

From: Ben Watts, County Returning Officer  
To: Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 27 March 2024  
Subject: 2023 Electoral Changes Orders – Ashford  
Status: Unrestricted

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## **1. Introduction**

This paper is to update the Committee about two Electoral Changes Orders made on 16 February 2023 and relate to alterations to the county division boundaries in the Ashford area.

## **2. The Ashford (Electoral Changes) (No. 2) Order 2023**

In 2015 Ashford Borough Council conducted a Community Governance Review (CGR) of its parish ward boundaries.

In October 2016 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) notified Kent County Council (KCC) that it was carrying out a review following the CGR in Ashford. It advised, subject KCC's approval, it would need to make a related alterations order to the county division boundaries as a consequential change resulting from the CGR. The Committee considered and agreed the proposed alterations to the county electoral boundaries in November 2016.

[The Ashford \(Electoral Changes\) Order 2017](#) was made and came into force for the KCC election on 4 May 2017.

In August 2021, KCC contacted the LGBCE as it had become aware of an error in the wording of the order. [The Ashford \(Electoral Changes\) \(No. 2\) Order 2023](#) was subsequently made to correct the wording in the original order.

## **3. The Ashford (Electoral Changes) (No. 1) Order 2023**

In addition to The Ashford (Electoral Changes) (No. 2) Order 2023, KCC became aware that a second Electoral Changes Order had been made, [The Ashford \(Electoral Changes\) \(No. 1\) Order 2023](#). This Order made changes to the county division boundaries of Ashford Central and Ashford Rural West which will come into effect for the KCC election in May 2025. The changes are detailed in Appendix 1 & 2 with an explanatory note and map.

In 2022 Ashford Borough Council conducted a further Community Governance Review (CGR) of its parish ward boundaries. As part of the CGR, the local KCC Members were consulted on the proposed change who confirmed their agreement: Paul Bartlett (Ashford Central) and Charlie Simkins (Ashford Rural West).

However, this Committee, which has responsibility for dealing with all matters relating to county division boundaries, was not consulted about this alteration.

Officers have been liaising with Ashford Borough Council and LGBCE about this. The 12 borough, city and district councils have subsequently been asked to ensure that KCC is notified of any Community Governance Reviews or proposed related orders to county division boundaries going forwards.

#### **4. Recommendation**

The Electoral & Boundary Review Committee is asked to note The Ashford (Electoral Changes) (No. 1) Order 2023 and The Ashford (Electoral Changes) (No. 2) Order 2023 which relate to county division boundaries in the Ashford area.

#### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Explanatory Note
- Appendix 2 – Map

#### **Background Documents**

Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 24 November 2016

[Agenda for Electoral and Boundary Review Committee on Thursday, 24th November, 2016, 10.00 am \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

[The Ashford \(Electoral Changes\) Order 2017](#)

[The Ashford \(Electoral Changes\) \(No. 1\) Order 2023](#)

[The Ashford \(Electoral Changes\) \(No. 2\) Order 2023](#)

#### **5. Report Author and Relevant Director**

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