

From: Ben Watts, County Returning Officer
To: Electoral & Boundary Review Committee, 15 October 2024
Subject: Maidstone Borough Council – Community Governance Review
Status: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

Principal councils (district councils or unitary councils) have the power to carry out community governance reviews and put in place or make changes to local community (parish) governance arrangements under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. A review can consider a number of issues including the creation of a new parish, altering the boundary of an existing parish or grouping a number of parishes together in a grouped parish council.

Maidstone Borough Council conducted a Community Governance Review of the whole borough in 2022 - 2023. The final recommendations were considered and approved at a meeting of its Council on 27 September 2023. A Reorganisation of Community Governance Order confirming the new parish boundaries came into force on 1 April 2024.

As part of the revised parish boundaries, Maidstone Borough Council has identified a number of areas where the parish and county boundary will no longer be coterminous and would like to formally consult the Committee, which has responsibility for dealing with all matters relating to county division boundaries, on the proposed alterations. These are detailed in Appendix 1 with an explanatory note and maps.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is responsible for determining and making related alterations to district ward or county division boundaries following parish boundary changes as a result of a CGR. It has set a deadline of the end of October 2024 to consider the proposed alterations to district, ward and county division boundaries resulting from the CGR. This is to ensure the changes are in place in time for 1 May 2025 County Elections. The Committee's view on the proposed alterations will be included as part of the evidence submitted to the LGBCE by Maidstone Borough Council as part of its alteration request.

If alterations to the county division boundaries are made by the LGBCE, they will come into force for the KCC election in May 2025. If they are not made, a number of additional polling districts will need to be created in the areas where the boundaries are no longer coterminous which would result in difficulties in administering the elections and potential voter confusion.

The local Members for Maidstone Central, Maidstone Rural East, Maidstone Rural North, Maidstone Rural South, Maidstone Rural West, Maidstone South, and

Maidstone South East have been consulted on the proposed alterations set out in Appendix 1.

2. Recommendation

The Electoral & Boundary Review Committee is asked to consider and comment on the proposed alterations to the county division boundaries in the Maidstone area.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Explanatory Note & Map

Background Documents

Maidstone Borough Council (2023) 'Community Governance Review (Parishes)'
[Community Governance Review \(Parishes\) | Lets Talk Maidstone](#)

Maidstone Borough Council, Council, 27 September 2023
[Agenda, Council, 27 September 2023](#)

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (2010) 'Guidance on community governance reviews'
[Guidance on community governance reviews](#)

The Maidstone Borough (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2023
[Reorganisation of Community Governance Order](#)

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