
To: Council

On: 30 April 2015

Report by: Director of Finance & Resources

Heading: Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland – Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements – Consultation on Ward Boundaries

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission is currently undertaking its Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements in Scotland. In 2014, the Commission completed that part of its Review dealing with the number of councillors for each council area. The Commission has now issued its proposals for consultation in relation to the Ward boundaries within the Renfrewshire Council local authority area.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide elected members with information on the detailed proposals put forward by the Commission and to provide members with the opportunity to consider their response to the consultation.
- 1.3 The consultation paper issued by the Commission is included as an appendix to this report
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council

- (a) agrees that a response to the consultation should be sent to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland making the points set out in Section 4 of this report; and
- (b) notes that a 12 week public consultation will take place later in 2015.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 On 19 March 2015, the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland issued proposals to all councils on wards within each council area. The proposals are at this stage for consultation with councils only with the deadline for councils to respond to the consultation being 14 May 2015. Thereafter, it is intended that the Commission will issue the proposals, subject to any amendments arising from the consultation with councils, for a 12 week public consultation commencing in July 2015.
- 3.2 At present, the Council is divided into 11 wards with 7 wards each electing 4 members and the remaining 4 wards each electing 3 members for a total of 40 elected members on Renfrewshire Council. Those arrangements have been in place since the 2007 Local Government election which was the first one to elect members to multi-member wards.
- 3.3 The first phase of the current Review of Electoral Arrangements was a review of the number of elected members for each council area. Members will recall that the proposal consulted on was that the number of elected members in Renfrewshire be increased from 40 to 43 and as reported to the Leadership Board on 18 February 2015, the Commission has retained that proposal following the conclusion of that phase of the consultation.
- 3.4 The consultation document issued on 19 March 2015, which is attached as an Appendix to this report, illustrates the proposals for wards in Renfrewshire. For each electoral ward, the Commission makes recommendations about its boundary, its name and the number of councillors to represent the ward (legislation restricts this to either 3 or 4 councillors). The main points to note from the consultation paper are:
 - The number of wards is increased from 11 to 13.

- None of the current wards remain unaltered.
- There will be 9 wards each electing 3 members and 4 wards each electing 4 members.
- Johnstone has its own single ward.
- Paisley is given two additional wards and, if Gallowhill is included, will be divided between seven wards. In addition, all of the wards in Paisley are to be 3 member wards.

3.5 When reviewing electoral arrangements the legislation requires the Commission to take account of the following factors:

- the interests of effective and convenient local government;
- within each council, that each councillor should represent the same number of electors as nearly as may be;
- local ties which would be broken by making a particular boundary;
- the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable; and
- special geographical considerations.

3.6 The Commission consultation document states that their proposals for the council area:

- improve overall forecast parity;
- introduce 2 new wards in Paisley;
- address forecast disparities in Paisley South West Ward;
- make changes to ward boundaries throughout the council area to align with community council area boundaries;

3.7 The proposals have been developed using electorate data from 1 September 2013 and having regard to the likely changes in the number of electors by considering forecast electorate counts in 2019.

4. **Commentary**

4.1 As a general comment, the consultation document does not provide a great deal of information and is insufficient to enable the council to determine all that has been taken into account by the Commission when creating the proposals for the new wards. In particular, no

indication is given as to how the Commission believes it has applied the factors it is required to take into account in the relevant legislation when undertaking this exercise. In these circumstances, the council may consider that it is not in a position to offer a definitive view on whether or not the proposals offer an improvement to the current electoral arrangements. However, it is recommended that a response to the consultation is issued to cover the points set out in this Section 4 and that the Council requests that these points be addressed in the consultation documentation issued for the wider public consultation later in 2015.

4.2 The names of some of the thirteen wards in the Boundary Commission proposal no longer make reference to some of the well-defined areas of population in Renfrewshire that feature in the names of existing wards. For example, if the proposed ward names were to be accepted, there would no longer be reference to Gallowhill, Ralston, Elderslie, Howwood and Kilbarchan. It could also be argued that to reflect the importance of the Braehead centre and the recent housing developments adjacent to it, the name of Ward 1 should specifically refer to Braehead. Finally, in the new Ward 11, Crosslee is not in that ward despite being referred to in the ward name. Therefore, it is suggested that the response to the consultation should propose the following names for some of the wards:

- Ward 1 Renfrew North and Braehead
- Ward 2 Renfrew South and Gallowhill
- Ward 3 Paisley Northeast and Ralston
- Ward 8 Paisley Southwest and Elderslie
- Ward 10 Bridge of Weir, Howwood, Kilbarchan and Lochwinnoch
- Ward 11 Linwood and Craigends.

4.3 The proposal intends to coordinate the ward boundaries with community council boundaries. An analysis of the new ward boundaries compared with the 25 community council area boundaries show that 8 community council areas cross ward boundaries with one community council area (Charleston) being split across three wards. The remaining 17 community council areas are each contained within single wards. Therefore, generally there is a reasonably good match between community council areas and ward areas. For example, it is clear that the proposed new Johnstone Ward is based on the existing community council area.

- 4.4 When the Commission was reviewing the number of elected members in each council area it decided for the first time to include in the criteria it used to determine member numbers the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data. The Council supported this approach which resulted in the council being allocated three additional members. However, this now begs the question whether the allocation of the 43 members across the newly defined wards achieves the aim of securing increased representation for the more deprived communities in Renfrewshire.
- 4.5 The proposed changes would mean that Renfrewshire's 60 datazones that are part of Scotland 20% most deprived, which are currently dispersed over 9 wards will be dispersed over 10 of the new wards. Currently, there are five wards with datazones in the 5% most deprived in Scotland. However, this will increase to six wards under the Boundary Commission's proposals. The main change is that the current Paisley North West ward will be split across two new wards; Paisley Northwest and Central and Paisley West. Therefore, as it stands, there are four councillors that represent people living in the 5% most deprived datazones in Paisley North West whereas under the new proposals, these datazones would be represented by six councillors, an increase of two.
- 4.6 Currently there are eight wards with datazones in the 5-10% most deprived in Scotland, although this will decrease under the Boundary Commission's proposals to seven wards. One of the main reasons for this is due to the current wards of Johnstone North, Kilbarchan and Lochwinnoch and Johnstone South, Elderslie and Howwood being split across various proposed wards. The datazones in question would be clustered together in the new Johnstone ward. Previously, the majority of these datazones had been in Johnstone North, Kilbarchan and Lochwinnoch and were represented by three councillors, but under the current proposals, they would be represented by four councillors, an increase of one. Another change in the boundaries would see the Paisley East and Ralston ward split across the proposed wards of Paisley East and Paisley Northwest and Central. At present, the areas of deprivation in Paisley East and Ralston are represented by four councillors, although under the proposed boundaries, there would be a total of six councillors representing these datazones, an increase of two.
- 4.7 The number of wards in Renfrewshire that hold the 10-15% most deprived datazones will increase from eight to ten under the Boundary Commission proposals. The main change here is due to the current Paisley East and Ralston ward being split across the proposed Paisley

East and Paisley Northeast wards. At present, the datazones are represented by four councillors, but under the proposals this could increase to six (three in each of the proposed wards). Another change in the wards where people live in the 10-15% most deprived datazones, would be that the current Paisley South West ward is anticipated to split between the proposed wards of Paisley West and Paisley Southwest. At present, people living in these datazones are represented by four councillors, while under the proposed new boundaries; a total of six councillors will be present across two wards.

- 4.8 Overall, it is clear that the 60 datazone that are part of the most deprived 20% in Scotland will be dispersed across more wards under the Boundary Commission proposals. However, it could be claimed that the areas of deprivation are concentrated within proposed wards, rather than spread across the local authority. This is due to the number of wards in Paisley increasing by two as well as the town of Johnstone being represented in its entirety as one ward. Along with the greater concentration of deprivation across these areas comes an increase in elected representatives.
- 4.9 Across Renfrewshire it is proposed to increase the number of councillors from 40 to 43, which would see an extra two councillors in Paisley, and four councillors for the entire Johnstone area. In each of Paisley's proposed six wards there would be three councillors, meaning there would be a range of elected representatives covering the most deprived areas. It could therefore be claimed that the proposal will result in an increased number of councillors across wards where deprivation exists and that the proposal does meet the aim of achieving greater representation for deprived communities.
- 4.10 In relation the factor in the second bullet point of paragraph 3.5, the ideal is that all councillors represent the same number of electors. This is referred to as "parity". Although it is apparent from the Boundary Commission document forming the Appendix to this report that this has not been possible to achieve, the table at page 4 of the document shows the variation from parity in each of the proposed 13 wards using the electorate figure from 2013 and the forecast electorate figure for 2019. Applying those figures would mean that each of the 43 councillors should represent 3033 electors which translates to each 3 member ward ideally having 9099 electors and each four member ward having 12,132 electors.
- 4.11 Based on the 2013 figures this illustrates wards ranging from a variation of -8% (over-representation) in Renfrew North to 10% (under representation) in Paisley North East. Using the 2019 forecast

electorate figures the variation from parity will range from -6% (over – representation) in Bridge of Weir and Lochwinnoch to 9% (under-representation) in Paisley Southwest. However, the same table shows a 4% variation overall for both 2013 and 2019 figures which indicates that a consequence of the proposals is a general under representation of electors across Renfrewshire.

- 4.12 No information is given by the Commission regarding whether these variations fall within a range of acceptable tolerances or whether they are typical of the variations across Scotland. Therefore, it is difficult to make an informed comment on whether the proposals achieve an acceptable level of parity.
- 4.13 In relation to whether the proposals will result in the breaking of local ties, there is already an example of this in the current arrangements with the Gallowhill area which is traditionally regarded as being part of Paisley, being included in a ward with Renfrew South. However, it could be argued that the new proposals create further examples of this. There doesn't appear any good reason to include Paisley town centre with Paisley Northwest and there is no traditional link between Foxbar and Elderslie which are combined in the new Ward 8. Elderslie would be seen locally as having closer links to Johnstone. Similarly, the inclusion of Craigends with Linwood when it is more clearly associated with Houston and Crosslee which are both in ward 12 could be seen as breaking local ties. In addition, Bridge of Weir has now been included in a ward with the villages to the south west such as Lochwinnoch and Howwood whereas previously it shared a ward with the villages to the north, Langbank and Bishopton. Finally, the proposal sees Erskine being split between two wards which again could be seen as breaking local ties.
- 4.14 In relation to easily identifiable boundaries and geographical considerations it is acknowledged that an effort has been made to use rivers, railways and main roads as boundaries. However, the boundaries between wards 8 and 9 and between wards 9 and 10 are difficult to locate by reference to any physical boundaries
- 4.15 An analysis has been undertaken of the extent to which the ward boundaries reflect the boundaries of the Westminster and Scottish Parliamentary constituencies. At present the boundary between the two Westminster constituencies cuts across four wards (Wards 3, 4, 9 and 10). That position remains unchanged under the Boundary Commission proposals with the boundary cutting across four of the new wards (Wards 3, 4, 8 and 10).

- 4.16 For the three Scottish Parliamentary constituencies that cover the Renfrewshire area, the only point of note under the current structure is that the line of the Renfrewshire South constituency boundary with Renfrewshire North and West constituency splits one ward (Ward 9). The new proposals involve Ward 4 being part of both the Paisley and the Renfrewshire North and West constituencies. The new Ward 7 would straddle the Paisley and the Renfrewshire South boundaries and the new Ward 10 straddles the Renfrewshire North and West and the Renfrewshire South boundary. Accordingly the new proposals result in an increased disconnection between ward boundaries and Scottish Parliament constituency boundaries
- 4.17 The purpose of this part of the review of the Local Government Electoral Arrangements is to give local authorities the opportunity to comment on the Commission's proposals ahead of the public consultation later in 2015. The public consultation will allow political parties and groups as well as individual elected members to submit their own comments on the proposals at that stage.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – If the proposals are adopted, there will be three additional elected members for Renfrewshire who will all be entitled to receive a remuneration and expenses.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
3. **Community Planning** – none
4. **Legal** – In terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the electoral boundaries for local authorities must be reviewed every 8 to 12 years.
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -

- (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. **Health & Safety** - None
- 9. **Procurement** - None
- 10. **Risk** - None
- 11. **Privacy Impact** - None

List of Background Papers

- (a) Background Paper 1 – Report to the Leadership Board on 2 April 2014- “Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland- Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements.
- (b) Background Paper 2 – Report to the Leadership Board on 18 February 2015 – “Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland- Update on Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Legal and Democratic Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Ken Graham, Head of Corporate Governance (Ext. 7360).

Author Ken Graham, Head of Corporate Governance (Ext 7360).

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

Renfrewshire Council Area

Proposals for wards



March 2015

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Ms Isabel Drummond-Murray (from October 2014)

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Introduction

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland is an independent, non-political body whose purpose is to make recommendations for local government administrative and electoral boundaries in Scotland.
2. We are tasked by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to undertake reviews of local government electoral arrangements in Scotland. These reviews are our fifth periodic reviews of local government electoral arrangements in Scotland since we were first established in 1973. We intend to submit a report containing our recommendations for electoral arrangements for each council area in Scotland to the Scottish Ministers by May 2016, in time for implementation for the next local government elections in May 2017.
3. This booklet contains a summary of our proposals for Scotland as a whole and our proposals for wards in Renfrewshire council area, and information on how to participate in our consultation with councils from 19 March to 19 May 2015.

The reviews

4. In 2011 we consulted the public on our methodology for determining councillor numbers. The results of that consultation can be found on our website www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk
5. We formally began the current reviews on 21 February 2014. We consulted councils and the public on our proposals for councillor numbers for each council between February 2014 and August 2014. We have now considered all the submissions received during these consultations. We have reached a decision on councillor numbers and the associated ward designs and are now presenting our proposals for wards for further consultation. The meeting papers that informed our deliberations and the minutes of our meetings are referenced on page 4. Details of how to participate in the consultation are given below.
6. For each electoral ward, we make recommendations about its boundary, its name and the number of councillors to represent the ward (legislation restricts this to either 3 or 4 councillors).
7. When reviewing electoral arrangements the legislation requires us to take account of the following factors:
 - the interests of effective and convenient local government;
 - within each council, that each councillor should represent the same number of electors as nearly as may be;
 - local ties which would be broken by making a particular boundary;
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable; and
 - special geographical considerations.
8. For further information on the policies and procedures we have adopted to underpin these reviews and the legal requirements for ward design, please refer to our *Guidance*

Booklet, which is available on our website http://www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/reviews/5th_electoral/resources.asp or on request.

Our proposals for wards in Scotland

9. We developed our proposals using electorate data from 1 September 2013. The number of electors registered in each council electoral ward on that date can be found on our website. In developing our proposals for wards, we have had regard to the likely changes in the number of electors by considering forecast electorate counts in 2019. The methodology we have used to forecast electorates can be found on our website. Whilst the dataset does not include 16 and 17 year olds, we have considered the impact their inclusion on the electoral register would have and are content that this would not affect our proposals.
10. Our proposals use population size to set councillor numbers. In keeping with past reviews we have created categories of similar councils to set ratios of councillors to electors. In doing so, we have used population distribution and levels of deprivation to group councils together. Population size, however, remains the biggest determinant of councillor numbers and the design of wards.
11. We consulted on proposals for councillor numbers in 2014. In 5 council areas, we have changed the number of councillors proposed for the area from our original proposals for councillor numbers because it allows us to take better account of the factors in the legislation during ward design. Overall, our proposals provide for 1,217 councillors representing 351 wards in Scotland: a decrease of 6 councillors and 2 wards from existing electoral arrangements.
12. Our proposals for wards include unchanged electoral arrangements in 2 council areas and minor changes in 2 other council areas.
13. Nationally, over 96% of proposed wards are forecast to be within 10% of parity for the council area. At present 17% of existing wards are 10% or more from parity. Only 2 proposed wards are forecast to be more than 15% from parity, compared to 19 existing wards.
14. Our proposals improve parity between councillors in terms of the number of electors they represent (the forecast average variation from a council area's parity per councillor improves from 6.0% for existing wards to 4.6% for proposed wards).
15. In general we have sought to construct wards from complete local sub-geographies such as community council areas. In our proposals for wards almost 80% of community council areas are wholly within wards. In a few council areas, we have adopted ward designs that recognise other locally-significant boundaries such as community planning areas, neighbourhoods or natural communities.

Consultation on our proposals for wards

16. The legislation provides that we must first of all consult on our proposals with councils. This consultation on our proposals for wards runs from 19 March 2015 until 19 May 2015. After consideration of responses to this consultation with councils, we intend to conduct a 12-week public consultation on our proposals for wards between

July and October 2015. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, we may further develop and consult on our proposals later in 2015. We expect to submit our reports containing our final recommendations to the Scottish Ministers by May 2016.

17. Further copies of this booklet are available on request.
18. We welcome all comments on our proposals to help inform our deliberations. Comments can be made in the following ways:

In writing to:	Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland Thistle House 91 Haymarket Terrace Edinburgh EH12 5HD
by email to:	comments@scottishboundaries.gov.uk

19. All comments we receive in response to this consultation will be available to view on our website in due course. For further information, please visit our website.
20. Where comments contain objections to our proposals, it would be helpful if they could be accompanied by alternative proposals that take account of statutory requirements and consider the consequences on the council area as a whole.

Proposals for wards in Renfrewshire council area

21. The maps on the following pages illustrate our proposals for wards in Renfrewshire council area. We present an electoral arrangement for 43 councillors representing 9 3-member wards and 4 4-member wards, increasing councillor numbers in the area by 3.

22. Our proposals for the council area:

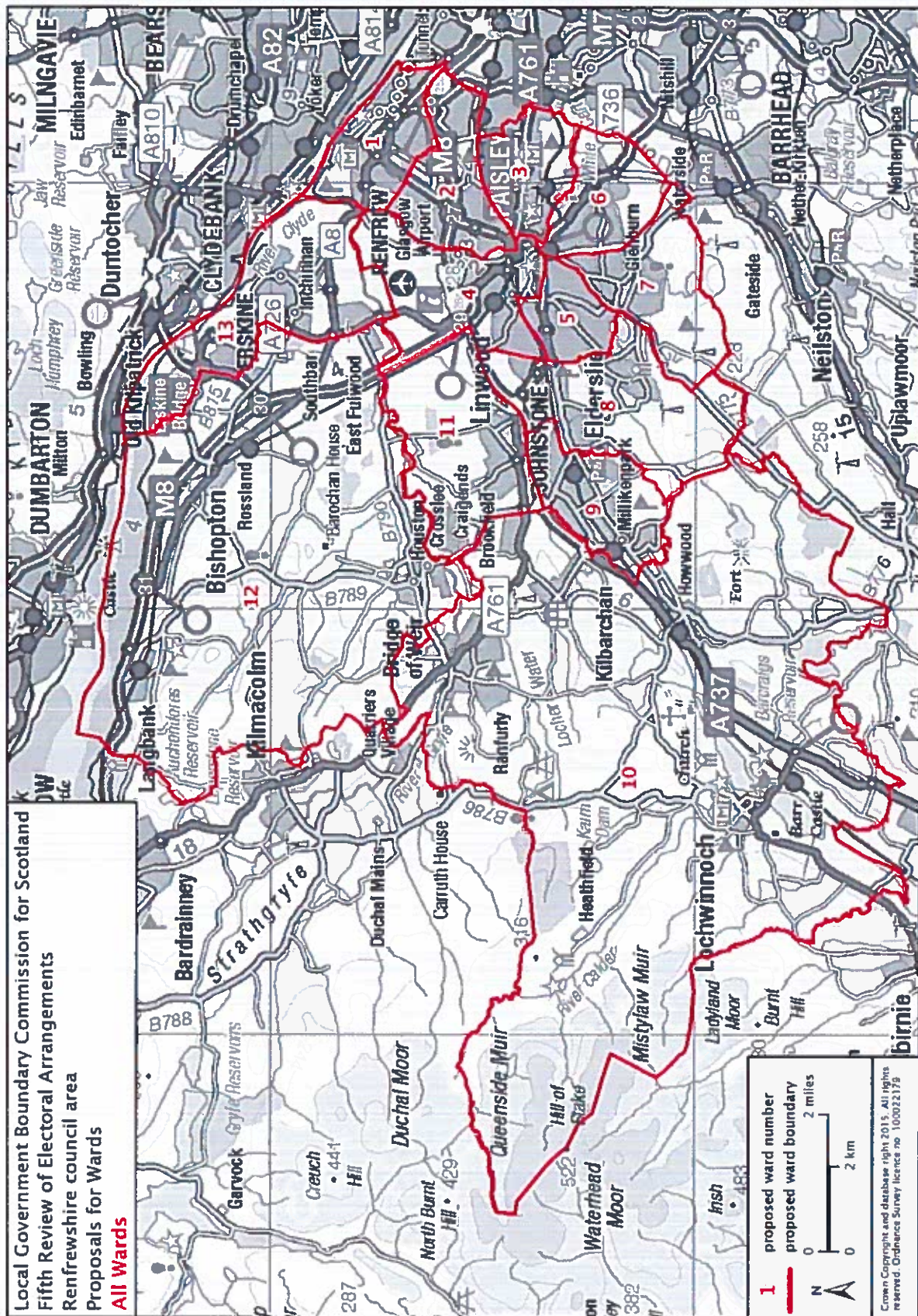
- improve overall forecast parity;
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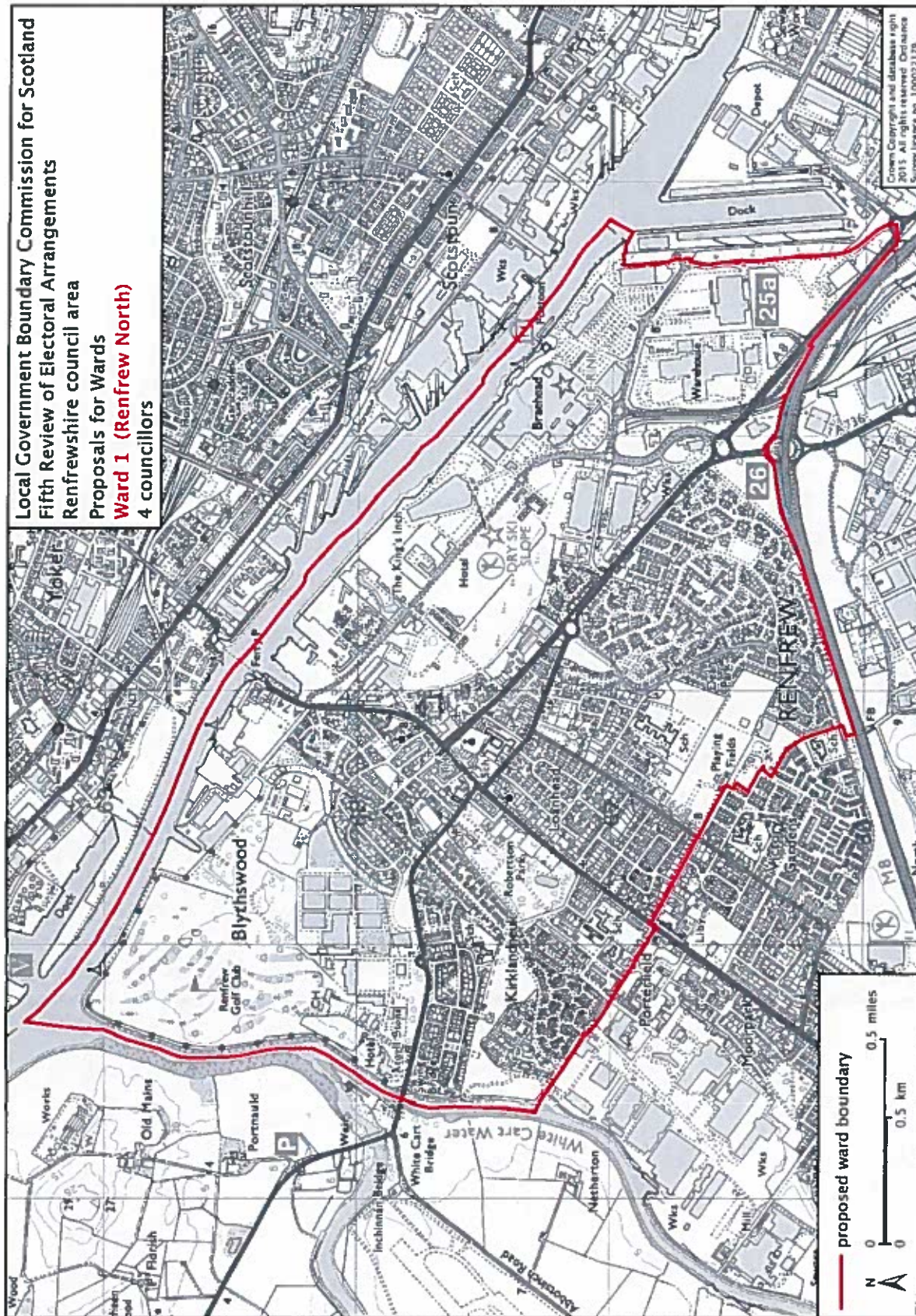
23. We discussed the proposals for Renfrewshire council area at our meetings of 10 September 2014 (See LGBCS Paper 2232/14) and 7 October 2014 (See LGBCS Paper 2239/14). We decided on our proposals at our meetings of 3 February 2015 and 3 March 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2276/15).

24. Table 1 below details the electorates and associated variation from parity of the proposed wards:

ward no.	ward name	cllrs	electorate Sept 13	actual variation from parity	forecast electorate 2019	forecast variation from parity
1	Renfrew North	4	11,192	-8%	11,646	-4%
2	Renfrew South and Paisley North	3	9,329	3%	9,054	-1%
3	Paisley Northeast	3	9,985	10%	9,747	7%
4	Paisley Northwest and Central	3	8,831	-3%	9,313	2%
5	Paisley West	3	9,591	5%	9,495	4%
6	Paisley East	3	8,817	-3%	9,115	0%
7	Paisley South	3	9,345	3%	9,085	-1%
8	Paisley Southwest	3	9,778	7%	9,955	9%
9	Johnstone	4	12,067	-1%	11,948	-2%
10	Bridge of Weir and Lochwinnoch	4	11,352	-6%	11,403	-6%
11	Crosslee and Linwood	3	8,880	-2%	8,756	-4%
12	Bishopton, Houston and Langbank	3	9,317	2%	9,838	8%
13	Erskine and Inchinnan	4	11,959	-1%	11,610	-5%
Totals		43	130,443	4%	130,956	4%

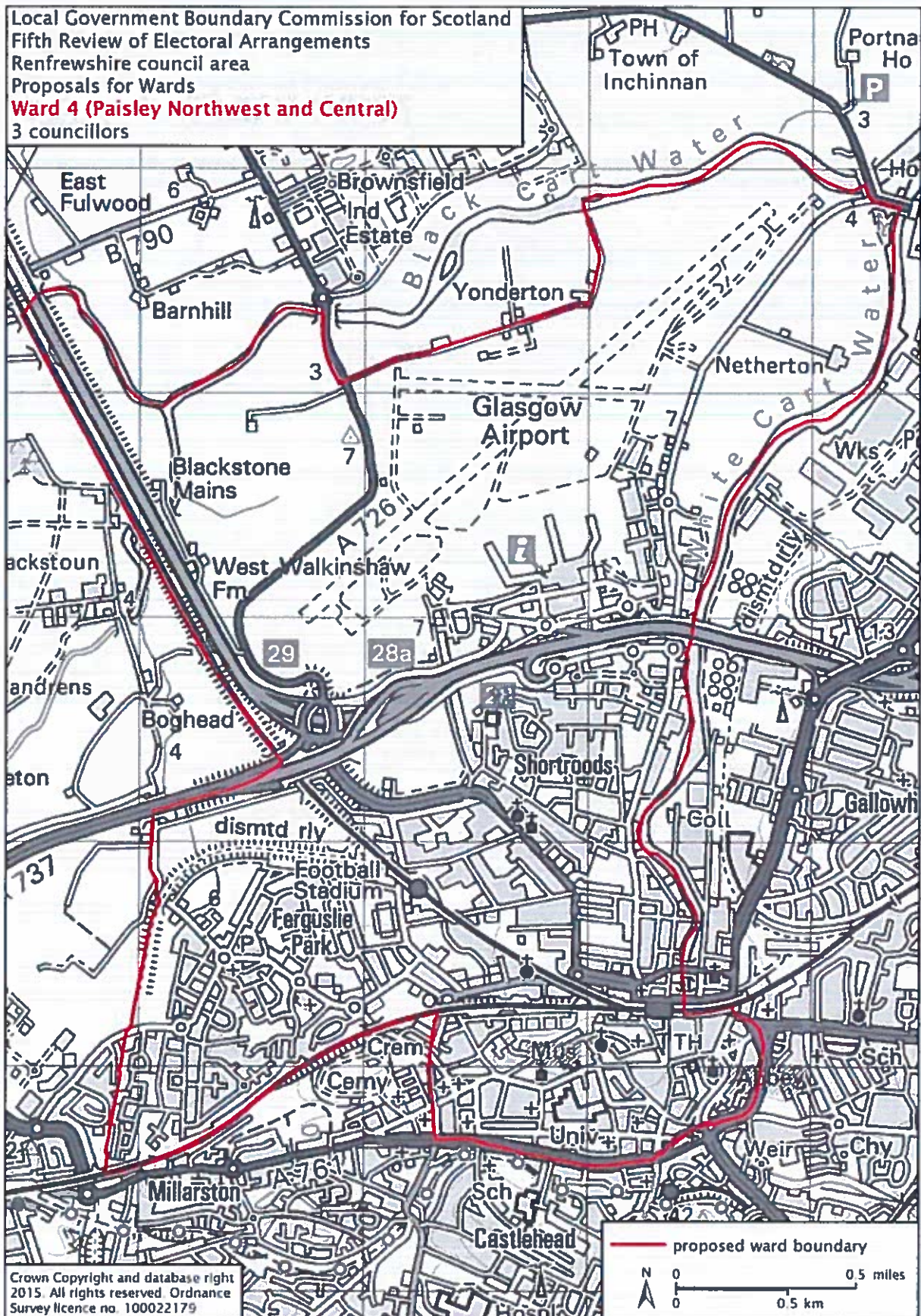
Table 1 – proposed wards' electorate counts.

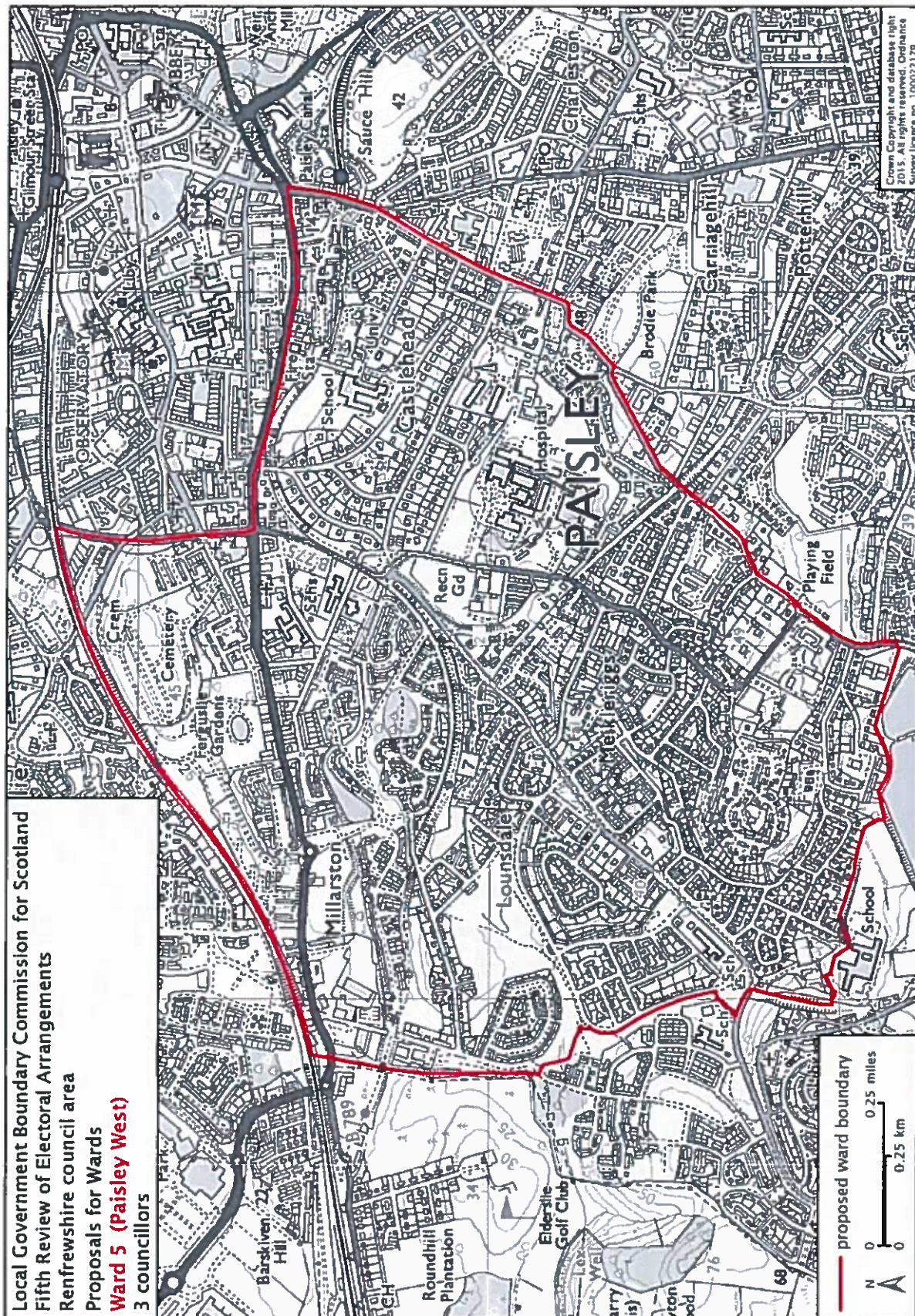


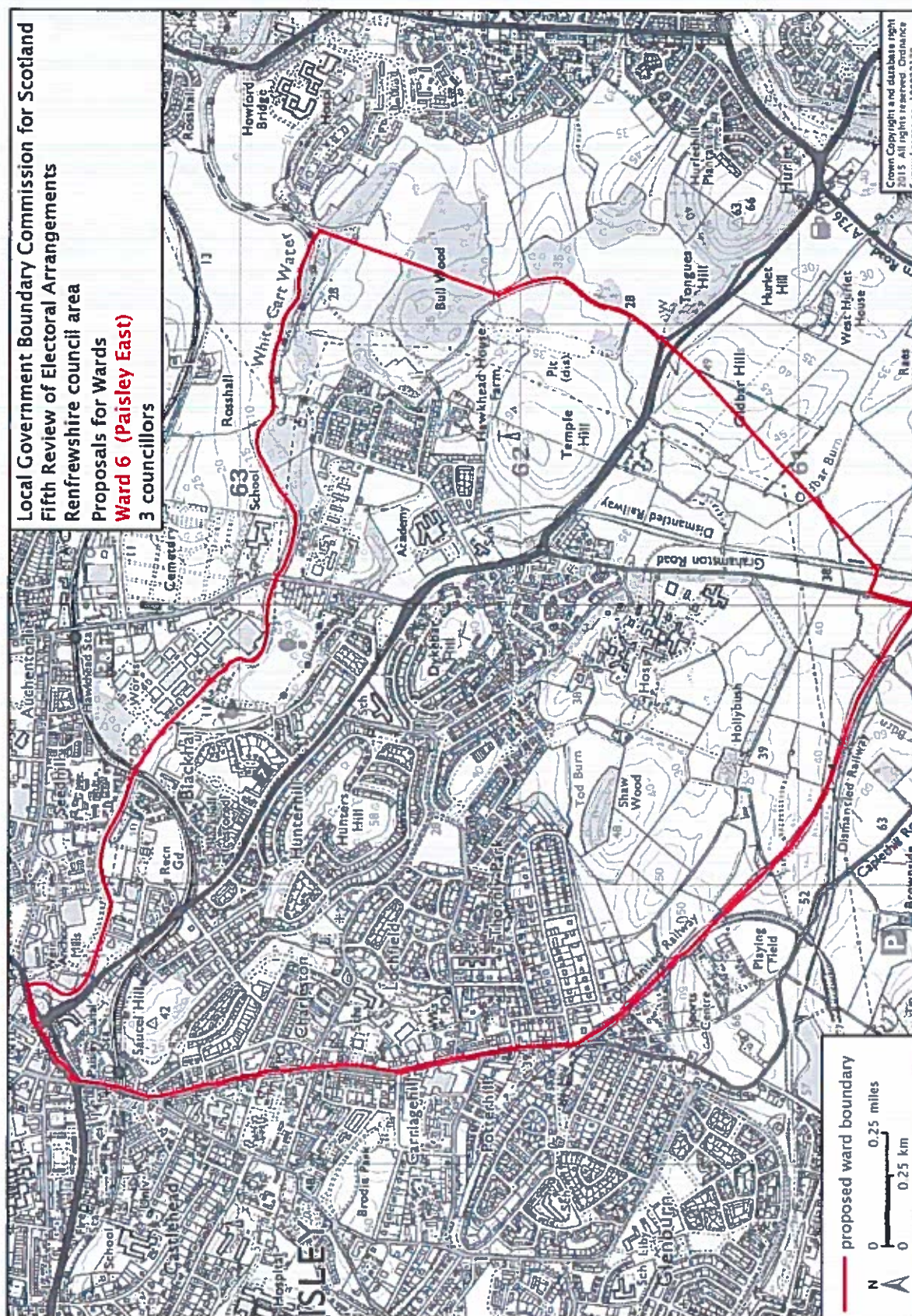


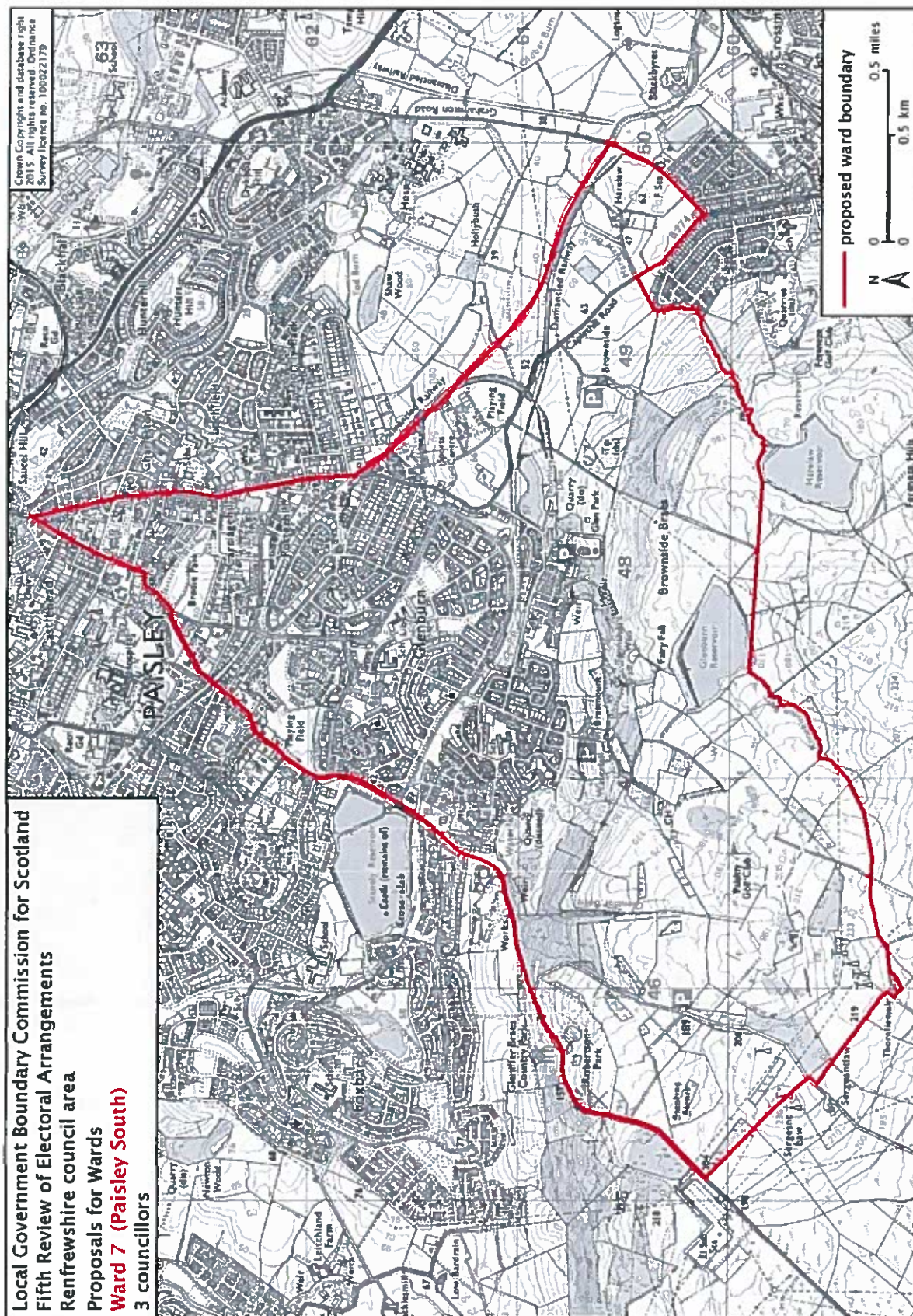












Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
Renfrewshire council area
Proposals for Wards
Ward 8 (Paisley Southwest)
3 councillors

