



REVIEW OF BOUNDARIES

BERWICK UPON TWEED TOWN COUNCIL



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Division** area represented by a councillor on Northumberland County Council (NCC).
- **Ward** area represented by a councillor or councillors on Berwick Town Council (BTC).
- **Polling District** subdivision of an NCC division, but coterminous with existing BTC wards.
- **Elector** someone registered to vote and entitled to do so.
- **Quota** number of electors required to elect one councillor if equality is the goal in terms of representation, *OR* the number of councillors in each ward if applied equally across the Town Council area.
- **Electorate** number of electors recorded in a polling district or districts.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

- 7 wards across two whole NCC divisions, and part of a third.
- 16 councillors, as follows:

Ward	Councillors currently	Electorate	Quota
Castle	3	2186	4.1
Magdalene	2	1184	2.2
Lower Spittal	2	697	1.3
Upper Spittal	2	1432	2.6
St Boisils	3	1211	2.27
Stadium	1	602	1.13
Grove	3	1216	2.28

EVIDENCE

- On the existing distribution of seats, wards have between 73% of quota (Castle) and 153% of quota (Lower Spittal.)
- This is both historic, and vulnerable to increases in population – significant house building is taking place or projected in Castle Ward, around the area south west of Loaning Meadows, and in Upper Spittal, around Barley Rise.
- Can this be addressed by redistribution alone? Yes, it can. However, this is not the only issue arising from the existing distributions.

WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS FOR EQUALITIES SAKE?

1. Reduce total number of councillors to 15
2. Reduce Lower Spittal to one councillor
3. Increase Upper Spittal to three councillors
4. Reduce St Boisils and Grove to two councillors each.
5. Increase Castle Ward to four councillors

THE PARTICIPATION CHALLENGES

- Not all wards are contested at each election, and there is an uneven distribution of candidates to seats available. These are the issues that led council to consider whether a review of boundaries was required.
- Ensuring that boundaries reflect communities which residents recognise and can associate with is part of the challenge of encouraging participation. This is not always clear from the previous ward boundaries, which follow on from boundaries established by the former Borough Council.
- An alternative proposal is attached.

THE THREE WARD SOLUTION WITH 15 COUNCILLORS

New ward	Old Ward	Councillors currently	Electorate	Quota	Number of councillors
Castle and Magdalene	Castle	3	2186	4.1	6
	Magdalene	2	1184	2.2	
Spittal and Harbour	Lower Spittal	2	697	1.3	6
	Upper Spittal	2	1432	2.6	
	St Boisils	3	1211	2.27	
Shielfield and Grove	Stadium	1	602	1.13	3
	Grove	3	1216	2.28	