

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Cabinet	5 October 2017

## ELECTORAL REVIEW

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform members about the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) decision to hold an electoral review of Chorley Council and proposed timetable of implementation. The letter from the LGBCE has been appended to this report for information (appendix 1).

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To note this report and that further information will be provided to members as it becomes available.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. The LGBCE has informed the Council of its decision to carry out an Electoral Review of the council size (number of elected Councillors) the number of wards and ward boundaries for Chorley Council.
4. The review is due to commence in June 2018 and expected to be completed by March 2019. Elections on the new electoral arrangements will take place on the ordinary day of elections 2020 when it will be a whole-council election that is every seat up for election.
5. Although the review is at a very early stage, this report sets out an overview of the processes and timescale involved.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	<b>No</b>
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### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) (if the recommendations are accepted)

6. The electoral arrangement of every principal local authority in England must, by law (Section 56 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009), be reviewed from time to time. It is the responsibility of the LGBCE to decide when those reviews are conducted.

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

7. By not undertaking the electoral review the authority would not be complying with Section 56 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8. 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 communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	X

## BACKGROUND

9. The last Electoral Review for Chorley Council was conducted by the Local Government Commission for England under the Local Government Act 1992, in 1999/2000. The final recommendations were published September 2000. The outcome of the review resulted in a reduction in the number of councillors from 48 to 47, and the number of wards from 22 to 20.
10. Since the last review the LGBCE has taken over responsibility for conducting reviews of the electoral arrangements of local authorities. Each year the LGBCE calculates the levels of electoral imbalance arising in each local authority area to establish whether there is a need for an electoral review.
11. By law, the LGBCE have to take into account three main considerations in the conduction an electoral review as set out in Schedule 2, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009:
- *Improve electoral equality by equalising the number of electors each councillor represents*
  - *Reflect community identity*
  - *Provide for effective and convenient local government*
12. Electoral reviews are initiated primarily to improve electoral equality. This means ensuring as far as is reasonable, that for any principal authority the ratio of electors to councillors in each electoral ward or division is approximately the same.
13. Under the criteria adopted by the LGBCE, either of the following conditions are considered to warrant a review if the imbalance is unlikely to be corrected by foreseeable changes to the electorate within a reasonable period:
- *Any local authority with an electoral division or ward that has an electoral variance of 30% or over. This means a division or ward having 30% more or fewer electors per councillor than is average for the council as a whole.*
  - *Any local authority where more than 30% of divisions or wards have an electoral variance of over 10% from the average for that authority.*
14. Based on the electoral data given to the LGBCE by this authority:
- 6 (30%) of the electoral wards have a variance greater than 10%
  - 1 of the electoral wards has a variance of over 30%

15. The data used to calculate the variance is based on the number of local government electors (including attainers) in each electoral area at 1 December 2016.

## TIMETABLE

16. In advance of the review formally starting the Commission will undertake a preliminary period, during which time it will gather further information from the authority including detailed mapping and electronic forecasts.
17. A meeting is being arranged between the Chair and Chief Executive of the LGBCE and the Executive Leader and Chief Executive of the Council in October. If that meeting goes ahead, it has been proposed that the representatives from the LGBCE will spend an afternoon in Chorley speaking to group leaders, officers, councillors and parish/town council representatives on the 21 November, which is the same day as the next full Council meeting.
18. The LGBCE have set out the following timetable for the review:

Stage starts	Description
June 2018	Number of councillors decided
June 2018	Start of consultation seeking views on new wards
September 2018	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming draft recommendations
November 2018	Publication of draft recommendations, start of second consultation
January 2019	End of consultation; we begin analysing submissions and forming final recommendations
March 2019	Publication of final recommendations
Ordinary day of elections 2020	Election on new electoral arrangements

## IMPACT OF THE REVIEW

19. The review is likely to mean a change in the number of Councillors and significant change to ward boundaries or numbers of wards and also potentially polling stations. The link under background documents is to LGBCE guidance on Electoral Reviews which Members may find useful. Appendix 2 in a list of FAQs which also may be of interest.
20. As part of the review, a Boundary Committee will need to be established to oversee the review and implementation of the recommendations. The membership for this Committee will need to be appointed at the annual Council meeting in May 2018. The Committee will need to be politically balanced.
21. The first borough election on the new electoral arrangements will be a whole-council election to bring the new wards into force. Unless the Council decides otherwise, it is anticipated that elections will return to elections by thirds as soon as practicable afterwards and in 3 member wards for example, those who poll lowest will serve 2 years, those who poll second will serve 3 years and those who poll the highest will serve 4 years.
22. Members should note that this review has an impact on those Councillors elected in May 2018 as they will only serve a term of 2 years (and in 2019, a term of 1 year).

## POLLING STATION CHANGES

23. A report was due to be presented at the Council meeting on 21 November about potential changes to polling stations. Due to the electoral review taking place earlier than anticipated, with the exception of Gillibrand Primary School being replaced by Buttermere Community Centre, it is suggested that changes to polling stations should not be introduced until after the outcome of review is known, in order to avoid confusion to electors.

## PARISH COUNCILS

24. Parish electoral arrangements may also be considered as part of this review.

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

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

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

## COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

26. No comments.

## COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

27. No comments.

GARY HALL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Cathryn Filbin	5123	21/09/17	<a href="https://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/10410/technical-guidance-2014.pdf">https://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/10410/technical-guidance-2014.pdf</a>