

From: Graham Gibbens, Chairman of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee

Geoff Wild, Director of Governance and Law

To: Electoral and Boundary Review Committee – 25 July 2013

Subject: Electoral Review of Shepway – Draft Recommendations

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides information on the draft recommendations for the electoral review of Shepway District published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on 18 June and which are the subject of a consultation which will close on 9 September 2013.

1. (1) In November 2011 Shepway District Council established a working group of Councillors to look at introducing predominantly single member wards and reducing the number of councillors. Shepway currently has 46 councillors.

(2) In response to the report of the working Group, the District Council passed the following resolutions:

“(a) To support the submission of a proposal to the LGBCE (Local Government Boundary Commission for England) incorporating the proposed new arrangements which demonstrate how the Council would operate with 38 member wards where necessary according to current electorate size, future electorate projections and geographical considerations.

(b) That the overall system of governance should continue to be the strong leader and cabinet model with independent overview and scrutiny.”

(3) The Commission noted Shepway’s proposal for 38 Members but considered that the evidence provided by the Council pointed towards a council size of 30 Members and that this reduction would be sustainable. The Commission noted the work already done by the Council to streamline its committee structure and considered that 30 Members would be sufficient to effectively manage committee work and to allow individual Councillors to perform their representative role.

(4) At its meeting on 2 August, 2012, this Committee considered a report on the proposals and resolved that the submission made to the LGBCE by Shepway District Council be noted and that Shepway District Council be informed that the County Council would not want to see any review of Ward Boundaries that would lead to the creation of more than two Member Electoral Divisions or any difficulties caused if the County Council wanted to change existing two Member divisions to single Member divisions in the future; A letter

was sent to the LGBCE and a response received which was circulated to all Members (copy attached as **Appendix 1**).

(5) The LGBCE has now published their draft recommendations and are proposing that there should be 30 Councillors on Shepway District Council with the wards organised as follows - one single-member, seven two-member and five three-member wards. Full details of the proposed wards are set out in the LGBCE report (attached as **Appendix 2**). A copy of a map showing the proposed wards and the related electoral divisions will be displayed at the meeting.

(6) The consultation on these proposals will close on 9 September 2013. The LGBCE expects to publish its final recommendations in early 2014.

Recommendation(s): The Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to respond to the consultation on the proposed recommendation from the LGBC to reduce the Council size of Shepway District Council to 30 Councillors and the related warding proposals.

Background Documents

Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Shepway Review
<http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/shepway-fer>

Contact details

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
(01622) 694269