

## LGBCE (12) 10th Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 10 October 2012, 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  
Professor Paul Wiles CB  
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE  
Sir Tony Redmond

### LGBCE Officers Present:

Alan Cogbill	Chief Executive
Archie Gall	Director of Reviews
David Hewitt	Finance Director
Richard Buck	Review & Programme Manager
Tim Bowden	Review Manager
Jessica Metherringham	Review Manager
Danny Edwards	Review Manager
Marcus Howell	Communications Manager
Sarah Vallotton	Business & Committee Services Manager
Daniel Knag	Review Officer
Nicholas Dunkeyson	Review Officer
Paul Kingsley	Review Adviser
Alex Skerten	Review Officer
William Morrison	Review Officer
Mark Pascoe	Review Officer
Richard Otterway	Review Officer
Simon Keal	Review Officer
David Owen	Research & Policy Officer
Arion Lawrence	Review Officer
Dean Faccini	Business Assistant (minutes)

### Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

## Declarations of interest:

Professor Colin Mellors declared an interest in York, and would withdraw from the discussion of that item. He also indicated his membership of the Board of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership. However, the Commission agreed that the interest was not such as to conflict with his contributing to the discussion of the Hambleton and Selby reviews.

Review Officers William Morrison and Simon Keal also declared an interest in York and would not be involved in the discussions.

## Minutes of LGBCE's meeting on 11 September 2012

The minutes of the 11 September Commission meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

## Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

### 1. Operational Report - LGBCE (12)127

The Director of Reviews advised the Commission that Basildon District Council had withdrawn its request for an electoral review and recommended that Stratford-on-Avon Council should replace it in the review programme.

The team had identified an error in the Hackney review where a miscalculation of the electorate for De Beauvoir and Hoxton wards. The team would address this error in the final recommendations.

#### **Agreed**

That Stratford-on-Avon District Council should replace Basildon District Council in the 2012 – 2013 review programme.

### 2. Overview Report - LGBCE (12)128

The Commission noted the content of the Overview report.

### 3. Telford & Wrekin Council Size - LGBCE (12)129

It had been agreed to review Telford & Wrekin Borough Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in June 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 39 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 54 members.

Following receipt of information about future governance and representational arrangements, it was recommended by LGBCE officers that, for the purposes of consultation, the Commission be minded to consult on both council size proposals for 44 members and 54 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted, and the specific circumstances of this case, the Commission agreed to develop a more structured consultation approach for this consultation and agreed that the details would be finalised in conjunction with the Chair and Lead Commissioner.

#### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed to a structured consultation on the proposal to either reduce the council size of Telford & Wrekin to 44 members, or retain the existing size of 54 members.

### 4. Shepway Council Size - LGBCE (12)130

It had been agreed to review Shepway District Council at the request of the authority. The review had commenced in May 2012. 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 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 the council size changing to 38 members. However, it was noted that a submission made by the Council's working group had put forward a strong proposal for a reduction in council size to 30 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted, including credible evidence submitted by the Council's working party for a reduction to 30 members, the Commission agreed to consult on a council size of 30 members.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed to consult on the proposal to reduce the council size of Shepway District Council to 30 members.

## **5. Three Rivers Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (12)131**

It had been agreed to review Three Rivers District Council at the request of the authority. The review had commenced in January 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 20 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 48 members.

At its meeting in July 2012 the Commission considered all the evidence it had received on council size. Given the changes proposed, the Commission had decided to consult on a change in council size to 39 members. The consultation ended on 3 September 2012.

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 39 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted they were minded to support a council size of 39 members.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed that a council size of 39 be used as the basis to proceed to consultation on warding arrangements and preparation of draft recommendations.

## **6. Uttlesford Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (12)132**

It had been agreed to review Uttlesford District Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in January 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 33 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent with one ward had a variance of over 30 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 44 members.

At its meeting in July 2012 the Commission considered all the evidence it had received on council size. Given the changes proposed, the Commission had decided to consult on a change in council size to 39 members. The consultation ended on 3 September 2012.

Following receipt of further 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 39 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted they were minded to support a council size of 39 members.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed that a council size of 39 be used as the basis to proceed to consultation on warding arrangements and preparation of draft recommendations.

## **7. York Council Size Post Consultation - LGBCE (12)133**

It had been agreed to review City of York Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in May 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, one ward has a variance of over 30 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 47 members.

At its meeting in July 2012 the Commission considered all the evidence it had received on council size. The Commission had decided to consult on the issue of council size, with views sought on the council remaining at 47 members. The consultation ended on 3 September 2012.

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 47 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted they were minded to support a council size of 47 members.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed that a council size of 47 be used as the basis to proceed to consultation on warding arrangements and preparation of draft recommendations.

## **8. Herefordshire Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)134**

The review of Herefordshire Council had commenced in February 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 30 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent with one ward being over 30 per cent.

At its meeting in March 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 54 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 53 single-member wards. The reduction by one seat from the proposed number of 54 as the basis of drafting was the better pattern of division distribution that would result from a change to 53 councillors.

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 Herefordshire Council as presented.

## **9. Bromsgrove Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)135**

The review of Bromsgrove District Council had commenced in February 2012 following a request by the Council for a single member ward review. According to the latest electoral figures, three wards have variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in March 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 31 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. A submission by the District Council proposed an increase in council size by one. The team had investigated whether a council size of 31 or 32 members would provide for a better allocation. It was concluded that a council size of 32 members would provide for a better allocation of members between Bromsgrove Town and the rural areas. The Draft Recommendations therefore propose a pattern of 32 single-member wards.

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

### **Agreed**

Draft Recommendations for Bromsgrove District Council as presented.

## **10. Hambleton Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)136**

The review of Hambleton District Council had commenced in February 2012 following a request by the Council. According to the latest electoral figures, 30 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in June 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 28 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 three three-member wards, six two-member wards, and seven single-member wards.

The Commission considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received. It agreed the Draft Recommendations subject to modifications in the north Hambleton area.

### **Agreed**

Draft Recommendations for Hambleton District Council as modified.

## **11. Tower Hamlets Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)137**

The review of Tower Hamlets Borough Council had commenced on January 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 35 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent with one ward being over 30 per cent.

At its meeting in March 2012, the Commission was 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 seven three-member wards, 11 two-member wards, and two single-member wards.

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 with minor amendments to ward names for the areas of Island Gardens, Canary, Bethnal Green East, Spitalfields & Banglatown, plus minor amendments to boundaries between Poplar South and Blackwall & Cubitt Town, and Bow East and Bow West.

### **Agreed**

Draft Recommendations for Tower Hamlets Borough Council as modified.

## **12. Gedling Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)138**

The review of Gedling Borough Council had commenced on February 2012 following a request from the Council. According to the latest electoral figures, four of the 22 wards have variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in March 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 40. However, a submission received from the Council proposed a council size of 41 arguing that an increase of one member would better reflect community identity and effective and convenient local government. Having analysed the Council's submission, the team was persuaded by the Council's proposals and the Draft Recommendations had been prepared on the basis of a Council size of 41 members.

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 five three-member wards, 12 two-member wards, and two single-member wards.

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 Gedling Borough Council as presented.

### 13. South Oxfordshire Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)139

The review of South Oxfordshire District Council had commenced in October 2011 following a request by the Council. According to the latest electoral figures, 14 percent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in June 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 Draft Recommendations proposed a pattern of four three-member wards, eight two-member wards, and eight three-member wards.

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 subject to two modifications to ward names in Didcot.

#### **Agreed**

Draft Recommendations for South Oxfordshire District Council as presented, subject to two modifications to ward names in Didcot.

### 14. Vale of White Horse Draft Recommendations - LGBCE (12)140

The review of Vale of White Horse District Council had commenced in October 2011 following a request by the Council. According to the latest electoral figures, 24 percent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting in June 2012, the Commission was minded to agree a Council size of 38 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, 10 two-member wards, and 10 single-member wards.

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 Vale of White Horse as presented.

## 15. Shropshire Ruyton XI Towns/Oswestry Related Alterations - LGBCE (12)141

The Commission considered the content of the Shropshire Ruyton XI Towns/Oswestry Related Alterations paper.

### **Agreed**

An order would be drafted to implement the related alternations for Shropshire Ruyton XI Towns/Oswestry as proposed in the report.

## 16. Wyre Council Size - LGBCE (12)142

It had been agreed to review Wyre Borough Council due to electoral imbalance. The review had commenced in January 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, 31 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 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 the council size changing to 50 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted they were minded to support a council size of 50 members.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed that a council size of 50 be used as the basis for consultation.

## 17. Selby Council Size - LGBCE (12)143

It had been agreed to review Selby District Council at the request of the authority. The review had commenced in April 2012. According to the latest electoral figures, three wards had variances greater than 10 per.

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 41 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 31 members.

The Commission considered all the available evidence. On the basis of the evidence submitted they were minded to support a council size of 31 members.

### **Agreed**

The Commission agreed that a council size of 31 be used as the basis for consultation.

## **18. Chair's Report (oral)**

The Chair reported that he would be attending a number of external meetings on Commission business. The Chair will circulate a note before the next Commission meeting updating Commissioners on the outcome of these meetings.

## **19. Chief Executive's Report (oral)**

The Chief Executive recommended that the Commission should seek to meet with the budget sub-committee of the Speaker's Committee at an early stage in order to gauge whether the Commission's approach to corporate planning and the likely increasing budget pressures are in tune with the Speaker's Committee's thinking.

## **20. Half Year Budget Review & Forecast to End of the Financial Year - LGBCE (12)144**

The Finance Director presented the Half Year Budget Review & Forecast to End of the Financial Year.

The Chair noted that this would be the Finance Director's final meeting, as he was leaving the Commission. The Chair thanked the Finance Director on behalf of the Commission for the expertise and knowledge that he had brought to the Commission which had made a significant contribution to the success of the Commission's setup in its first two and a half years in operation.

## 21. Review of Commission Performance - LGBCE (12)145

The Commission noted the content of the report.

## 22. Future Business - LGBCE (12)146

The Commission noted the schedule.

**13:20 Meeting Closed**