

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

LGBCE (13) 7th Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 9 July 2013, at 09:30am, in Rooms A & B, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Commissioners Present

Max Caller CBE (Chair)
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL
Sir Tony Redmond
Professor Paul Wiles CB
Colin Sinclair

LGBCE Officers Present:

Alan Cogbill	Chief Executive
Archie Gall	Director of Reviews
Lynn Ingram	Director of Finance
Alison Evison	Review & Programme Manager
Marcus Bowell	Communications and Public Affairs Manager
Tim Bowden	Review Manager
David Owen (from item 8)	Policy and Research Officer

Apologies for Absence

None

Declarations of interest

The Chair declared an interest for the Suffolk Coastal item and took no involvement in the discussion. The Deputy Chair chaired the item.

Minutes of LGBCE's meeting on 11th June 2013

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

The Chair noted four items of research for the team to undertake:

A report on GLA constituencies and potential options for future GLA constituencies.

A report on the role of councillors, including lessons learned throughout our reviews. This could be used to inform the sector, including the LGA who are also doing some work on this theme.

A note on the powers of the Secretary of State and the LGBCE, identifying any gaps in powers.

Advice on how an electoral review could be undertaken in six months.

1. Operational Report - LGBCE (13)97

The content of the Operational Report was noted.

2. High Peak Council Size - LGBCE (13) 98

It had been agreed to review High Peak council, due to electoral imbalance. The review had started in January 2013. According to the latest electoral figures, 30 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent average. Padfield ward currently has 23% more electors than the average for High Peak.

Meetings had been held with local authority leaders and officers, both to explain the review process, and to seek information about electorate forecasts and the basis of the proposed council size. The current size of the Council is 43 members.

Agreed

After considering the evidence received, the Commission agreed that a council size of 43 be used as the basis for the council size consultation.

3. Poole Council Size - LGBCE (13)99

It had been agreed to review Poole council due to electoral imbalance.. The review had commenced in January 2013. According to the latest electoral figures, 36% of its wards exceeded the 10% variance.

The Commission had held meetings with local authority leaders and officers both to explain the review process and to seek information about electorate forecasts and the basis of the proposed council size. The current size of the Council is 42 members.

Agreed

After considering the evidence received, the Commission agreed that a structured consultation on council sizes of both 38 and 42 for Poole Borough Council be undertaken.

4. Stafford Council Size - LGBCE (13)100

It had been agreed to review Stafford Council as a result of a request made by the authority for a review. The review commenced in January 2013.

Meetings had been held with local authority leaders and officers both to explain the review process and to seek information about electorate forecasts and the basis of the proposed council size. The current size of the Council is 59 members.

Agreed

After considering the evidence received, the Commission agreed that a council size of 40 be used as the basis for the council size consultation.

5. Ashfield Council Size Post Consultation- LGBCE (13)101

It had been agreed to review Ashfield due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in October 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 40% of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

Meetings had been held with local authority leaders and officers both to explain the review process and to seek information about electorate forecasts and the basis of the proposed council size. The current size of the Council is 33 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 change to 35 members. The Commission considered all the available evidence.

Agreed

Having considered the evidence received during the consultation on council size, the Commission agreed a council size of 35.

6. Suffolk Coastal Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (13)102

The Deputy Chair chaired this item. The Chair took no part in the discussions.

It had been agreed to review Suffolk Coastal due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in October 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, two of the

Council's 34 wards currently have electoral variances greater than +/- 40%. These two wards are Rendlesham and Kesgrave East, with variances of 41% more and 40% more electors than the district average, respectively.

Meetings had been held with local authority leaders and officers both to explain the review process and to seek information about electorate forecasts and the basis of the proposed council size. The current size of the Council is 55 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 change to 43 members. The Commission considered all the available evidence.

Agreed

Having considered the evidence received during the consultation on council size, the Commission agreed a council size of 43 for Suffolk Coastal District Council.

7. Aylesbury Vale Council Size Post Consultation -LGBCE (13)103

It had been agreed to review Aylesbury Vale due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in October 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 12 of the council's 36 wards (33%) currently have a variance of (+/-) 10%, while one ward (Bierton) has a variance of -37%

Meetings had been held with local authority leaders and officers both to explain the review process and to seek information about electorate forecasts and the basis of the proposed council size. The current size of the Council is 59 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 59 members. The Commission considered all the available evidence.

Agreed

After considering the evidence received, the Commission agreed a council size of 59.

8. South Hams Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (13)104

The review of South Hams had commenced in June 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 31% of the wards have an electoral variance over 10%.

At its meeting in March 2013, the Commission was minded to agree a council size of 30 for South Hams 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 two three-member wards, seven two-member wards, and 11 single-member wards in total. This is an increase of one member from the council size agreed by the Commission in March 2013.

The Commission considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received. It agreed the Draft Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Draft Recommendations for South Hams as presented.

9. Wellingborough Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (13)105

The review of Wellingborough had commenced in June 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 44% of wards in the council currently have variances of +/- 10%. Two wards, Hemmingwell and North, both have variances of 22%.

At its meeting on 12th December 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 36 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 team's proposals would result in three single-member wards, six two-member wards and seven three-member wards with outliers of -10% by 2019 in the proposed Earls Barton and Great Doddington & Wilby wards.

The Commission considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received. The Commission decided to modify the proposed boundary between the wards of Irchester and Great Doddington & Wilby.

Agreed

The Commission agreed draft recommendations for Wellingborough Council as modified.

10. Quarterly Review Programme Review- LGBCE (13)106

The Commission noted the updates to the Work Programme for 2011-2014.

11. Councillor Public Opinion Survey Outputs- LGBCE (13)107

The Commission noted the report. Members considered the value of the survey and raised concerns regarding the contractor's inability to reach the required number of young people. It was noted that this type of research would be unlikely to reach young people as they are less likely to have a landline. It was noted that the views of councillors were the most valuable to understand and that the team should monitor future research to consider whether bi-annual reports would provide satisfactory value in future.

12. Chair's Report (oral)

The Chair reported that the LGA Conference, which had taken place the previous week, had been a great success. Participation in the conference and attendance at the fringe event had been high. LGBCE's work had attracted significant interest.

13. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive gave an update on the current industrial action; he welcomed the budgetary projections for the future and he noted the reappointment of the Chair was scheduled for 2015.

14. Finance & Performance Report - 1st Quarter LGBCE (13)

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The Commission noted the content of the report.

15. Strategic Planning Event – August 2013 – LGBCE (13)109

The Chief Executive invited comments on the draft agenda for the Strategic Planning event in August. It was agreed that without a facilitator, it was essential that sessions were focussed and clarity provided on the purpose of each session. Some changes to the running order were agreed.

16. Future Business – LGBCE (13)110

The content of the Future Business paper was noted.

17. 2014/2015 Review Programme – LGBCE (13)111

The Commission agreed to review the following authorities:

- Cambridgeshire
- Devon
- Hertfordshire
- Lincolnshire
- Gloucester
- Kent
- Warwickshire
- Winchester
- South Norfolk
- Test Valley
- Nottinghamshire
- Dorset
- Taunton Deane
- Bristol
- North Norfolk
- Rochford
- Stroud
- Surrey Heath
- North East Derbyshire
- Tewkesbury

These authorities would be written to, advising them that they would be included in the work programme.

It was agreed that requests could be added to the 14/15 work programme throughout the year.

18. AOB

No other business

Close of Business 12:45