasonably practicable ... be substantially the same number of local electors in each ward.” The current average electoral ward population for each of the two districts is 3173 for Belfast and 2125 for Antrim and Newtownabbey. To accommodate this consequence of their proposal, the DUP produced an alternative division of Antrim and Newtownabbey into forty wards, ranging in size from an estimated 1800 to 2140. This alternative package is attached as Appendix C.

**3.24** On the other side of the argument, Newtownabbey Borough Council declared its support for the provisional boundary and Antrim Borough Council asked that the area of the new council should not be diminished in any way.

**3.25** At the hearing, Councillor Webb suggested that the proposed transfer was motivated by electoral considerations. He stated that Belfast City Council had expressed no interest in expanding northwards. He agreed with the principle advanced by the DUP and UUP that community identity should be taken into account, but maintained that the residents of the area had not been consulted about the proposal, and had shown no desire to join Belfast. The removal of Abbey Centre from Newtownabbey would seriously weaken the new council’s resource base. The points made by the proponents of the transfer concerning transport linkages, coverage

by urban regeneration agencies and parliamentary constituency boundaries were immaterial.

**3.26** The Alliance Party argued that the M2 provided a clearly visible and appropriate physical boundary which had been used as such since 1973, and that there was no other boundary so readily identifiable. The alternative proposed by the DUP would dissect the local community centred on facilities around Cloughfern Corner and Whiteabbey Hospital. The DUP and UUP proposals would remove the commercial centre of Newtownabbey (Abbey Centre and Valley Retail Park) from the new district. If the proposed transfer were adopted, the new district would be so diminished as to become unviable.

**3.27** Joan Cosgrove said that the residents of the wards in question identified themselves as citizens of Newtownabbey. If they were transferred to Belfast, this would impair the quality of their electoral representation in that they would be less close to their elected representatives and less likely to engage in civic life themselves.

### Conclusions

**3.28** The DUP and UUP proposals both offer readily identifiable alternative boundaries. While acknowledging the counter-argument that they are not as clearly identifiable as the M2, I am satisfied that they would be consistent with the rule in paragraph 14.

**3.29** The Rules make no explicit reference to such issues as community identity, ties or linkages; or to the operational boundaries

used by statutory agencies. They do not require the Commissioner to take into account employment patterns, school catchment areas, historical connections or parliamentary constituency boundaries. They do, however, permit social and human features and characteristics to be admitted as a contribution to the task required under paragraph 14.

**3.30** The evidence presented to me about social and human factors was inconclusive. Some witnesses said that the residents in question identified with Belfast, others that they identified with Newtownabbey. It appears that people travel in both directions to work, shop, and attend school.

**3.31** The arguments which were adduced about historical connections, employment opportunities, school catchment areas and transport connections could equally well be made in relation to so many other parts of Newtownabbey that if they were accepted and applied consistently as the basis for redefining the new district's boundary it is debatable whether the major part of Newtownabbey would fall within it as required by the legislation.

**3.32** The proposed transfer is opposed by both the existing Borough Councils and has not been supported by Belfast City Council.

**3.33** In light of the above, I am not satisfied that a sufficient case has been made for setting aside the Commissioner's provisional recommendations.

## Recommendation

**3.34** I recommend that Rathcoole, Valley, O'Neill and Whitehouse wards should remain in their entirety within Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

**3.35** If this recommendation is accepted, there is no requirement for the reorganisation of the district's internal ward boundaries as proposed by the DUP.

## Glenavy and Stoneyford

**3.36** Antrim Borough Council suggested that the portion of the Lough Neagh shoreline currently in Lisburn City Council area should be transferred in to Antrim and Newtownabbey. The reason given was that this would help simplify the future management of Lough Neagh. Members believed that a community consultation would be required if the whole of Glenavy ward were to be proposed for transfer, as advocated by Councillor Burns.

**3.37** Councillor Burns proposed that the area to be transferred in should comprise the entire Glenavy ward and the northern part of Stoneyford ward (following townland boundaries and excluding Stoneyford village). He based this proposal on the following arguments:

- the local government boundary should be the same as the parliamentary boundary (the Parliamentary Boundaries Commissioner recommended in 2007 that Glenavy should be included in the South Antrim constituency, along with the rest of the Antrim local government district)

- Crumlin and Glenavy are ‘generally regarded’ as one community, and their physical and community infrastructures (e.g. business, shopping, schools, transport) are highly integrated
- Antrim Borough Council already provides numerous amenities and services for the residents of Glenavy and Stoneyford (e.g. community centres, playing fields, waste collection)
- Glenavy would be better served by the police and other agencies if it were linked with Crumlin inside Antrim and Newtownabbey
- Royal Mail serves Glenavy from Crumlin and both lie in the same postal district
- Antrim Borough Council (with responsibility for 28 miles of shoreline) has shown a greater commitment than Lisburn (3 miles) to the protection and development of Lough Neagh
- the transfer would allow for the more efficient and effective management of the Lough Neagh shoreline and would resolve anomalies concerning the development of tourism facilities at Rams Island and Sandy Bay marina.

**3.38** At the hearing Councillor O’Hagan and Lisburn City Council both opposed the transfer of any part of Glenavy and Stoneyford, including the Glenavy shoreline.

**3.39** Councillor O’Hagan said that there was no reason for the local government boundary to be influenced by the Parliamentary Boundary Commissioner’s recommendations or by such factors as shopping patterns and parish boundaries. Lisburn City Council was already providing extensive services and facilities for the people of Glenavy. Glenavy did not identify with Crumlin and its people would

not support the transfer. Antrim and Newtownabbey district should have direct access to Lough Neagh.

**3.40** Speaking on behalf of Lisburn City Council, Karen Blair and Michael Gordon argued that the factors identified by Councillor Burns were not relevant under the Rules. In relation to paragraph 15, the Commissioner had established (Provisional Recommendations Report, paragraph 2.5) that he was prepared to depart from townland boundaries where necessary to establish a readily identifiable boundary. The new line which Councillor Burns had proposed through Stoneyford would not be readily identifiable since it ran through the middle of fields. In response to this, Brian McWilliams countered that there existed a more readily identifiable alternative, namely the B38 road.

**3.41** Lisburn City Council said that if the shoreline alone were transferred without any of the rest of Glenavy ward, it would still have to be accessed through roads in Lisburn and Castlereagh, whose new council could therefore not simply be excluded from the management of the Lough.

**3.42** Newtownabbey Borough Council supported all the provisional boundaries.

**3.43** Councillor Ford suggested that it would be difficult to identify an appropriate boundary if any of Glenavy and Stoneyford were to be transferred, and noted that no evidence had been produced of a desire on the part of the residents of Glenavy or Dundrod (in Stoneyford) to transfer.

## Conclusion

**3.44** As regards Antrim Borough Council's proposal to transfer the shoreline only, neither they nor any other witness submitted an alternative boundary line. I consider that any line which severed the shoreline from the rest of Glenavy and the roads leading to the shore could reasonably be criticised for so doing, not least on the ground of inconsistency with paragraph 16(a). While there may be a case to be made on the ground of administrative efficiency for reducing from four to three the number of councils participating in the management of the Lough, this is not a relevant factor.

**3.45** Antrim Borough Council felt unable to recommend the transfer of Glenavy as proposed by Councillor Burns without first holding a community consultation. His proposal cannot therefore be regarded as having the Council's endorsement.

**3.46** The Commissioner's provisional boundary follows the existing boundary between Antrim and Lisburn as established in 1973, and as such is readily identifiable. The division of Stoneyford proposed in Councillor Burns's written submission would result in a less readily identifiable district boundary. The alternative proposed by Brian McWilliams of following the B38 would split the community living on the two sides of the road and would offend paragraph 15.

**3.47** To the extent that it is a relevant factor, the evidence which I heard concerning the community identity of the residents of Glenavy and Stoneyford is inconclusive.

**3.48** In light of the foregoing, I am not satisfied that a sufficient case has been made within the rules for setting aside the Commissioner's provisional recommendations.

### Recommendation

**3.49** I recommend that Glenavy and Stoneyford wards should remain in their entirety within Lisburn and Castlereagh district.

### Greenisland

**3.50** Desmond Fulton suggested that Greenisland should be transferred in from Mid Antrim, for which he gave two reasons:

- that Belfast/Newtownabbey is the shopping, social and services centre for this area rather than Ballymena/Larne/Carrickfergus
- that Greenisland has poor transport links with Ballymena.

**3.51** Kenny Brown suggested the same transfer, and gave five reasons:

- that it has the same telephone code as Newtownabbey
- that there is a natural greenbelt boundary separating it from Carrickfergus
- that its residents have more social and educational connections with other parts of Newtownabbey
- that they would feel a stronger connection with a council based in Newtownabbey or Antrim than in 'the distant towns' of Ballymena or Larne
- that such a council would cater better for their interests and needs

He estimated the population to be transferred at around 5,000 residents.

**3.52** Belfast High School noted that the Provisional Recommendations Report adopts the existing boundary between Newtownabbey and Carrickfergus which follows the line of the Silverstream River. This runs through the middle of the School's grounds, separating its main buildings from its playing fields. The School requested that the boundary should be redrawn to bring its entire estate into Antrim and Newtownabbey.

**3.53** Newtownabbey Borough Council endorsed the provisional boundary in its totality.

### Conclusions

**3.54** Neither of the representations for the transfer of Greenisland included a proposed boundary line. They referred to the community of Greenisland rather than the ward. If the provisional Greenisland ward were transferred without Gortalee ward, this would leave Gortalee encompassed within Antrim and Newtownabbey, which would offend paragraph 16(b). Accordingly I have interpreted the proposal as relating to Gortalee and the southern part of Greenisland ward, with a new northern boundary line for Greenisland to be determined in the green space between Greenisland village and Carrickfergus. I have estimated the electoral population in question at 3,749.

**3.55** I have no evidential grounds either to confirm or disprove the proposition that the residents of Greenisland have more social and educational connections with other parts of Newtownabbey than

with Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus; or that they would feel a stronger connection with a council based in Newtownabbey or Antrim than in Ballymena.

**3.56** I accept that a readily identifiable boundary could be drawn in the green space between Greenisland village and Carrickfergus.

**3.57** I find the division of the Belfast High School estate anomalous. I am satisfied that the edge of the Belfast High School estate would constitute a more readily identifiable boundary without offending any of the other relevant criteria.

**3.58** I am not satisfied that a sufficient case has been made within the rules for otherwise changing the established district boundary by transferring Greenisland and Gortalee into Antrim and Newtownabbey.

### Recommendations

**3.59** I recommend that the wards of Greenisland and Gortalee should remain in Mid Antrim district.

**3.60** I recommend that the northern boundary of Rostulla ward should be redrawn along Neill's Lane to accommodate the entire Belfast High School estate within Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

### Grange

**3.61** The DUP suggested that part of Grange ward should be transferred in from Mid Antrim in order to create a stronger and more readily identifiable boundary. The proposed boundary would follow the Roughery Road (B18) between Whitesides Corner and Ballydonnelly Road. The Groggan Road would serve as the boundary between the Toome and Cranfield wards.

**3.62** The Alliance Party countered that this would offend paragraph 15 and divide the community on the two sides of the B18 road.

**3.63** Newtownabbey Borough Council endorsed the provisional boundary.

#### Conclusion

**3.64** In the context given by paragraph 15, I am not persuaded that a sufficient case has been demonstrated to justify departing from the provisional recommendation by changing the established district boundary line in this case.

#### Recommendation

**3.65** I recommend that Grange ward should remain in Mid Antrim in its entirety.

#### Kells

**3.66** Antrim Borough Council suggested that consideration should be given to the transfer in of Kells from Mid Antrim.

#### Conclusion

**3.67** No argument was adduced to support this suggestion.

### Recommendation

**3.68** Kells should remain in Mid Antrim

### Parkgate

**3.69** Councillor Ford argued at the hearing that the district boundary line between Ballymena and Newtownabbey should be adjusted at Tildarg on the northern edge of Parkgate ward. The existing line follows the Tildarg and Braepark Roads, dividing the townlands of Tildarg, Carnlea and Ballynashee. Councillor Ford proposed shifting it to run along the crest of the hill between the Six Mile Water and Glenwhirry River valleys. This would transfer a small portion of the population south of the crest into Antrim and Newtownabbey.

**3.70** In support of this proposal Councillor Ford produced correspondence from one resident of the Tildarg Road who supported the change on the ground that it did not make sense to have one council servicing one side of the road, another the other. Councillor Ford had also received two telephone messages on the issue, one for and one against the change. The argument against was that existing council services were not as good in Newtownabbey as in Ballymena.

### Conclusions

**3.71** The principal argument advanced under the rules in support of the change is that the provisional boundary is offensive to

paragraph 15. However the proposed transfer does not correct this, since Councillor Ford's alternative would also split townlands. I consider that it would also be less readily identifiable.

### Recommendation

**3.72** The provisional district boundary should stand between Parkgate ward and Mid Antrim.

## **4. WARD NAMES AND BOUNDARIES**

### **Introduction**

**4.1** Three political parties commented on the provisional boundaries of the wards inside Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

**4.2** The DUP and Alliance submitted proposals for ward changes across the entire district, and these are attached as Annexes C and D.

**4.3** The UUP commented unfavourably on the provisional Carnmoney Hill ward boundaries and on the treatment of the Hightown area, but did not submit any alternative proposals for consideration.

### **Number**

**4.4** The DUP proposed that the number of wards should remain at forty despite the transfers which it proposed to Belfast.

**4.5** The Alliance Party proposed that the number of wards should be increased from forty to forty-one to allow for improvements in the overall pattern of ward boundaries.

### Conclusions

**4.6** Alliance's proposals are based on a set of principles which I will consider in due course. Whatever its merits, this is not supported by the Rules. Specifically, the Rules do not acknowledge the concept of 'natural communities'. Neither do they admit for consideration by the Commissioner the implications for the delineation of District Electoral Areas or of parliamentary constituency boundaries. In addition, in their argumentation Alliance refer to such subjective factors as 'coherence', 'ugliness' and 'awkwardness'. Again, aesthetic judgements such as these fall outside the Rules.

**4.7** The Local Government (Boundaries) Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 presumes that each district outside Belfast shall have 40 wards except where there are sufficient grounds for the Commissioner to exercise his discretion under paragraph 18(2) or (3). I am not persuaded by the evidence presented to me that such grounds exist in this case.

### Recommendation

**4.8** I recommend that the number of wards in Antrim and Newtownabbey district should remain at 40.

### **Ward Names**

**4.9** The Ulster Unionist Party proposed that the wards of Ballyclare North and South should be renamed as East and West.

**4.10** There were no other representations to change ward names from those in the Provisional Recommendations Report.

## Conclusion

**4.11** I agree that the proposed names would be more accurate than those which were provisionally recommended.

## Recommendation

**4.12** I recommend that the ward of Ballyclare North should be renamed Ballyclare West; and that the ward of Ballyclare South should be renamed Ballyclare East.

## **Ward Boundaries**

**4.13** The DUP submitted a package of proposals for changes in ward boundaries to take account of its proposed amendments to the district boundary. This is attached as Appendix C.

**4.14** The Alliance party submitted a package of proposals for changes in ward boundaries which would require an overall increase in the number of wards to 41. This is attached as Appendix D.

**4.15** Alliance based the case for this package on the following general principles:

- given that wards are the building blocks for district electoral areas (DEAs), their boundaries should be such that 'natural communities' will not be split between different DEAs
- that townlands and villages in rural areas should not be split
- that boundaries should not run down residential streets or through clearly defined residential developments

- that in urban areas the commissioner should try to use arterial roads or other ‘natural barriers’ as ward boundaries
- that large wards should be avoided with a sparsely populated centre and population concentrations on the edges, because of the potential impact on DEAs

**4.16** Alliance specifically criticised the proposed Carnmoney Hill as ‘probably the worst example’ of a ward with ill-defined boundaries and limited coherence; and ‘the ugly and incoherent extension of Parkgate ward to the north-east’.

**4.17** Alliance suggested that the Commissioner should take account of recently established parliamentary constituency boundaries, while acknowledging that they would not always provide an easy answer.

### Conclusions

**4.18** At 3.34 above I recommended that Rathcoole, Valley, O’Neill and Whitehouse wards should remain within Antrim and Newtownabbey district. Consequently there is no need to reorganise the district’s internal boundaries as proposed by the DUP.

**4.19** As indicated at 4.6 above, the Alliance Party’s package of alternative ward boundaries is based on a declaration of principles which is not supported by the Rules.

**4.20** The Alliance Party criticised some of the provisional recommendations on the relevant ground that the proposed boundaries were not easily identifiable. However, some of their suggested alternatives are vulnerable to the same criticism. The Rules implicitly acknowledge that some boundary lines will be less readily identifiable than others.

**4.21** Unlike the DUP, the Alliance Party did not provide estimates of the number of electors in each of its proposed wards, which could have established whether or not its proposals would satisfy paragraph 19. In his Provisional Recommendations Report (at paragraph 4.7), the Commissioner indicated that a variation of more than 10% from the average ward electoral population for the district might not be regarded as satisfying this requirement.

**4.22** Alliance's package of proposals would require the addition of one extra ward. I have already recommended at 4.8 against this.

**4.23** In light of the above, I am not persuaded that the case for the Alliance Party's alternative package is sufficiently compelling to justify a departure from the presumptive ward number (40) given by the legislation.

### Recommendation

**4.24** I recommend that the provisional ward boundaries within Antrim and Newtownabbey district should remain as set out in the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations Report.

## Antrim Town

**4.25** Although the issue of electoral equality is not critical to the above recommendation, I subjected Alliance's alternative package of boundaries to a further test by calculating the impact on it of their proposals for Antrim town, Glengormley and the Carnmoney area. In so doing I took account of Councillor Ford's contributions at the public hearing, which supplemented and clarified the material at Appendix D. It should be noted that Alliance formulated its proposals in terms of the existing ward boundaries rather than those in the Provisional Recommendations Report.

**4.26** At Antrim, Alliance proposed that Balloo ward should include all the current ward, plus the area between the Crumlin and Templepatrick railway lines (Moyleena Road and Greenvale) and the town centre, including Riverside but not Townparks South. Fountain Hill ward would include Townparks South and Fountain Street, with Station Road as its western boundary, plus the inner Belfast Road, Folly and Parkhall areas, also taking in Queen's Road and Mallusk Gardens from Steeple. Round Tower ward would include the remainder of the Steeple area, plus Millhouse and Springfarm. Greystone ward would include all the current Greystone, plus Stiles estate and the lower Greystone Road (Knockmoyle and Braeside Gardens). Massereene ward would include the remainder of the town centre, and the Ballymena and Randalstown roads, with the railway as its eastern boundary.

**4.27** At Carnmoney, Alliance proposed that the existing Burnthill ward should acquire a small addition straightening the boundary in

the Wynland area. Mossley ward would consist of the entire urban area north of Manse Road and east of Ballyclare Road.

Carnmoney ward would extend east to include the Christine and Fairview areas, with the boundary continuing across the open space at the top of Beverley Road to Ballyduff Road. Hawthorne ward would include Sharonmore/Ravelston, Woodford/Knockview and Ballyduff estate.

**4.28** At Glengormley, Collinbridge ward would be unchanged apart from losing a small area of Elmfield to Glebe. Glebe ward would also gain the new housing to the south of O'Neill Road, adjacent to the Children's Hospice, and The Brackens on the north of Carnmoney Hill, requiring the ward boundary to follow the townland boundary over the hill, between Carnmoney and Dunanney townlands, then directly north through Ballyduff townland to the Ballyduff Road. It would lose the Archvale/Abernethy area to Glengormley. Glengormley ward would gain the above area, but lose Queen's Avenue and Burnthill Gardens to Ballyhenry, while gaining part of the village centre from Hightown. Hightown ward would add the Sandyknowes/Sandyholme area from Ballyhenry. Ballyhenry ward would thus gain from Glengormley and lose to Hightown.

### Conclusions

**4.29** I calculated the range of electoral populations which would satisfy paragraph 19. In the case of Antrim and Newtownabbey, the average is 2125 and the range falling into the Commissioner's 10% definition of acceptable variation is from 1912 to 2337.

**4.30** According to my expert advisers' calculations, the average electoral population of each of the five wards proposed by Alliance for Antrim town would be 2541. This falls outside the acceptable range. It would be still more objectionable if the number of wards in the district were increased to 41 as Alliance proposed.

**4.31** In the case of Carnmoney and Glengormley, Alliance's proposals as we understand them would result in the electoral populations of several wards falling outside the acceptable range, the most egregious of which would 1388 (Carnmoney Hill) and 2473 (Glebe).

#### Recommendation

**4.32** These analyses reinforce the recommendation at 4.24 that the provisional ward boundaries within Antrim and Newtownabbey district should remain as set out in the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations Report.

## **5. GENERAL ISSUES**

### **Use of Irish**

**5.1** Some fourteen written proposals were received requesting that districts and wards be named in Irish as well as English. They came from:

- J. de Buitleur, Ballycastle
- Martin Campbell, Newry
- Maria Caraher, Newry
- Joe Carey, Ireland
- Oonagh Coleman, Armagh
- Mairin Gaston, Dunloy, County Antrim
- Paul Maguire, North Antrim
- Seamas McAleenan, Ballymena
- Barry McKee, West Armagh Consortium
- Pdraig O Cuinneagain, Belturbet, County Cavan
- Deaglan O Doibhlin, Irish Language Development Officer, Magherafelt District Council and Limavady Borough Council
- Sean O Muireagain, Council for Irish-medium Education
- Nic Sadlier, Pobal, Belfast
- Siobhan Vallely

**5.2** Four written submissions were received requesting that townlands, streets, villages, towns and signs should be named in Irish as well as English. They came from:

- Joanne Bargewell

- Brendan Campbell
- Aodan A Mac Sheafraidh
- Michael Sands

**5.3** These proposals were not specific to Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

**5.4** The main reasons given were:

- 1) to enable councils to discharge their legal obligations under the EU Charter on Regional and Minority Languages
- 2) to fulfil the spirit of the Belfast and St. Andrews Agreements
- 3) to honour Northern Ireland's cultural character, identity and history
- 4) to acknowledge the recent growth of interest in Irish as a spoken language.

### Conclusion

**5.5** The European Charter obliges government departments and associated bodies to protect regional and minority languages, including Irish; and where the number of residents who are users of such languages is such as to justify it, to encourage the use of 'traditional and correct forms of place names' in those languages.

**5.6** The Good Friday Agreement indicated that the British Government would facilitate and encourage the use of the Irish language in speech and writing in public and private life where there was appropriate demand. The St. Andrews' Agreement indicated that the Government would introduce an Irish Language Act.

**5.7** The Local Government Boundaries Commissioner (NI) has not been determined as an associated body under the Charter. Nevertheless in the spirit of the Charter it is right where there is appropriate demand that representations for the names of districts and wards to be in Irish as well as English should be carefully considered.

**5.8** None of the written representations for naming the district and its wards in Irish as well as English originated within the district, and nobody raised the issue at the public hearing. I accordingly remain to be persuaded that there is sufficient demand in the area to justify assigning names in both languages.

**5.9** The naming of townlands, streets, villages, towns and signage is outside the scope of my review and therefore I can make no recommendation.

### Recommendation

**5.10** I recommend that the district of Antrim and Newtownabbey and its constituent wards be named in English as in the Provisional Recommendations Report.

### **Eleven District Model**

**5.11** R G Cuan suggested an alternative to the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations. This was based on the five cities within Northern Ireland and the six historic counties.

**5.12** Margaret Hoben asked the Commissioner not to recommend the proposed eleven district model. She cited a number of reasons including the financial impact on the population and the accuracy and relevance of the statistics used to justify the model.

**5.13** Councillor Andrew Wilson of the Ulster Unionist Party wrote to record that his party considered that "the eleven council model that we are looking at here makes very little sense and is a completely artificial construct".

**5.14** The Presbyterian Church in Ireland broadly welcomed the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations as 'a mature response to a changed and changing society.' However, the Church expressed concern that other agencies had already redrawn their boundaries and asked that strategies for managing clashes and for realignment should be considered.

### Conclusion

**5.15** These suggestions and requests lie outside the statutory framework of my review as outlined at Section 2 above. I can accordingly offer no recommendations.

## **6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

### District level

3.6 The name of the new district should be 'Antrim and Newtownabbey'.

3.34 Rathcoole, Valley, O'Neill and Whitehouse wards should remain in their entirety within Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

3.49 Glenavy and Stoneyford wards should remain in their entirety within Lisburn and Castlereagh district.

3.59 Greenisland and Gortalee wards should remain in Mid Antrim district.

3.60 The northern boundary of Rostulla ward should be redrawn as necessary to accommodate the entire Belfast High School estate within Antrim and Newtownabbey district.

3.65 Grange ward should remain within Mid Antrim in its entirety.

3.68 Kells ward should remain in Mid Antrim.

3.72 The provisional district boundary line should stand between Parkgate ward and Mid Antrim.

### Ward level

4.8 The number of wards in Antrim and Newtownabbey district should remain at 40.

4.12 The ward of Ballyclare North should be renamed Ballyclare West; and Ballyclare South should be renamed Ballyclare East.

4.24 The provisional ward boundaries within Antrim and Newtownabbey district should remain as set out in the Commissioner's Provisional Recommendations Report.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

**7.1** I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all those who submitted written representations and attended the public hearing for the effort which they put into preparing their evidence and for the civility and helpfulness with which they engaged in the proceedings.

**7.2** My thanks go also to each of the members of the staff team which advised and supported me in conducting the public hearing and in preparing this report.

**Dr Bill Smith**

**Assistant Local Government Boundaries Commissioner**

**22 December 2008**

## **APPENDIX A**

### **ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY WRITTEN RESPONDENTS**

Alliance Party (David Ford MLA)  
Antrim Borough Council  
Belfast High School  
Brown, Kenny  
Burns, Thomas, MLA  
Democratic Unionist Party  
Fulton, Desmond  
Newtownabbey Borough Council  
Ulster Unionist Party

## **APPENDIX B**

### **ANTRIM AND NEWTOWNABBEY**

#### **ORAL RESPONDENTS**

Councillor Thomas Burns MLA

Councillor David Ford MLA (Alliance Party)

Councillor Peter O'Hagan

Councillor Billy Webb

Lisburn City Council (represented by Karen Blair, Michael Gordon  
and Colin McClintock)

Mr Peter King (DUP)

Mr Michael Carchrie Campbell (Alliance Party)

Mrs Joan Cosgrove (Newtownabbey Senior Citizens' Forum)

## APPENDIX C

### DUP PROPOSALS FOR NEW WARD BOUNDARIES TO ACCOMMODATE PROPOSED TRANSFER TO BELFAST

#### Note on ward sizes

With the south eastern part of the Council transferred to Belfast, the total electorate is reduced to about 78000, and with 40 wards the average ward size is reduced to about 1950. Taking the guidance that wards shouldn't be any more than 10% different in population from the average; this gives a rough range of 1750-2150.

1 **Crumlin** – As per provisional recommendations with the exception of Tromery Court, Drive and Park transferred to Clady. Estimated Electorate 2038

2 **Aldergrove** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes, North Eastern boundary now to run along Seven Mile Straight Road as far as junction with Dunadry Road and then along Dunadry Road until it meets current proposed boundary with Templepatrick ward. Also from where it currently meets the junction of the Greystone and Fountain Hill wards, the boundary now should run along the Oldstone Road until after the Greenmill cul de sac, where the boundary runs back to current boundary. Estimated Electorate 1933.

3 **Greystone** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes, the eastern boundary of the ward to run along the Ballycraigy Road as far as the junction with the A6, the eastwards along the A6 to the entrance to New Lodge Road, then South Westwards to the junction of Seven Mile Straight Road and Dunadry Road. Estimated Electorate 1936.

4 **Fountain Hill** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes, the Eastern boundary to go along Oldstone Road taking in Greenmill. The northern boundary now to run the full length of the Greystone Road. Estimated Electorate 1998.

5 **Steeple** – As per provisional recommendations. Estimated Electorate 2040

6 **Stiles** – Western boundary with Steeple ward as per provisional recommendation, then down Stiles Way as far as Northern end of Rathenraw Industrial Estate, then across to the top of New Lodge Road, down it to the A6 then across to Ballycraigy Road then up the road to the roundabout with Greystone Road, then along Greystone Road to the junction with Steeple ward. Estimated Electorate 2090

7 New Ward – **Dunsilly** – Southern Boundary with northern end of Rathenraw Industrial Estate, across to Stiles Way. Along Stiles Way to junction with the start of the Steeple ward to the junction with Antrim Centre ward. Then up the roads at the junction as far as the boundary with Shilvodan ward. Estimated Electorate 1842.

8 **Springfarm**- Boundaries along Oriel Road to Mount Oriel Road, to the junction of Randalstown Road. Along the Randalstown Road as far as end of Coral Crescent. Then north to junction of Ballymena Road and Kilbegs Road at the roundabout. Then north eastwards until it meets the boundary of the new Dunsilly ward and down this boundary until it meets the boundary with Steeple ward. Estimated Electorate 1800.

9 **Antrim Centre** – As per provisional recommendation with the exception of the changes above, and the addition of the small estate just to the North-West of Kilbegs Road-Ballymena Road junction. Estimated Electorate 1890.

10 **Shilvodan** – As per provisional recommendations with the following exceptions. The removal from the ward of the estate mentioned above in 9, and the addition of territory from the northern part of the proposed Cranfield ward. The western boundaries of Shilvodan at Holybrook House would extend westwards through Primrose Hill to the junction of Ahoghill Road and Groggan Road, and across to the proposed boundaries with the new Toome ward. Estimated Electorate 1990

11 **Randalstown** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes. The boundary with Cranfield to move from its current location to closer to the junction of Laurel Park and New Street, so that Laurel Park, Church View, Clonboy Walk and those

additional houses on New Street that fall into that area transfer to Cranfield. Estimated Electorate 2135.

**12 Cranfield** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes- the changes as noted in 10 and 11 above, plus its western boundary where it meets the A6 to extend along the A6 as far as the junction with the Ballynafey Road. It then moves along the Ballynafey Road to the Gloverstown Road, Church Road and finally the full length of Ballydonnelly Road, until it reaches the northern boundary of the Council. (Plus the changes to the external boundaries mentioned earlier in the submission). Estimated Electorate 2128.

**13 Toome** – As per provisional recommendations with the exception of the changes noted above with the adjustment with the Cranfield boundary (see 12) (Plus the changes to the external boundaries mentioned earlier in the submission). Estimated electorate 1924.

**14 Parkgate** – As per provisional recommendations. Estimated Electorate 2006.

**15 Templepatrick** – As per the provisional recommendations with the following changes- see above re boundary with Greystone ward, plus the eastern boundaries would now run from the point at which it meets the Old Coach Road along the road westwards to the junction with Lowtown Road then in a northwards line excluding from the Templepatrick ward both sides of the Lowtown Road up to the junction with the Tamlaght road, along the road and then eastwards along the Ballymartin Road to the junction with Ballyrobert ward. This territory to be transferred to Mossley ward. Estimated Electorate 1987.

**16 Clady** – As provisional recommendations with the following changes – see above re boundary with Crumlin ward, plus its northern boundary where it meets Cairnhill Road, to go along that road and then sweep south eastwards along the western end (thus excluding both sides of the road from Clady ward) of Lylehill Road until it meets the boundaries with Belfast. Estimated Electorate 2140.

**17 Doagh** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes. The boundary with Ballynure now runs from the

current proposed Ballyclare North boundary beside Rectory Road, along the Road northwards then northwestwards to the junction of Springvale Road and Brookfield Road then northwards along Brookfield Road to the boundary with Parkgate ward. Estimated Electorate 1969.

**18 Ballyrobert-** As per the provisional recommendations with the following changes. The Northern Boundary meets the Templepatrick Road at Lindsay's Corner, and then continues along the Templepatrick Road until it meets the junction with Mill Road. It then goes along Mill Road until it meets the Templepatrick Road again and carries along that road until it meets the roundabout just south of Ballynure then along the Carrickfergus Road until the junction with Castletown Road and then northwards to the Council boundaries. The ward boundaries then move along the external Council boundaries until it meets the Old Carrick Road, then westwards until south of Burnfield house then northwards to Rea Hill and westwards to the ward boundary with Mossley at Rushfield. Estimated Electorate 1960.

**19 Ballyclare West (new ward)** – The boundaries of this would start at the proposed new boundary with Ballyrobert ward, run along Mill Road to its junction with Main Street, go up Main Street as far as the Doagh Road, then run westwards along the Doagh Road up as far as the junction with Marvista Park, then run Northwestwards round the back of Russell Manor and Court, so that these streets are encompassed within the ward, up to the boundary with the Doagh ward, then the boundary would follow round the Doagh boundary up to the point where the Doagh boundary meets the new Ballyrobert boundary at Lindsay's Corner, then along the Tempatrack Road until it meets Mill Road. Estimated Electorate 1891.

**20 Ballyclare North** – As per provisional recommendations with the exception of the territory listed above in 19 which would go to the new Ballyclare West ward. Estimated Electorate 2050

**21 Ballynure** – As per the provisional recommendations with the following changes –in addition to the changes to boundaries listed above in 17 and 18 (Ballyrobert and Doagh), where the proposed new boundary meets Ballyclare South ward at Ballycorr Road, then westwards along Ballycorr Road to just beyond the entrance to Meadow Gardens. Then south round the back of Meadow

Gardens to just south of Meadow Drive(so that all of the Meadow streets are encompassed in Ballynure), then eastwards round the bottom of Riverdale Park and Close and round to meet the new boundary with the Templepatrick Road. Estimated Electorate 1854.

**22 Ballyclare South** – As per the provisional recommendations with the changes as noted above top the boundaries with Ballynure. Estimated Electorate 2056.

**23 Mallusk-** As per provisional recommendations with the following changes- the new northern boundary would run westwards along the M2 as far as the junction with Ballycraig Road South, then down the road to the A6 Antrim/Templepatrick Road, and along to the boundary with Templepatrick. The western boundary with the proposed Hightown ward should retreat to the Scullions Road and HydePark Link. This would transfer out Alderney Place, Alderney Lance, Mayfield Avenue, Mayfield Park and Mayfield Drive as well as the Mayfield Road (divided by the present proposals). This is better situated in an urban rather than largely rural ward and would include all of the housing development in the area in one ward. Estimated Electorate 2138.

**24 Ballyhenry** – As per the provisional recommendations with the following changes- the northwestern boundary runs along the Ballycraig Road from the junction of the Ballyclare Road until it reaches the A8. Estimated Electorate 1804.

**25 Hightown** – See 23 for proposed changes to Hightown. Estimated Electorate 1920.

**26 Collinbridge-** As per the provisional recommendations. Estimated Electorate 2005.

**27 Mossley (renamed Mossley North)** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes – changes to boundaries to encompass the territories coming out of Ballyrobert, Clady, Templepatrick and Mallusk (see 15,16, 18 and 23 above). Additionally, the Eastern boundary of the proposed ward runs along Carnmoney Road North, and in the Southwest of the ward it runs from Ballyearl Drive, just to the east of Craiglands Manor , round to Ballyclare Road just north of Craiglands Drive, so that

Craiglands is taken out of the ward. Estimated Electorate [NOT GIVEN]

28 **Abbey** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes – southern boundary now moves southwards to new proposed boundary at Station Road. The northern boundary shifts southwards to the south of the entrance of Old Manse Road. Estimated Electorate 1810.

29 **Carnmoney Hill** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes- southern boundary now runs along new boundary with Belfast along O'Neill's Road from the entrance to Altnacreeve Park eastwards to the junction with the Doagh Road. The eastern boundary then runs along the Doagh Road. Estimated Electorate 1999.

30 **Fairview** – As per provisional recommendations. Estimated Electorate 1956.

31 **Monkstown** (renamed Monkstown West)– As per provisional recommendations with the following changes – adjustments to boundary through transfer from Carnmoney Hill (see 29) and eastern boundary goes southwards along the Monkstown Road until it passes River Walk, then south eastwards until it meets the railway line and boundary of Abbey ward. Estimated Electorate 1897.

32 **Monkstown East** (new ward) - Comprised of the territory excluded from the provisional recommended wards of Monkstown and Abbey (see 28 and 31), with the north eastern boundary of the new ward running along Monkstown Road as far as the railway track, and then south eastwards along the railway track until it hits the Jordanstown Road, from which point the boundary follows the new boundary with Rostulla ward. Estimated Electorate 1819.

33 **Carnmoney** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes – westward boundary to run along Richmond Road, as far as the junction with Monkstown Avenue. The boundary moves westward and then northwards so that Hillcrest and Hillside are moved out of the ward. Estimated Electorate 1846.

34 **Ballyduff** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes- the changes to the boundary to accommodate

territory that is now in the new Monkstown East ward. Estimated Electorate 1827.

35 **Rostulla** – As per provisional recommendations. Estimated Electorate 2069.

36 **Jordanstown** – As per provisional recommendations with the changes as listed to Ballyrobert (see 18). Estimated Electorate 2077.

37 **Mossley South** (new ward) – This ward contains those parts already transferred from the old Mossley ward (see 27 above). The southern boundary of the ward goes southwestwards from the junction of Carnmoney Road North and Manse Road, along the Manse Road to its junction with the Ballyclare Road, then up the Ballyclare Road until veering north westwards up the Ballycraigy Road. Estimated Electorate 1850.

38 **Burnthill** – As per provisional recommendations with the following changes- Transferred into the ward is the territory from Carnmoney (see33) and transferred out the ward into Mossley South (see 37), its western boundary runs from the east of Glenvarna Court in a southwards direction to the Antrim Road, just North West of the entrance to Mossgrove Park, then along Antrim Road to the junction of Ballyclare Road and then northwards to the junction of Burnthill Road and eastwards to the junction of Richmond Road. Estimated Electorate 1811.

39 **Glengormley**- As per provisional recommendations with the following changes- see part of ward transferred to Burnthill (see 38 above). Estimated Electorate 1888.

40 **Glebe** – As per provisional recommendations. Estimated Electorate 2119.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **ALLIANCE PROPOSALS FOR NEW WARD BOUNDARIES**

#### **Introduction**

Alliance has adopted the following general principles:

- Wards do not in themselves have huge political significance, but they are the building blocks for District Electoral Areas (DEAs); the latter are entities around which political representation is organised. Therefore, where ward boundaries are flawed, the potential exists for natural communities to be split between different DEAs
- The process should avoid splitting townlands in rural areas/avoid splitting villages (where population is less than the average quota for a ward)
- The process should avoid running boundaries down residential streets, or through clearly defined residential developments
- In urban areas, the commissioner should try to use arterial roads or other natural barriers as ward boundaries
- The process should avoid creating large wards, in particular with a sparsely populated centre and population concentrations on the edges – this will significantly restrict the scope for creating viable/coherent DEAs
- There are also dangers in running ward boundaries along current development lines; if these are subsequently breached, then ward boundaries (and potentially DEA boundaries) may not best reflect natural communities

Whilst I acknowledge the pressures under which the Commissioner and his staff are obliged to operate, I believe that the provisional recommendations for Antrim and Newtownabbey breach these principles in a number of areas. There is also conflict with the requirement of Rule 14, that boundaries should be easily identifiable.

While the proposed Carnmoney Hill ward is probably the worst example, many other urban wards have ill-defined boundaries which meander through streets and there are rural wards of very limited coherence. After examination of the provisional

recommendations, and comparing them to both the existing pattern of wards and districts and the new Parliamentary boundaries, it appears that improvements could be made by using the discretion provided by the legislation to increase the total number of wards to 41.

In particular, this would allow the current Borough boundary to be maintained as a ward boundary and avoid the ugly and incoherent extension of Parkgate ward to the north-east. It would also make it easier to deal with the problems round Carnmoney hill.

The inter-Borough boundary was established in 1972, modified in the 1983 revision and remained since then. The recently established Parliamentary boundaries were the outcome of extensive discussion. It therefore seems reasonable to take account of them at this stage when attempting to set easily recognised boundaries, while acknowledging that they will not always provide an easy answer.

The detailed submission deals with logical groups of wards as this appears an appropriate way of recognising some of the local factors. It assumes 41 wards.

### **Toome, Randalstown, Parkgate**

The current six wards are entitled to five new wards. The proposed Toome ward extends the existing ward east to leave an awkward Cranfield. It would be more logical to add the rural Cranfield/Staffordstown/Creggan area to Toome.

The existing Drumanaway ward should be joined to most of the urban part of Cranfield ward, with the Neillsbrook area added to existing Randalstown.

In turn, Randalstown would lose the eastern edge of the urban area to Shilvodan, which would lose the townlands of Artnagullion, Carncombe, Edenvale and Lislunnan to Parkgate.

### **Antrim Town**

The existing seven wards become five new wards. An expanded Balloo ward would gain the Moylena Road and Greenvale area, leaving the remainder of Massereene ward largely unchanged.

A new Greystone ward would include the current ward, plus additional housing on the south of Greystone Road and Stiles estate.

Round Tower ward would include most of the current Steeple plus Springfarm area.

Fountain Hill would continue to cover the inner Belfast Road, Folly and Parkhall areas, also taking in Queen's Road and Mallusk Gardens from Steeple.

### **Crumlin, Muckamore and Templepatrick**

Existing Crumlin ward would lose the Tromery estate and Bramblewood to Ballydonaghy ward, with the small urban area at present in Aldergrove moving into Crumlin.

The new ward of Ballydonaghy would take in the remaining parts of east Crumlin and towards Ballyutoag from Clady, becoming more Crumlin focused. The area north of Loanends which looks to Templepatrick would be added to the existing Templepatrick ward.

A new ward would combine the urban fringe areas of Farranshane and Ballycraigy, though losing Muckamore Garden Village to a revised Aldergrove ward.

### **Ballyclare**

The current five wards in Ballyclare area are entitled to six seats, with the addition of Ballycraigy townland.

Doagh is a single ward, including Burnside and Cogry.

The rural Rashee area should transfer to Ballyclare North, while a new Ballyclare East would include areas round the Ballyeaston, Ballycorr and Ballynure Roads.

Ballyclare South would contain the remaining parts of the town, although Mill Road would remain in Ballyrobert.

Ballynure would remain largely unchanged, as would Ballyrobert except where indicated above.

## **Mallusk**

The existing, extremely large, Mallusk ward would be split. Ballycraigy townland looks towards Ballyrobert. The Mallusk urban fringe (from Hightown to Highgate/Tudor and Rogan Manor/Antrim Road) would form one ward with the remainder of the rural area and the Ballyhenry Rd/Ballycraigy Rd area forming a second.

## **Glengormley area**

Using the new constituency boundary as a key divide, there are five current wards which are in Belfast North. Adjacent are two small areas, at the O'Neill Rd/Antrim Rd junction and the Brackens on the north of Carnmoney Hill.

Glebe would gain the two adjacent areas, losing the Ashgrove area to Glengormley, which would transfer Burnthill Ave/Queens Park to Ballyhenry. This would entail drawing a ward boundary along the townland boundary over Carnmoney Hill, rather than along roads round the hill.

The existing Collinbridge ward can continue without significant change.

Hightown ward should gain the Sandyknowes estate from Ballyhenry.

## **Carmmoney area**

The five existing wards within South Antrim become four new wards. Burnthill needs a small addition in the Wynland area.

Mossley should include all of New Mossley estate, with the remaining two wards centred on Carnmoney and Ballyduff estate.

## **Jordanstown area**

Taking account of the Parliamentary boundary and the railway line, Rostulla should remain unchanged.

The current Jordanstown becomes two wards, on a west/south east split. While these three wards are larger than Monkstown, there are readily identifiable boundaries between them.

Monkstown would thus remain unchanged., although it would be possible to transfer the area of Rostulla south of the Threemilewater river to Monkstown

### **Whiteabbey, Whitehouse**

This area has lost significant population. It is now entitled to five seats only. Abbey should include the area east of Doagh Road and Princess Crescent/Park as far south as Whitehouse Park.

Valley should include all of Bawnmore/Longlands and Merville, extending along the Shore Road to Whitehouse Park.

Cloughfern would include the current Cloughfern ward, plus the small addition in the Fernagh area, excluding the area transferred to Glebe. The western boundary would run across the top of the hill.

Rathcoole estate would provide the remaining two wards, with a split between the western and south-eastern parts of the estate and external boundaries along the Doagh and O'Neill Roads.