



17/4/16

LGBCE (16)4th Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 19 April 2016, at 9:30am, in Meeting Room, Floor 29, Millbank Tower, Millbank, London, SW1P 4QP

Commissioners Present

Professor Colin Mellors (Chair)
Alison Lowton
Peter Maddison QPM
Sir Tony Redmond
Professor Paul Wiles CB

LGBCE Officers Present:

Jolyon Jackson CBE	Chief Executive
Lynn Ingram	Finance Director
Marcus Bowell	Communications Manager
Tim Bowden	Review Manager
Richard Buck	Review Manager
Jo Porter	Review Manager
Lucy Ward	Review Manager
Alex Hinds	Review Officer (item 5)
Emily Starkie	Review Officer (item 6)
Mark Pascoe	Review Officer (item 7)
Mark Cooper	Review Officer (item 8)
Paul Kingsley	Review Officer (item 9)
Alex Palacky	Office Manager (minutes)

Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

Lucy Ward was congratulated on her appointment as Review Manager.

Declarations of interest

Peter Maddison (Commissioner) declared an interest in item 4 (Cambridgeshire new Draft Recommendations) and left the room for that item.

Jo Porter (Review Manager) declared an interest in items 5 (Eastleigh Draft Recommendations) and 9 (West Sussex Final Recommendations) and left the room for those items.

Tim Bowden (Review Manager) declared an interest in item 9 (West Sussex Final Recommendations), and left the room for that item.

Richard Buck (Review Manager) declared an interest in item 9 (West Sussex Final Recommendations) and left the room for that item.

Minutes of LGBCE's meeting on 15 March 2016

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 (16)34

The Chief Executive presented the Operational Report for April 2016 and the Commission noted its content.

An extension on consultation has been agreed for East Sussex County Council.

An extension on consultation has been agreed for Chichester.

The Chair and the Chief Executive met with St Edmundsbury and Mid Suffolk councils on Thursday 14 April 2016.

Review requests have been received from South Gloucestershire and Cheshire West & Cheshire. Meetings would be arranged between the Chair and leaders of those authorities.

Richard Buck (Review Manager) updated the Commission on the review of Leeds. A request has been received to delay consultation until following the EU Referendum on June 23. It was agreed to move the consultation dates.

Richard Buck (Review Manager) has been requested to circulate the current allocation of Local Authorities to Commissioners.

2. Teignbridge Council Size LGBCE (16)35

It had been agreed to review Teignbridge District Council due to electoral imbalance. According to the latest available electoral figures, 28 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

The current size of the Council is 46 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 46 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence and, on the basis of this evidence, it was minded to support a council size of 46 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 46 be used as the basis for the preparation of the Draft Recommendations.

3. Torridge Council Size LGBCE (16)36

It had been agreed to review Torridge District Council due to electoral imbalance. According to the latest available electoral figures, 44 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

The current size of the Council is 36 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 36 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence and, on the basis of this evidence, it was minded to support a council size of 36 members.

Agreed

The Commission agreed that a council size of 36 be used as the basis for the preparation of the Draft Recommendations.

4. Cambridgeshire New Draft Recommendations LGBCE (16)37

The review of Cambridgeshire County Council had commenced on 21 October 2014. According to the latest available electoral figures, 32 per cent of divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 21 October 2014, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 63. This was further reduced to 61 during development of the draft recommendations to provide for a better allocation between districts. The Commission subsequently, on 21 April 2015, agreed Draft Recommendations.

At its meeting on 19 January 2016, the Commission considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations and during the further limited consultation. The Final recommendations for Cambridgeshire County Council were agreed as presented with amendment in the Castle and Newham area.

Following publication of the final recommendations the Commission received approximately 30 complaints focused on the Cambridge City area and East Cambridge District area. The content of the complaints was that local people felt that they had not had sufficient opportunity to comment on the amended boundary in the City or sufficient chance to comment on the overall proposals for East Cambridgeshire and Fenland districts which had been affected by the Commission's decision to change its recommended council size.

Accordingly, the Commission was asked to consider undertaking a further round of consultation on new Draft Recommendations. The latter were required to be identical to those considered as Final Recommendations at its January meeting but this additional phase of consultation would make clear that their status had now changed and that all representations, supported by evidence, would be considered and, if appropriate, modifications accepted. In publishing new draft recommendations and undertaking a new phase of public consultation the team has taken into consideration both the complaints received and the statutory criteria.

The Commission considered the proposal and recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria, and taking into account the advice of officers. The Commission considered that, while it had followed the statutory procedure and its own guidance, local residents should have the opportunity to be formally consulted again on the Commission's recommendations.

It agreed the New Draft Recommendations and the timeline for public consultation as presented with amendments in the following parts of the paper in order to clarify terminology and the status of the new Draft Recommendations:

- Paragraphs 24, 25 and 33.

Agreed

New Draft Recommendations and the timeline for public consultation for Cambridgeshire County Council as presented.

5. Eastleigh Draft Recommendations LGBCE (16)38

The review of Eastleigh Borough Council had commenced on 17 November 2015. According to the latest available electoral figures, 21 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 17 November 2015, 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 11 three member and 3 two member wards.

It was noted that, while there was a presumption that the authority have a uniform pattern of three-member wards, the team were of the view that a limited departure from this presumption in a discrete area of the Borough better reflected the statutory criteria and this had been supported by strong evidence including that made available at the recent County review.

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 Eastleigh Borough Council as presented.

6. South Cambridgeshire Draft Recommendations LGBCE (16)39

The review of South Cambridgeshire District Council had commenced on 17 November 2015. According to the latest available electoral figures, 21 per cent of wards/divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent with 2 wards being over 30 per cent.

At its meeting on 17 November 2015, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 45 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 5 three, 10 two, and 10 single-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 South Cambridgeshire as presented.

7. Birmingham Final Recommendations LGBCE (16)40

The review of Birmingham City Council had commenced on 14 July 2015. According to the latest available electoral figures, 15 per cent of wards/divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent. The Commission was undertaking a review following a

report from Lord Kerslake on effective and convenient local government in Birmingham.

At its meeting on 14 July 2015, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 101 and had subsequently, on 17 November 2015, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 2,186 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 there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some aspects and these changes were reflected in the recommendations put to the Commission for consideration.

The recommendations proposed a pattern of 30 two, and 41 single-member wards in total. The Commission considered the recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

Taking all of the submissions into account, it was considered that there was sufficient evidence to agree a set of further draft recommendations focusing particularly on the proposals for the Moseley, Acocks Green, Hall Green, Edgbaston, Erdington and Sutton Coldfield areas before the Commission publishes its Final Recommendations.

It agreed to a set of further draft recommendations for Birmingham City Council.

Agreed

The further draft recommendations for Birmingham City Council.

8. Lincolnshire Final Recommendations LGBCE (16)41

The review of Lincolnshire County Council had commenced on 21 April 2015. According to the latest available electoral figures, 32.5 per cent of wards/divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 21 April 2015, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 71. This was changed to 70 during development of the draft recommendations to provide a better allocation across the county. The Commission subsequently, on 17 November 2015, agreed Draft Recommendations based on a council size of 70.

Following publication, 214 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 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 70 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 to a period of further limited consultation focusing on the areas of North Kesteven, South Holland, South Kesteven and West Lindsey.

Agreed

A period of further limited consultation focusing on the areas of North Kesteven, South Holland, South Kesteven and West Lindsey.

9. West Sussex Final Recommendations LGBCE (16)42

The review of West Sussex County Council had commenced on 16 June 2015. According to the latest available electoral figures, 32 per cent of wards/divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 16 June 2015, the Commission had been minded to agree a council size of 70 and had, subsequently on 17 November, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 44 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 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 70 single-member wards in total.

Taking all of the submissions into account, it was considered that there was sufficient evidence to undertake a period of further limited consultation focusing on the proposals for the Crawley area before the Commission published its Final Recommendations.

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 to a period of further limited consultation focusing on the areas of Crawley Borough.

Agreed

A period of further limited consultation focusing on the area of Crawley Borough.

10. Chair's Report

The Chair noted a positive meeting with the Speakers Committee in March.

The Chair announced that Sir Tony Redmond has been formally appointed as the Deputy Chair for the Commission. Appointment of two further Commissioners has been approved by DCLG.

Since the last Commission meeting, the Chair met with Mark Francois MP, a minister at CLG. Subsequently, the Secretary of State had agreed that Mr Francois would act as the ministerial link with the Department.

The Chair also indicated that there had been a useful series of briefings given to Cornwall Council at the end of March and that he had also held a productive meeting with the Council's Chief Executive..

In addition to the two Suffolk meetings mentioned in the Operational Report, he had also met with the Leader and Chief Executive of East Devon Council prior to the start of their electoral review.

11. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive and Director of Finance met with the Treasury in March. The outcome of the meeting was positive with the Commissions five-year corporate plan receiving sign off.

The role of DCLG in respect of potential mergers was discussed.

The Chief Executive and Finance Director will be leading a Strategy Day on 16 May 2016. The event will look at strategic statement, proposing values, reviewing business plans, and gap analysis.

The agenda and location of the Strategy Day and background papers will be circulated to invitees in advance of the event.

12. Finance Director's Report (16)43

The Commissions main supply estimate is laying on 20 April 2016.

The Finance Director made a request for Commissioners to use and maintain LGBCE domain emails and calendars.

The Finance Director highlighted the main points of the Outturn Report for 2015/16. There was a total underspend of £75k with a 1.5% shift on total budget. There was an underspend on training and recruitment, and the annual leave adjustment figure was lower due to a change in maximum carry over entitlement from 9 days to 5 days.

The Windows 10 project slipped from 2015/16 to 2016/17 and is due to take place over the coming weeks. This will be placed against our capital budget.

Final accounts audit will take place in May with NAO

Following the presentation of the report from the Finance Director, the Commission discussed the training budget and needs of the organisation. It was agreed that the Audit & Risk Committee would produce a training plan for moving forward.

13. Future Business – LGBCE (16)44

It was noted that the scheme of delegation is still outstanding and this will be considered at the May Commission meeting.

14. Business Process Review

Document was noted.

AOB

New dates and times for Commission Meetings and Audit and Risk Committee meetings were discussed and agreed with amendments to the Policy Workshop dates and times. Alex Palacky (Office Manager) to formalise the new calendar and send to The Chair for final approval.

Alison Lowton had experienced technical issues with the Story Maps, the solution to which would need to be investigated Jo Porter (Review Manager) was continuing to monitor the further development of the maps.

Under Item 7, it was noted that Mark Pascoe was leaving the Commission to take up a post at Hackney Council. The Commission expressed their thanks for his work and wished him well in his new role.

There were no other items.

Close of Business 13:05

