

From: Graham Gibbens, Chairman of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee
Geoff Wild, Director of Governance & Law and County Returning Officer

To: County Council – 17 July 2014

Subject: Electoral Review of Kent County Council's Area – Draft submission on Council Size

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report invites the County Council to comment on, amend as necessary and approve for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) the County Council's submission on Council Size as part of the Electoral Review of KCC's area.

1. Introduction

- (1) Members will recall that on 30 April 2014, representatives from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) gave a presentation to all Members on the Electoral Boundary Review of Kent County Council's area.
- (2) All Members received a copy of the LGBCE's "Electoral Review of Kent County Council – A guide for Councillors", which is attached at **Appendix A** for ease of reference.
- (3) The Electoral Boundary Review is being conducted in two distinct parts.

Council size

Before any electoral boundary division boundaries are re-drawn, the Commission will come to a view on the total number of councillors to be elected to the Council in future. The Commission will come to a conclusion on Council size after hearing the Council's (and/or Councillors') views during the preliminary phase.

Electoral Division boundaries

The Commission will then re-draw electoral division boundaries so that they meet the statutory criteria: Delivering electoral equality for local voters; interests and identities of local communities; and effective and convenient local government. The County Council will have an opportunity to put forward ideas and proposals in two phases of public consultation.

2. Council size

- (1) The Electoral and Boundary Review Committee has met three times (1 April, 5 June and 7 July) to consider the issue of Council size and at its meeting on 7 July agreed to recommend to the County Council that the Council should remain at 84 Members and that as part of this recommendation, the LGBCE be asked to note the Council's preference for single Member divisions where possible. Accordingly, the draft submission on Council Size has now been finalised and is attached at **Appendix B** for the County Council's consideration.

3. Next Steps

- (1) The deadline for the County Council and/or Council groups' submission to the LGBCE on Council Size is 8 August 2014. It is important to note that any single member or group of members can submit a proposal for Council Size. The LGBCE places no more weight on a submission which has agreement by full council than a single member submission. The LGBCE is looking for evidence, supported by an explanation of how the proposal meets the Commission's statutory criteria, to back up the submission.

Recommendations:

1. The County Council is invited to comment on, amend as necessary and approve for submission to the LGBCE the County Council's submission on Council size.
2. That authority be delegated to the Head of Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chairman of the Electoral and Boundary Review Committee to make any final amendments to the submission that are necessary prior to the deadline for submission.

Background Documents:

Previous update reports to the Electoral Boundary Committee

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