

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Electoral Arrangements Committee

7 July 2011

AUTHOR/S: Chief Executive / Corporate Manager (Community and Customer Services)

CAMBRIDGE CITY AND SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE – BOUNDARY REVIEW

Purpose

1. To report to Members on the progress with proposals for a boundary review with Cambridge City and to advise of the likely timetable for a boundary review as indicated by the Boundary Commission. To seek a recommendation to Council for its meeting on 21 July 2011.
2. This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of the District as it affects many of the wards whose boundaries are adjacent to the boundary of the City Council. It was first published in the July 2011 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

3. That the Committee should revisit the existing request for a boundary review between South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council and recommend to Council whether it is still appropriate that the authority requests a review from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. Given the amount of time that has elapsed since the original proposal for a boundary review was formulated (April 2008) and recent changes to Boundary Commission guidance, it is felt prudent that the Committee should revisit the existing proposal to ensure it is still appropriate.

Background and considerations

5. In October 2007 Council authorised the Chief Executive to enter into discussions with the Chief Executive of Cambridge City Council regarding a District / City boundary review, on the basis that such discussions were to have due regard to the needs of parishes likely to be affected by any such review. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 permits principal authorities, of which SCDC is one, to request the Boundary Committee to undertake administrative boundary reviews. Such requests can be unilateral or made jointly by neighbouring authorities.
6. A report was brought to the April 2008 meeting of the Electoral Arrangements Committee outlining a proposal, which had been drawn up following those discussions. The proposals are shown on the attached plan (**Appendix A**) and were described in the report to the April meeting of the Committee (**Appendix B**). That report outlined the rationale behind the proposals. At this meeting following representations from several Parish Councils and some local Members, the Committee decided that all Parish Councils in the district would be asked for their views on the proposals.

7. Following this consultation exercise the Electoral Arrangements Committee, at its July 2008 meeting, recommended to Council that the submission of a request for a review of the administrative boundary between Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council be agreed in principle, on the basis of the proposals outlined previously. This recommendation was subsequently agreed by Council at their meeting on 17 July 2008, subject to satisfactory assurances being received on the issue of the RSS. A letter was subsequently received from Go-East and Cabinet (at their December 2008 meeting) resolved to proceed with the review in light of the perceived assurances in the letter.
8. Since this time, work has been on-going in terms of both understanding the implications of such a boundary change (**Appendix C** details an assessment of the demographic impact of the proposed changes, in terms of population and dwelling stock, now and in the future) and discussing with the Boundary Commission the potential timescales and timetabling of any review.
9. In May 2011, the LGBCE (Local Government Boundary Commission for England) issued new guidance covering both its main types of review work: electoral reviews and Principal Area Boundary Reviews (PABRs). This new guidance aims to simplify the electoral review process for some reviews and, in doing so, increases the capacity of the Commission. Consequently they are introducing a new programme of boundary reviews to deal with the external boundaries of local authorities and have asked South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council whether they still wish to proceed with their proposed review. A preliminary meeting was held with the LGBCE in March 2011, which indicated that any review could possibly be undertaken in the 2012/13 programme of reviews, subject to the business case, the level of simplicity and consensus, etc.
10. Given the amount of time that has elapsed since the original proposal was formulated it is felt prudent that the Electoral Arrangements Committee should revisit the proposal and recommend to council whether it is still appropriate that the authority requests a review from the LGBCE.

Implications

11.	Financial	All SCDC input into any future review would be from within existing resources.
	Legal	None identified.
	Staffing	All SCDC input into any future review would be from within existing resources.
	Risk Management	None identified.
	Equality and Diversity	None identified.
	Equality Impact Assessment completed	No.
	Climate Change	None identified.
	Young people	None identified.

Consultations

12. Considerable consultation was conducted on the original proposal, as detailed in the attached appendices.

Effect on Strategic Aims

13. None.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: See appendices

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