

The  
Local Government  
Boundary Commission  
for England

## LGBCE (14)11 Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 18 November 2014, 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  
Alison Lowton  
Sir Tony Redmond

Professor Paul Wiles CB

Observer and Technical Adviser

### LGBCE Officers Present:

Alan Cogbill	Chief Executive
Jolyon Jackson CBE	Chief Executive Designate
Lynn Ingram	Finance Director
Marcus Bowell	Communications Manager
Tim Bowden	Business Development Manager (item 4)
Richard Buck	Review Manager (item 17)
Mark Cooper	Review Officer (item 2)
Johanna Porter	Review Officer (item 3)
Mark Pascoe	Review Officer (item 5)
Lucy Ward	Review Officer (item 6 & 7)
Dean Faccini	Business Assistant (minutes)

## Apologies for Absence

The Business & Committee Services Manager had sent apologies.

## Declarations of interest

Alison Lowton and the Chief Executive Designate declared an interest in Doncaster. Neither took any part in the discussions of that item.

Professor Paul Wiles observed the Commission meeting in a Technical Advisory role due to the delay in processing his reappointment to the Commission. He took no part in the discussion of any items.

## Minutes of LGBCE's meeting on 21 October 2014

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

### Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

#### 1. Operational Report - LGBCE (14)135

The Chief Executive Designate presented the Operational Report for November.

Consideration of the Gloucester draft recommendations had been deferred by one month and would be presented to the Commission at its meeting in December 2014. This deferral would have no adverse impact on implementation in time for the 2016 elections.

Kent County Council: The report highlighted the Commission's previous decision to defer a decision on council size. A paper including a minute of the meeting between the council leaders, the Lead Commissioner and the Review Officer had been circulated prior to the meeting. This would be discussed later in the meeting as an agenda item.

Allocations of the next batch of reviews would be made shortly.

The Chief Executive updated the Commission on the work currently being done by the Baker Tilly improvement project. It was noted that the new style Commission reports had now been implemented.

An update was given on the meeting with the Commission and authority leaders at East Sussex.

The Commission noted the report's content and commented on the new report style.

#### 2. Kent County Council Council Size - LGBCE (14)136

It had been agreed to review Kent County Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in October 2014. According to the latest available electoral figures, 31 per cent of divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent with Romney Marsh division being over 30 per cent.

The current size of the Council is 84 members.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements and following a meeting between the Lead Commissioner and Group

Leaders, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that the council size decrease by 3 from 84 to 81 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence including the most appropriate allocation between constituent and districts boundaries and, on the basis of this evidence, it was minded to support a council size of 81 members.

#### **Agreed**

- The Commission agreed that a council size of 81 be used as the basis for the preparation of the Draft Recommendations.
- Officers should consider ways of promoting a good understanding by local authorities about the use of CIPFA groupings alongside the need to highlight the importance of ensuring an appropriate allocation to constituent districts in county reviews.

### **3. Doncaster Final Recommendations - LGBCE (14)137**

The review of Doncaster Metropolitan District Council had commenced in August 2013. According to the latest available electoral figures, 10 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in November 2013, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 54 and had subsequently, in March 2014, agreed Draft Recommendations. At that stage, the Commission agreed the addition of a further councillor, to make a council size of 55, since this would allow for a better allocation between wards.

In September 2014, the Commission decided that, based on the evidence received during consultation, there was sufficient evidence to conduct a further round of consultation.

Following publication, 648 submissions had been received commenting on the Further 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 there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Further 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 eight two-member wards and 13 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 with amendments to the further draft recommendations in the following areas:

- Conisbrough area
- Norton & Askern area
- Rural Western Parishes.

**Agreed**

Final Recommendations for Doncaster Metropolitan District Council as presented.

#### 4. Rochford Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (14)138

The review of Rochford District Council had commenced in July 2014. According to the latest available electoral figures, 32 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in July 2014, 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 Rochford District Council as presented.

#### 5. Bristol Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (14)139

The review of Bristol City Council had commenced in July 2014. According to the latest available electoral figures, 29 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent with one ward (Cabot) being at 30 per cent. The City Council had also requested the Commission undertake an electoral review.

At its meeting in July 2014, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 70 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 four single-member wards, 27 two-member wards, and four 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 Bristol City Council as presented.

**6. Cherwell Related Alterations - LGBCE (14)140**

The team recommended that the Commission agree to make an electoral change order implementing related alterations to district wards as requested by the Council. This would restore co-terminosity between parish and county electoral division boundaries in Cherwell.

**Agreed**

The Commission agreed to make the necessary electoral change order.

**7. Cherwell Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (14)141**

Following the Commission's decision to accept the related alterations made by Cherwell District Council, the Commission considered its draft recommendations.

The review of Cherwell District Council had commenced in December 2013. According to the latest available electoral figures, 36 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent with Banbury Grimsbury & Castle ward having a variance of 25%.

At its meeting in December 2013, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 48 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 16 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 Cherwell District Council as presented.

## 8. Swindon Related Alterations - LGBCE (14)142

The team recommended that the Commission agree to make an electoral change order implementing related alterations to district wards as requested by the Council. This would restore co-terminosity between parish and borough ward boundaries in Swindon.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed to make the necessary electoral change order.

## 9. Purbeck Related Alterations - LGBCE (14)143

The team recommended that the Commission agree to make an electoral change order implementing related alterations to district wards as requested by the Council. This would restore co-terminosity between parish and district ward boundaries in Purbeck.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed to make the necessary electoral change order.

## 10. East Northamptonshire Related Alterations - LGBCE (14)144

The team recommended that the Commission agree to make an electoral change order implementing alterations to district wards as requested by the Council. This would restore co-terminosity between parish and ward boundaries in East Northamptonshire.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed to make the necessary electoral change order.

## 11. Fenland Consent to Change Protected Electoral Arrangements - LGBCE (14)144

This consent case had been referred to the Commission by the Chief Executive given the recent start of the Cambridgeshire County Council review and its potential impact on the requests made. The team recommended that the Commission give consent for the Council to change the protected electoral arrangements for Chatteris, Manea and Whittlesey parishes.

### **Agreed**

- The Commission agreed that consent be granted for the proposed changes to Chatteris and Manea parishes.
- The Commission decided not to grant consent for the proposed changes to Whittlesey parish given the potential changes that could arise from the divisional arrangements during the county review.

## 12. Chair's Report

The Chair noted his recent meeting with Kris Hopkins, MP. A letter had previously been circulated to the Commission providing an update on the key discussion points.

The Chair also noted his recent meeting with the Speakers Committee where an update on the changes made to the review programme had been given.

## 13. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive formally noted the transfer in Accounting Officer responsibility to the Chief Executive Designate which would be effective from 1 December 2014.

The Chief Executive stressed that the importance for a decision on the location of the Commission's new offices be made at the Project Steering group meeting held later that day. A delay in deciding where the Commission should relocate to would put risk to the Commission's business continuity and would have severe financial ramifications. It was critical that a decision was made soon so that plans could be put into effect to achieve the deadline of moving by May 2015. Savings would be lost each month, and if LGBCE were not able to move by October 2015 (with new IT services fully tested first), costs would then be liable to rise dramatically.

## 14. Finance Director's Relocation Update

The Finance Director gave an update on the latest developments from the Commission's relocation project. The Project Steering Group would be holding a meeting that afternoon to discuss a number of items for which decisions were needed to progress the project. This would include a decision on the location of the Commission's new offices and the consideration of a paper setting out options of sourcing the Commission's back office support.

The Finance Director placed on record her thanks to colleagues Karen Cleverly, Heather Fuller, Luke Dawson and Lucy Ward for their hard work and commitment in supporting this project.

## 15. New & Emerging Risks

The Commission identified two new risks:

- The potential delay in constituting a Speakers Committee following the May 2015 election.
- The delay in the appointments of Commissioners

### **Agreed**

To add these risks to the risk register.

## 16. Report of Audit Committee Meeting

The Chair of the Audit Committee reported on the Audit Committee meeting the previous day.

Key topics covered were:

- A risk update which included a discussion on the use of current and immediate risks as the basis for the Commission's audit plan.
- A discussion around the Commission's policy on quorum rules. A report reviewing this arrangement would be sent to the Commission for consideration in due course.
- A review on the Remuneration Committee's terms of reference.
- An update on the Performance Management Framework.
- The Internal Audit Progress Report, which reported no major issues.
- An update on the Internal Audit Recommendations Log was presented and warmly received.
- The external auditor briefed the Committee on the End of year Audit Plan.
- The Committee reviewed two governance policies; Anti-fraud and Whistle-blowing.

The Chair of the Audit Committee also signalled his intention for the Committee to sign off its audit plan at its meeting on 16 February 2015.

The Commission Chair thanked the Audit Committee Chair and noted that changes to the Commission's Standing Orders required a formal report of which notice had been given. A report would be presented to the Commission in due course.

## 17. Non-financial Performance Indicators: Second Quarter Outturns - LGBCE (14)146

The Review Manager presented the Performance Management report on 2nd Quarter outturns for non-financial indicators.

Highlights from the report were:

- The Commission is meeting its targets for KPI 1 and 4.



- KPI 2 is not currently meeting its target but is expected to do so with the inclusion of requests to the review programme from additional authorities.
- KPI 3 is now in the high 60 percentile and is expected to improve due to an increase in survey responses.

The Commission noted its content.

**Agreed**

That future updates on performance management be included in the Operational Report.

**18. Future Business - LGBCE (14)147**

The Commission noted its content.

**AOB**

There were no other items.

**Close of Business 12:10**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Callier', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MAX CALLIER CBE

CHAIR

