

LGBCE (18)10th Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 23rd October 2018, at 10:15am, 1st Floor,
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
Lynn Ingram	Director of Finance & Resources
Marcus Bowell	Director of Strategy & Communications
Alison Evison	Review & Programme Manager
Richard Buck	Review Manager
Jo Porter	Review Manager
Jonathan Ashby	Review Officer (item 7)
Laura Taylor	Review Officer (item 8 & 9)
Dan Carlsson-Hyslop	Review Officer (item 10)
Angela Hendry	Office Manager & HR Lead (minutes)

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Declarations of interest

Andrew Scallan declared an interest in item 8 Salford City Council Size, and took no part in the discussions of that item.

Peter Maddison, Colin Mellors and Marcus Bowell all declared an interest in item 11, Leeds City Council Related Alteration and took no part in the discussions on that item.

Minutes of LGBCE's meetings on 18/09/2018 and 5/10/2018

The minutes of both meetings were agreed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

The following actions were reported on:

Keeping a log of all wards over 10% is complete.

Report findings of meeting with Reigate and Banstead re warding pattern tool: It was noted that the team had a demonstration of the tool used that could be used by other local authorities. However at the moment it was not considered to be at a stage of development to be progressed by the Commission.

Implement changes to ARC and Commission responsibilities is complete.

Organisation's response to the call for evidence on how to encourage more disabled applicants for high profile public appointments is complete.

The actions from the Strategy day were reported on.

1. Chair's Report

The Chair expressed thanks to the members of the management team who facilitated the policy session and SharePoint training on the previous afternoon.

2. Chief Executive's Report

There was nothing further to add.

3. Director of Finance Report – LGBCE (18) 119

Qtr. 2 Financial Projections and KPIs - The Director of Finance & Resources reported that the costs of the refurbishment of our office in Windsor House had been paid and invoices had been received for two quarterly invoices for rent, facilities and rates. She has raised a query on the measurements of our office which was changed in May/June this year leading to a £30k increase in rent and associated costs.

The Commission noted a projected underspend for the year of £28k following a transfer of £18k to capital. It was noted that OMT are monitoring the budget on a monthly basis.

The Director of Finance & Resources updated on the improvements to the KPI report following feedback at the last meeting. The report now clarified the basis of each target. The Commission will receive a dashboard report at each meeting with the full report on a quarterly basis.

4. Communications Strategy – LGBCE (18) 120

The Director of Strategy and Communications briefed the Commission on the organisation's communications strategy, outlining its objectives, resources, audiences, channels, evaluation and development. In commenting on the plan, Commissioners discussed the following issues:

- The need for a focus on internal communications.
- Networking with bodies undertaking similar work and learning from best practice.
- The challenges of identifying stakeholders and working through councils.
- The importance of guidance and explaining the why reviews are important/worthwhile.

The Director agreed to incorporate the various points raised into the strategy.

5. Future Business – LGBCE (18) 121

The Commission noted the Future Business Plan.

6. Operational Report - LGBCE (18) 122

The Chief Executive presented the Operational Report for September and the Commission noted its content.

7. Chorley Draft Recommendations – LGBCE (18) 123

The review of Chorley Borough Council had commenced on 19 June 2018. According to the latest available electoral figures, 10 per cent of wards had variances of greater than 10 per cent, with 5 per cent of wards having a variance of greater than 30 per cent.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 42 and the Draft Recommendations being considered had been prepared on the basis of such a council size.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations proposed a pattern of 14 three-member wards in total.

The Commission considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the advice of officers and the submissions received.

It agreed the Draft Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Draft Recommendations for Chorley Borough Council as presented.

8. Salford Draft Recommendations – LGBCE (18) 124

Andrew Scallan left the room and took no part in the discussion on this item.

The review of Salford City Council had commenced on 19 June 2018. According to the latest available electoral figures, 25 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent, with one ward having a variance of over 30 per cent.

At its meeting on 19 June 2018, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 60 and the Draft Recommendations being considered had been prepared on the basis of such a council size.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations proposed a pattern of 20 three-member wards in total.

The Commission considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the advice of officers and the submissions received.

It agreed the Draft Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Draft Recommendations for Salford City Council as presented.

9. Norwich Final Recommendations – LGBCE (18) 125

The review of Norwich City Council had commenced on 23 January 2018. According to the latest available electoral figures, 31 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent. One ward, University, had a variance of -31 per cent.

At its meeting on 23 January 2018, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 39 and had subsequently, on 19 June 2018, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 82 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 pattern of 13 three-member wards in total.

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

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for Norwich City Council as presented.

10. Oxford Final Recommendations – LGBCE (18) 126

The review of Oxford City Council had commenced on 19 December 2017. According to the latest available electoral figures, 67 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent, with 17 per cent of wards being over 20 per cent. One ward, Holywell, had a variance of 61 per cent.

At its meeting on 19 December 2017, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 48 and had subsequently, on 22 May 2018, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 152 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of 24 two-member wards in total.

The Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and considering the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations. It agreed to a period of further limited consultation focusing on the areas of Cowley, Donnington & Liffley, Littlemore, Rose Hill, St Clement's, St Mary's and Temple Cowley.

Agreed

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11. Leeds Related Alteration – LGBCE (18) 127

Peter Maddison, Colin Mellors and Marcus Bowell left the room and took no part in the discussion on this item. Susan Johnson chaired this item.

Alison Evison updated the Commission on the background to this request. The Commission undertook an electoral review of Leeds. Following that electoral review there was an error where the mapping showed an incorrect boundary. An amendment order correcting that boundary has been laid in parliament. Leeds City Council subsequently conducted a community governance review for which they requested four alterations to ward boundaries. However, it omitted a fifth alteration which is now before the Commission for consideration.

We received notification from the parish council that 16 properties had voted in the wrong ward.

The Commission considered the content of the Leeds City Council Related Alterations paper. It was minded to agree to the related alteration as the changes proposed would have no adverse effect on electoral equality.

The Commission agreed that a letter from the Commission should be sent to Leeds City Council highlighting the error regarding the 16 properties as well as a letter to the parish council advising them that the Order has been made.

Agreed

The Commission agreed to the making of an Order implementing the related alteration.

AOB

There were no other items.

Close of Business 14:00