

The
**Local Government
Boundary Commission**
for England

LGBCE (18)6th Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 19th June 1:30pm at Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP

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
Dan Carlsson-Hyslop	Review Officer (item 5)
David Owen	Review Officer (item 6)
Emily Starkie	Review Officer (item 7)
Mark Cooper	Review Officer (item 8)
Mishka Mayers	Review Officer (item 9)
Laura Taylor	Review Officer (item 10)
Johnny Ashby	Review Officer (item 11)
Dean Faccini	Business Support Officer

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Declarations of interest

Andrew Scallan declared an interest in item 3 Salford Council Size, and took no part in the discussions of that item.

Minutes of LGBCE's meeting on 22 May 2018

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

Matters Arising

The Chair welcomed Amanda Nobbs OBE to the Commission.

Actions from the previous Commission meeting

The following actions were reported on:

- Commission Policy workshops will be added to the Future Business document.
- Consideration of the availability of Commission papers on the LGBCE website would be added to the actions log.

1. Operational Report - LGBCE (18)62

The Chief Executive presented the Operational Report for June 2018 and the Commission noted its content.

The Chief Executive gave an update on the potential establishment of new authorities. This included:

- Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire could be added to the review programme depending on the Secretary of State's subsequent decisions.
- Orders to establish the following authorities have now been made:
 - West Suffolk
 - East Suffolk
 - Somerset & West Taunton
 - Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole, and Dorset

The Communications and Strategy Director provided a summary of the Commission's objectives for the forthcoming LGA Conference. The Commission's exhibition stand would be staffed by the Chief Executive, the Communications and Strategy Director, and a Review Officer. The Chair would also attend.

2. Halton Council Size - LGBCE (18)63

It had been agreed to review Halton Borough Council due to electoral imbalance. According to the latest available electoral figures, two per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent, with Farnworth ward having a variance of 33 per cent.

The current size of the Council is 56 members.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that there was sufficient evidence to support that the council size decrease by 2 from 56 to 54 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence and, on the basis of this evidence, it was minded to support a council size of 54 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 54 be used as the basis for the preparation of the Draft Recommendations.

3. Salford Council Size - LGBCE (18)64

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

It had been agreed to review Salford City Council due to electoral imbalance. 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 20 per cent and another ward having a variance of over 30 per cent.

The current size of the Council is 60 members.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that there was sufficient evidence to support that the council size remain at 60 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence and, on the basis of this evidence, it was minded to support a council size of 60 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 60 be used as the basis for the preparation of the Draft Recommendations.

4. Chorley Council Size - LGBCE (18)65

It had been agreed to review Chorley Council due to electoral imbalance. 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.

The current size of the Council is 47 members.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that there was sufficient

evidence to support that the council size increase/decrease by 5 from 47 to 42 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence and, on the basis of this evidence, it was minded to support a council size of 42 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 42 be used as the basis for the preparation of the Draft Recommendations.

5. Dorset Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (18)66

On the 25 May 2018, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament to establish the new unitary district of Dorset Council in 2019. The new council is a combination of the existing East Dorset district, North Dorset district, Purbeck district, West Dorset district and Weymouth & Portland borough.

Representatives of the existing councils submitted a proposal, along with other supporting information, for new wards to MHCLG on 4 May 2018. The Ministry subsequently forwarded all of this information to the Commission in order that it formulate its Draft Recommendations.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations were based on a council size of 82 as also included in the Order made by MHCLG.

The scheme presented by the team proposed pattern of eight three-, 14 two-, and 30 single-member wards in total. One of the wards, Lytchett Matravers & Morden', will have an electoral variance of greater than 10 per cent from the average for the council by 2023.

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

- To adopt a council size of 82 for the new authority.
- Draft Recommendations for Dorset Council as presented.

6. Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (18)67

On the 25 May 2018, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which establishes the new unitary district of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council

in 2019. The new council combines the existing Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Boroughs.

Representatives of the existing councils submitted a proposal, along with other supporting information, for new wards to MHCLG on 4 May 2018. The Ministry subsequently forwarded all of this information to the Commission in order that it formulate its Draft Recommendations.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations were based on a council size of 76 as also included in the Order made by MHCLG.

The scheme presented by the team proposed pattern of ten three-, and 23 two-member wards in total. None of the wards will have an electoral variance of greater than 10 per cent of the average for the council by 2023.

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

- To adopt a council size of 76 for the new authority.
- Draft Recommendations for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council as presented.

7. West Suffolk Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (18)68

On the 24 May 2018, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which establishes the new unitary district of West Suffolk in 2019. The new council combines the existing Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

Representatives of the existing councils submitted a proposal, along with other supporting information, for new wards to MHCLG on 4 May 2018. The Ministry subsequently forwarded all of this information to the Commission in order that it formulate its Draft Recommendations.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations were based on a council size of 64 as also included in the Order made by MHCLG.

The scheme presented by the team proposed pattern of one three-, 17 two-, and 27 single-member wards in total. None 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 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

- To adopt a council size of 64 for the new authority
- Draft Recommendations for West Suffolk as presented.

8. West Somerset & Taunton Draft Recommendations – LGBCE (18)69

On the 25 May 2018, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which establishes the new unitary district of Somerset West and Taunton Council in 2019. The new council combines the existing Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset District Council.

Representatives of the existing councils submitted a proposal, along with other supporting information, for new wards to MHCLG on 4 May 2018. The Ministry subsequently forwarded all of this information to the Commission in order that it formulate its Draft Recommendations.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. It noted the suggestion of a council size of 58 which was also included in the Order made by MHCLG but, after considering all the evidence against the statutory criteria, the team judged that a council size of 59 members would provide for better electoral equality across the district. The Draft Recommendations accordingly propose a pattern of six three-, 12 two-, and 17 single-member wards in total.

One of the wards, Creech & Durston, will have an electoral variance greater than 10 per cent from the average for the council by 2023.

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

- To adopt a council size of 59 for the new authority
- Draft Recommendations for Somerset West and Taunton Council as presented.

9. East Suffolk Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (18)70

On the 24 May 2018, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) laid a structural changes order in Parliament which establishes the new unitary district of East Suffolk in 2019. The new council combines the existing Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council.

Representatives of the existing councils submitted a proposal, along with other supporting information, for new wards to MHCLG on 4 May 2018. The Ministry subsequently forwarded all of this information to the Commission in order that it formulate its Draft Recommendations.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations were based on a council size of 55 as also included in the Order made by MHCLG.

The scheme presented by team proposed pattern of seven three-, 13 two-, and eight single-member wards in total.

Two of the wards, Lothingland and Martlesham & Purdis Farm, will have an electoral variance greater than 10 per cent of the average for the council by 2023.

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

- To adopt a council size of 55 for the new authority.
- Draft Recommendations for East Suffolk as presented.

10. Norwich Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (18)71

The review of Norwich City Council had commenced on 23 January 2018. According to the latest available electoral figures, 23 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent, with University ward having a variance of 33 per cent.

At its meeting on 23 January 2018, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 39 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 13 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 Norwich City Council as presented.

11. Windsor & Maidenhead Final Recommendations - LGBCE (18)72

The review of Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead had commenced on 19 September 2017. The review was requested by the Council in order that it could consider the number of members elected to the Council. According to the latest available electoral figures, 22 per cent of wards had variances of greater than 10 per cent, with two wards having a variance of greater than 20 per cent.

At its meeting on 19 September 2017, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 43 and had subsequently, on 20 February 2018, agreed Draft Recommendations although these were based on a modified council size of 42 since this allowed for a more effective allocation of members across the borough.

Following publication, 169 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, it was felt that a further reduction in council size by one from 42 to 41 members facilitated a better warding pattern in the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale area. These changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The Commission also considered in detail the most appropriate warding pattern for Old Windsor and the Boltons community located in the nearby built-up area. Having carefully considered all the representations received and the proposed alternative warding patterns, it concluded that the draft recommendations for this area continued to provide the best balance of the statutory criteria. It did, however, decide that Windsor Great Park should be wholly contained within Old Windsor ward.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of 16 two-member, and 3 three-member wards in total.

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 Windsor and Maidenhead as presented.

12. Leeds: lessons learned - LGBCE (18)73

The Commission received a briefing from the Director of Communications and Strategy on his investigation into an error that went unchecked during the electoral review of Leeds City Council. This meant that a minor mapping error failed to incorporate a decision (and conformed in the text) made by the Commission at the Final Recommendations stage of the review.

The briefing detailed the cause of the error, the investigation process, and the steps taken to prevent the error from occurring again.

The Commission considered the report and endorsed the recommendations. They were assured that the error would be rectified by the drafting of an amendment order and agreed that it would be laid in Parliament after the summer recess.

The Chair also asked for the revised Review Officer Desk Instructions to be assessed by the Audit & Risk Committee to ensure that there were no gaps left in our processes.

13. Chair's Report

The Chair would be attending the Local Government Association (LGA) conference in July. The key objectives would be to establish contacts with representatives from local authorities and various other local government groups, and to promote the work of the Commission.

The Commission placed on record its thanks to those colleagues who were working on the move to Windsor House.

14. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive advised Commissioners that building passes for Windsor House would be handed out after the meeting.

15. Audit & Risk Committee – Chair's Report

The Interim Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee provided an update on the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting held earlier that morning.

In its meeting, the Committee had:

- Considered the Annual Report and Accounts for 2017/18
- Received an update from the NAO
- Received a presentation from the Commission's IT partner, Wavex, on IT security
- Reviewed two policies; Equalities & Diversity in Employment, and ICT Acceptable Use
- Looked at the action plan from its Review of Effectiveness

- Reviewed the Audit Recommendations Log
- Considered a deep dive report on equalities, and health and safety
- Discussed the possibility of introducing a staff survey after the Commission's move to Windsor House

16. Draft Audit & Risk Committee Minutes (May) – LGBCE (18)74

The Commission noted the minutes from the May Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

17. Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report – LGBCE (18)75

The Finance & Resources Director provided a summary of the Committee's achievements over the past 12 months.

All areas that the Audit & Risk Committee had set out to achieve

- A review of its own effectiveness
- Regularly assessing achievements against its progress plan
- Reporting formally to the Commission on its activities
- Developed criteria for appointments to ARC
- A major review of ARC Terms of Reference
- Assessing the Commission's Risk Register at each meeting and the consideration of three deep dives during the year
- Further developed its Risk processes to show unmitigated base risks

Internal Audit

- The new Internal Auditor (Gateway) had completed the audit programme for 2017/18.

Annual Report & Accounts

- Draft and Final versions of the accounts were approved by ARC
- The NAO management letter was examined and agreed to

Policy Reviews and updates

- Five Commission policies were reviewed and implemented
- Actions on GDPR compliance and updated Personal Data procedures were overseen by ARC during the year

Scrutiny of Business Activities

- Equality and Diversity updates were commissioned and received at each meeting
- Strategic finance and unit costing updates were commissioned & examined
- The Commission's annual budget setting process was examined
- ARC led & advised on the Commission's review of its KPIs

The Finance & Resources Director also asked the Commission to feedback its own views on how effective ARC has been this past year.

18. Finance Director's Report Personal Data policy and GDPR Update – LGBCE (18)76

The Finance & Resources Director presented the revised Personal Data Policy, the draft Privacy Notice, and the GDPR action plan.

The Commission was asked to formally approve the revised Personal Data Policy due to a number of significant changes that had been made to it. ARC previously considered the policy on two separate occasions and have endorsed the revised policy to the Commission.

Due to further changes to the Data Protection Act (2018), which have only recently been made into law, the Policy will undergo a further change when it will become the Data Protection and Data Security Policy. This will be considered by ARC at their meeting in October and will go to the Commission at a date soon after.

The Privacy Notice was drafted after consultation with OMT members and advice taken from our external contractors. This has resulted in changes to the way the Commission publishes personal data from submissions and how the Commission stores and uploads submissions to the LGBCE website. The Privacy Notice was also considered by ARC on two separate occasions and is now live on the LGBCE website. It will also be used in correspondence, acknowledgements, and on the Commission's recruitment literature.

The majority of actions from the GDPR action plan had been completed and an update was given on those actions still in progress. One of the actions that was recently completed was the appointment of the Data Protection Officer; this would be the Finance & Resources Director.

The Commission approved the Personal Data Policy.

Annual Report & Accounts – pre-approval report - LGBCE(18)77

The final draft version of the Annual Report and Accounts was put forward to the Commission.

The NAO are still to conclude their audit of the accounts and issue an Audit Completion Report including the Audit Certificate and the Letter of Representation. An NAO representative attended the ARC meeting that occurred earlier in the day and it was anticipated that a Draft Management Letter would be made available after the meeting. ARC were satisfied for the Commission to approve the Annual Report and Accounts subject to receiving a satisfactory NAO Management Letter. The anticipated signing date would be the end of June or beginning of July 2018.

The Commission agreed to this approach. They also provided feedback on the report's content and presentation style. The Director of Finance and Resources agreed to take these comments into account in the final version of the report.

19. Future Business – LGBCE (18)78

The Commission noted the busy agenda for the July meeting. Peter Maddison confirmed that would not be available for the meeting in July.

AOB

The Commission enquired about the 2019 meeting dates. The Director of Finance and Resources would ask the Office Manager & HR Lead to expedite this.

Close of Business 17:00

Colin Murray 24/7/18