Final recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Warwick District Council

**Summary**

**Who we are:**
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas.

**Electoral reviews:**
The purpose of an electoral review is to decide on the appropriate electoral arrangements – the number of councillors, the names, number and boundaries of wards – for a local authority.

**Why Warwick?**
We are conducting an electoral review of Warwick District Council to deliver improved levels of electoral equality for local voters.

Warwick currently has high levels of electoral inequality so that the value of your vote - in district council elections - varies depending on where you live in the district.

**Council size**
The Commission recommends that Warwick District Council should be represented by 46 councillors in future: the same as the current arrangements.

We consider that a council size of 46 members will ensure the council can discharge its roles and responsibilities effectively and will provide for a pattern of wards that reflects community identities across Warwick.

**Electoral arrangements**
The Commission’s final recommendations propose that Warwick’s 46 councillors should represent four three-member wards, 16 two-member wards and two single-member wards across the district.

The Commission believes its recommendations meet its obligations - which are set out in law - to:

- Deliver electoral equality for voters.
- Reflect local community interests and identities.
- Promote effective and convenient local government.

View maps of the recommendations at: consultation.lgbce.org.uk
View the full report and submissions at: www.lgbce.org.uk

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Submissions received

During our consultation on draft recommendations, the Commission received 322 submissions from local organisations and members of the public.

All submissions can be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

General analysis

In response to the views put to us during consultation, the Commission proposes several changes to the draft recommendations.

West rural area

The Commission considered the council’s proposal that Bishop’s Tachbrook parish should form part of the rural Budbrooke ward. However, we believe that such a pattern would create a large ward which would not necessarily be conducive to the delivery of effective and convenient local government.

The Commission therefore confirms its draft recommendations for two-member Arden and Budbrooke wards as final.

The Commission also proposes an alternative arrangement for Bishop’s Tachbrook as described below.

Leamington Spa - south

We have decided to make a minor change in our proposed boundary between the Brunswick and Leam wards to follow the railway line and county council electoral division boundary. Otherwise, we confirm our draft recommendations for those two-member wards as final.

The Commission listened to views expressed during consultation in relation to the Whitnash area. The Commission proposes to alter its draft recommendations for a Briar Hill ward so that it includes the whole of Whitnash parish with the exception of the new development in the east of the parish that comprised Sydenham ward in the draft recommendations. We propose that this three-member ward should be called Whitnash ward.

The Commission also proposes that there should be a single-member Bishop’s Tachbrook ward covering the parish of that name.

Overall, our final recommendations for the southern part of Leamington Spa are for a single-member Bishop’s Tachbrook ward, two-member Brunswick, Leam and Sydenham wards and a three-member Whitnash ward.

Leamington Spa - north

The Commission considered including Old Milverton and Blackdown parishes as part of Stoneleigh & Cubbington ward as suggested during consultation. However, we believe that the resulting ward would be very large and we have not seen evidence that such an arrangement would deliver effective and convenient local government.

In this part of the district, the Commission confirms its draft recommendations for two-member Clarendon, Crown, Manor, Milverton and Newbold wards as final.

Warwick town

On the balance of evidence received during consultation, the Commission accepts that the Heathcote part of Warwick Town Council looks more towards Warwick than elsewhere. In light of the evidence received during consultation, we are also persuaded that the Europa Way development shares community interests with Myton. As such, we propose a two-member Myton & Heathcote ward which includes the Heathcote part of Warwick Town Council and the Europa Way development.

Our final recommendations for the Warwick town part of the district are for two-member Aylesford, Emscote, Myton & Heathcote, Saltisford and Woodloes wards.

Kenilworth and east rural area

The Commission received support for its proposed three-member Abbey ward in the north of the district and we confirm that recommendation as final.

The council proposed amendments to our draft recommendations in this area so that the remaining areas in this part of the district are covered by the same pattern of wards that exist now. Despite the significant changes proposed to our draft recommendations by the council in this area, the Commission proposes to accept the argument in favour of two three-member wards for the remaining parts of Kenilworth. As such, the Commission proposes that this part of the district should be covered by a single-member Radford Semele ward, a two-member Stoneleigh & Cubbington ward and three-member Abbey, Park Hill and St John’s wards.

What happens next?

We have now completed our review of Warwick District Council.

The recommendations must now be approved by Parliament. A draft order - the legal document which brings into force our recommendations - will be laid in Parliament. Subject to parliamentary scrutiny, the new electoral arrangements will come into force at the district council elections in 2015.

The full report and maps are available at www.lgbce.org.uk and consultation.lgbce.org.uk