

Mr Alistair Stewart
Chief Executive
Shepway District Council
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone CT20 2QY
23 October 2012

Dear Mr Stewart

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF SHEPWAY

Following my letter of 29 March, I am writing to formally announce the start of the electoral review of Shepway District Council. Shepway is being reviewed following a formal request from your Council in order to consider a reduction in council size.

A copy of the Commission's press release, and posters advertising the start of the review are being sent to your Council. It would be much appreciated if you could publicise the start of the review by placing copies on display at local information points, and by taking such other steps as you consider appropriate to bring the review to the attention of the public and other interested parties.

Consultation on council size

The Commission considered the proposals for council size, which can be found on the Commission's website at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent>, at its meeting on 10 October 2012. The Commission noted that the Council's proposal was for 38 members. However, the Commission considered that the evidence provided in by the Council in both of original and supplementary submissions pointed towards a council size of 30. The Commission has also had regard to the report considered by your Council at its meeting on March 21, and which is available on your Council's website. The Commission considered that evidence provided detailed that a reduction to 30 would be sustainable. In particular, the Commission noted the work done already by the Council to streamline its committee structure. 30 members would be sufficient to allow the Council to effectively manage committee work and allow individual councillors to perform their representative role.

The Commission now seeks views on its proposal for a council size of 30 members for Shepway District Council during this period of public consultation.

Review timetable

The review begins today with a consultation on the appropriate number of councillors to be elected to Shepway District Council (we refer to this as 'council size'). The closing date for submissions on council size is **3 December 2012**. Once we have considered all the representations we receive, we will take a provisional decision on council size, and begin a public consultation on the ward boundaries. We expect this consultation to run from 29 January 2013 to 8 April 2013.

After this date, the Commission will formulate our draft recommendations, which we expect to publish in June 2013. A twelve-week period of public consultation will follow this, during which time we would very much welcome your parish or town council's views on what is being proposed. Following this consultation period, the Commission will formulate final recommendations; we expect to publish these in early 2014.

Parish electoral arrangements

The Commission will make recommendations on the number of councillors, the number and boundaries of wards, and the names of wards. It can also recommend changes to the electoral arrangements of parish and town councils i.e. the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of parish councillors for each parish ward. However, this is only in circumstances where the parished area is to be divided between wards. The Commission cannot, as part of this review, consider changes to the external boundaries of a parish, or create new parishes. Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, changes to external parish boundaries are the responsibility of local authorities.

Correspondence and Enquiries

Your Council's main contacts at the Commission will be:

- William Morrison, Review Officer, with specific responsibility for the day-to-day running of the review.
email: william.morrison@lgbce.org.uk; Tel: 020 7664 8516;
- Tim Bowden, Review Manager, who leads the team dealing with this and other reviews
email: tim.bowden@lgbce.org.uk; Tel: 020 7664 8514.

I am copying this letter to the organisations and individuals listed below.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Archie Gall', written in a cursive style.

Archie Gall
Director of Reviews
archie.gall@lgbce.org.uk
020 7664 8509

cc Kent County Council
 MPs and MEPs with constituency interests in Shepway
 Headquarters of the main political parties
 Kent Police
 Kent Fire and Rescue Service
 NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent
 Kent Association of Local Councils
 Parish and town councils in Shepway

