

Ms Tracey Kerly
Chief Executive
Ashford Borough Council
Tannery Lane
Ashford
Kent
TN23 1PL

7th February 2017

Dear Ms Kerly,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF ASHFORD: DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has opened a public consultation on its draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Ashford Borough Council.

The consultation opens today (7th February 2017) and closes on 3rd April 2017.

The draft recommendations propose that 47 borough councillors should be elected to Ashford Borough Council in future. The recommendations also propose new electoral ward boundaries across the borough.

Once the Commission has considered all the responses to the consultation, we aim to publish final recommendations in June 2017. We will then lay a draft order in both Houses of Parliament under the negative resolution procedure. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements are scheduled to come into effect at the local council elections in 2019.

All information relating to the draft recommendations is available on our website. The Commission's report on its draft recommendations can also be found at: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk>. In addition, hard copies of the report and accompanying map will be dispatched to the council shortly.

Interactive maps of the proposals are also posted on the Commission's consultation portal at: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>. The portal also allows visitors to submit comments and alternative proposals.

Publicising the consultation

The Commission will shortly dispatch hard copies of the recommendations to the council for distribution to local information points. In the meantime, I would be grateful if you could bring the consultation to the attention of elected members.

We have also provided information on the draft recommendations directly to local councils and community organisations as well as notifying local press and media.

I would be grateful if you could also take steps to bring the consultation to the attention of the public and interested parties. In particular, please include details of the consultation:

- On your website;
- Promote the consultation through social media and;
- Use any other channels you would normally employ to engage residents in local consultations (newsletters, press releases, publications etc).

The Commission would be happy to provide information and/or copy to help you promote the consultation locally.

Draft recommendations

The Commission considered all the submissions it received in the previous stages of the review before drawing up the draft recommendations.

We have sought to balance the criteria we must follow when drawing up recommendations, namely:

- To deliver electoral equality where each borough councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the borough.
- That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

The Commission will consider all representations made on the draft recommendations and has an open mind about amending the scheme if an alternative pattern of wards would better meet the statutory criteria above.

It is also important for respondents to the consultation to indicate where and why they support the draft recommendations.

Further information on drawing up a pattern of electoral wards and putting forward alternative proposals is available in our guidance document: *Electoral reviews: technical guidance* which can be found at:

www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/10410/technical-guidance-2014.pdf .

We also publish a practical guide for putting forward submissions called *How to propose a pattern of wards* which is available at:

http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/25694/Proposing-new-wards-guidance-2015-08-04.pdf.

Our website includes information about previous electoral reviews of borough councils where you can see how the Commission came to its conclusions and how other counties, districts and parishes responded to consultations on draft recommendations.

As ever, please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about the consultation.

Correspondence and enquiries

Correspondence relating to the review – and consultation responses - should be addressed to:

Review Officer (Ashford)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

Email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Responses to the consultation can also be made directly through our specialist consultation portal: <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

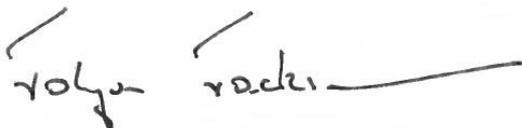
Further information on electoral reviews can also be found at our main website at: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk>.

Your direct contacts for the review:

- Laura Taylor, Review Officer, with specific responsibility for the day-to-day running of the review
email: Reviews@lgbce.org.uk; tel: 0330 500 1252;
- Lucy Ward, Review Manager, who leads the team dealing with this and other reviews
email: Reviews@lgbce.org.uk; tel: 0330 500 1281

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

Yours sincerely



Jolyon Jackson CBE
Chief Executive
reviews@lgbce.org.uk
0330 500 1525

cc MPs and MEPs with constituency interests in Ashford
Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent
Ashford Clinical Commissioning Group
Kent Fire and Rescue Service
Kent Association of Local Councils
Parish and Town Councils in Ashford