

Summary Sheet

Council Report

Council – 12 July 2017

Report Title

Local Government Boundary Commission for England's Review of Ward Boundaries in Rotherham

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

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Report Author

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Wards Affected

All

Summary

The Council has now received the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) recommended approach for the future warding of Rotherham.

The Commission's proposals were published on 4 July 2017 and confirm that there should be 59 councillors in the borough elected from 25 wards, which is four wards more, but four councillors fewer than there are at present. The Commission also proposes changes to all of the current ward boundaries in the borough.

This report details what is involved in the next stage of the review and outlines a recommended approach for the Council to respond to the proposals from the LGBCE.

Recommendations

1. That the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Rotherham be noted.
2. That the timetable for the remainder of the ward boundary review be noted.

3. That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Constitution Working Group, to submit a response on behalf of the Council in respect of warding arrangements to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 – Letter from the Chief Executive of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England dated 4 July 2017.

Appendix 2 – Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Rotherham Borough Council

Background Papers

Report to Council – Review of Ward Boundaries and the Size of the Council – 13 July 2016

Report to Council – Review of Ward Boundaries and the Size of the Council – 7 September 2016

Report to Council – Local Government Boundary Commission for England’s Review of Ward Boundaries in Rotherham – 8 March 2017

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Constitution Working Group

Council Approval Required

Yes

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Local Government Boundary Commission for England's Review of Ward Boundaries in Rotherham

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Rotherham be noted.
- 1.2 That the timetable for the remainder of the ward boundary review be noted.
- 1.3 That authority be delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Constitution Working Group, to submit a response on behalf of the Council in respect of warding arrangements to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) initiated a review of the local government ward boundaries within Rotherham following the move to whole council elections in May 2016. The objective of the review is to deliver effective and convenient local government, with a presumption that there is no longer a requirement to have three councillors representing each ward.
- 2.2 The LGBCE is an independent statutory body which was established by and is accountable to Parliament. The role of the LGBCE is:
 - to provide electoral arrangements for English principal authorities that are fair and deliver electoral equality for voters; and
 - to keep the map of English local government in good repair by working with councils to help them deliver effective and convenient local government to citizens.
- 2.3 There are two distinct stages to a Boundary Review:-
 - a) Preliminary Stage – for the Council to indicate what size of membership will be appropriate for the future to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the authority
 - b) Second Stage – for the LGBCE to identify and consult upon the warding pattern for the Borough. Within the overall number of councillors, there will be a need to create wards which address the criteria of electoral equality, community identity and effective and convenient local government.
- 2.4 In September 2016, the Council indicated to the LGBCE that the preferred size of membership of the authority from May 2020 was 59 councillors.

2.5 In February 2017, the LGBCE indicated that it was minded to recommend a membership of 59 to Parliament, subject to the completion of the remainder of the review. For a two month period from February to May 2017, the LGBCE ran a consultation on the future warding arrangements for Rotherham. The Council submitted a response to the consultation, which was supported by the two political groups on the Council.

3. Key Issues

3.1 The Council has now received the draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Rotherham (see Appendix 2). The LGBCE has confirmed its recommendation that the Council should be made up of 59 councillors serving 25 wards, representing 16 two Member wards and 9 three Member wards.

3.2 The LGBCE's stated aim was to propose a pattern of wards for Rotherham which would deliver:

- Electoral equality: each local councillor represents a similar number of voters
- Community identity: reflects the identity and interests of local communities
- Effective and convenient local government: helping the council to discharge its responsibilities effectively.

3.3 The proposed ward arrangements from May 2020 would be:

Ward Name	Number of Councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of Electors per Councillor
Anston & Woodsetts	3	9,714	3,238
Aston & Todwick	2	7,348	3,674
Aughton & Swallownest	2	6,849	3,425
Boston Castle	3	10,526	3,509
Bramley & Ravenfield	2	7,423	3,712
Brinsworth	2	7,715	3,858
Dalton & Thrybergh	2	7,503	3,752
Dinnington	3	10,089	3,363
Greasbrough	2	6,567	3,284
Hooper	3	10,286	3,429
Keppel	3	11,058	3,686
Kilnhurst & Swinton East	2	6,342	3,171
Maltby East	2	6,764	3,382
Maltby West	2	6,648	3,324
Rawmarsh East	2	7,365	3,683
Rawmarsh West	2	7,286	3,643

Ward Name	Number of Councillors	Electorate (2022)	Number of Electors per Councillor
Rother Vale	2	6,550	3,275
Rotherham East	3	10,917	3,639
Rotherham West	3	10,812	3,604
Sitwell	3	10,285	3,428
Swinton Rockingham	2	6,466	3,233
Thurcroft & Wickersley South	2	7,194	3,597
Wales	2	7,480	3,740
Wath	2	6,835	3,418
Wickersley North	3	10,241	3,414

4. Options considered and recommended proposal

4.1 The LGBCE has now reached the final stage of its review of warding arrangements in Rotherham, which involves:

- Consultation on draft arrangements – when LGBCE has published its draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements (number of wards, number of councillors representing each ward, ward names and ward boundaries) for an area, the Council, public and partners will have the chance to comment on them.

4.2 The period of consultation in respect of the draft arrangements commenced on 4 July 2017 and will end on 4 September 2017. On 7 September 2016, the Council resolved that the Constitution Working Group be authorised to continue to lead on the Review of Ward Boundaries for the duration of the review, subject to any further proposals being agreed by Council for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

4.3 There are no more Council meetings scheduled during the consultation period. Therefore, if the Council is minded to submit a response to the consultation in respect of the draft warding arrangements, it will be necessary to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Constitution Working Group, to submit the response to the LGBCE. In doing so, any response will be subject to the agreement of a proposal by the Constitution Working Group. This is the recommended approach.

4.4 The Council is not required to submit a response to the LGBCE.

5. Consultation

5.1 The Council has the opportunity to respond directly to the consultation being run by the LGBCE. In this sense, the Council is consultee, rather than running a consultation. However, the Constitution Working Group may seek views from the wider membership of the Council prior to finalising its response to the LGBCE.

5.2 It should be noted that partners and members of the public will be able to independently submit their own response to the draft warding arrangement proposals directly to the LGBCE. The letter from the Chief Executive of the Local Government Boundary Commission dated 4 July 2017, which is appended to this report, has been copied to all town and parish councils in the borough, along with various other public bodies that operate within Rotherham.

6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

6.1 If Council is minded to agree to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to formally submit a response to the LGBCE, it will be necessary for the decision to be made at this meeting. There are no further scheduled Council meetings before the end of the consultation period on 4 September 2017.

6.2 The timetable for the final stage of the review is set out below:

	Date from:	Date to:
LGBCE Consultation on warding arrangements	4 July 2017	4 September 2017
Final recommendations published	31 October 2017	

7. Financial and Procurement Implications

7.1 There are no financial or procurement implications directly arising from this report. However, changing the number of councillors and the number of wards will have financial consequences in terms of member allowances and the cost of running elections.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 LGBCE will undertake an electoral boundary review in accordance with the statutory criteria detailed in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which requires LGBCE to have regard to the need to:

- Secure equality of representation;
- Reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- Effective and convenient local government

9. Human Resources Implications

9.1 There are no Human Resources implications directly arising from this report.

10. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

10.1 There are no implications for Children and Young People or vulnerable adults arising from this report.

11. Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 11.1 Securing equality of representation and reflecting the identities and interests of local communities are key aspects of electoral boundary reviews.

12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 12.1 There are no implications for partners or other directorates in respect of the recommended approach.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Failure to ensure electoral representation is fair and equitable restricts the Council's ability to deliver services reflective of local need, demands and choice.

14. Accountable Officers

Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive
Dermot Pearson, Assistant Director – Legal Services

Approvals Obtained from:-

Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Services:- Judith Badger

Assistant Director of Legal Services:- Dermot Pearson

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