

**LGBCS Paper 2469****2018 Review of Electoral Arrangements  
Shetland Islands council area****Purpose**

1. The Commission is invited to agree its Initial Proposals for the 2018 Review of Electoral Arrangements in Shetland Islands council area.

**Background**

1. At its meeting of 3 December the Commission considered Paper 2462 and four ward design options for Shetland Islands council area. The four options included:
  - Option 1 – Commission’s recommendations from its 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews;
  - Option 2 – aimed to improve variation from parity with 1, 2, 3 and 4-member wards;
  - Option 3 – Shetland Locality boundaries; and
  - Option 4 – Existing electoral arrangements.
2. Options 1, 2 and 4 retained 22 Councillors. Option 3 proposed 23 Councillors.
3. During the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews of Electoral Arrangements the Commission recommended ward boundaries which addressed variation from parity in wards 3 and 5.

**Meeting with Council Officers**

4. The Secretariat met officers from Shetland Islands Council on Tuesday 22 January 2019 to discuss informal views on proposed boundaries, the extent to which they take account of local ties, possible ward names and to seek advice on handling of the public consultation later in 2019. The Secretariat will provide an oral update from their visit at the Commission meeting.

**Options**

5. This paper sets out four options for the Commission to consider. Options 1, 3 and 4 are unchanged from Paper 2462. Each of the options is considered in more detail below.

**Option 1 – Recommendations from 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews**

6. Option 1 adopts the Commission’s recommendations from its 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews.
7. The 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews addressed variation from parity in ward 3 and ward 5 and made no changes to the ward boundaries of ward 1 (North Isles) and ward 2 (Shetland North). The recommended ward boundaries from the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews broadly followed community council area boundaries to the west of Lerwick.
8. During the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews public consultation stage, 5 respondents commented on this ward design, with both some support and opposition to the proposals. The opposition focussed on breaking local ties by Lerwick (Tingwall, Gulberwick and Quarff).
9. The electorates and associated variation from parity of the proposed wards for Option 1 are shown in the table below and the boundaries are shown in Appendices A & E:

Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate	Variation from parity	Forecast Electorate	Forecast variation from parity
1	North Isles	3	2,207	-8.7	2,207	-9.4
2	Shetland North	3	2,504	3.6	2,524	3.6
3	Shetland West	3	2,681	10.9	2,724	11.8
4	Shetland Central	3	2,200	-9.0	2,230	-8.5
5	Shetland South	3	2,639	9.2	2,655	8.9
6	Lerwick North	3	2,363	-2.3	2,365	-3.0
7	Lerwick South	4	3,135	-2.7	3,168	-2.5
		<b>22</b>	<b>17,729</b>		<b>17,873</b>	

10. The advantages of Option 1 are:

- it improves variation from parity in ward 3 and ward 5 in comparison to the existing ward boundaries;
- makes no changes to ward 1 (North Isles) and ward 2 (Shetland North) minimising disruption; and
- two members of the public supported this ward design during the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews public consultation stage, in south Shetland and throughout the area.

11. The disadvantages of Option 1 are:

- There was some opposition to this ward design during the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews public consultation stage. This included:
  - a member of the public stated that Gulberwick and Lerwick have close ties and they should not be split between wards;
  - a community council stated that the proposals do not consider existing community council boundaries, break local ties between Scalloway and Tingwall, and asked the Commission to consider adopting parish boundaries instead;
  - Shetland Islands Council raised concerns stating that the proposed ward boundaries did not align with other boundaries, they may consider variation from parity but do not consider community ties, especially in Shetland West and they break local ties by Quarff and Gulberwick;
- there are few local ties in the Shetland West ward because it stretches from the east coast to the west coast. There is a mountain range within the middle of the ward, to the west of the A970 road, which acts as a natural boundary between communities in this ward; and
- forecast variation from parity is over 10% in ward 3. Ward 3 (Shetland West) contains the inhabited islands of Papa Stour and the more remote Foula. therefore special geographical circumstances could be considered within this ward.

## Option 2

12. Option 2 offers a new ward design from Paper 2462.

13. Option 2 aims to address variation from parity with 1, 2, 3 and 4-member wards by proposing a ward design with locality boundaries and existing ward boundaries, with a minor change to a ward boundary in Lerwick.

14. Option 2 follows Locality boundaries in the existing 3-member North Isles ward. It proposes a 1-member Whalsay and Skerries (Bruray) ward and a 2-member Unst, Fetlar and Yell ward.

15. Option 2 retains the existing Shetland North ward boundary which is coterminous with the Shetland North locality.
16. Option 2 proposes a Shetland West ward and a Shetland Central ward which both follow Locality boundaries. The locality boundary follows a mountain range, west of the A970 road, acting as a natural boundary between communities in the west and centre of Shetland.
17. Option 2 retains the existing Shetland South ward boundary but makes a minor change to the existing ward boundary in Lerwick to improve electoral parity by transferring approx. 120 electors between wards. The proposed boundary in Lerwick follows Union Street and Hillhead, an historic ward boundary.
18. Option 2 places Gulberwick within a Lerwick ward to retain local ties.
19. Option 2 proposes a total of 23 Councillors, one more than the Commissions methodology proposes. Option 2 adds a councillor to the proposed Lerwick South ward which improves electoral parity in Lerwick and overall in the council area. If Option 2 retained 22 councillors, variation from parity would be over 20% in both Lerwick wards and over 10% in three other wards.
20. The electorates and associated variation from parity of the proposed wards for Option 2 are shown in the table below and the boundaries are shown in Appendices B & F:

Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate	Variation from parity %	Forecast Electorate	Forecast Variation from parity %
1	North Isles	2	1,345	-12.8	1,345	-13.5
2	Whalsay and Skerries	1	862	11.8	862	10.9
3	Shetland North	3	2,504	8.3	2,524	8.3
4	Shetland West	2	1,373	-10.9	1,373	-11.7
5	Shetland Central	4	3,030	-1.7	3,077	-1.0
6	Lerwick North	3	2,456	6.2	2,458	5.4
7	Lerwick South	4	3,323	7.8	3,382	8.8
8	Shetland South	4	2,836	-8.0	2,852	-8.2
		<b>23</b>	<b>17,729</b>		<b>17,873</b>	

21. The advantages of Option 2 are it:
- considers local ties in the whole council area;
  - adopts recognised boundaries, Localities and existing wards;
  - addresses concerns raised from the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews (Option 1) where local ties were broken to the north, west and south of Lerwick;
  - retains the existing Shetland North ward and Shetland South ward minimising disruption;
  - minimises change to the existing ward boundary in Lerwick; and
  - addresses variation from parity in Shetland South and Shetland West.
22. The disadvantages of Option 2 are:
- forecast variation from parity is over 10% in two wards. Ward 1 (North Isles) contains solely inhabited islands in the far north of the council area. Ward 4 (Shetland West) contains the inhabited islands of Papa Stour and the more

remote Foula. Special geographical circumstances could be considered in both of these wards. Historically the Commission has recommended wards in Shetland with a wide variation from parity; and

- it proposes 23 Councillors, one more than the Commission's methodology.

### Option 3 – Shetland Localities

23. Option 3 adopts a ward design based on Shetland Localities. Localities are used by both Shetland Islands Council and NHS Shetland for community planning, health and social care. Shetland Council asked the Commission to consider a ward design based on localities when they met in June 2018.

24. There are seven localities in Shetland: North Isles; Whalsay & Skerries; North Mainland; Central Mainland; West Mainland; South Mainland; and Lerwick and Bressay. They mainly follow similar boundaries to community councils and parishes and will therefore have some historical or local community ties. Only the Shetland North locality boundary and current Shetland North ward boundary are coterminous.

25. The Central Mainland locality boundary, to the west of Lerwick, mainly follows a similar boundary to an historic ward and community council area boundary.

26. The Shetland South locality boundary follows a community council area boundary.

27. The Lerwick and Bressay locality contains approximately 5,300 electors, therefore this locality has been divided into two wards. The proposed boundary splits Lerwick by following the existing ward boundary.

28. Option 3 recommends 23 councillors, one more than the methodology proposes. An additional councillor has been added to a Lerwick South ward. The additional councillor improves variation from parity in this area as well as two other wards. Option 3 could retain 22 councillors, if the Lerwick and Bressay locality contained two 3-member Lerwick wards, variation from parity would be approx. +11% for the two Lerwick wards, -16% in a North Isles ward and -15% in a Shetland West ward.

29. The table below shows how localities fit with existing ward boundaries.

Locality	Existing Ward
North Isles (Unst, Fetlar and Yell)	North Isles – part ward
Whalsay and Skerries	North Isles – part ward
Shetland North	coterminous with Shetland North ward
Shetland West	-660 electors from West mainland ward
Shetland Central	+660 electors from Shetland Central ward
Lerwick North and Bressay	Lerwick North & Lerwick South wards (-450 from Gulberwick)
Shetland South	+450 electors from Shetland South ward (Gulberwick)

30. The electorates and associated variation from parity of the proposed wards for Option 3 are shown in the table below and the boundaries are shown in Appendices C & G:

Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate	Variation from parity	Forecast Electorate	Forecast Variation from parity
1	North Isles	2	1,345	-12.76%	1,345	-13.46%
2	Whalsay & Skerries	1	862	11.83%	862	10.93%
3	Shetland North	3	2,504	8.28%	2,524	8.27%
4	Shetland West	2	1,373	-10.94%	1,373	-11.66%
5	Shetland Central	4	3,030	-1.7%	3,077	-1.0%
6	Lerwick North and Bressay	3	2,335	0.97%	2,335	0.16%
7	Lerwick South	4	3,008	-2.44%	3,041	-2.17%
8	Shetland South	4	3,272	6.1%	3,316	6.7%
		<b>23</b>	<b>17,729</b>		<b>17,873</b>	

31. The advantages of Option 3 are:

- it adopts boundaries recognisable to the Council, Health Board and general public; and
- addresses variation from parity in wards 3 and 5.

32. The disadvantages of Option 3 are:

- forecast variation from parity is over 10% in two wards. Ward 1 (North Isles) contain solely inhabited islands in the far north of the council area. Ward 4 (Shetland West) contains the inhabited islands of Papa Stour and the more remote Foula. Special geographical circumstances could be considered in these wards. Historically the Commission has recommended wards in Shetland with a wide variation from parity; and
- Gulberwick, just south of Lerwick, is not placed within a Lerwick ward and the proposed boundary may break local ties between these areas; and
- It proposes 23 Councillors, one more than the Commission's methodology.

#### Option 4 – Existing Wards

33. Option 4 retains the existing electoral arrangements. It makes no changes to the existing ward boundaries or number of councillors.

34. The electorates and associated variation from parity for Option 4 are shown in the table below and the boundaries are shown in Appendices D & H:

Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate	Variation from parity	Forecast Electorate	Forecast Variation from parity
1	North Isles	3	2,207	-9%	2,207	-9%
2	Shetland North	3	2,504	4%	2,523	4%
3	Shetland West	3	2,038	-16%	2,051	-16%
4	Shetland Central	3	2,365	-2%	2,400	-2%
5	Shetland South	3	2,836	17%	2,852	17%
6	Lerwick North	3	2,334	-3%	2,336	-4%
7	Lerwick South	4	3,445	7%	3,504	8%
		<b>22</b>	<b>17,729</b>		<b>17,873</b>	

35. The advantages of Option 4 are:

- it maintains the existing electoral arrangements and may avoid confusion by retaining identifiable ward boundaries; and
- minimises disruption.

36. The disadvantages of Option 4 are:

- forecast variation from parity in two wards is over 10%. Ward 3 (Shetland West) is a Shetland mainland ward which includes the inhabited islands of Papa Stour and Foula. Ward 5 Shetland South is also a Shetland mainland ward and it includes the inhabited island of Fair Isle. Special geographical circumstances could be considered in both of these wards.

### **Conclusions**

37. Only options 2 and 3 consider the use of 1, 2, 3 and 4-member wards as enabled by the legislation.

38. Options 2, 3 and 4 contain two wards with variation from parity over 10%. Option 1 has only one ward with variation from parity over 10%.

39. All four options propose at least one ward with variation from parity over 10%, although the Commission can consider special geographical circumstances due to the remoteness of Shetland and its island communities with poor transport links, dependent on weather conditions.

40. The Commission can consider flexibility with variation from electoral parity. The Commission's Fourth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements recommended a Shetland West ward with variation from parity of -16%. The Third Reviews of Electoral Arrangements recommended a Whalsay/ Skerries ward with variation from parity of nearly 20%.

41. Options 1, 2 and 3 offer improved electoral parity than Option 4.

42. During the 5<sup>th</sup> Reviews consultation (Option 1), concerns were raised from local communities that local ties were broken by Lerwick.

43. Options 2, 3 and 4 may better reflect local ties in the council area as they follow recognisable boundaries (existing ward and locality boundaries).

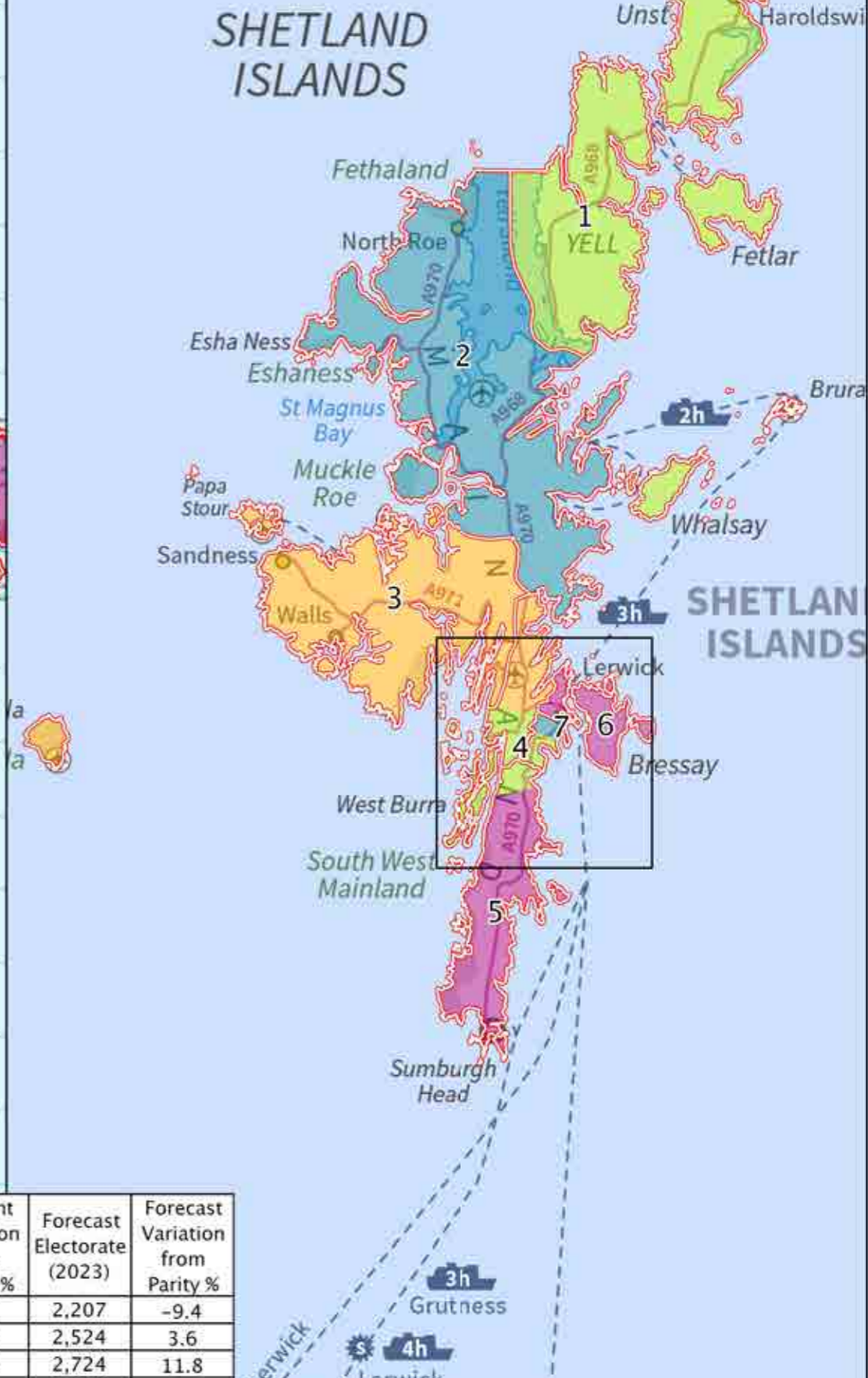
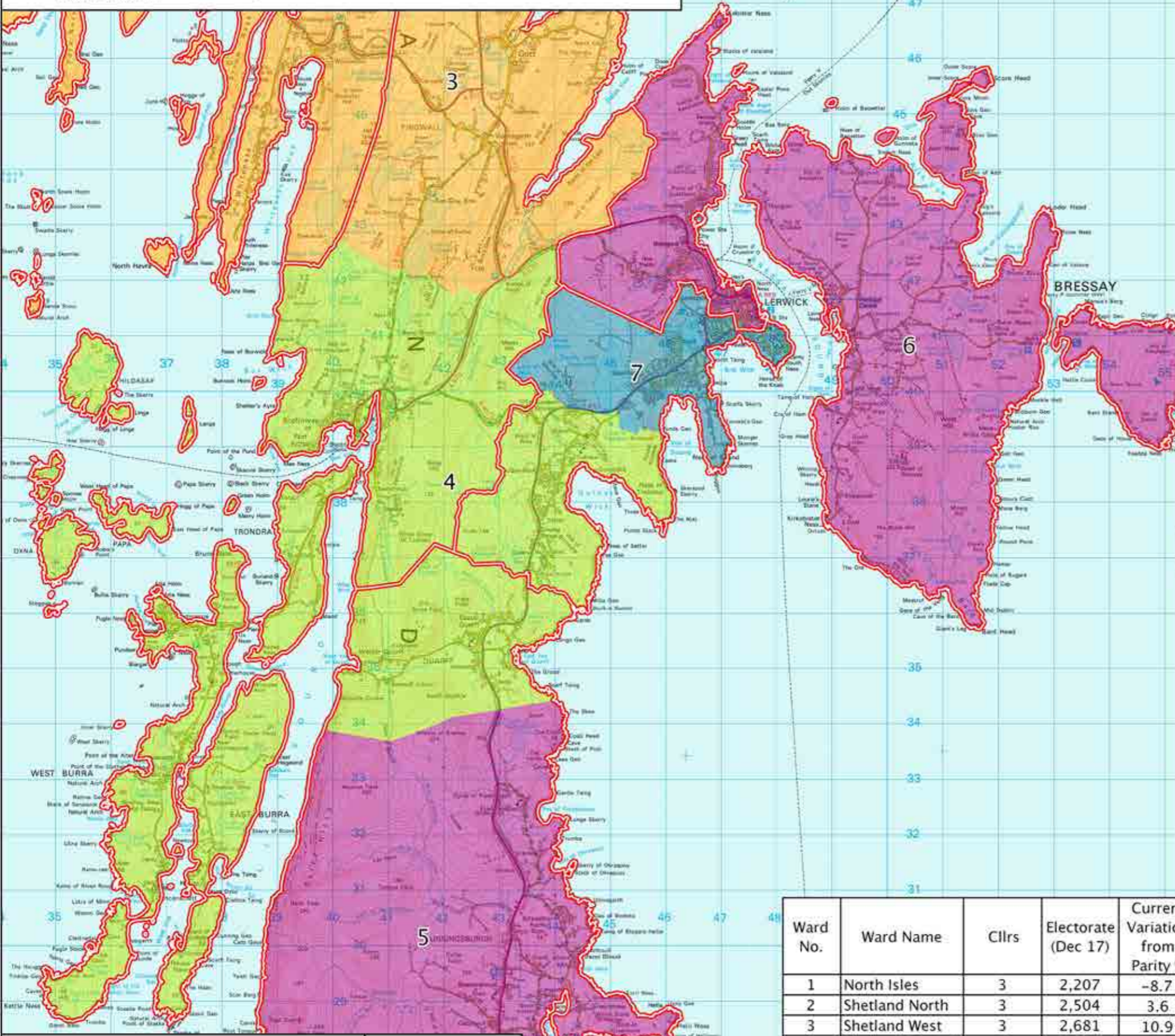
44. Options 2 and 3 both propose a total of 23 Councillors, one more than the Commission's methodology proposes. The additional councillor addresses variation from parity, while also considering local ties.

45. Option 3 may break local ties between Gulberwick and Lerwick.

### **Recommendations**

46. The Commission is invited to agree its Initial Proposals for the 2018 Review of Electoral Arrangements in Shetland Islands council area.

**Secretariat**  
**January 2019**

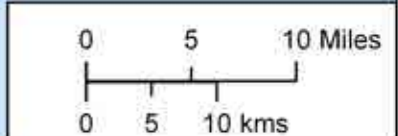


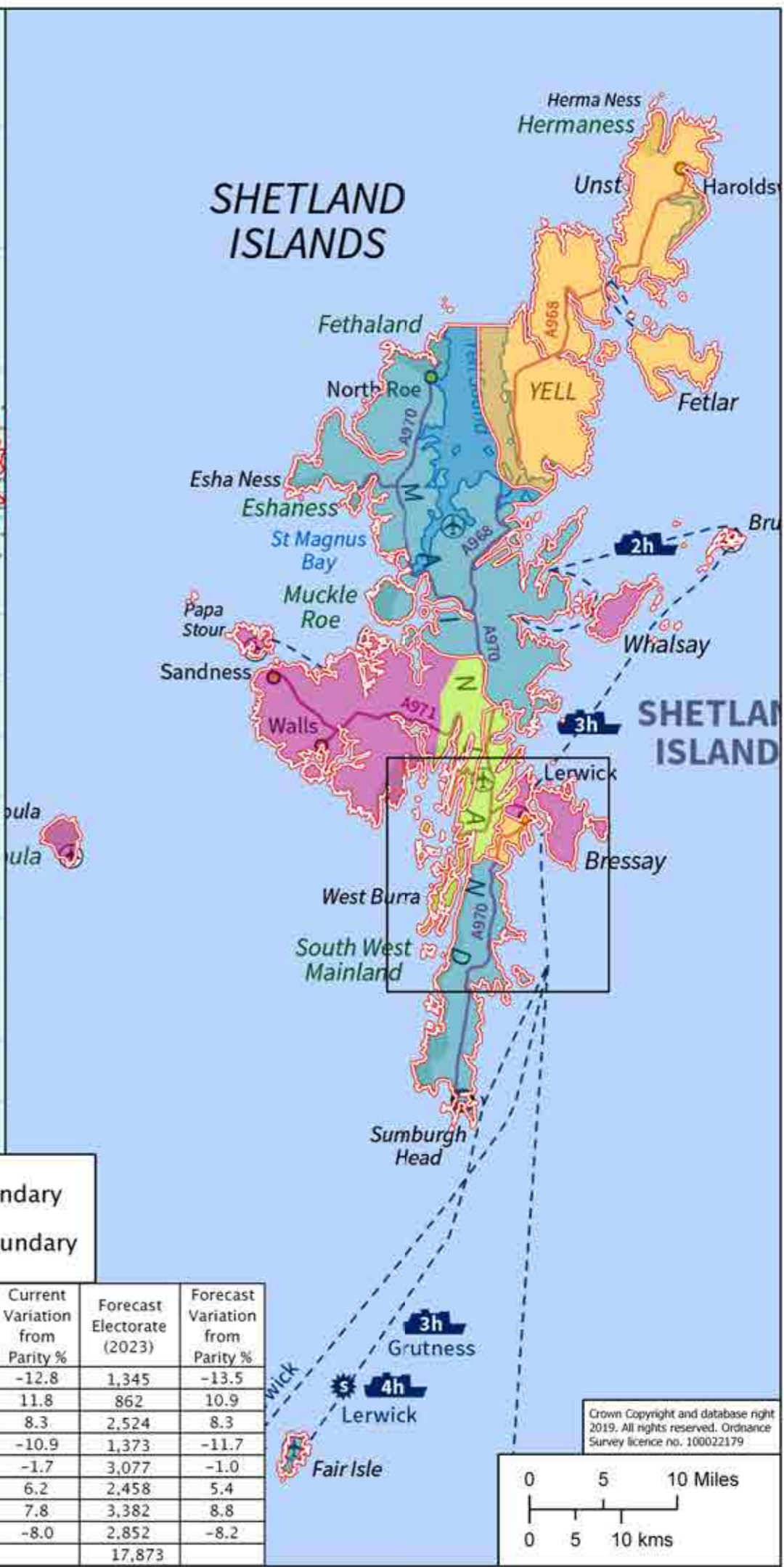
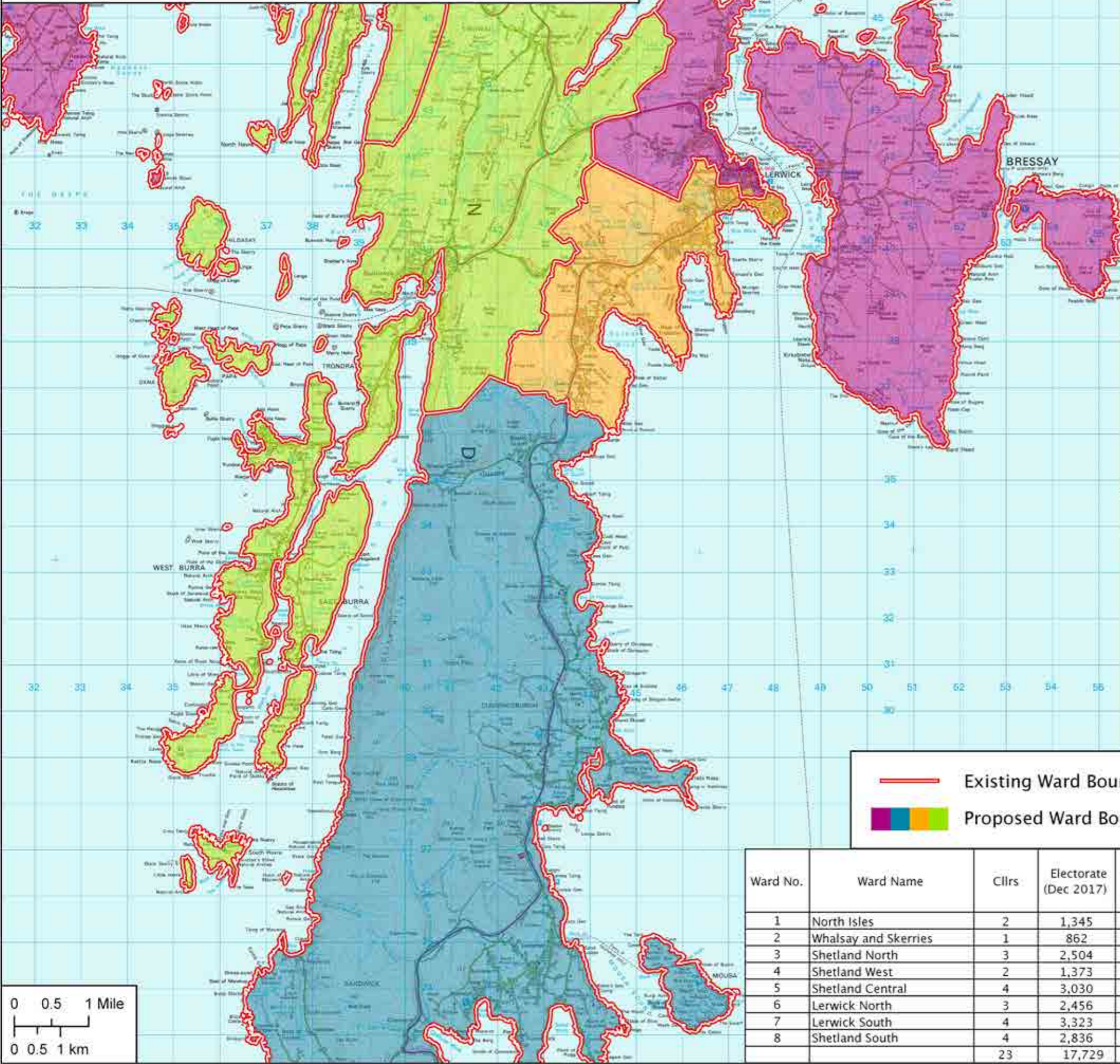
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7	Lerwick South	4	3,135	-2.7	3,168	-2.5
		22	17,729		17,873	

Existing Ward Boundary  
 Proposed Ward Boundary

0 0.5 1 Mile  
 0 0.5 1 km

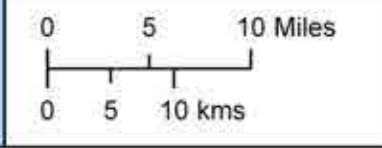
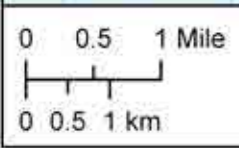
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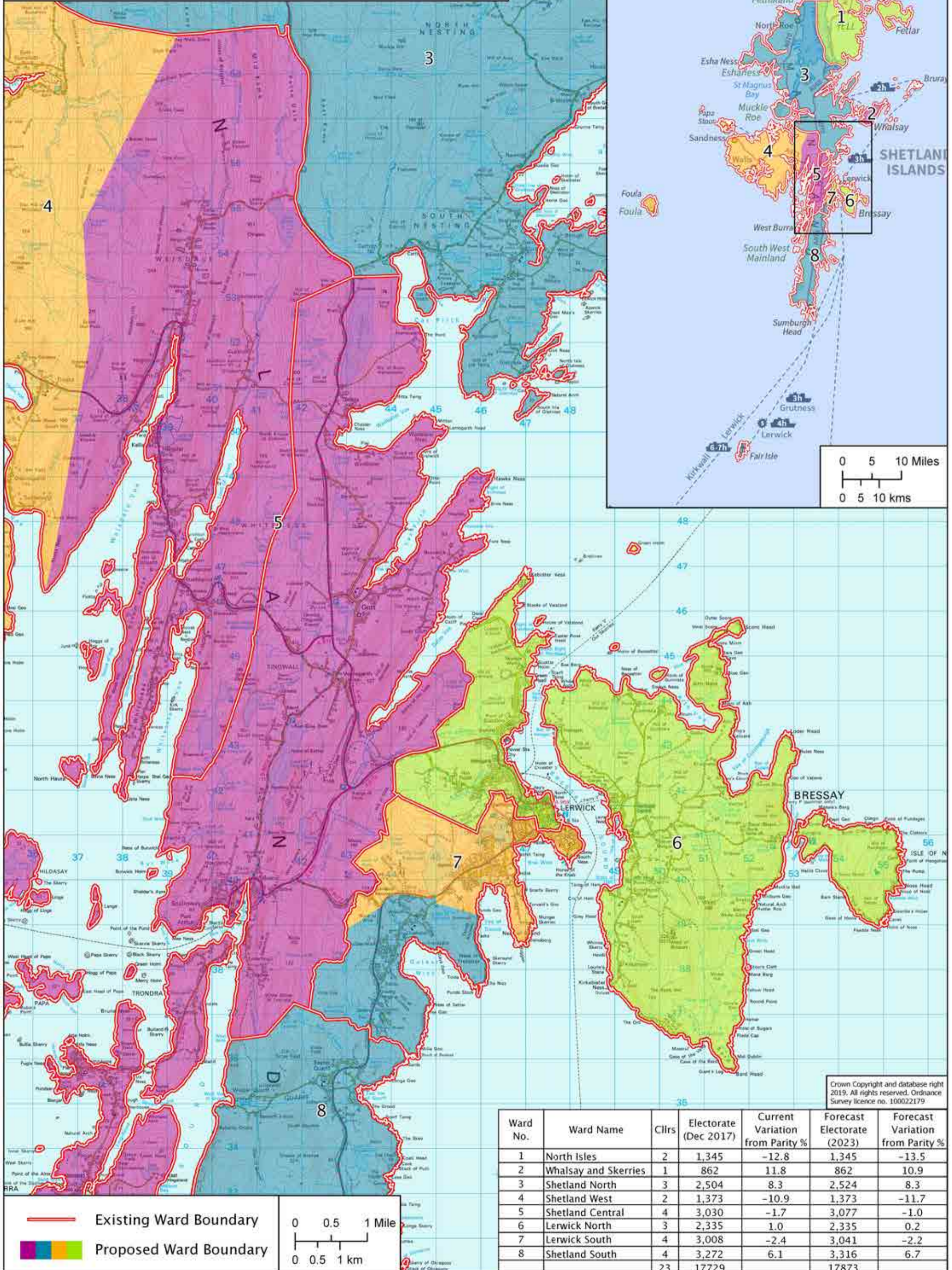


— Existing Ward Boundary  
 Proposed Ward Boundary

Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate (Dec 2017)	Current Variation from Parity %	Forecast Electorate (2023)	Forecast Variation from Parity %
1	North Isles	2	1,345	-12.8	1,345	-13.5
2	Whalsay and Skerries	1	862	11.8	862	10.9
3	Shetland North	3	2,504	8.3	2,524	8.3
4	Shetland West	2	1,373	-10.9	1,373	-11.7
5	Shetland Central	4	3,030	-1.7	3,077	-1.0
6	Lerwick North	3	2,456	6.2	2,458	5.4
7	Lerwick South	4	3,323	7.8	3,382	8.8
8	Shetland South	4	2,836	-8.0	2,852	-8.2
		23	17,729		17,873	

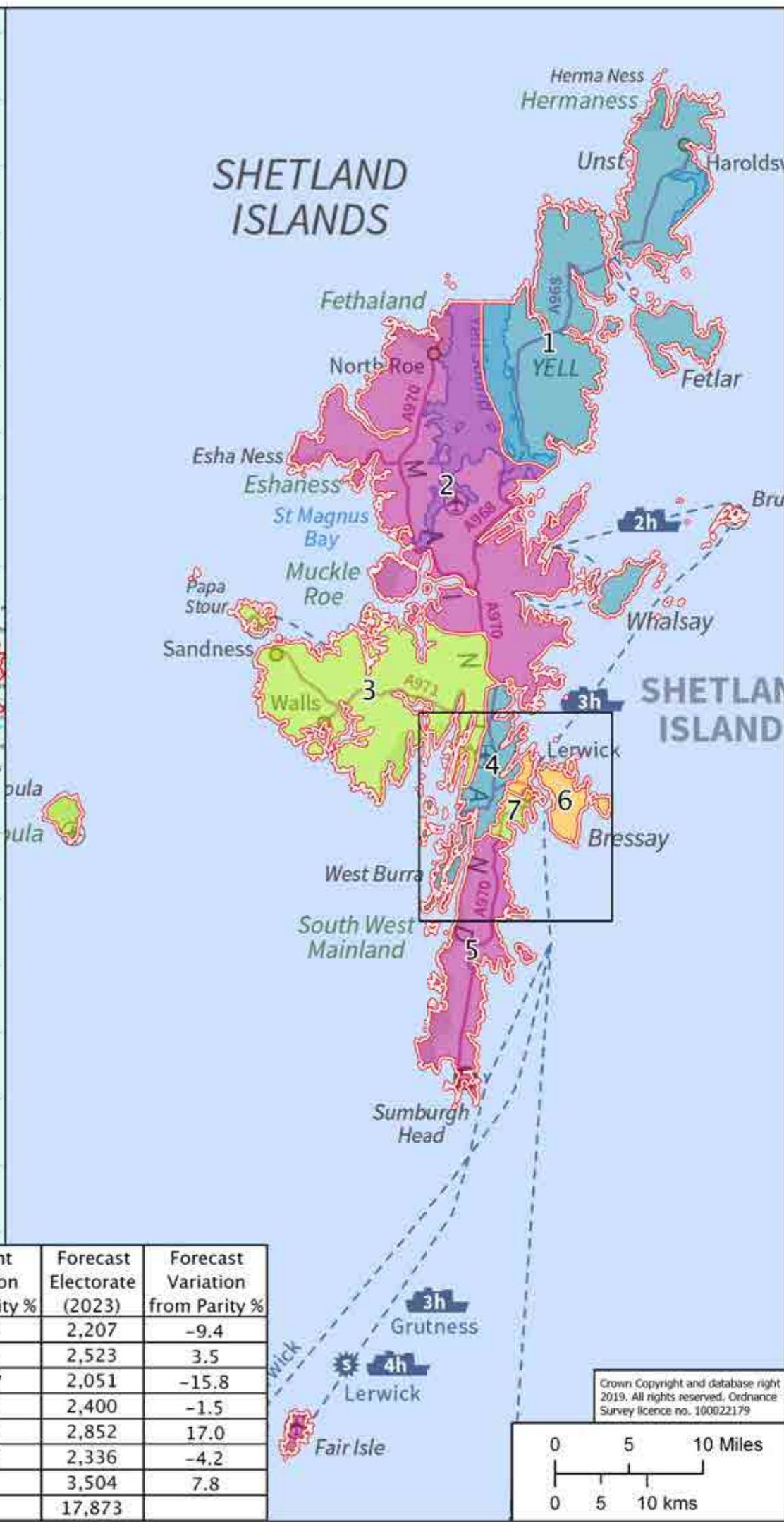
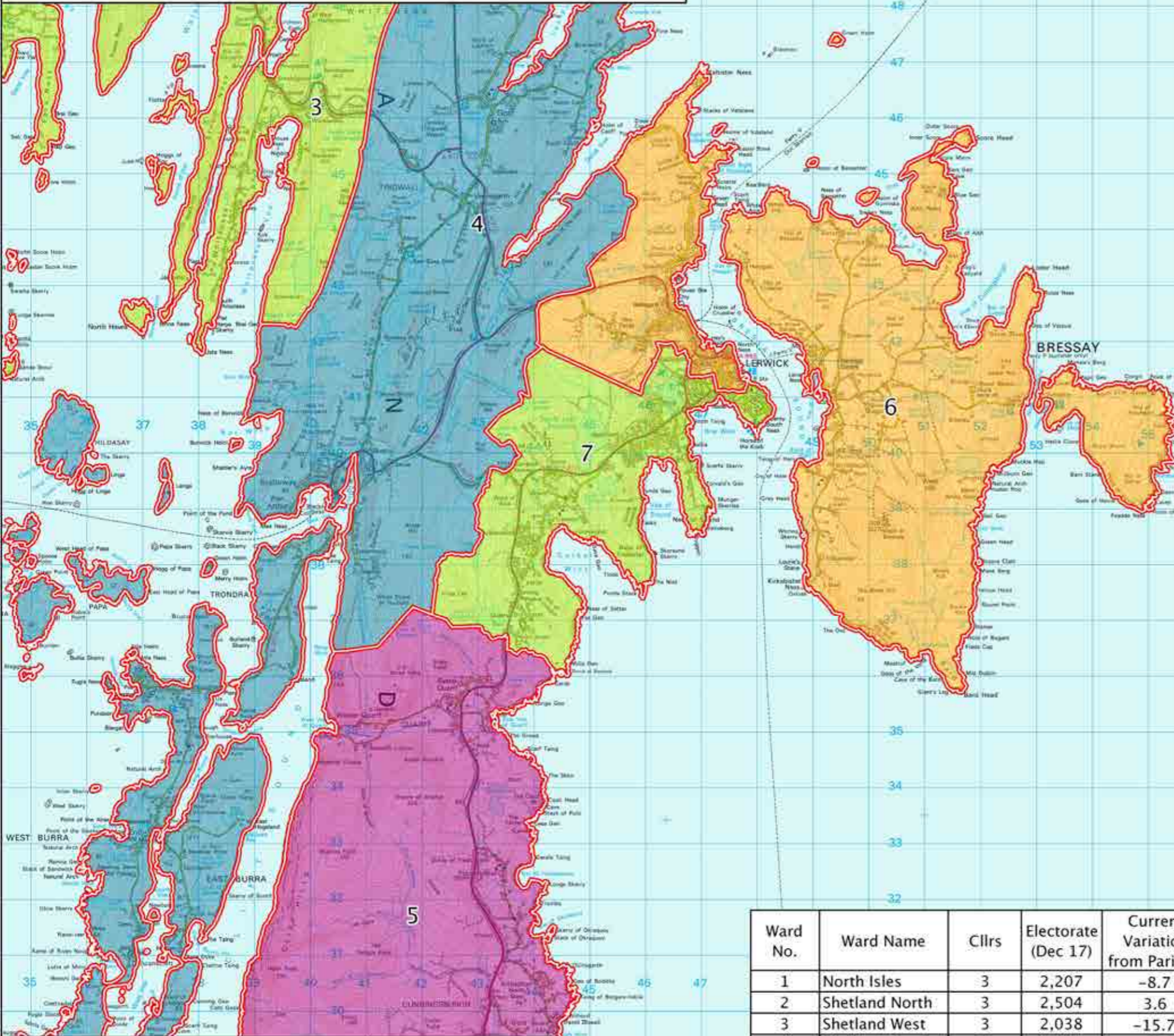


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Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate (Dec 2017)	Current Variation from Parity %	Forecast Electorate (2023)	Forecast Variation from Parity %
1	North Isles	2	1,345	-12.8	1,345	-13.5
2	Whalsay and Skerries	1	862	11.8	862	10.9
3	Shetland North	3	2,504	8.3	2,524	8.3
4	Shetland West	2	1,373	-10.9	1,373	-11.7
5	Shetland Central	4	3,030	-1.7	3,077	-1.0
6	Lerwick North	3	2,335	1.0	2,335	0.2
7	Lerwick South	4	3,008	-2.4	3,041	-2.2
8	Shetland South	4	3,272	6.1	3,316	6.7
		23	17729		17873	



Ward No.	Ward Name	Cllrs	Electorate (Dec 17)	Current Variation from Parity %	Forecast Electorate (2023)	Forecast Variation from Parity %
1	North Isles	3	2,207	-8.7	2,207	-9.4
2	Shetland North	3	2,504	3.6	2,523	3.5
3	Shetland West	3	2,038	-15.7	2,051	-15.8
4	Shetland Central	3	2,365	-2.2	2,400	-1.5
5	Shetland South	3	2,836	17.3	2,852	17.0
6	Lerwick North	3	2,334	-3.5	2,336	-4.2
7	Lerwick South	4	3,445	6.9	3,504	7.8
		22	17,729		17,873	

Existing Ward Boundary  
 Proposed Ward Boundary

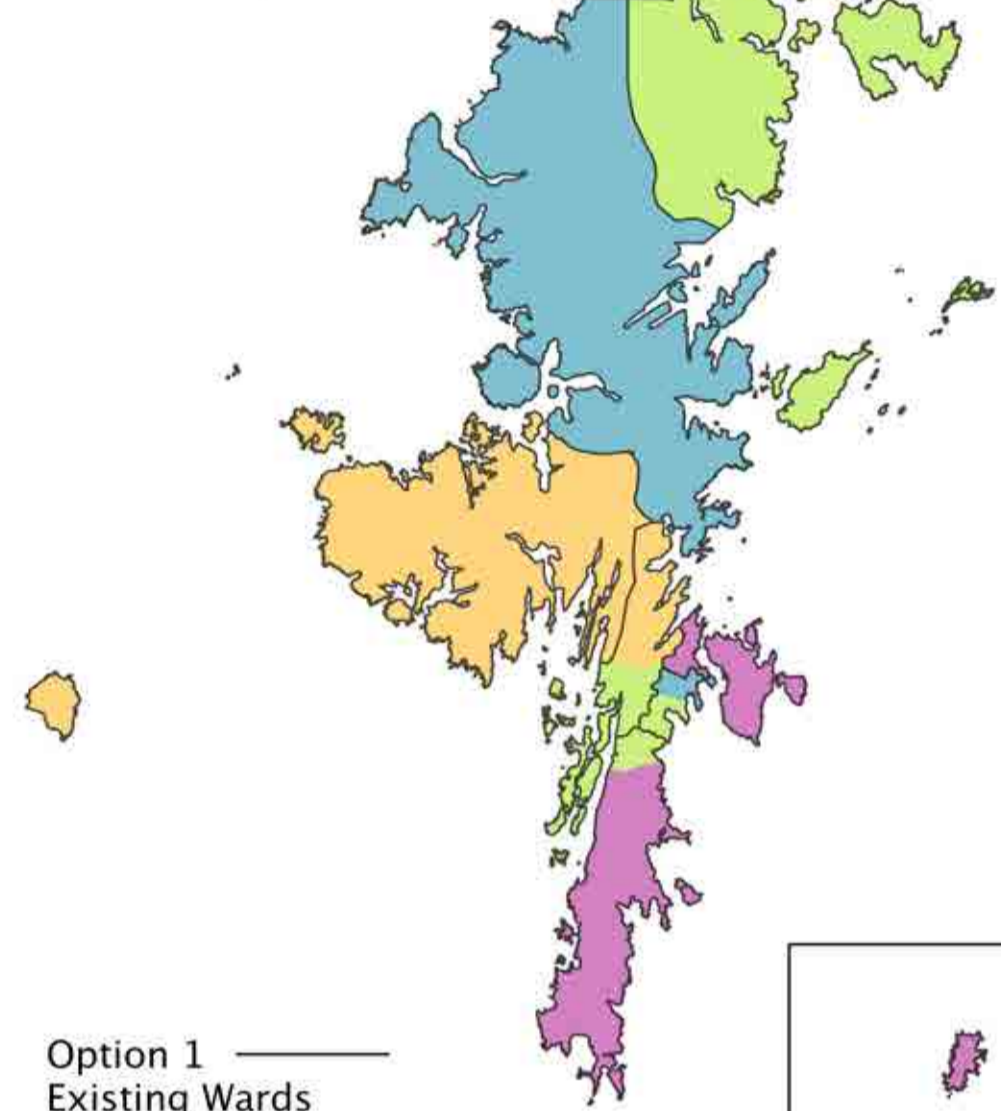
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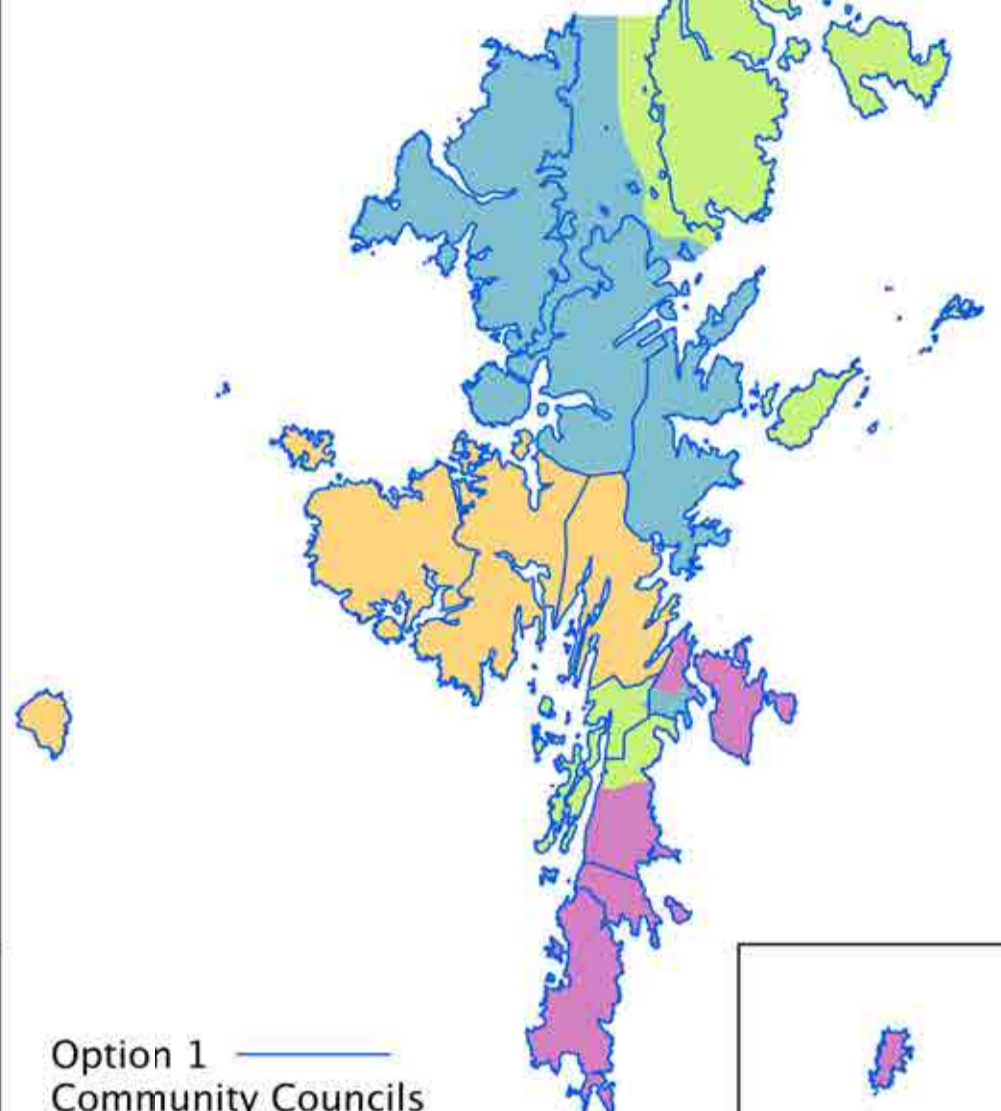
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LGBCS Paper 2469 Appendix E  
2018 Review of Electoral Arrangements  
Shetland Islands council area  
Option 1 – 5th Reviews

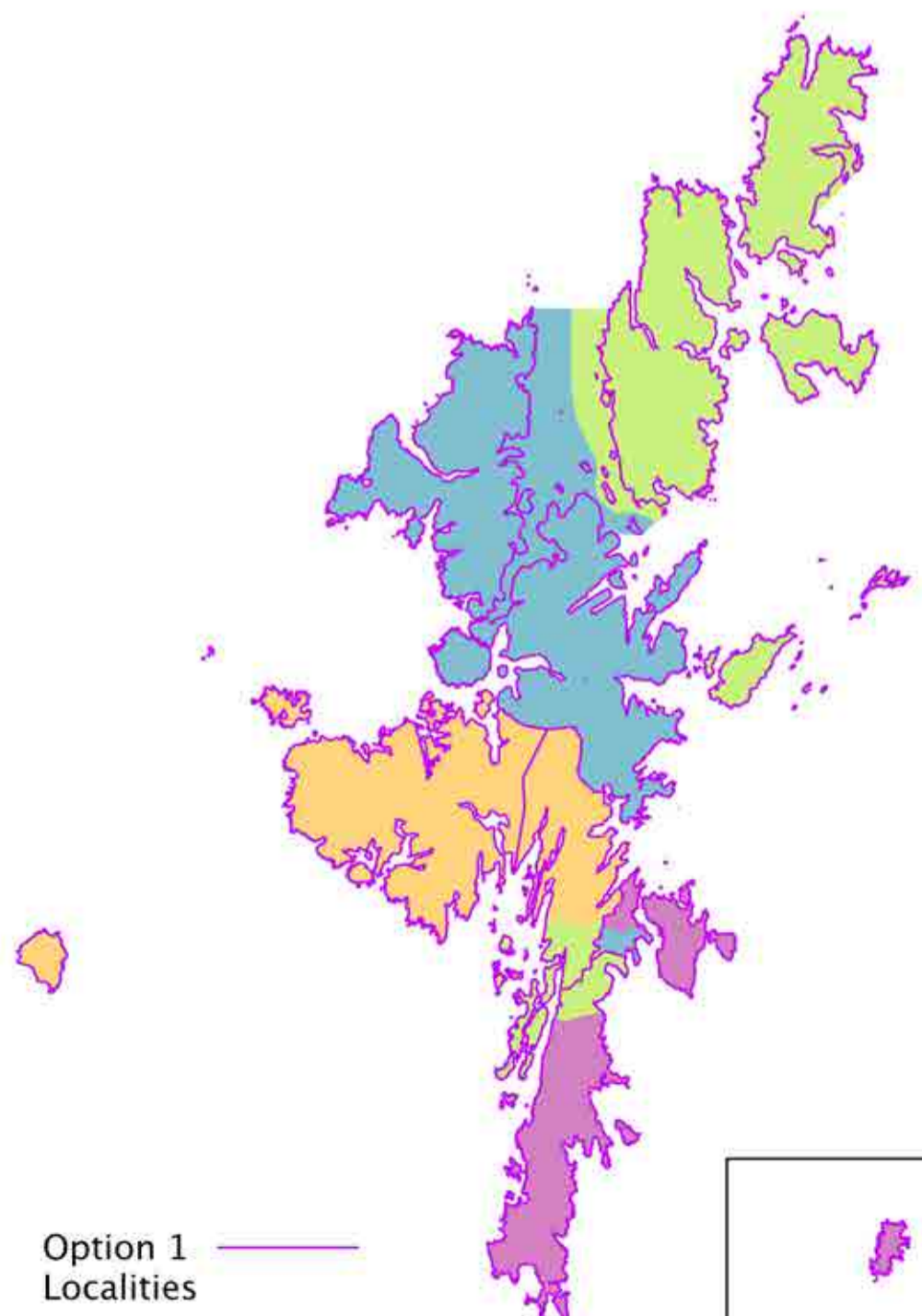
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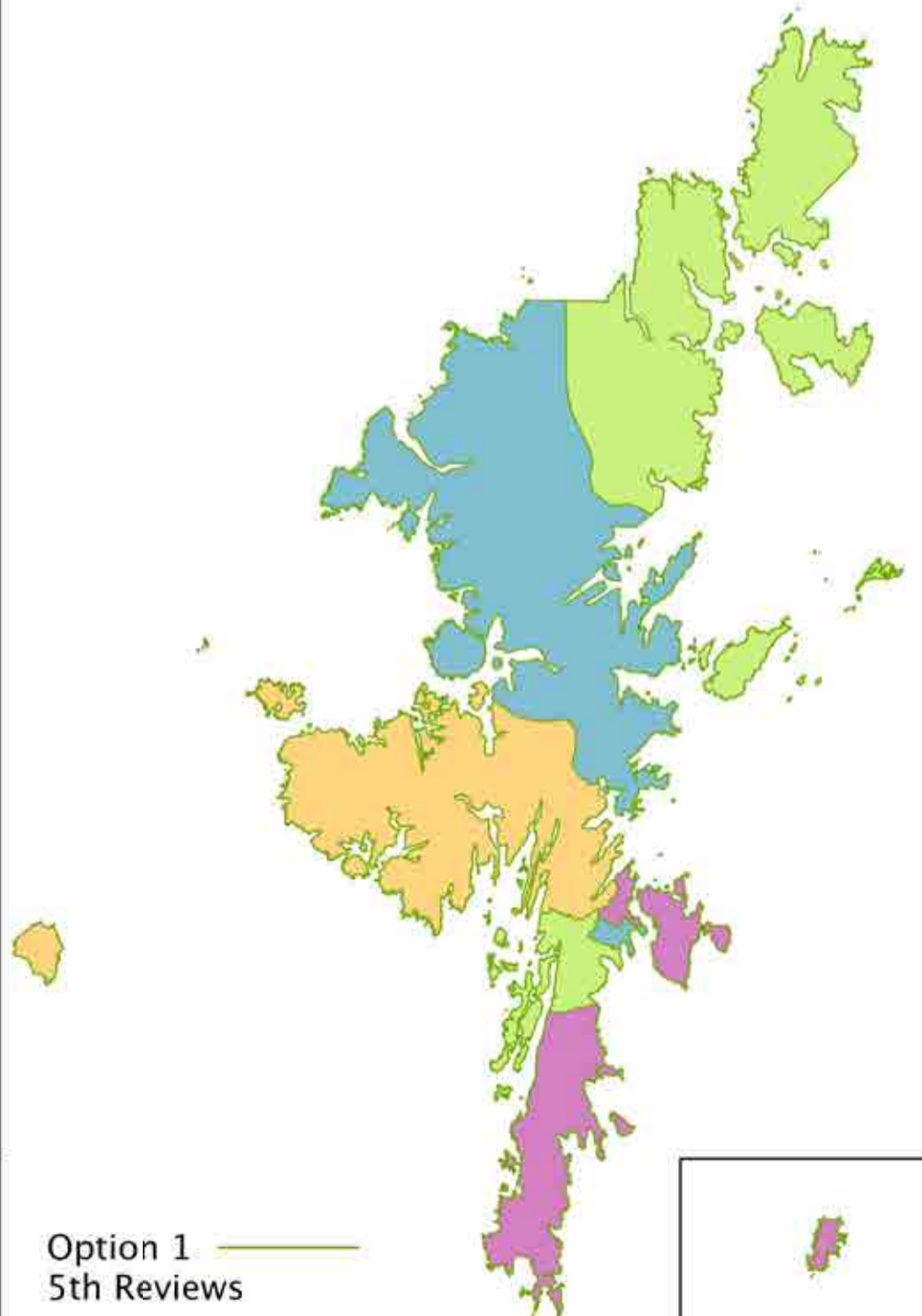
Option 1 — Existing Wards



Option 1 — Community Councils



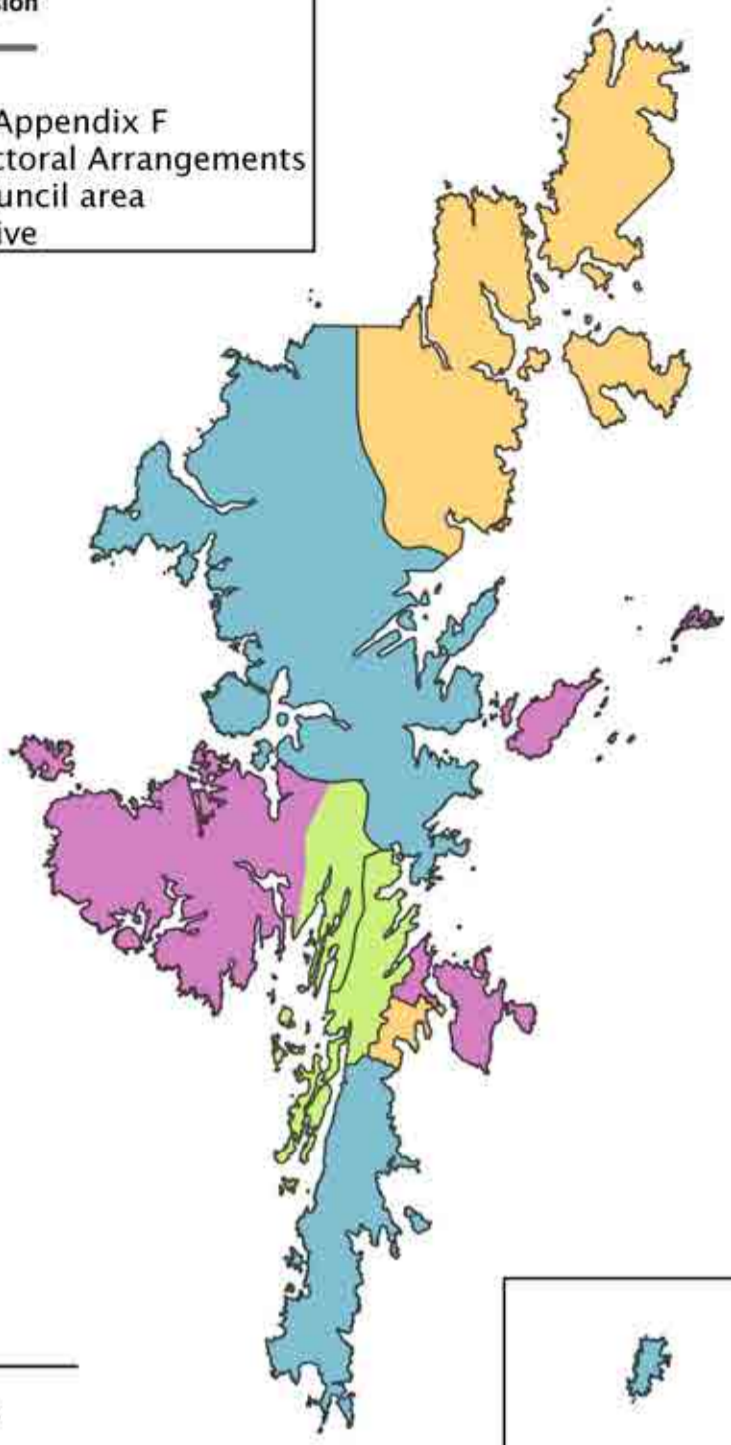
Option 1 — Localities



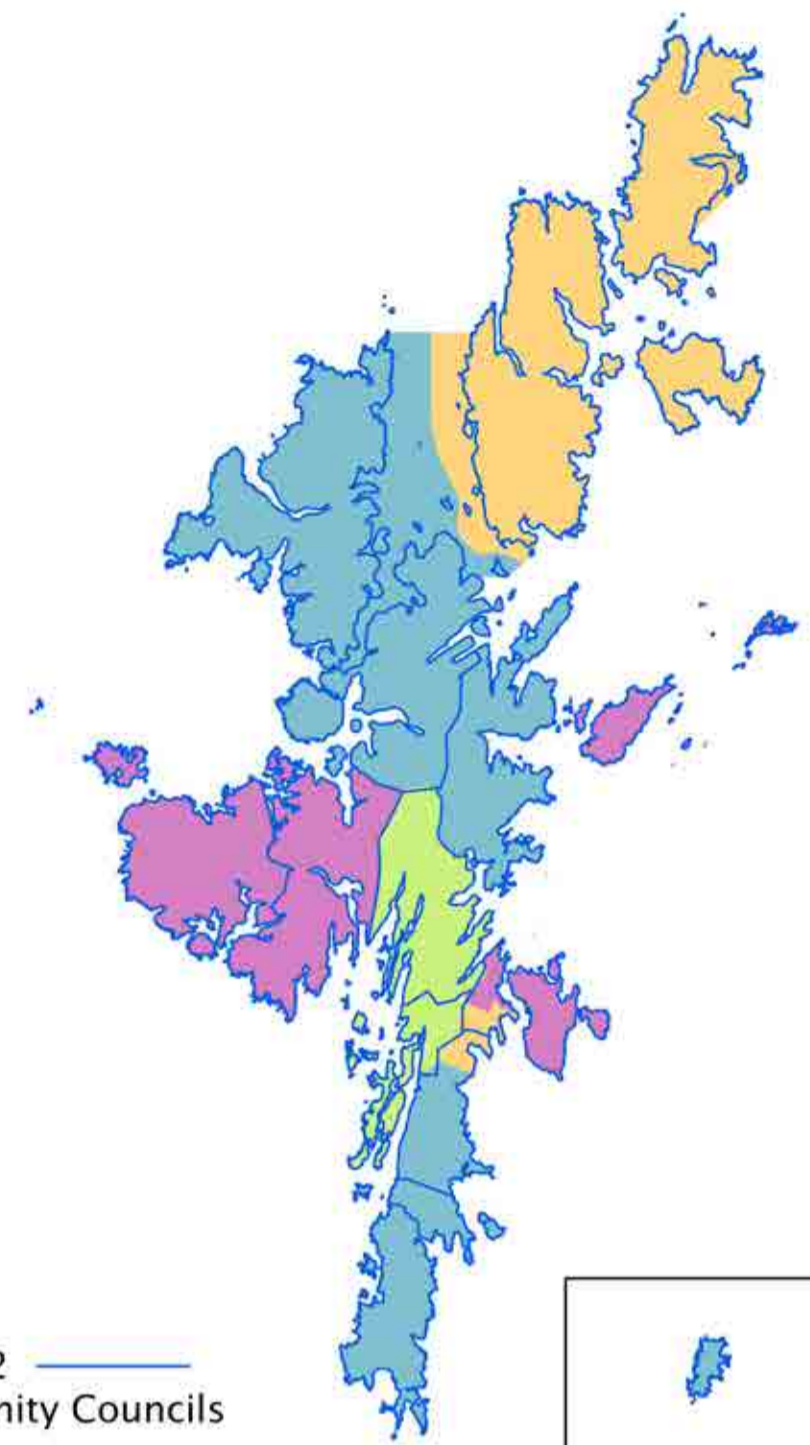
Option 1 — 5th Reviews

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2018 Review of Electoral Arrangements  
Shetland Islands council area  
**Option 2 – Alternative**

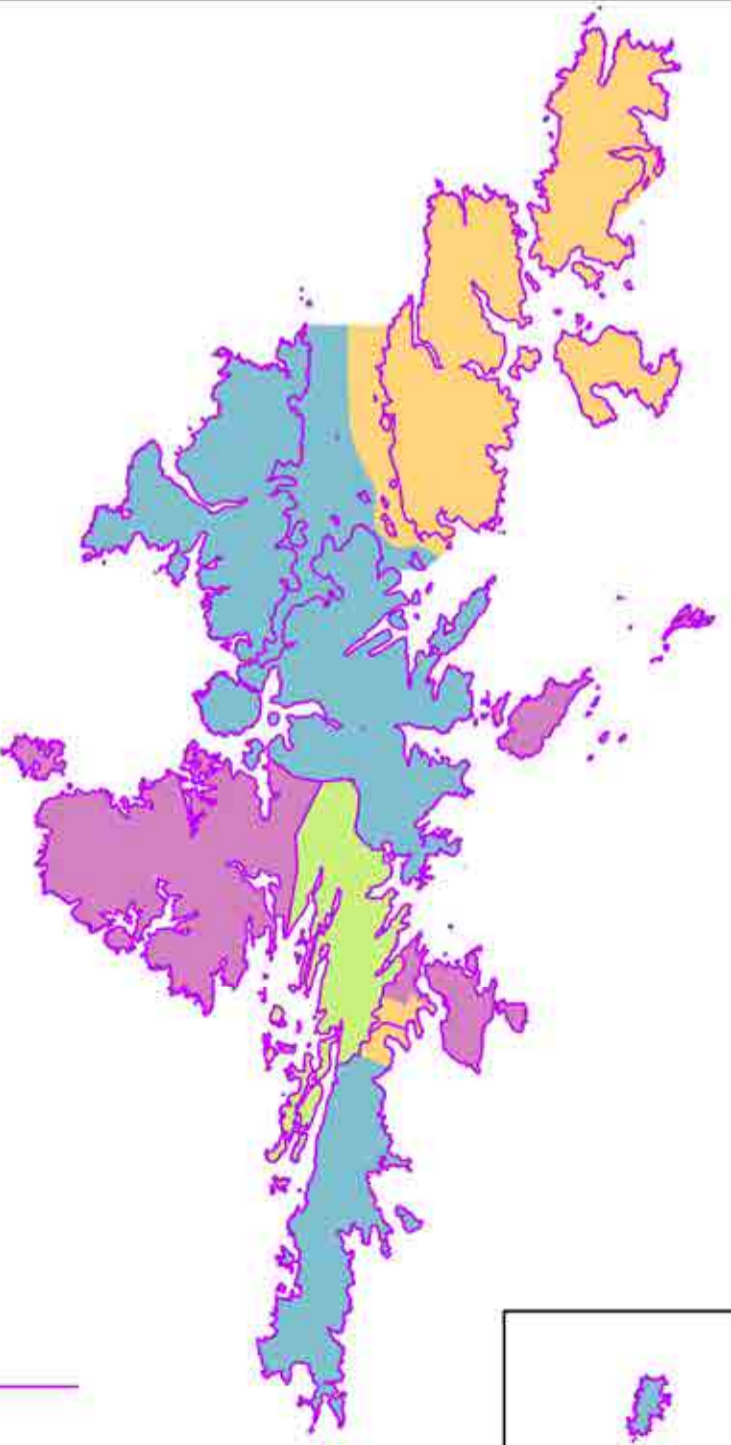
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Option 2 — Existing Wards



Option 2 — Community Councils



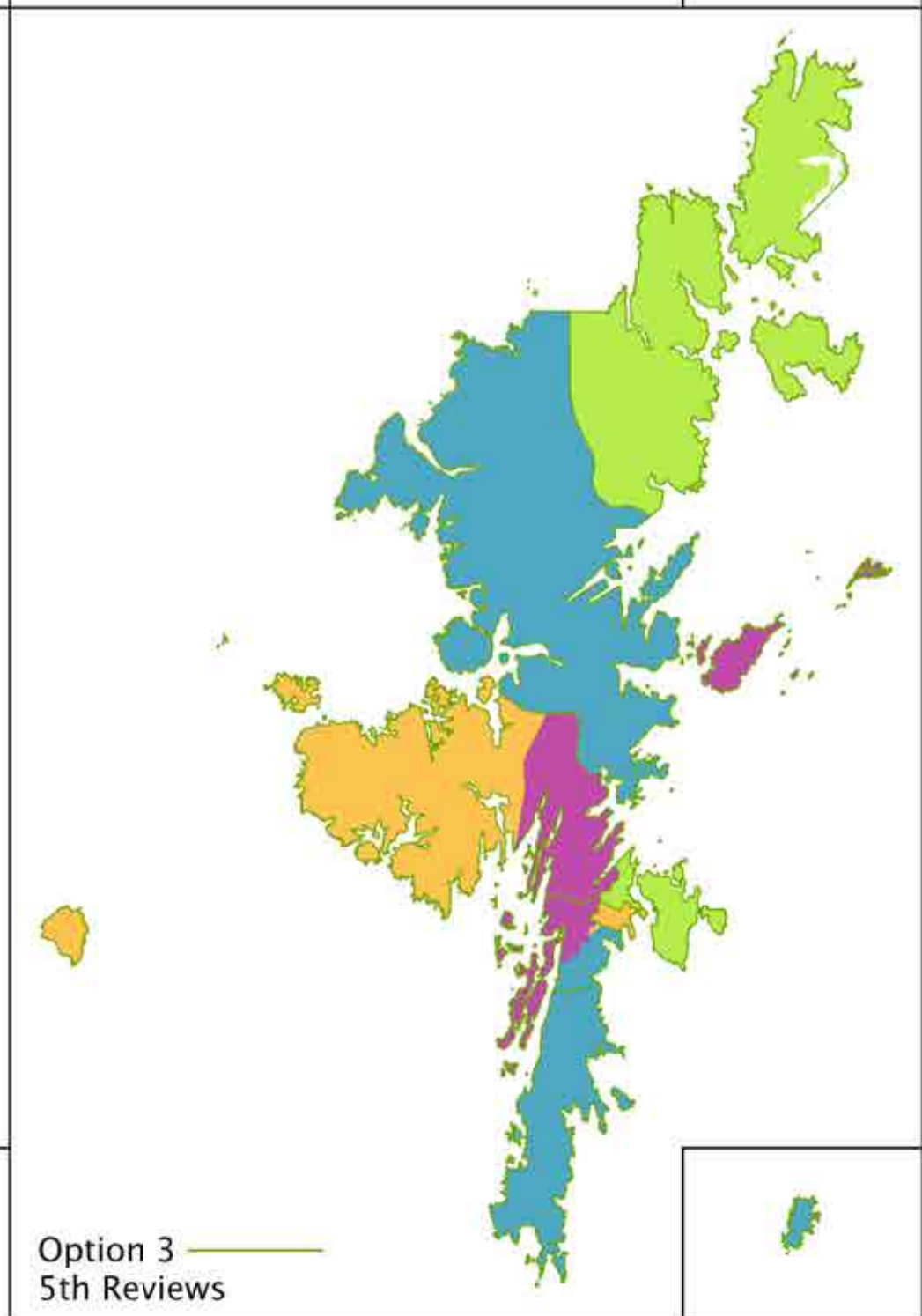
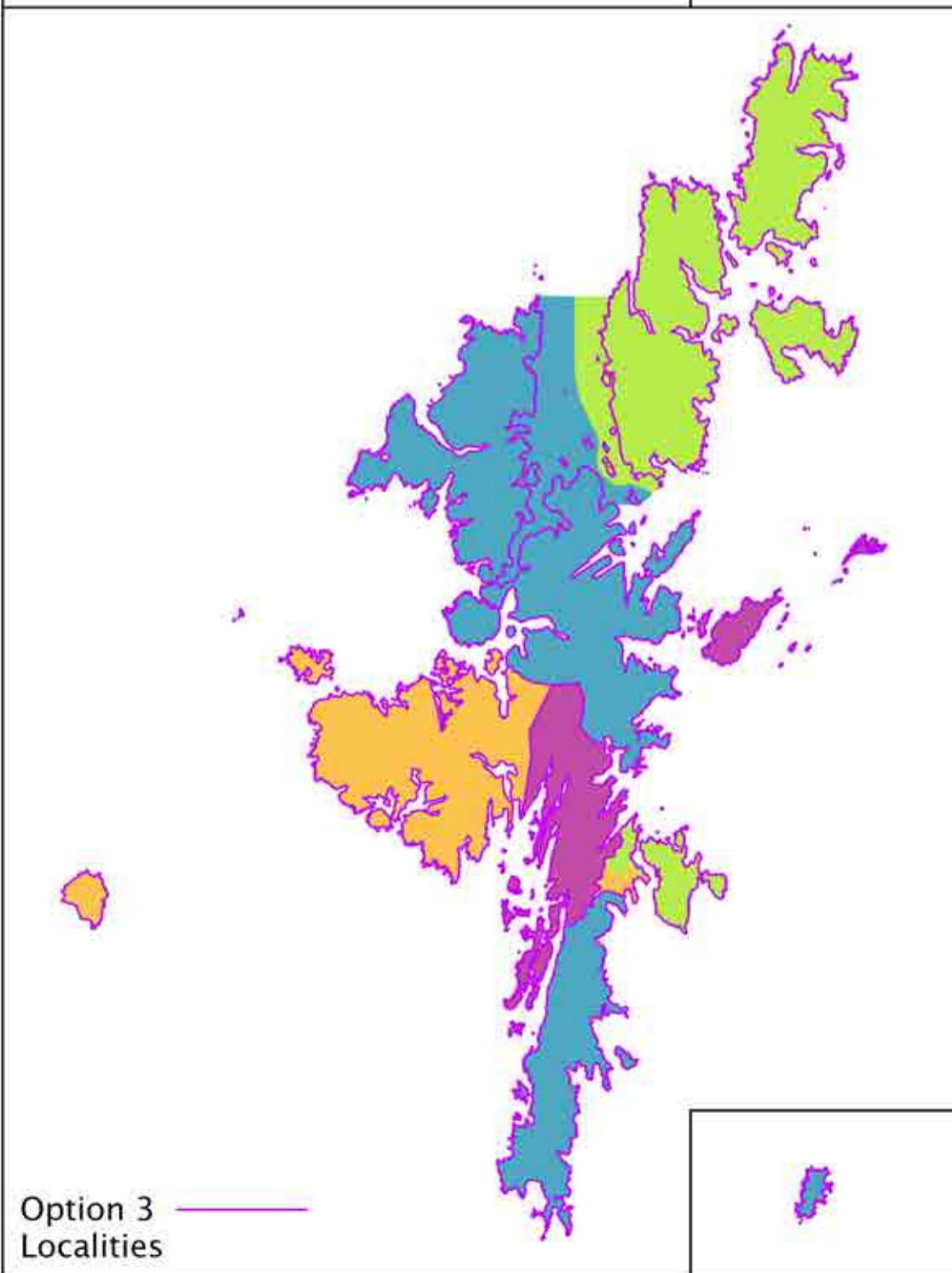
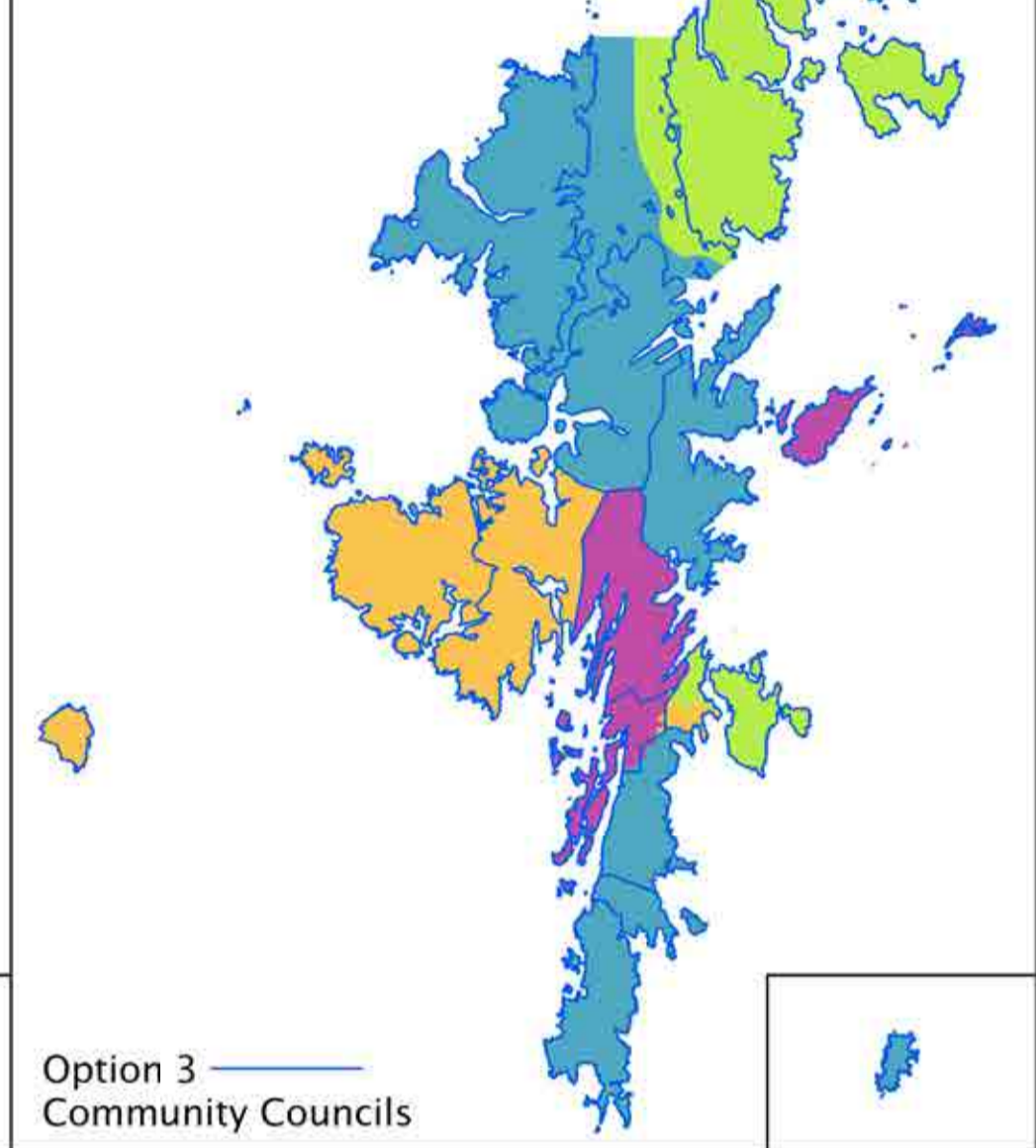
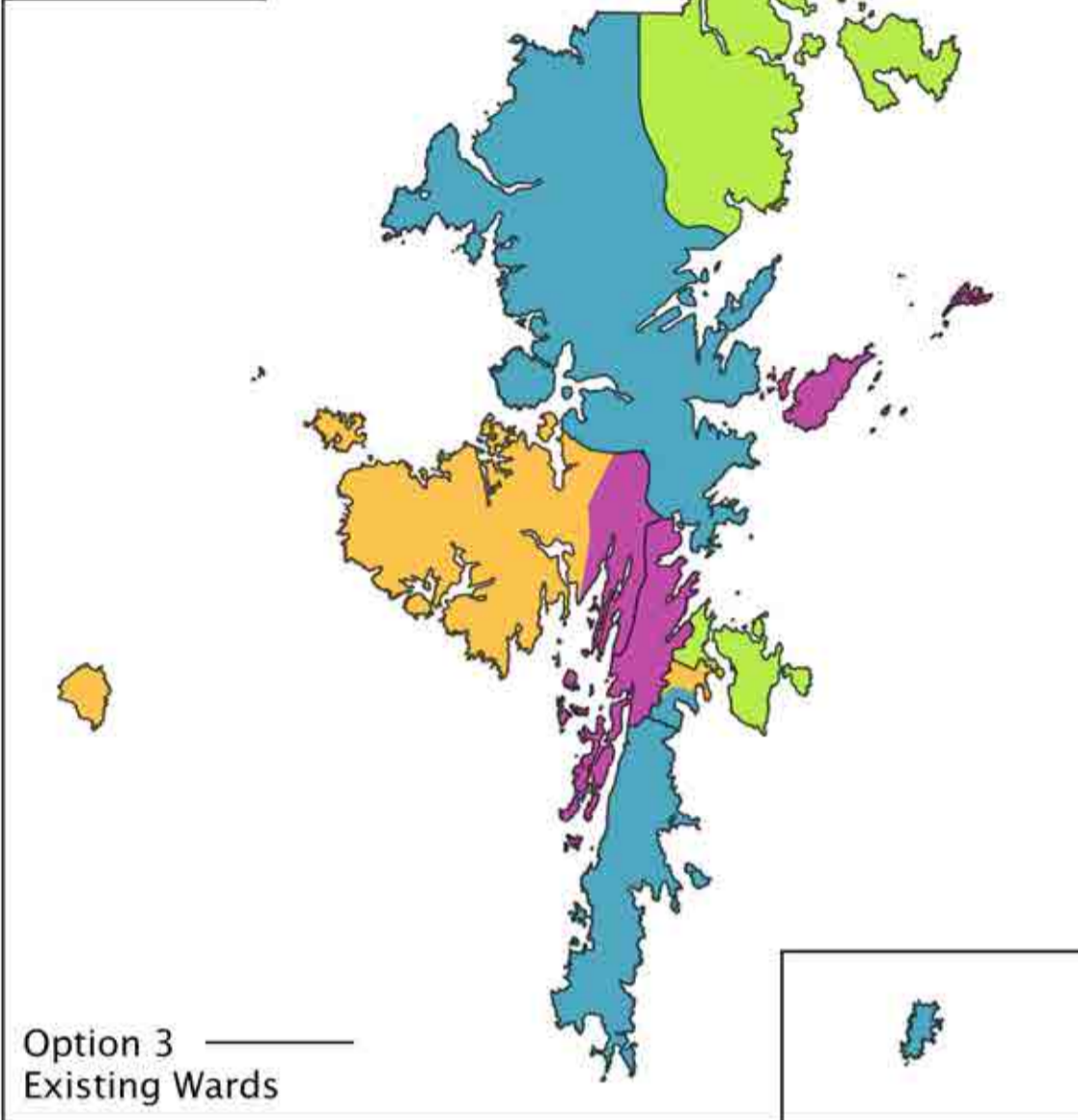
Option 2 — Localities



Option 2 — 5th Reviews

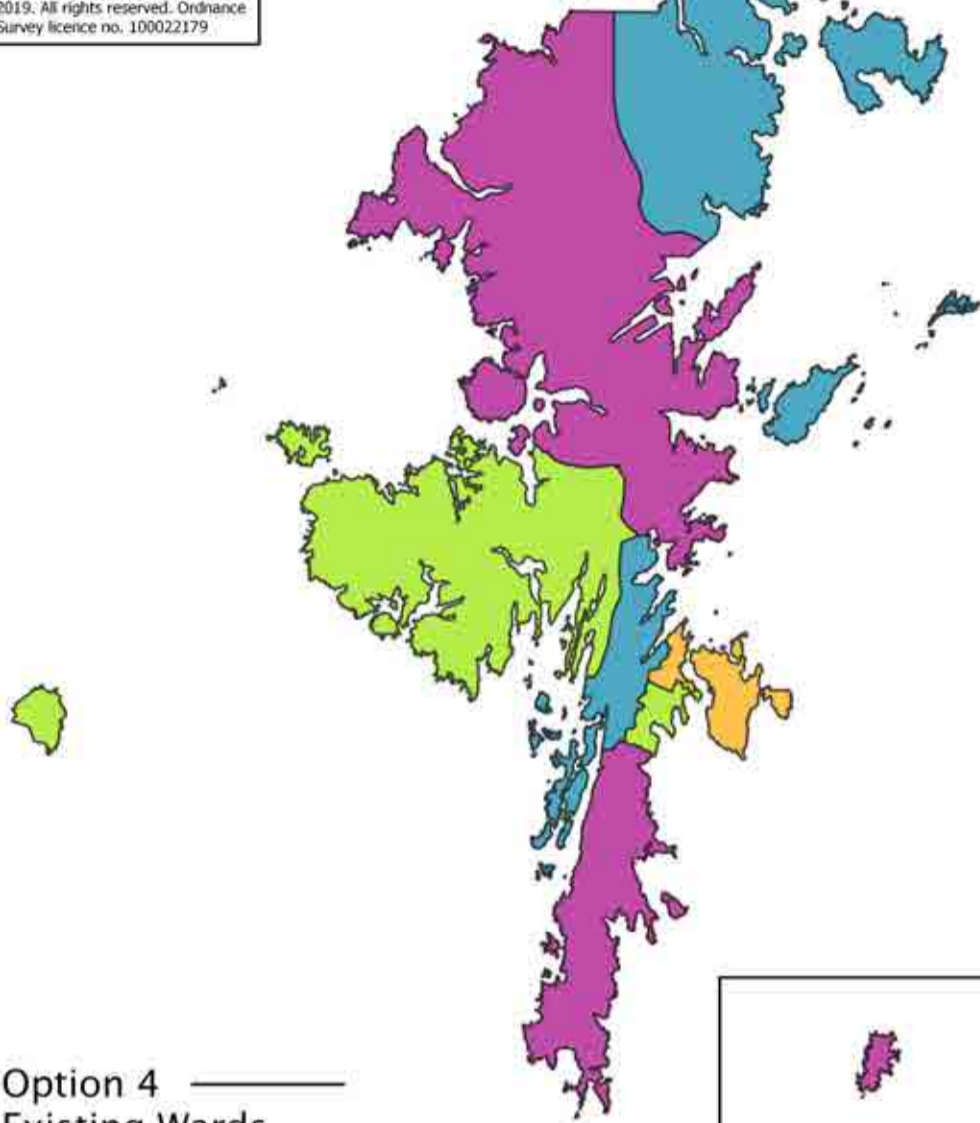
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Option 3 - Localities

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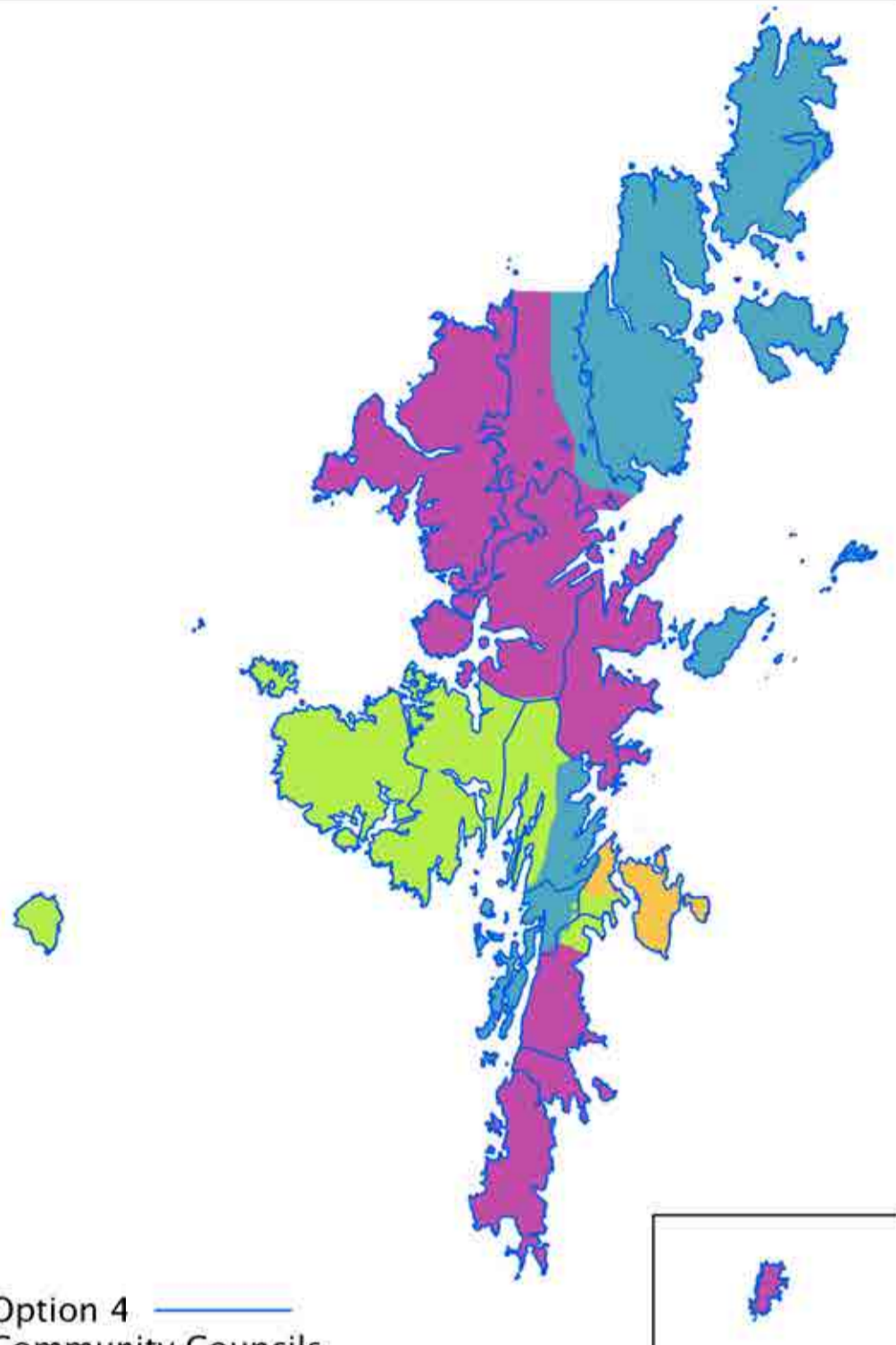


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2018 Review of Electoral Arrangements  
Shetland Islands council area  
Option 4 – Existing

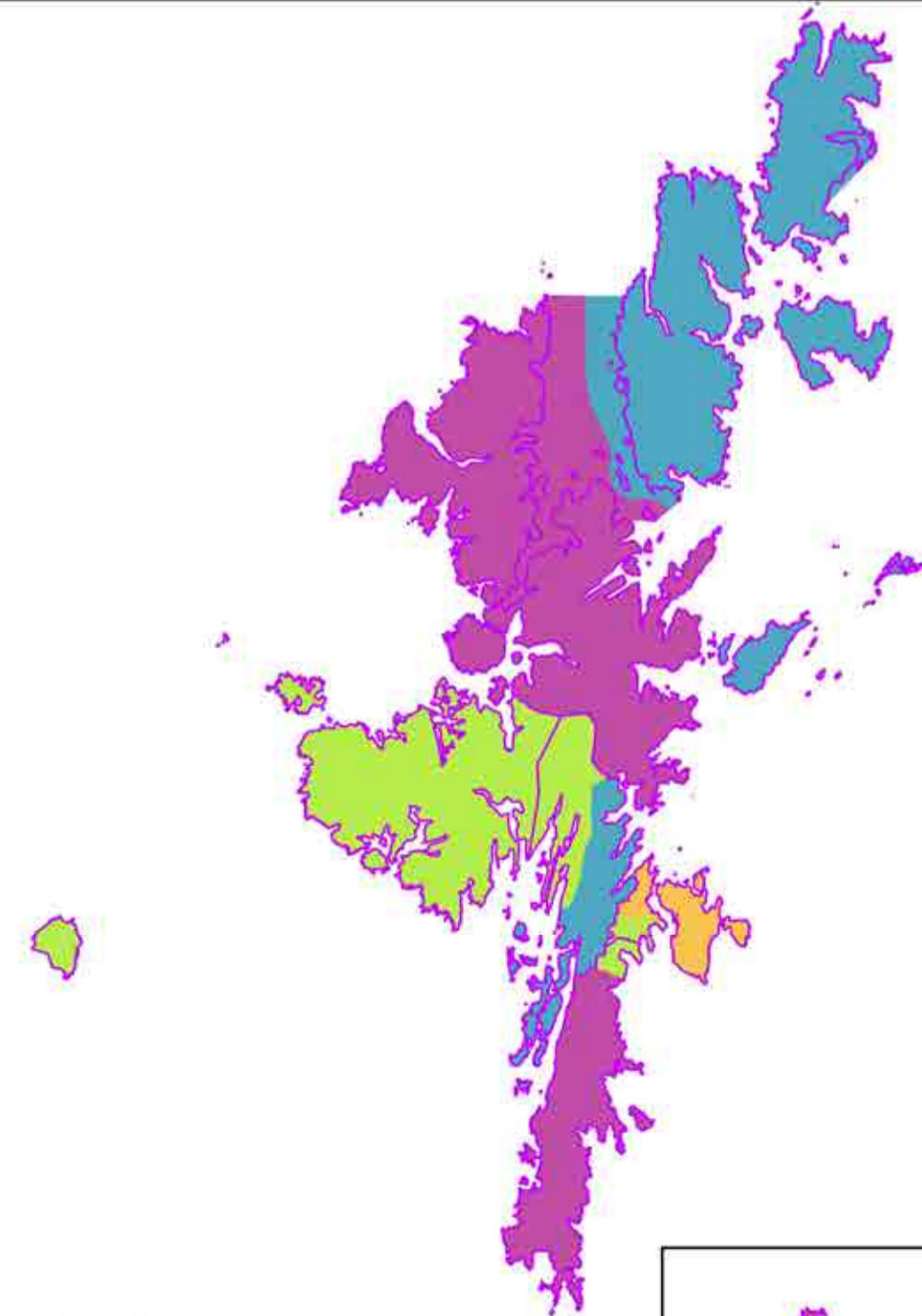
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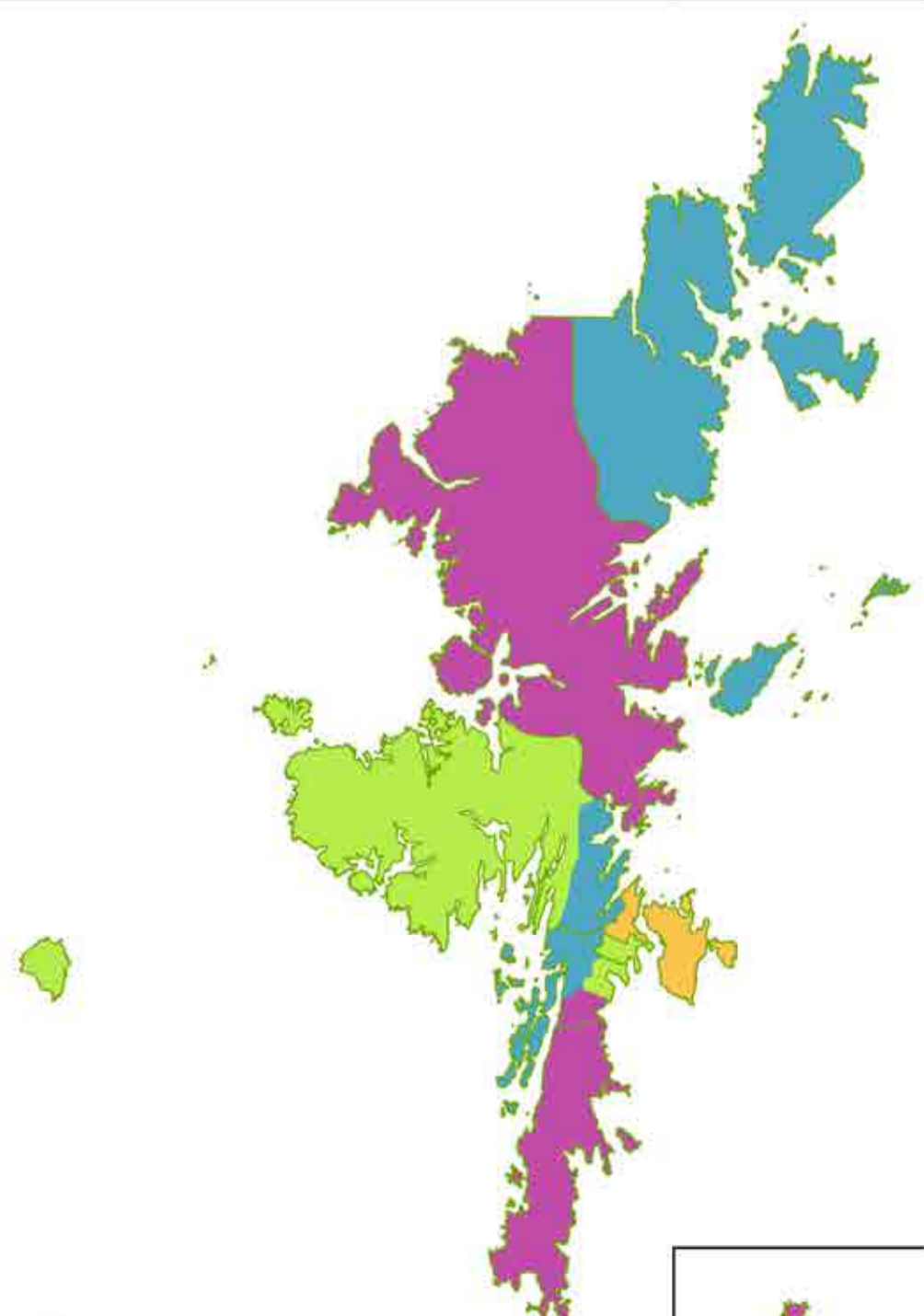
Option 4 — Existing Wards



Option 4 — Community Councils



Option 4 — Localities



Option 4 — 5th Reviews