

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF CHORLEY COUNCIL COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 9TH JULY 2018, 6.00 PM
COMMITTEE ROOM 1

AGENDA

- | | | |
|---|--|----------------|
| 1 | MINUTES | (Pages 3 - 6) |
| 2 | TIMELINE

To note the electoral review timeline. | (Pages 7 - 8) |
| 3 | WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

To consider the attached report on proposed ward arrangements (enclosed). | (Pages 9 - 34) |
| 4 | ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES IS/ARE URGENT | |

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Electoral Review of Chorley Council Committee Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), Councillor (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Jane Fitzsimons, Danny Gee, Steve Holgate, Adrian Lowe, Paul Leadbetter, John Walker, Peter Wilson and Alan Whittaker.

Electronic agendas sent to Electoral Review of Chorley Council Committee reserves) for information.

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MINUTES OF ELECTORAL REVIEW OF CHORLEY COUNCIL COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE **Wednesday, 7 March 2018**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Alistair Bradley (Chair), and Councillors John Dalton, Danny Gee, Paul Leadbetter, Adrian Lowe, John Walker, Paul Walmsley and Peter Wilson

OFFICERS: Rebecca Huddleston (Director (Policy and Governance)), Phil Davies (Electoral Services Manager), and Cathryn Filbin (Democratic and Member Services Officer)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mark Jarnell, Councillor Jane Fitzsimons and Councillor Debra Platt

OTHER MEMBERS: Councillor Alan Whittaker

1 **Appointment of Chairperson**

AGREED unanimously – that Councillor Alistair Bradley be elected as Chair.

2 **Draft Council Size Submission**

In his opening statement, the Chair encouraged those members, not appointed to the Committee to attend its meetings as it was important that all members had the same opportunity to contribute to the future running of the council. The Committee were reminded that voting rights would be limited to those appointed to the Committee or acting in the official capacity of a substitute member.

The Committee was reminded that the Electoral Review would take place in two stages:

- **Stage 1 - Council size;** before the LGBCE re-draws ward boundaries, it will come to a view on the total number of councillors to be elected to the council in future. A conclusion on council size will be drawn after hearing the council's (and/or councillors') views during the preliminary phase.
- **Stage 2 - Ward boundaries;** the LGBCE will re-draw ward boundaries so that they meet their statutory criteria. The council will have the opportunity to put forward its ideas in two phases of public consultation.

The timetable for the review was confirmed as follows: -

Stage Starts	Description
Current stage until May 2018	Council to gather information for LGBCE included electoral forecast
June 2018	Number of councillors decided by LGBCE.
June 2018	Start consultation seeking views on new wards

September 2018	End of consultation; LGBCE analyse submission and form draft Recommendations
November 2018	Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation
January 2019	End of consultation; LGBCE begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
March 2019	Publication of final recommendations
Ordinary day of elections 2020	Whole of council election on new electoral arrangement

Members of the Committee considered the draft council submission to be presented at the council meeting to be held on 10 April. A recommendation to council was sought on the preferred council size and frequency of meetings.

In order that the council continued to elect by thirds the Committee was informed that the number of members per ward needed to consist of three to ensure electoral equality.

The decision of council size would be the only stage of the review that would not be released for consultation by the LGBCE, although alternative council size submissions by interested parties would be considered by them. Ultimately the decision for council size was the LGBCE.

Results of member survey

To assist in the formation of the council's submission, members had been encouraged to take part in a survey the aim of the survey was to –

- find out how much time members spent on council duties,
- what assistance they received,
- how they communicated with constituents,
- how the role of councillor had changed in recent years.

A total of 22 members responded to the survey. A copy of the results were summarised and presented to the Committee. Key issues which arose from the summary included:

- 90% of respondents indicated that the time spent on council duties was as expected.
- That the number of hours spent on council duties (not including the Leader of the Council or its Executive) broke down as follows: -
 - 32% worked between 10-15 hours per week
 - 32% worked between 15- 20 hours per week
 - 9% worked between 20-25 hours per week
 - 27% worked less than 10 hours per week
- The types of support members received included –
 - officer support
 - ward colleagues
 - party colleagues
 - local political party office
 - MPs
 - Member training
- Engaging with constituents
 - 90% via street surgeries/knocking door to door and produce newsletters
 - 41% use social media
 - 27% attend public meetings
 - 14% hold surgeries

- Agreement that the role of ward councillor had changed in recent years with technology having a significant role when communicating with residents and communities.

Council size and election arrangements

Members of the Committee had a positive discussion on various aspect of the proposed draft submission, including the data from the councils nearest neighbours (both demographically as identified by CIPFA and geographically) and the results of the recent member survey. Particular interest was expressed in those authorities that had undergone an electoral review of their own, the majority of which (the Committee noted) had a reduction in council size following their review.

It was accepted that a drastic reduction (by half) in the council numbers would not allow the council to carry out its duties and functions effectively. It was important therefore to be realistic in terms of what was required of its members.

In terms of the frequency of elections the Committee considered that the council should continue to elect by thirds, and it therefore recognised that the preferred council size number must allow for three member wards.

Other matters raised included –

- The introduction of a timeline to be included on future agendas;
- In June, if not already been confirmed, to progress a response from the Secretary of State at the councils request to postpone the local election in 2019.

After consideration of all the written and verbal evidence presented to the Committee, it was **AGREED unanimously that the recommendation to the council meeting on the 10 April would be as follows:**

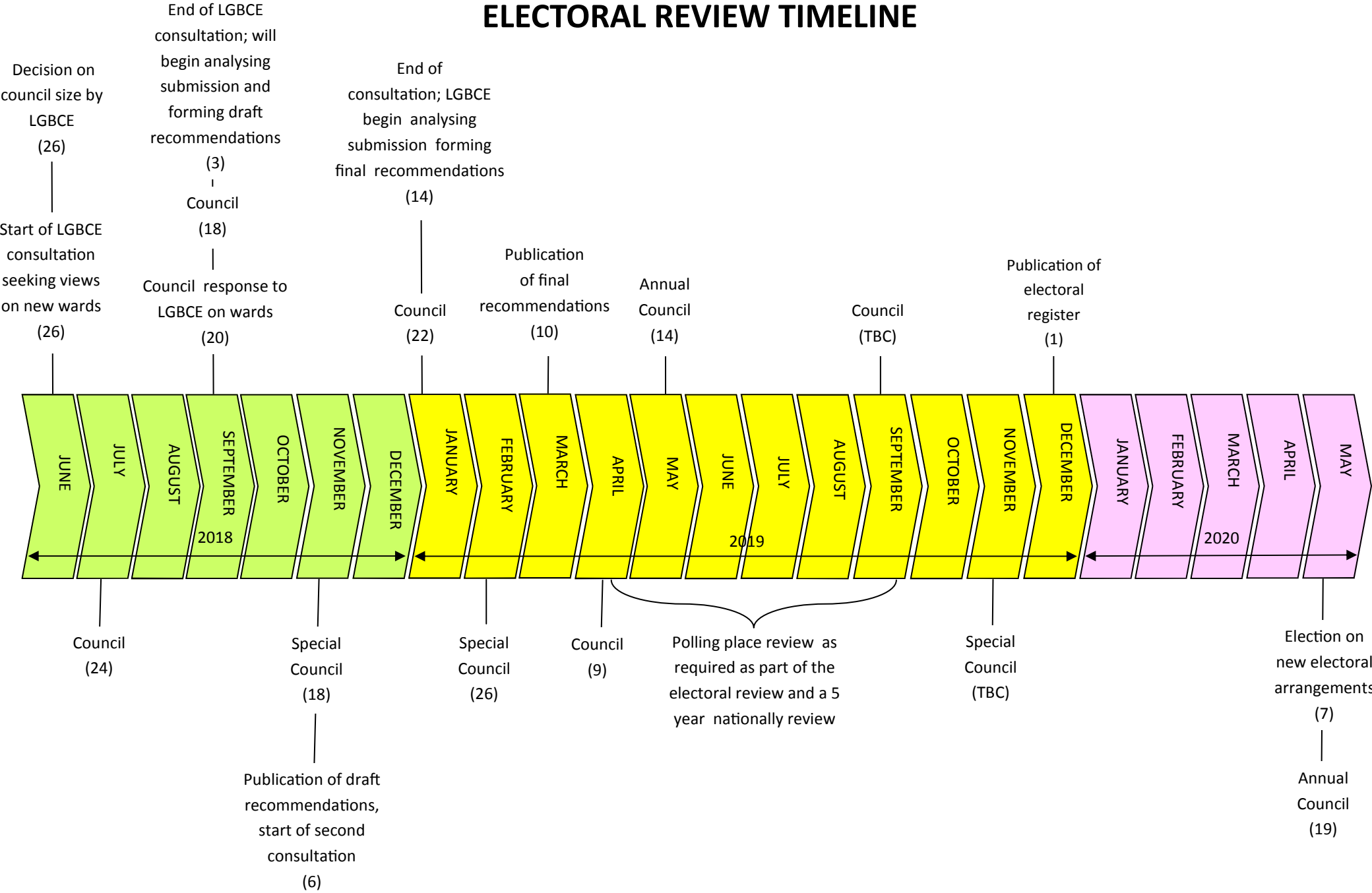
1. **A reduction in the council size to 42 members (resulting in 14 wards); and that**
2. **That the council continue to elect by thirds.**

Chair

Date

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ELECTORAL REVIEW TIMELINE



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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Policy and Governance	Electoral Review of Chorley Council Committee	9 July 2018

WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To consider and debate the proposed new warding arrangements in response to the electoral review of Chorley Council, detailed within this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To agree 14 new ward boundaries and their names.
3. Once the committee agrees to the new ward arrangement (subject to amendments) a (revised) copy of the map including the breakdown of polling districts (and any streets that had been split) to be displayed in the members room.
4. The agreed new ward arrangement (subject to amendments) be presented at the council meeting on 18 September 2018 before submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on 20 September 2018.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

5. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all	✓	A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

BACKGROUND

6. On 26 June the LGBCE announced that it was minded to accept Chorley Council's proposal for preferred council size. The proposal recommended that there should be a reduction in the number of members from 47 to 42. This decision brings stage 1 of the review to a close.
7. At the same time as the announcement, the LGBCE launched stage 2 of the review; a public consultation exercise on new warding arrangements. The deadline for submission is

3 September 2018. However, due to the timing of council meetings, the LGBCE has given approval for Chorley Council to submit its proposal by Thursday, 20 September 2018. This is to allow members more time to consider the proposals of the committee and debate them at the council meeting on 18 September 2018.

WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

8. As part of the council size submission, Chorley Council informed the LGBCE that it would continue to hold elections by thirds. In these circumstances, the LGBCE stipulates that each ward must consist of 3 members to ensure electoral equality. With the council size number being agreed at 42, this equates to 14 borough wards.
9. At the last meeting of the committee, members resolved for a mapping exercise to be carried out based on the council size confirmed by the LGBCE.
10. The following map and the methodology behind the warding arrangements represents the outcome of the above exercise. The majority of wards have been made up of existing polling districts. However, where a polling district has been split, the individual streets concerned are details in appendix 1 (to follow).
11. It is worth noting that where the polling districts have been split to street level, the figures have had to be based on the 1 December 2017 electoral register.
12. As a reminder the LGBCE will review warding proposals against three statutory criteria and all proposals should demonstrate how they meet these requirements:
 - To deliver electoral equality where each borough councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the borough.
 - That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
 - That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.
13. LGBCE have produced a practical guide for putting forwards submissions and this is contained in appendix 2.

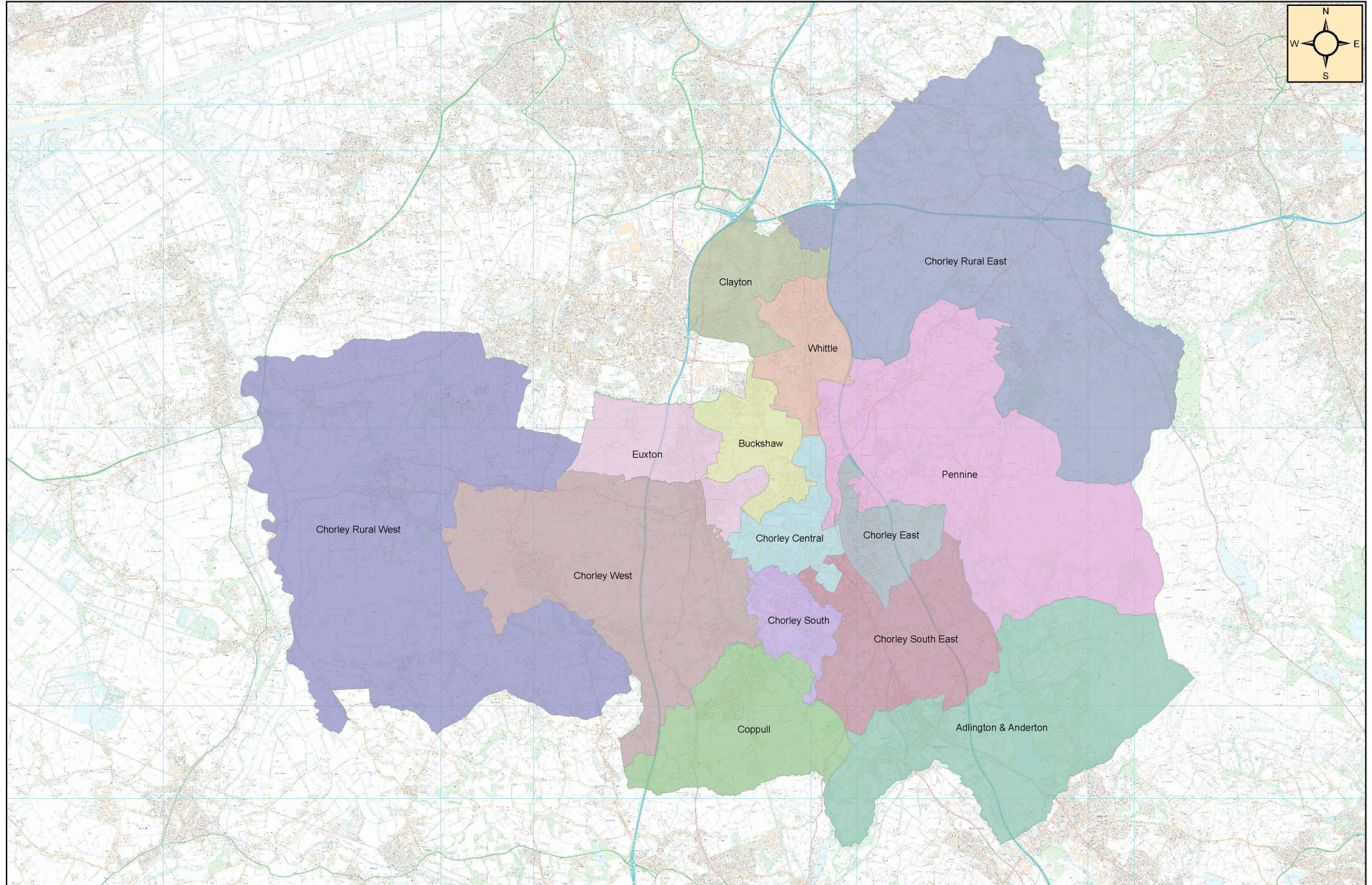
CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

14. The consultation is open to all interested parties and members of the public. The LGBCE have requested that the council publicise the consultation by arranging for their press release and posters to be placed on display at local information points, and by taking such other steps as consider appropriate to bring the review to the attention of the public and other interested parties. The LGBCE further requested that the council promote the consultation online, via social media and any other channels normally use to engage residents.
15. Chorley Council has a dedicated webpage on the council's website for the electoral review which provides an explanation to the purpose of the review and provides a link to the LGBCE website (<http://chorley.gov.uk/Pages/AtoZ/Electoral-Review-of-Chorley-Council.aspx>).
16. On 26 June the Communications and Events team announced the start of the review and will continue to conduct a publicity campaign throughout the consultation which will include social media and marketing emails. The consultation will also be promoted as part of the council's consultations web page. In addition, articles have been included in intheknow and intheboro, and posters have been distributed for display purposes, to the same outlets that receive the council's What's Happening magazine.

17. In addition, the LGBCE consultation portal allows visitors to interact with online maps of the current electoral wards, draw their own boundaries and feed views into the consultation process directly. The portal is available at <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>.

NEXT STEPS

18. The merits of suggested ward arrangements in this report should be debated. Officers would welcome any supporting evidence to prove, or otherwise, that the arrangements suggested is a viable option (ie community identity).
19. Should the committee agree to the proposal, a copy of the map, and details within this report will be displayed in the members' room. This will allow members as much opportunity as possible to consider the proposals prior to the matter being debated at the council meeting on 18 September 2018.
20. If, however, the committee requires amendments to the warding arrangements, officers would welcome the opportunity to make changes as directed. It is worth bearing in mind that a change to any of the wards would have an impact of the variance figure to neighbouring wards.
21. Notwithstanding the council submission, political parties can submit their own warding arrangements directly to the LGBCE by 3 September 2018. It has been agreed, that any such submission, if required, could be mapped by officers of the council.
22. Once the LBCE has considered all the proposals received during this phase of consultation, it plans to publish draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements in November 2018. Public consultation on the draft recommendations is scheduled to take place between November 2018 and January 2019. Once the Commission has considered the representations and evidence as part of that consultation, it intends to publish final recommendations in March 2019.
23. New electoral arrangements for the borough are scheduled to come into effect at the borough council elections in 2020.



BREAKDOWN OF CHORLEY COUNCIL WARD PROPOSAL

Map Colour Code	Polling District	2024 electorate	Description of Polling District area	Parish	Parish ward	COUNTY DIVISION	Existing Borough Ward	New Ward	Electorate	% variance	Electors from the mean
	07A	1103	Chorley North West (1)			Chorley Central	Chorley North West	Chorley Central	6381	-0.62%	-40
	07B	1499	Chorley North West (2)			Chorley Central	Chorley North West				
	07C	1029	Chorley North West (3)			Chorley Central	Chorley North West				
	07D	1367	Chorley North West (4)			Chorley Central	Chorley North West				
	08B	898	Chorley South East (5)			Chorley Central	Chorley South East				
	08A	485	Chorley South East (1)			Chorley Central	Chorley South East				
	08B	806	Chorley South East (2)			Chorley Central	Chorley South East	Chorley South East	6403	-0.28%	-18
	08C	2153	Chorley South East (3)			Chorley Central	Chorley South East				
	08E	1030	Chorley South East (5)			Chorley Central	Chorley South East				
	09E	703	Chorley South West (5)			Chorley Central	Chorley South West				
	17A	567	Heath Charnock (1)	Heath Charnock		Chorley Rural East	Heath Charnock & Rivington				
	17C	1144	Heath Charnock (2)	Heath Charnock		Chorley Rural East	Heath Charnock & Rivington				
	05A	1942	Chorley East (1)			Chorley North	Chorley East	Chorley East	7003	9.06%	58
	05B	1906	Chorley East (2)			Chorley North	Chorley East				
	05C	1633	Chorley East (3)			Chorley North	Chorley East				
	06B	1522	Chorley North East (2)			Chorley North	Chorley North East				
	06A	1134	Chorley North East (1)			Chorley North	Chorley North East	Pennine	6492	1.11%	
	06C	2378	Chorley North East (3)			Chorley North	Chorley North East				
	19A	24	Anglezarke	Anglezarke		Chorley Rural East	Pennine				
	19B	507	Heapey (1)	Heapey		Chorley Rural East	Pennine				
	19C	266	Heapey (2)	Heapey		Chorley Rural East	Pennine				
	19D	1342	Whittle-Le-Woods East	Whittle-Le Woods East		Chorley Rural East	Pennine				
	20E	841	Wheelton	Wheelton		Hoghton with Wheelton	Wheelton & Withnell				
	01A	1231	Adlington North (1)	Adlington	North	Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton	Adlington & Anderton	6251	-2.65%	-170
	01B	1066	Adlington East	Adlington	East	Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton				
	01C	1034	Adlington Central	Adlington	Central	Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton				
	01D	1439	Adlington West	Adlington	West	Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton				
	01E	1066	Anderton	Anderton		Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton				
	01F	334	Adlington North (2)	Adlington	North	Chorley Rural East	Adlington & Anderton				
	17B	81	Rivington	Rivington		Chorley Rural East	Heath Charnock & Rivington				
	13A	2295	Coppull East (1)	Coppull	East	Chorley South	Coppull	Coppull	6572	2.35%	18
	13B	3173	Coppull East (2)	Coppull	East	Chorley South	Coppull				
	04C	1104	Coppull West	Coppull	West	Chorley South	Chisnall				
	04B	1551	Charnock Richard	Charnock Richard		Chorley Rural West	Chisnall	Chorley West	6250	-2.66%	-11
	14A	1996	Eccleston (1)	Eccleston		Chorley Rural West	Eccleston & Mawdesley				
	16A (939 electors)	939	*								
	14B	1764	Eccleston (2)	Eccleston		Chorley Rural West	Eccleston & Mawdesley				
	04A	730	Heskin	Heskin		Chorley Rural West	Chisnall	Chorley Rural West	5956	-7.24%	-465
	14C	1591	Mawdesley	Mawdesley		Chorley Rural West	Eccleston & Mawdesley				
	18A	640	Bretherton	Bretherton		Chorley Rural West	Lostock				
	18B	2397	Croston	Croston		Chorley Rural West	Lostock				
	18C	598	Ulnes Walton	Ulnes Walton		Chorley Rural West	Lostock				

	09A	291	Chorley South West (1)			Chorley South	Chorley South West	Chorley South	6115	-4.77%	-306
	09B	2294	Chorley South West (2)			Chorley South	Chorley South West				
	09C	2451	Chorley South West (3)			Chorley South	Chorley South West				
	08D	457	Chorley South East (4)			Chorley Central	Chorley South East				
	09D	622	Chorley South West (4)			Chorley South	Chorley South West				
	10A	2895	Clayton-Le- Woods East	Clayton-Le-Wood East		Clayton with Whittle	Clayton-Le-Woods & Whittle-Le-Woods	Whittle	6013	-6.35%	-408
	10B	2670	Whittle-Le-Woods West	Whittle-Le-Wood West		Clayton with Whittle	Clayton-Le-Woods & Whittle-Le-Woods				
	11A (448 electors)	448	*								
	12A	2977	Clayton-Le-Woods West	Clayton-Le-Wood West		Clayton with Whittle	Clayton-Le-Woods West & Cuerden	Clayton	6564	2.23%	143
	12B	1388	Clayton-Le-Woods West	Clayton-Le-Wood West		Clayton with Whittle	Clayton-Le-Woods West & Cuerden				
	12C	110	Cuerden	Cuerden		Clayton with Whittle	Clayton-Le-Woods West & Cuerden				
	11A (less 448 electors)	744	* Clayton-Le- Woods North	Clayton-Le-Wood North		Hoghton with Wheelton	Clayton-Le-Woods North				
	11C	1345	Clayton-Le-Woods North	Clayton-Le-Wood North		Hoghton with Wheelton	Clayton-Le-Woods North				
	10C	1208	Whittle-Le-Woods West	Whittle-Le-Wood West		Clayton with Whittle	Clayton-Le-Woods & Whittle-Le-Woods	Buckshaw	6996	8.95%	575
	02A	2359	Astley Village	Astley Village		Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley	Astley & Buckshaw				
	02B	247	Euxton North East	Euxton	North East	Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley	Astley & Buckshaw				
	02C	3182	Buckshaw Village	Euxton	North East	Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley	Astley & Buckshaw				
	15A	3912	Euxton North	Euxton	North West	Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley	Euxton North	Euxton	6051	-5.76%	-
	16A (less 939 electors)	2139	* Euxton South	Euxton	Euxton South	Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley	Euxton South				
	03A	456	Brindle (1)	Brindle		Hoghton with Wheelton	Brindle & Hoghton	Chorley Rural East	6853	6.73%	4
	03B	371	Brindle (2)	Brindle		Hoghton with Wheelton	Brindle & Hoghton				
	03C	688	Hoghton (1)	Hoghton		Hoghton with Wheelton	Brindle & Hoghton				
	03D	262	Withnell North	Withnell	North	Hoghton with Wheelton	Brindle & Hoghton				
	11B	2529	Clayton-Le-Woods North	Clayton-Le-Wood North		Hoghton with Wheelton	Clayton-Le-Woods North				
	20A	350	Abbey Village	Withnell	South	Hoghton with Wheelton	Wheelton & Withnell				
	20B	560	Withnell South	Withnell	South	Hoghton with Wheelton	Wheelton & Withnell				
	20C	362	Withnell South	Withnell	South	Hoghton with Wheelton	Wheelton & Withnell				
	20D	1275	Brinscall	Withnell	South	Hoghton with Wheelton	Wheelton & Withnell				

*For details of the polling districts split see Appendix 1

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

24. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

RISK

A risk register has been completed	Yes	No
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COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

25. The public consultation is being carried out by the Boundary Commission. The only costs to the Council will be publicity costs and these should be met from existing budgets

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

26. No comments

REBECCA HUDDLESTON
DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Background Papers

Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Electoral Review of Chorley Council – Draft Council Size Submission	10 April 2018	https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s85271/Electoral%20Review%20of%20Chorley%20Council%20-%20Draft%20Council%20Size%20Submission.pdf	Council agenda
Electoral Review Committee	27 February 2018	https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s83882/Electoral%20Review%20Committee.pdf	Council agenda
Electoral Review Update	23 January 2018	https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s82429/Report.pdf	Council agenda
Electoral Review	5 October 2017	https://democracy.chorley.gov.uk/documents/s79211/Electoral%20Review.pdf	Executive Cabinet agenda

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Phil Davies Cathryn Filbin	5131 5123	03/07/18	***

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The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



How to propose a pattern of wards

Helping you make the strongest possible case to the Commission

Getting started

If you have a view on a new pattern of wards or electoral divisions for your area, there are three important things to remember before you get in touch:

1. Give your reasoning

The Commission takes its decisions on the basis of the evidence and argument put to us. It's important that you tell us **why** you are putting forward your view. Just giving your opinion without explanation and reasoning is unlikely to persuade the Commission.

2. Make it relevant

The Commission has three main criteria - set out in law - which it must follow when it produces a new pattern of wards or electoral divisions. They are:

- The new pattern of wards should mean that each councillor represents roughly the same number of voters as elected members elsewhere in the authority.
- Ward patterns should – as far as possible – reflect community interests and identities and boundaries should be identifiable.
- The electoral arrangements should promote effective and convenient local government and reflect the electoral cycle of the council.

Our decisions on new wards and boundaries will always be based on the criteria above. As such, the Commission is much more likely to accept your proposals if they are based on one or more of the criteria above. This guide sets out, in more detail, what the three criteria might mean in practice.

3. Get in touch

The Commission gives equal weight to all responses to consultation regardless of whom they are from but we need to record them all and consider them together. We also publish all consultation responses so you can see the basis on which we took our decisions. You don't need to write a lot, but if you follow the advice above and elsewhere in this guide, you should be able to make a good case.

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Consultation process

One of the most important parts of the electoral review process is to propose a new pattern of wards or electoral divisions for the whole local authority area.

We will carry out two phases of public consultation on new boundaries during an electoral review.

We judge all proposals on their merits regardless of whom they are from and we commit, in every electoral review, to carry out two phases of public consultation on boundaries before we finalise the electoral arrangements for your area.

This guide aims to help you contribute to an electoral review by proposing a pattern of wards for your area, commenting on our draft proposals or having your say about the community identities and interests of your area.

When will we ask for your view?

We will ask local people for views on new warding arrangements on two occasions during an electoral review.

1. Information gathering stage – once the Commission has taken a view on the total number of councillors that should represent the authority, we will begin work on drawing up new boundaries for wards across the area to accommodate those councillors. We will ask local people for their help in drawing up draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements.
2. Consultation on draft recommendations – once we have published our draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements (number of wards, number of councillors representing each ward, ward names and ward boundaries) for your area, you will have the chance to comment on them. We will invite you to tell us where you think we've got it right and, where you don't think our boundaries meet our criteria, you can propose alternatives.

At all stages of consultation, you can give us your views on the whole local authority area just a small part of it.

You can find out which stage we are at with your review by logging on to our website at www.lgbce.org.uk or go direct to our consultation portal at consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

Making your case

The Commission must abide by certain rules – set out in law¹ - when drawing up our proposals for new ward or electoral division boundaries. We will consider your evidence in light of these criteria before coming to conclusions so it's important that you bear them in mind when submitting your views to us.

The main rules are:

- **Delivering electoral equality for local voters** – this means ensuring that each local councillor represents roughly the same number of people so that the value of your vote is the same regardless of where you live in the local authority area.
- **Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities** – this means establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable.
- **Promoting effective and convenient local government** – this means ensuring that the new wards or electoral divisions can be represented effectively by their elected representative(s) and that the new electoral arrangements as a whole allow the local authority to conduct its business effectively. In addition, we must also ensure that the pattern of wards reflects the electoral cycle of the council as shown below.

Occasionally, it will not be possible for us to put forward a boundary proposal that clearly meets all these principles. In fact, the statutory criteria can sometimes contradict each other, for example where a proposed ward might reflect the shape of local communities but delivers poor levels of electoral equality. In these cases, the Commission will use its discretion – and the quality of the evidence presented to it - to come to a conclusion.

The next three sections of this guide tell you more about how we interpret the three criteria and how they might make a difference to your submission to us.

¹ Schedule 2, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

1. Delivering electoral equality for local voters

An electoral review must, so far as is practicable, deliver electoral equality where all councillors in a local authority area represent a similar number of electors.

Electoral equality is the only criterion which we can measure with precision. We will therefore be able to take a firm view on the extent to which your proposal meets our ambition to deliver electoral fairness.

We publish details of electorate numbers at polling district level on our website along with maps which give you a good idea of the number of electors affected by your proposal. We will also take into consideration any developments that might affect the number of electors in an area within five years of the end of the review.

We base our decisions on the number of electors in a ward and **not** the total population.

For example, if the overall number of electors in your local authority area is 100,000 and we have said we are minded to recommend a council size of 40 councillors, it means that electoral equality will be achieved if each councillor represents 2,500 electors.

In this scenario, if you are proposing a single-member ward during the next phase of consultation, it will need to contain approximately 2,500 electors. Similarly, if you are proposing a three-member ward, it would need to have around 7,500 voters.

Although we strive for perfect electoral equality for all wards or divisions, we recognise that this is unlikely to be exactly achieved. If you propose a boundary that has many more, or fewer, voters in it than the target we set in the paragraph above, we will need to see evidence that such a variance is justified on the grounds of our other statutory criteria set out below. The more your proposal causes councillors to represent many more, or fewer, voters than the average, the more persuasive your evidence will need to be. You will need to explain to us why your proposal reflects the interests and identities of local communities and/or the arrangement would provide for effective and convenient local government.

The example below shows how we calculate electoral variances for new wards or divisions.

Figure one: electoral variances

Local authority A has an electorate of 100,000 in 2012. In 2018 (five years after the planned completion of the review), the electorate of Local authority A is expected to be 103,000.

The Commission has decided that it is minded to recommend a council size of 40 councillors for Local authority A.

In these circumstances, the Commission will base its new ward patterns on each councillor representing around 2,500 electors.

	2012	2018
10% fewer electors	2,250	2,318
Perfect electoral equality	2,500	2,575
10% more electors	2,750	2,833

2. Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities

If you are making a submission to the Commission, you should ensure that the wards and boundaries you propose reflect, as far as possible, the interests and identities of your area's communities. We will try to balance this consideration with our other statutory criteria before finalising our conclusions.

Unlike electoral equality, it isn't possible to measure levels of community identity so we will be looking for evidence on a range of issues to support your reasoning. The best evidence for community identity is normally a combination of factual information such as the existence of communication links, facilities and organisations along with an explanation of how local people use those facilities. Put simply, we want to know **why** a particular proposal reflects local communities. For example, why does a road unite the surrounding communities when roads can often divide areas?

Below are some issues that we often use to assess community interests and identity. You may wish to use some of these examples to tell us why you are putting forward your view:

Transport links – Are there good communication links within the proposed ward or division? Is there any form of public transport? If you are proposing that two areas (e.g. villages, estates or parishes) should be included in the same ward or division together, how easily can you travel between them?

Community groups – Is there a residents group or any other local organisation that represents the area? What area does that group cover? What kind of activities do they undertake and are there any joint-working relationships between organisations that could indicate shared community interests between different geographical areas?

Facilities – Where do local people in your area go for shopping, medical services, leisure facilities etc? The location of public facilities can represent the centre or focal point of a community. We would like to hear evidence from local people about how they interact with those facilities so that we can understand the shape of local communities and the movement and behaviours of their residents.

Identifiable boundaries – Natural features such as rivers, valleys and woodland can often provide strong and recognisable boundaries. Similarly, constructions such as major roads and railway lines can also form well known barriers between communities.

Parishes - In areas where parishes exist, the parish boundaries often represent the extent of a community. In fact, the Commission often uses parishes as the building blocks of wards and electoral divisions.

Shared interests – Are there particular issues that affect your community which aren't necessarily relevant to neighbouring areas that might help us determine where a ward or division boundary should be drawn? For example, many local authorities contain areas which have urban, suburban and rural

characteristics. Each of those areas may have different needs and interests though they could be located next to each other. One area might be more affected by urban issues such as the local economy while an adjacent area might be more concerned with local transport matters. We would like to hear evidence about what those issues are and how they mean ward boundaries should combine or separate the areas in question.

3. Promoting effective and convenient local government and reflecting electoral cycles

The third factor the Commission must consider, by law, in making recommendations for new electoral arrangements is the need to secure effective and convenient local government and ensure that the council has a ward pattern that reflects its electoral cycle.

We will therefore consider the following issues before we recommend a pattern of wards or divisions for your area:

Number of councillors in each ward or division - there is no limit to the number of councillors that can be elected to represent a ward or division. However, we would not normally accept a proposal for more than three councillors to represent a ward.

The Commission has to abide by certain rules when deciding how many councillors should represent a ward and, in particular, we have a responsibility to ensure that patterns of wards reflect the electoral cycle of the local authority. The law² states that where a council hold elections in three years out of every four where a third of councillors are elected at each election ('by thirds'), we should seek to deliver a pattern of three-member wards across a district. This means that every voter will have an equal opportunity to influence the make up of the council at each election. Similarly, if a district council elects half its councillors every other year ('by halves'), we should seek to deliver a pattern of two-member wards across the district.

If you live in a district which elects by thirds, you should bear in mind that the Commission will seek to propose three-member wards in your area. We will only move away from such a pattern where a three-member ward would significantly undermine our other obligations under the law, namely: to deliver electoral equality, reflect community interests and identities and promote effective and convenient local government. The rules we must follow are summarised in Figure Two below.

Where a council holds whole-council elections every four years (this includes all county councils and London boroughs), the Commission is able to propose any pattern of wards or divisions that it believes best meets its statutory criteria. This is usually a mixture of single-, two- and three-member wards or divisions.

² Section 2, Schedule 2, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

Figure Two: councillors per ward depending on electoral cycle

Electoral cycle of council	Pattern of wards sought by Commission	Types of authority affected
By thirds	Three-member	Some district and metropolitan borough councils
By halves	Two-member	Some district councils
Whole-council elections	Any pattern of single-, two- and three-member wards or divisions	All county councils, London borough and some district councils

Size of ward or division – we will look at the geographic size of the ward or division and try to ensure that it is not so large that it would be difficult for a councillor to represent. Similarly, in urban areas, a ward might be so small in area that its councillor might not be able to contribute effectively to the wider business of the council.

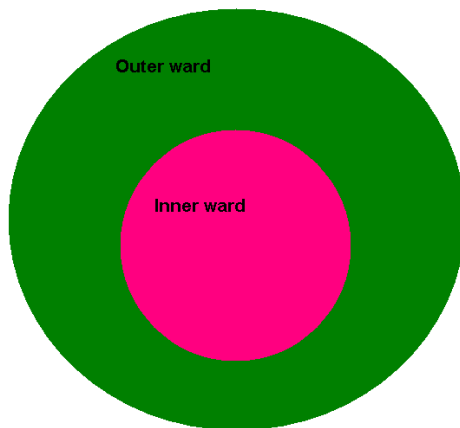
District council boundaries – if we are carrying out a review of a county council, electoral divisions will never cross the existing district council boundary. This is a rule which is set out in law³ so that all electoral divisions will be wholly contained within a district.

Coterminosity – if we are carrying out a review of a county council, we will try to match the boundary of the new electoral divisions – as far as possible – with the existing district ward boundaries. Where existing district ward boundaries match the boundaries of electoral divisions, we call it ‘coterminosity’ where coordination between the two councils in question can help to deliver effective and convenient local government.

‘Doughnut’ wards – we occasionally receive proposals for a pattern of wards which propose an ‘inner’ ward and an ‘outer’ ward for a town or village (see Figure Three below). We will not normally recommend this kind of pattern because the communication links between the north and south of the outer ward are usually poor and we also often find that people in the northern part of the outer ward share higher levels of community identity with residents in the north of the inner ward than with residents in the south of the outer ward. Where we need to split a town or village to achieve electoral equality, we will usually seek an alternative to this pattern.

³ Schedule 2, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

Figure Three: 'Doughnut' ward



Detached ward – we are sometimes presented with proposals to include two geographically separate areas in the same ward or division. We will not usually accept a proposal of this kind as it is unlikely to meet our criteria for promoting community identity and interests or delivering effective and convenient local government.

Ward and electoral division names - the names of wards and divisions are often important to local people. The Commission rarely has strong views on this aspect of a review and will usually use names which have been put to us by local people. Where there is no consensus, we will make our decision based on which name best reflects the communities contained within the ward. We will also seek to ensure that ward names are distinct from others in the area to avoid confusion for voters. For example, we will consider whether the proposed name of a ward is too long to be easily recognised by local people and that there is some consistency in the way wards have been named across the local authority area.

A district or county council can also opt to change the name of a ward or division outside the review process.

4. Other things to consider

The Commission will base its decisions primarily on its three main statutory criteria set out in the sections above. However, there are a few other things you should remember if you're putting together a proposal.

Single-member ward review - councils whose electoral cycle means that they elect the whole council every four years can ask the Commission to carry out a single-member ward or division review. This means that the Commission will seek to deliver a pattern of wards or divisions across the district or county which are represented by one councillor.

Changing electoral cycles - the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 allows councils to change their cycle of elections under certain circumstances. The provision means that some councils who currently elect by thirds can move to whole-council elections every four years (or vice versa). As a result, the Commission would not need to try and deliver a uniform pattern of three-member wards across the district.

Other things we don't usually consider - there are a number of things the Commission does not consider to be strong evidence when it takes decisions. For example, an area's history and tradition may be the basis of a sense of community identity. However, communities change over time and perceptions can vary between individuals as to the nature of those ties. The Commission would need to hear how and why those traditional arrangements reflect communities **now**.

In addition, whilst social and economic data (e.g. from the census or other statistical sources) can tell you a lot about individuals living in an area, it doesn't necessarily explain the nature of communities and is often a poor guide their interests and identities. The Commission considers that this kind of evidence can provide useful background information but we will treat it with caution when proposing new wards or divisions and their boundaries.

Previous examples

You might also find it useful to have a look at previous reviews where the Commission received persuasive evidence on ward and division arrangements which it subsequently recommended as part of its draft or final proposals.

Case study: Northampton Borough Council

In October 2009, the Commission invited proposals for a new ward pattern for Northampton Borough Council as part of its electoral review. In preparing its submission to the Commission, the Borough Council formed a cross-party working group of councillors to draw up its proposals which were subsequently submitted to the Commission.

The council's working group considered the need to secure electoral equality as part of its evidence as well as assessing the various identities and interests of communities across the borough before proposing a pattern of wards. In its final submission to the Commission, the working group was able to describe each ward and why it met the Commission's statutory criteria. The council had also carried out a public consultation on its proposals to assess local people's views.

The Commission found the evidence provided by the council's working group to be persuasive in most areas and based its draft recommendations on their work.

The relevant submission can be found on the Commission's website at:
http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/16325/northampton-stage-one-submission-northampton-borough-council-2010-21-01.pdf

Case study: Prestbury Parish Council

In May 2011, the Commission published its draft recommendations for a new pattern of electoral divisions for Gloucestershire County Council. In its initial recommendations, the Commission proposed that the parish of Prestbury should be linked with the parish of Swindon in the same electoral division.

The Commission received evidence from Prestbury Parish Council which included evidence that the parish shared community interests and identity with Pittsville parish rather than Swindon. They cited shared transport routes, the location and usage of schools and a library as well as shared issues around a major new development in the area which affected its own area as well as Pittsville's residents.

The Commission found that the parish council's evidence made a persuasive case that Prestbury and Pittsville shared common community interests and identity and, as such, proposed that they formed part of the same electoral division as part of its final recommendations.

You can read Prestbury Parish Council's submission on our website:
http://www.lgbce.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/16081/all-parish-and-town-councils-glouc-stage3-sub-2011-08-05_redacted.pdf

Case study: Goffs Oak Community Association

In May 2011, the Commission published draft recommendations for a new pattern of wards for Broxbourne. It proposed that the area of Goffs Oak should form part of a ward with the adjacent Bury Green part of the Borough.

The Goffs Oak Community Association supplied evidence to the Commission proposing that their area shared greater community identity and interests with the Hammond Street area rather than the Bury Green Area.

The Association provided evidence of community facilities, transport links and local organisations which were used by people in the Goffs Oak and Hammond Street areas which suggested that the two areas shared a community identity to a greater extent than the proposals made by the Commission. The Association was able to point out that an alternative proposal, put forward by the council, would provide for good levels of electoral equality as well as meeting the Commission's obligations on community interests and identity.

The Commission accepted the evidence presented to it and proposed the change in its final recommendations. The Goffs Oak Community Association submission can be accessed on the Commission's website:
http://www.lgbce.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0015/15450/gofts-oak-community-association-broxbourne-stage-three-submission-2011-07-25.pdf

What happens next?

If you are responding to the information gathering stage of the review, the Commission will consider your views before producing a set of draft recommendations for new wards and ward boundaries across your local authority area. You will get another chance to have your say when we publish draft recommendations. Once we've gathered all the views expressed to us during the draft recommendations consultation stage, we will then publish final recommendations.

You will find all the advice you need to take part in any other stages of the electoral review, as well as the timetable, on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk and through our consultation portal at consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

How you can have your say

Website: you can keep track of the electoral review for your area through our website at www.lgbce.org.uk. We set up a dedicated web page for each review where you will find details of its timetable, our reports, maps, proposals and guidance.

Email: You can make a submission to us directly through our website or by emailing: reviews@lgbce.org.uk.

Write: to us at:

Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor, Millbank Tower,
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

Interactive consultation portal: we have built a dedicated consultation portal as part of our website which allows you to have your say during any part of our consultation.

The portal includes interactive maps where you can search for your area, zoom into any part of it and compare the existing arrangements with our proposals. You can also have your say directly through the portal.

Just log on to our website at www.lgbce.org.uk or go directly to consultation.lgbce.org.uk to have your say.

Hard copies: we always make hard copies of our maps and reports available to local authorities and asked that they are placed on display in libraries and other council buildings.

Quick briefing: How to propose a pattern of wards or divisions

The Commission aims to propose electoral arrangements for a local authority which:

- Mean that each local councillor represents a similar number of voters.
- Reflect the identity and interests of local communities
- Promote effective and convenient local government and ensure that the pattern of wards reflects the council's electoral cycle.

The checklist below lists some of the factors you should consider if you are putting together your own boundary proposals.

You can find out more information about this electoral review and the Commission on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

A good pattern of wards or divisions should:

- Provide **good electoral equality**, with each councillor representing a similar number of voters.
- Reflect **community interests and identities** and include evidence of community links.
- Be based on strong, **easily identifiable boundaries**.
- Help the council deliver **effective and convenient local government**.

Useful tips:

- Our website has all the information you will need about electorate figures, maps of the area and other useful information.
- Changing the boundary of one ward can cause knock-on effects elsewhere in the area.
- We publish all submissions we receive on our website so you can follow what other people and organisations are telling us.
- Our consultation portal allows you to interact with maps of your area and to look in more detail at current and proposed boundaries. Access it through consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

Have your say:

By post: The Review Officer
LGBCE

14th Floor, Millbank Tower
Millbank,
London
SW1P 4QP

By email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Electoral equality:

- Does your proposal mean that councillors would represent roughly the same number of voters as elsewhere in the council area?

Community identity:

- **Transport links:** are there good links across your proposed ward? Is there any form of public transport?
- **Community groups:** is there a parish council, residents association or another group that represents the area?
- **Facilities:** does your pattern of wards reflect where local people go for shopping, medical services, leisure facilities etc?
- **Interests:** what issues bind the community together or separate it from other parts of your area?
- **Identifiable boundaries:** are there natural or constructed features which make strong boundaries for your proposals?

Effective local government:

- Are any of the proposed wards too large or small to be represented effectively?
- Are the proposed names of the wards appropriate?

Councillors per ward:

- If your council elects 'by thirds' we will look to create a pattern of three-member wards across your council area. If not, we can propose a mixed pattern of wards

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