

## Summary Sheet

### Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Council – 13 December 2017

### Report Title

Local Government Boundary Commission for England's Review of Ward Boundaries in Rotherham – Notification of Final Recommendations

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

No

### Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Shokat Lal, Assistant Chief Executive

### Report Author(s)

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### Ward(s) Affected

All

### Summary

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

The Commission's proposals were published on 31 October 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 is submitted to ensure that all Members are aware of the final recommendations from the LGBCE.

### Recommendations

1. That the final recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in respect of the future council size and warding arrangements in the borough of Rotherham be noted.
2. That the future Council size of 59 Members and the operation of 25 electoral wards from May 2020 be noted.

## **List of Appendices Included**

### **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

Report to Council – Local Government Boundary Commission for England’s Review of Ward Boundaries in Rotherham – 12 July 2017

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **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 final recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in respect of the future council size and warding arrangements in the borough of Rotherham be noted.
- 1.2 That the future Council size of 59 Members and the operation of 25 electoral wards from May 2020 be noted.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Following the move to all-out elections in Rotherham in May 2016, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) commenced an electoral review of the Council in July 2016. There are two key stages for the electoral review:
  - a) Preliminary Stage – for the Council to indicate what size of membership would be appropriate to undertake the functions and responsibilities of the authority in future and to reach agreement on this with the LGBCE.
  - b) Second Stage – for the LGBCE to consult upon the future warding pattern for the Borough. Taking account of the overall number of councillors, there will be a need to create ward boundaries which address the criteria of electoral equality, community identity and effective and convenient local government. Taking account of consultation, the LGBCE to issue draft and then final recommendations for the future pattern of wards.

### **3. Key Issues**

- 3.1 On 13 July 2016, the Council authorised the Chief Executive to submit a draft submission on Council size to the LGBCE in the light of the representations received from the Constitution Working Group.
- 3.2 On 7 September 2016, the Council agreed a submission that the future size of the membership should be 59 councillors from May 2020. It further agreed that the Constitution Working Group continue to lead on the electoral review for the duration of the process, subject to any further proposals being agreed by Council for submission to the LGBCE. On 21 February 2017, the LGBCE indicated that it was minded to recommend a membership of 59 councillors.
- 3.3 On 28 February 2017, LGBCE commenced a period of consultation until 8 May 2017 seeking suggestions for the warding arrangements for the borough to fit the reduced membership of 59 councillors. The reduction in council size meant that 8 of Rotherham's 21 existing wards no longer had viable electorates and change was therefore inevitable. The move to all-out elections also meant that wards were no longer restricted to having three councillors and smaller wards might allow a better fit to local communities.

- 3.4 On 8 March 2017, Council agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Constitution Working Group, to submit a warding proposal on behalf of RMBC. Consultation with Members took place at well attended drop-in sessions held on 23 March and 11 April. The review was also discussed at the Parish Council Liaison Group in March. Taking account of Member feedback, the Constitution Working Group agreed a warding scheme on 21 April and the Council submitted a boroughwide proposal to the LGBCE on 4 May. A number of parish councils and individuals, including councillors, also made their own comments.
- 3.5 On 4 July 2017, LGBCE published their draft recommendations for a warding arrangement for the borough and invited comments upon these by 4 September 2017. The recommendations largely reflected the Council's proposals with a number of minor amendments. The Constitution Working Group met on 4 August and agreed to support the draft recommendations with one exception relating to Wickersley. The Parish Council Liaison Group was also informed of the draft recommendations. The Council responded to the consultation, as did a number of other organisations and individuals, including some councillors. This was the final period of consultation by the LGBCE during the review.
- 3.6 On 31 October 2017, the LGBCE published its final recommendations. There is no provision in legislation for further representations to be received in relation to these. The LGBCE will lay a draft order before Parliament in December, and after 40 days this will be given effect following the draft negative resolution procedure and become law early in 2018. The final proposals can be summarised as follows:
- Rotherham MBC will be represented by **59 councillors**, four fewer than now.
  - Rotherham MBC will have **25 wards**, four more than now.
  - 9 wards will have 3 councillors and 16 wards will have 2 councillors.
  - The boundaries of all wards will change, some wards will be similar to existing wards but others will be quite different.
  - The new boundaries come into force in May 2020
- 3.7 Councillors will continue to represent their existing wards until the next borough-wide local elections in May 2020. All 59 seats will then be contested using the new ward boundaries. Any by-election which takes place before May 2020 will be held using the relevant existing ward boundary.
- 3.8 The final recommendations are based largely on the draft recommendations with four changes affecting some of the proposed wards as follows:

- A few houses on Golden Smithies Lane, Wath (19 electors), to be in Wath ward rather than Swinton Rockingham, as originally proposed by the Council.
- The two Maltby wards to be divided along Braithwell Road, as originally proposed by the Council. This affects 181 electors.
- Wickersley North to be bounded by Bawtry Road along its entire southern boundary, as originally proposed by the Council. This affects 379 electors.
- The proposed Maltby West ward to be named Hellaby & Maltby West.

3.9 The changes to the draft proposals are relatively minor and three were originally proposed by the Council in response to the first consultation in May. The use of Hellaby in a ward name acknowledges this parish and continues an existing use of Hellaby in a ward name.

#### **4. Options considered and recommended proposal**

4.1 This report is submitted for information and the Council is asked to note the final recommendations of the LGBCE.

#### **5. Consultation**

5.1 As the review process has now concluded, there is no further opportunity to formally comment on the recommendations.

#### **6. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

6.1 There is no formal decision required by Council in respect of this report.

#### **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 have undertaken 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 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 There are no equalities or human rights implications arising from this report.

## **12. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

12.1 Partners have been written to by the LGBCE and made aware of the final recommendations. As electoral wards are not only used by the Council in the delivery of services and analysis of data, partners will need to take account of and plan for the changes with effect from May 2020.

## **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. The final recommendations from the LGBCE have been designed as a mitigation to any associated risk.

## **14. Accountable Officer(s)**

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

Approvals obtained from:-

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services	Judith Badger	05/12/2017
Assistant Director of Legal Services	Dermot Pearson	04/12/2017
Head of Procurement (if appropriate)		
Head of Human Resources (if appropriate)		

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