

LGBCE (18)10th Special Commission Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on Friday 5th October 2018 at 11:30am in LGBCE Board Room, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0TL

Commissioners Present

Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
Susan Johnson OBE
Peter Maddison QPM
Andrew Scallan CBE
Steve Robinson
Amanda Nobbs OBE

LGBCE Officers Present:

Jolyon Jackson CBE	Chief Executive
Marcus Bowell	Director of Strategy & Communications
Alison Evison	Review & Programme Manager
Richard Buck	Review Manager
Jo Porter	Review Manager
Emily Starkie	Review Officer (item 2)
David Owen	Review Officer (item 3)
Dan Carlsson-Hyslop	Review Officer (item 4)
Mark Cooper	Review Officer (item 5)
Dean Faccini	Business Support Officer (minutes)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Director of Finance & Resources.

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Matters Arising

The Chair commended the team for their hard work and professionalism in completing the reviews on the establishment of new authorities in the time available. The reviews had been conducted fully in line with our statutory criteria and with the

same level of rigour that characterised other reviews. It was also noted that, as anticipated, the reviews had attracted considerable public interest and the level of engagement had been helpful in formulating the Final recommendations.

1. East Suffolk Final Recommendations - LGBCE (18)114

The Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which established the new unitary district of East Suffolk. The new council combines the existing Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council. The Order provided for a new 55-member East Suffolk that would be established in 2019. This Order passed Parliamentary scrutiny on 24 May 2018.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission had been minded to adopt a council size of 55 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations for the new authority. An eight-week public consultation on the draft recommendations ran from 3 July to 27 August 2018.

Following publication, 83 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some areas and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The Final Recommendations proposed a council size of 55 members and a pattern of eight three-, 10 two-, and 11 single-member wards in total. Two of the wards will have an electoral variance greater than 10 per cent of the average for the council by 2023.

The Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations with one minor amendment to the boundary between Eastern Felixstowe and Western Felixstowe so that the boundary follows the railway line to the south ensuring that all of the dock is included in Western Felixstowe. This change does not affect any electors.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for East Suffolk as presented.

2. West Suffolk Final Recommendations – LGBCE (18)115

The Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which established the new unitary district of West Suffolk. The new council combines the existing Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council. The Order provided for a new 64-member Council that would be established in 2019. This Order passed Parliamentary scrutiny on 24 May 2018.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission had been minded to adopt a council size of 64 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations for the new authority. An eight-week public consultation on the draft recommendations ran from 3 July to 27 August 2018.

Following publication, 128 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some areas and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The Final Recommendations proposed a council size of 64 members and a pattern of two three-, 17 two-, and 24 single-member wards in total. None of the wards will have an electoral variance outside the 10 per cent average for the council by 2023.

The Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for West Suffolk as presented.

3. Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Final Recommendations – LGBCE (18)116

The Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which established the new unitary district of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council. The new council combines the existing Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Borough Councils. The Order provided for a new 76-member council that would be established in 2019. This Order passed Parliamentary scrutiny on 24 May 2018.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission had been minded to adopt a council size of 76 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations for the new authority. An eight-week public consultation on the draft recommendations ran from 3 July to 27 August 2018.

Following publication, 598 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some aspects and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The Final Recommendations proposed a council size of 76 members and a pattern of 10 three-, and 23 two-member wards in total. None of the wards will have an electoral variance outside of the 10 per cent average for the council by 2023.

It was noted that, on 17 September 2018, Christchurch Borough Council took the decision to make three Reorganisation of Community Governance (ROGC) Orders following a Community Governance Review (CGR). These orders would make changes to parish and parish ward boundaries within the borough and would come into effect from April 2019. However, the team was unable to take these changes into account during the development of its Final Recommendations due to the conflicting scheduling of the CGR and the need to ensure good electoral equality. The Final Recommendations, therefore, reflect the parish boundaries at the time of the review being completed.

The Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Borough Council as presented.

4. Dorset Final Recommendations – LGBCE (18)117

The Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which established the new unitary council of Dorset. The new council combines the existing East Dorset district, North Dorset district, Purbeck district, West Dorset district and Weymouth & Portland borough. The Order provided for a new 82-member council that would be established in 2019. This Order passed Parliamentary scrutiny on 25 May 2018.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 82 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations for the new authority. An eight-week public consultation on the draft recommendations ran from 3 July to 27 August 2018.

Following publication, 183 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some aspects and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The Final Recommendations proposed a council size of 82 members and a pattern of six three-, 18 two-, and 28 single-member wards total. Three of the wards will have an electoral variance greater than 10 per cent of the average for the council by 2023.

It was noted that East Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council took the decision to make Reorganisation of Community Governance (ROGC) Orders following a Community Governance Review (CGR). These orders would make changes to parish and parish ward boundaries within these authorities and would come into effect from April 2019. However, the team was unable to take into account the changes in Weymouth & Portland during the development of the Final Recommendations. This was due to the conflicting scheduling of the CGR and the need to ensure good electoral equality for district wards in this area. The Final Recommendations, therefore, reflect the parish arrangements in Weymouth & Portland that existed at the time of the review being completed.

The Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for Dorset Council as presented.

5. Somerset West & Taunton Final Recommendations – LGBCE (18)118

The Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which established the new unitary district of Somerset West and Taunton Council. The new council combines the existing Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset District Council. The Order provided for a new 58-member Council that would be established in 2019. This Order passed Parliamentary scrutiny on 24 May 2018.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission noted the suggestion of a council of 58 members but having considered all the evidence against the statutory criteria, it was minded to adopt a council size of 59 as this would provide for better electoral equality across the district. It then subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations for the new authority. An eight-week public consultation on the draft recommendations ran from 3 July to 27 August 2018.

Following publication, 128 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some aspects and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The Final Recommendations proposed a council size of 59 members and a pattern of five three-, 14 two-, and 16 single-member wards in total. One of the wards will have an electoral variance greater than 10 per cent of the average for the council by 2023.

The Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for Somerset West and Taunton Council as presented.

AOB

It was suggested that the Commission and the teams should compile 'lessons learned' from the reviews, whilst memories were fresh, to inform similar future reviews. The Chief Executive agreed to co-ordinate this exercise.

Close of Business 15:40