

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

LGBCE (13) 10th Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 8 October 2013, at 09:30am, in Rooms A & B, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5LG

Commissioners Present

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

LGBCE Officers Present:

Alan Cogbill	Chief Executive
Archie Gall	Director of Reviews
Lynn Ingram	Director of Finance
Marcus Bowell	Communications Manager
Alison Evison	Review & Programme Manager
Tim Bowden	Review Manager
Richard Buck	Review Manager
Sarah Vallotton	Business & Committee Services Manager
Alex Hinds	Review Officer
Paul Kingsley	Review Adviser
Mark Pascoe	Review Officer
Simon Keal	Review Officer
Dean Faccini	Business Assistant

The Deputy Chair welcomed Mark Cooper who was attending as an observer having recently been appointed as a member of LGBCE staff.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Max Caller CBE (Chair). The Deputy Chair chaired the meeting in his absence.

Declarations of interest

Professor Colin Mellors declared an interest in York and did not take part in the discussion of that item.

Minutes of LGBCE's meeting on 10th September 2013

The minutes were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

1. Operational Report - LGBCE (13)151

The Director of Reviews presented the Operational Report for October. An update was given on the Doncaster review.

2. High Peak Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (13)152

It had been agreed to review High Peak Borough Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in March 2013. According to the latest electoral figures, 30 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

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 43 members.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that there was sufficient evidence to support the council size remaining at 43 members.

At its meeting in July 2013 the Commission considered all the evidence it had received and decided to consult on the issue of council size. The Commission sought views on the council size remaining at 43 members. The consultation ended on 2 September 2013.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted it was minded to support a council size of 43 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 43 be used as the basis to proceed to consultation on warding arrangements and preparation of draft recommendations.

3. Poole Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (13)153

It had been agreed to review Poole Borough Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in January 2013. According to the latest electoral figures, 36 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

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.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that evidence pointed to either a reduction in council size to 38 members or to retain the current size of 42 members.

At its meeting in July 2013 the Commission considered all the evidence it had received on council size. Given the change proposed, the Commission had decided to consult on the issue of council size. The Commission sought views on a change in council size to 38 and 42 members. The consultation ended in September 2013.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. It noted that it had received little in the way of additional substantive arguments for either 38 or 42 and that neither the Council nor the Liberal Democrats/Poole People Party had submitted any further evidence. Accordingly, the Commission re-considered both the initial evidence and the representations in response to the consultation. Taking all of the information into account, on balance, 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 to proceed to consultation on warding arrangements and preparation of draft recommendations.

4. Stafford Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (13)154

It had been agreed to review Stafford Council at the request of the authority. The review had commenced in January 2013. According to the latest electoral figures, 27 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

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 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 the council size changing to 40 members.

At its meeting in July 2013 the Commission considered all the evidence it had received on council size. Given the change proposed, the Commission had decided to consult on the issue of council size. The Commission sought views on a change in council size to 40 members. The consultation ended on 2 September 2013.

In response to the consultation on council size the Commission received 30 submissions.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted they were minded to support a council size of 40 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 40 be used as the basis to proceed to consultation on warding arrangements and preparation of draft recommendations.

5. Stratford on Avon Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (13)155

The review of Stratford-on-Avon District Council had commenced in October 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 31 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in October 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 36 members and the Draft Recommendations being considered had been prepared on the basis of such a Council size.

In December 2012, the Council had passed a resolution requesting that this be a single-member ward review. 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 36 single-member wards in total.

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 Stratford-on-Avon District Council as presented.

6. Middlesbrough Council Final Recommendations - LGBCE (13)157

The review of Middlesbrough Council had commenced in December 2011. According to the latest electoral figures, 30 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent and Middlehaven ward had a variance of -35%.

At its meeting in April 2013, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 46 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 34 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations. These had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account it had been judged that there was insufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations except in respect of minor boundary amendments between the Nunthorpe and Marton West wards, the Acklam and Kader wards, Ayresome and Newport wards and the Linthorpe and Park Wards. The draft recommendations with these minor amendments were proposed as the Final Recommendations for Middlesbrough Council.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of eight three-member wards, ten two-member wards and two single-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 Middlesbrough Council as presented.

7. East Lindsey Final Recommendations - LGBCE (13)156

The review of East Lindsey District Council had commenced in August 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 31 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on November 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a council size of 55 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 35 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations. These had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account it had been judged that there was insufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations except in respect of amendments to the boundaries of wards in the Louth area. Specifically, it was proposed that the two-member St Mary's & St Michael's ward be divided into two single-member wards, as well as minor amendments to the proposed Priory ward. It was also proposed that Priory ward be renamed Priory & St James'. In the rural area of the district, a minor amendment was proposed to the boundary between the proposed Coningsby & Mareham and Sibsey & Stickney wards. It was also proposed that Wainfleet & Firsby ward be divided into two single-member wards named Croft and Wainfleet. The Commission also agreed two ward name changes - Tetford & Donington ward (changed from Goulceby & Tetford) and Marshchapel & Somercotes ward (changed from North Somercotes & Saltfleetby) - in response to local opinion. These were proposed as the Final Recommendations for East Lindsey District Council.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of four three-member wards, 10 two-member wards, and 23 single-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 East Lindsey District Council as presented.

8. Wyre Final Recommendations - LGBCE (13)158

The review of Wyre Borough Council had commenced in October 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 31 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent and Catterall ward had a variance of -30%.

At its meeting on 15 January 2013, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 50 and had subsequently agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 13 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations. These had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account it had been judged that there was insufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations except in respect of minor amendments to ward names in the Thornton-Cleveleys area of the borough. These were proposed as the Final Recommendations for Wyre Borough Council.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of six three-member wards, 14 two-member wards, and four single-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 Wyre Borough Council as presented.

9. The Role of Councillors - LGBCE (13)159

An Occasional paper entitled 'The Role of the Councillor in Modern Local Government' was presented to the Commission.

The Commission noted the content of the report and awaited feedback from the LGA, which had been sent a copy of the report, before deciding on how best to disseminate the information contained in the report.

10. Chair's Report

The Commission noted the paper received from the Chair that, in his absence, gave a written update. This included:

- Meetings with County Leaders and Chief Executives in Devon, Dorset, Hertfordshire, Kent, Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire.
- Meetings with Jeremy Lefroy MP and Dominic Grieve MP in respect of review involving their constituencies
- Process to recruit an additional Commissioner

11. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive outlined the schedule of meetings on 11/12 November.

The Chief Executive updated the Commission on a number of issues including his recent meeting with the new secretary for the Speaker's Committee; his recent meeting with the National Audit Office on the Value for Money study; and the continuing industrial action.

12. New and Emerging Risks

The Commission had nothing to report.

13. Finance and Performance Report

The contents of the report were noted and the Commission was pleased with the progress being made on costing's. It was agreed that further thought would be given to opportunities to support programme efficiency improvement and in IT infrastructure if funding allowed later in the year. .

14. Future Business – LGBCE (13)150

The content of the Future Business paper was noted.

AOB

None.

Close of Business 12:55