



Report To: Council
Lead Officer: Jean Hunter, Chief Executive

28 January 2016

First Phase Consultation Response to LGBCE South Cambridgeshire Electoral Review

Purpose

1. To approve submission of a Council response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) first phase of consultation on new warding patterns for South Cambridgeshire.
2. This proposal was recommended for submission by the Civic Affairs Committee on 12 January 2016.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Council **APPROVE** submission of the warding proposal, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as a Council response to the first phase of the review.
4. This proposal was developed by the Member Champion in consultation with all Members, and was recommended for approval by Civic Affairs Committee - subject to the inclusion of an amendment to ward 20 in respect of Cambourne to reflect that the proposed ward was a single large settlement which would clearly benefit from being a ward on its own, and that there were plans for continued growth beyond the forecast period.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The Member Champion has been tasked by the Civic Affairs Committee to draft a Council response, and this has been done in consultation with all members.

Background

6. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has begun a review of the electoral arrangements of South Cambridgeshire District Council.
7. This review has been initiated because of an increasing imbalance in the number of people represented by each member across the district.
8. In advance of the review commencing formally, the Council resolved to move to all-out elections from 2018. This decision was made to ensure that the LGBCE could implement a warding pattern that saw a mix of one, two and three member wards.
9. The Council also made a submission to the LGBCE recommending a Council Size of 45 members going forward. The submission made it clear that the Council would not support a Council Size smaller than this number.

10. At its meeting in late November, the LGBCE supported the Council's proposals for a Council Size of 45 and approved the electorate forecasts which had been submitted. At this point, the LGBCE invited stakeholders and interested parties to submit proposals for the future warding of the district.
11. The first phase of consultation is scheduled to finish on 1 February 2016.
12. The Civic Affairs Committee met on 12 January and recommended that Council approves the warding proposal for submission to the LGBCE.
13. Very minor changes have been made to the proposal as a result of the Civic Affairs Committee. Two small errors in the report have been corrected and additional information has been added to the report indicating that continued growth is likely in the proposed Cambourne Ward beyond the five year forecast.

Considerations

14. The Civic Affairs Committee in November agreed to support two principles in the forming of new warding proposals. Where possible and practical, these were:
 - (i) to propose single member wards
 - (ii) to avoid smaller villages being placed in the same ward as a single larger village
15. Alongside these principles, the Member Champion has been working closely with the forecast electorates and the LGBCE key principles of electoral equality, community identity and effective and convenient local government to ensure any proposal made by the Council is robust.

Options

16. Council could either:
 - (a) **APPROVE** the warding proposal at Appendix 1 and ask for it to be submitted to the LGBCE as a Council response
 - (b) **NOT APPROVE** submission of the warding proposal
17. It is recommended that option A be approved, as the Member Champion has extensively consulted all members (by email) on his proposals, and the warding proposal is recommended for submission by the Civic Affairs Committee.
18. Any attempt to make alternative proposals should be handled very carefully so as to ensure that any submission made is able to reflect the key requirements of the LGBCE.

Implications

19. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

There are no significant implications.

Consultation responses (including from the Youth Council)

20. The LGBCE consultation is open to all interested parties for comment and proposal. The Council does not need to consult on its own response but has publicised the review through the South Cambs Magazine and social media channels.

Background Papers

LGBCE Guidance on warding proposals:

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/policy-and-publications/guidance>

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