

Porter, Johanna

From: Egan, Helen
Sent: 30 January 2015 16:58
To: Porter, Johanna
Subject: FW: Lincolnshire county council size submission
Attachments: LGBCE letter - 30 01 15.pdf; Size submission final version.pdf

Importance: High

Hi Jo,

Please see submission below for Lincolnshire.

Helen

From: Kate Husson [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 January 2015 10:42
To: Reviews@
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Lincolnshire county council size submission
Importance: High

****For the attention of Tim Bowden and Johnna Porter****

Dear Mr Bowden and Ms Porter

Please find attached our council size submission paper, along with a covering letter from our leader and chief executive.

Should you have any queries about this, from next week the contact will be Nigel West. Nigel's contact details are in the covering letter.

With kind regards

Kate Husson
Senior Change Officer
Commercial Team
Lincolnshire County Council

[REDACTED]

If your E-mail is a request under the Freedom of Information Act then please send this to foi@lincolnshire.gov.uk
This is the E-mail account that is used to process Freedom of Information Act requests.

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My ref: [REDACTED]
Your ref:

Mr T Bowden
Review Manager
The Local Government Boundary
Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

30 January 2015

Dear Mr Bowden

Re: Lincolnshire electoral review: council size

We enclose a copy of the County Council's size submission. This is a response to your request that Lincolnshire County Council considers its size and the number of council members it needs to achieve electoral equality between its divisions.

In putting this together, we have considered the views of all our political groups and sought approval from a full council meeting, which we received on 19 December 2014.

Should you need any further information, please contact our colleague Nigel West on [REDACTED] or at [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**Councillor Martin Hill OBE
Leader of the Council**

**Tony McArdle
Chief Executive**

Electoral review: preliminary size submission for Lincolnshire County Council

Introduction

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) notified Lincolnshire County Council that it would conduct an electoral review during the summer of 2013. However, the Commission postponed it during the autumn of that year, while it conducted reviews of South Kesteven and East Lindsey district councils. Following these district reviews, the LGBCE contacted the council again in summer 2014 stating its intention to restart the review.
2. The main purpose of the review is to improve electoral equality across the whole of the county of Lincolnshire. The Commission's criteria state that the county needs to consider the electorate numbers from the end of the review (in 2016) and five years from that date (that is the predicted electorate in 2021.)
3. This size submission is the first stage amongst several in the process. It seeks to set out the county council's views on size, to get the best electoral representation for the people of Lincolnshire, weighed-up against the working demands on our councillors and acting within the council's governance arrangements.
4. A working group of councillors with cross-party representation was established to consider council size and, with the factors in 3 (above) in mind, they put forward three options for council to consider at its meeting on 19 December 2014. At that meeting council agreed a preferred size of 71 county councillors. This represents a reduction of six council seats, from the current make-up of 77 members. Council also voted to retain single-member divisions, to maintain the same level of member-accountability. Councillors also felt that multiple-member divisions were not conducive to large rural areas as they could become geographically unmanageable.

The last review

5. The last review of the county council took place under the LGBCE's predecessor, the Local Government Commission for England (LGCE). They began the review in September 1998 and concluded in November 1999, after extensive consultation. LGCE found unequal electoral representation in 43 of the 76 divisions and predicted that by 2003, an unchanged make-up would mean that this situation would deteriorate further.
6. They recommended increasing the number of councillors from 76 to 77, in single-member divisions and changing the boundaries to enable this, in all except five of the existing divisions. This had the effect that 21 of the 77 divisions the number of electors would vary by no more than 10 percent from the county average, with only four varying by more than 20 percent. This was also set to continue with 26 divisions expected to vary by no more than 10 percent and only three divisions expected to vary by more than 30 percent from the end of the review.

Lincolnshire in context

7. Lincolnshire is England's fourth largest county by area, covering 5,921 square kilometres. The county council was created as part of the local government reorganisation of 1974 and excludes North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire councils, which were previously part of Humberside.
8. The council's area boasts the bustling centres of Lincoln, Boston and Grantham. It also serves important market towns such as Spalding, Sleaford, Gainsborough, Skegness, Louth and Stamford.
9. Lincolnshire has one of the fastest-growing county populations as people move into it from other parts of the UK and overseas. The population boom means that Lincolnshire now has 724,500 residents (the 2013 mid-year estimates) a 1.51% increase on the 713,700 residents recorded in the 2011 Census. It is estimated that the population will increase to 763,900 people by 2021.¹
10. The 2011 Census showed that 51% of residents were female and 49% male. 21% were aged 65 or over and 22% aged 19 or under.

Political make-up

11. Lincolnshire County Council is currently made up of 77 councillors.
12. At the time of writing, Lincolnshire County Council's political profile is as follows:
 - Conservative 35
 - Labour 12
 - UK Independence Party 12
 - Lincolnshire Independents 8
 - Liberal Democrat 4
 - Independence from Europe 3
 - Independents 3
13. The ruling group on the County Council, Lincolnshire Administration, is made up of 35 Conservatives, four Liberal Democrats and three Independents.

Councillors

14. The council operates a leader and cabinet model of decision making. Full council meets a minimum of four times per year and is responsible for agreeing budgets and major policy issues affecting Lincolnshire people.
15. Ten councillors (including the Leader of the council) form the Executive, which has overall responsibility for making most decisions about our priorities and how we spend our money. The Executive roles are as follows:

¹ Total population figure projected by the Office for National Statistics

- Leader of the council: governance, communications and commissioning
- Deputy group leader: adult care and health services, children's services
- economic development, environment, planning, tourism
- highways, transport, IT
- finance, property
- fire and rescue, emergency planning, trading standards, equality and diversity
- waste, recycling
- NHS liaison, community engagement
- libraries, heritage, culture, registration and coroners service
- crime reduction, people management, legal

16. The remaining 67 councillors form scrutiny committees, which develop policy and scrutinise decisions made by the Executive, as well as key decisions made by officers, to hold them to account. A number of other committees deal with regulatory issues. These are listed below.

Scrutiny committees (10)

- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meets monthly and is made up of 18 councillors and 5 added members for Education matters.
- Adults Scrutiny Committee is made up of 11 councillors and meets approximately every six weeks.
- Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is made up of 18 councillors plus 5 added members for education matters and meets approximately every six weeks
- Community and Public Safety Scrutiny Committee is made up of 11 councillors and meets approximately every six weeks
- Economic Scrutiny Committee is made up of 11 councillors and meets approximately every six weeks
- Environmental Scrutiny Committee is made up of 11 councillors and meets approximately every six weeks
- Flood and Drainage Management Scrutiny Committee comprises 11 members and one representative from each of the seven Lincolnshire district councils. It meets four times per year
- Health Scrutiny for Lincolnshire Scrutiny Committee has 16 members, made up of eight county councillors, one representative from each of the seven Lincolnshire district councils and one non-voting representative from Healthwatch Lincolnshire. It meets approximately every four weeks.
- Highways and Transport Scrutiny Committee is made up of 11 councillors and meets approximately every six weeks
- Value for Money Scrutiny Committee is made up of 11 councillors and meets approximately every six weeks

Regulatory committees (four)

- Appointments Committee is made up of 12 members of council and meets as and when necessary
- Audit Committee is made up of seven members of council plus one added committee member and meets six times per year
- Pensions Committee is made up of eight members of council plus three co-opted committee members and meets seven times per year

- Planning and Regulation Committee is made up of 15 members of council and meets 12 times per year

Sub-committees (two)

- Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way Committee
- Pay Policy Committee

17. The county council is also a key stakeholder on the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board, with eight councillors as members, along with four clinical commissioning group representatives, three senior officers, plus one representative each from Healthwatch Lincolnshire and the clinical commissioning board. It meets four times per year.

18. There are also a small number of sub-committees and working groups which meet from time to time to consider specific issues and policies, plus various panels such as the Fostering and Adoption Panel.

19. Members also help the council to maintain effective partnerships with a number of external organisations as, although these are independent of the council, they have an impact on its services and the way we deliver them, as well as an operational effect on its service areas. At the time of writing, 61 elected councillors sit on the various committees and forums that are responsible for them and a list of these bodies is appended to this paper. Committee membership is shown in the table below.

Number of outside bodies members are on	Number of members this applies to
One committee	26
Two committees	14
Three committees	10
Four committees	4
Five committees	5
Six committees	1
Ten committees	1
Total members	61

20. As the majority of members representing Lincolnshire County Council (40) are representatives on one or two such bodies, and only 61 of our members are involved, we anticipate that reducing the council's size would not significantly affect how we manage our relationships with external bodies.

21. The Commission should note that the county council has adopted a commissioning-based approach to its activities and is now in the process of translating this to new staff and committee structures. A review could result in slightly fewer committees. A reduced total work demand could help to offset the reduction in councillors. We are unable to give an exact break-down of the effect this will have at present.

Comparison with Neighbours

22. Lincolnshire communities tend to be fairly dispersed with a low ratio of electors per hectare, at 0.94. This means that the county is 13th among our family set of 16 statistical neighbours and 24th in England as far as the 27 shire counties are concerned.²
23. We rank third on council size, as only Cumbria and Norfolk have a larger number of county councillors, with 84 each. We are however 12th of the 16 statistical neighbours, in terms of the number of electorate per member. The largest is Staffordshire with 10,695 electors per member and the smallest is Cumbria with 4,566 in comparison with Lincolnshire's 7,226 electors per member.
24. A reduction to 71 would still put us above the mean average, of 66 members per council, amongst our statistical neighbours. As such, there is an argument that we could reduce the number of council members, based on our neighbours' experiences. (A table, showing Lincolnshire's position amongst our statistical neighbours is appended to this submission.)

Geographical considerations

25. The overall electorate (according to the LGBCE February 2014 figures) is 556,400: an average of 7,226 per electoral division. The city of Lincoln has the highest electorate density, with an electorate of 64,000 (rounded). Other areas of density are Boston (49,000), Gainsborough (23,000), Grantham (38,000), Louth (33,000), Sleaford (24,000), Spalding (34,000) and Stamford (20,000).
26. Lincolnshire's transport links are less developed than those in many other parts of the United Kingdom. The road network within the county is dominated by single carriage A roads and local roads (B roads) rather than motorways and dual carriageways. Lincolnshire is one of the few UK counties without a motorway, although the A46 is now dual carriageway between Newark (to the West, in Nottinghamshire) and Lincoln.
27. The low population density means that the county has few railway stations and train services in relation to the county's large area. Lincoln-based passengers tend to change trains at Newark (just over the border in Nottinghamshire) when travelling to and from London, or North along the East Coast main line to Leeds, Newcastle or Edinburgh. East Coast main line trains also stop at Grantham, connecting the county with London and the North.
28. Most rail services are currently provided by East Midlands Trains and Northern Rail, although East Coast and Cross Country Trains also have services which pass through the county.

² Data from LGBCE website <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/records-and-resources/local-authorities-in-england> summary table for all local authorities in England

29. East Coast Trains now run a Lincoln to London service. One train travels both ways each day, and a north bound service is there on a Sunday. East Midlands Trains also run a Monday to Saturday service each way between Lincoln and London St Pancras, taking around 3 hours via Nottingham and Leicester, compared to East Coast's service to London King's Cross, which takes around one hour and 50 minutes.
30. Although the Commission is concerned about the number of electors for each councillor, it would be unwise to ignore the physical size of an electoral division. This does have a practical impact on the opportunities for citizens to interact with their elected members. Members expect that a smaller council size would be manageable, even with the restrictions of Lincolnshire's road and rail network and the dispersed nature of its population. However there will be practical limitations for frontline councillors, if division-size becomes too large.
31. Some of the geographical implications listed above will have an effect on the way our council members represent individual divisions. The challenges of representing a large, rural and sparsely populated area are likely to be quite different from those in more compact and geographically smaller urban areas. As such, council felt that a size of 71 members would strike a balance in allowing it to keep the workload achievable and maintaining reasonable councillor visibility among the local electorate.

Councillor workloads

32. In October 2014, Lincolnshire county councillors were invited to complete an anonymous questionnaire about their workload, including the time taken to read papers. Councillors were asked how many hours they spent per week, firstly on divisional casework and other engagement with the local community and secondly, on formal county council business such as representation on partnership bodies, working groups, scrutiny committees and council meetings.
33. Officers received 41 returns from the total of 77 which it sent out. The mean average is 19.07 hours per week for the local role and 19.71 for county council business. The median class (that is the value in the middle of the returns) is 16 to 20 hours per week each, for the local role and for county council business. Assuming that the sample and the mid-point in the category (of 18 hours per week) are representative would mean that councillors spend an average of 36 hours per week in their role.
34. Clearly any change to the number of councillors would impact on their weekly workload. As a rough calculation, the workload would involve an average time commitment of around 39 hours per week, were the council to reduce in size to 71 members.
35. However, other changes within the council are likely to have an effect on the workload, including our move towards a commissioning-based approach to service provision. As this change will bring about staff reductions, councillors feel that there should be a corresponding reduction in their numbers, especially as reducing the

council's size to 71 members would not significantly increase the members' average workload.

Councillor development

36. The county council has a councillor development group which meets six times per year and is charged with enhancing councillors' skills and knowledge. Overall, it aims to build councillors' capacity through member personal development planning and by identifying training needs.
37. A series of councillor role descriptions have been developed to reflect activities that they may undertake whilst serving as a councillor and the activities listed are indications of the types of activity, rather than requirements. The role descriptions serve three main purposes:
- to help those performing the role;
 - for those councillors who would like to undertake a specific role in the future (such as portfolio holder or committee chair); and
 - to inform the public, staff and stakeholders about the types of activity that councillors can undertake in their role.
38. They are also of value to the Independent Remuneration Panel when they consider recommendations around the level of councillor allowances.

The relationship with parishes

39. Working with information supplied by the Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC), officers identified 481 parishes, or grouped parishes, in the county. As a large, rural county the number and size of parishes varies considerably across divisions in the districts.
40. Lincoln city is not divided into parishes, so councillors in the 10 city divisions are not expected to maintain a relationship with parish councils, as in the rural divisions. Some of the other urban areas, such as Gainsborough, have one town council, but more than one electoral division covering the area. Overall 62 of our 77 electoral divisions include parishes. (This figure takes account of the four town councils that have two divisions in each of them: Gainsborough, Louth, Skegness and Stamford.)
41. As far as the more rural areas are concerned, Louth Wolds has the largest number of parishes at 47. After that, there is a drop-off to 25 parishes each in two divisions: Folkingham Rural, plus Horncastle and Tetford.
42. Officers surveyed the 67 councillors who are not based in Lincoln, about their relationship with parishes in 2010/2011. They received 23 replies: a response rate of 34 percent. Unsurprisingly, the responses show a range of experiences. These vary from those who receive agendas and minutes only (to keep up to date), to the member who gives a report at the beginning of parish council meetings then leaves at their request, to those who enjoy more open dialogue as active participants in

parish council meetings.

43. There were also comments about the growing importance of email and written reports as a means of keeping parish councils up to date with developments and good news stories, without necessarily attending in person. Some felt that keeping the lines of communication open, by phone and email, is as valuable as attending meetings.
44. As far as the county council itself is concerned, only core policy information is usually sent from its departments directly to town and parish councils. However, information is provided to the LALC website, for them to disseminate on the county council's behalf. LALC also produce a newsletter and have email groups: they are happy to include county council items for communication with town and parish council clerks.
45. With the growing reliance on electronic communications, we consider that a reduction to a council size of 71 will not significantly increase the members' time commitment toward the parishes.

Other considerations

46. Councillors recently agreed to increase their basic allowance from £8,184 to £10,100 per year, with effect from April 2014. (This is the first increase since 2008). Along with travelling and other expenses, we expect the reduction to generate an annual saving of at least £11,757 per member.
47. According to LGBCE figures (at February 2014) the Lincolnshire electorate is currently 556,399, giving an average of 7,226 per elected council member. Reducing the number of members to 71 would increase this average, to 7,837 electors per county councillor (on the 2014 figures). The working group has considered the implications of population growth on councillor numbers, to 2021 and feel that 71 seats would give the best spread, as far as the mean average is concerned. This would be 7,343, were we to keep 77 seats, growing to 7,946, if we reduced council size to 71 seats.
48. Recent changes in local government (such as the emphasis on partnership working, Big Society and localism) coupled with the county council's move towards becoming a commissioning council; mean that the county council has a more strategic role. As such, there may be a corresponding reduction in the committee commitments of our members.

Summary

49. Lincolnshire County Council has considered the size and structure of its organisation and the effects any change would have on workload, connectivity and day-to-day council business.
50. Electoral equality has been the main consideration in reaching the conclusion that Lincolnshire needs to reduce in size to 71 members, based in single-member

divisions. The council has considered the current and projected electorate (to 2021) in making this decision.

51. The commission should note that:

- Lincolnshire County Council has agreed that the council size should reduce to 71 members in single-member wards.
- This is has been agreed at full council, by majority vote.

Appendices

Appendix A: Lincolnshire county council members

Appendix B: position amongst statistical neighbours

NW/kh: 29 January 2015

Council representation on external bodies

At the time of writing, the council has representatives on the following outside bodies:

1. Adoption and Permanence Panel A
2. Adoption and Permanence Panel B
3. Anglian (Northern) Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
4. Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Visitor Centre Trustees
5. Boston Woods Trust
6. Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee
7. Community Lincs - Board
8. Community Lincs - Company Members
9. Cordeaux Academy
10. Council for Protection of Rural England - Lincolnshire Branch
11. County Councils Network
12. East Midlands Adult Social Care and Health Councillor Network
13. East Midlands Children's Services Lead Member Network
14. East Midlands Councils
15. East Midlands Councils - EM Improvement and Transformation Board
16. East Midlands Councils - EM Strategic Migration Partnership Board
17. East Midlands Councils - Executive Board
18. East Midlands Councils - Regional Employers' Board
19. East Midlands Councils - Regional Joint Council
20. East Midlands Museums Service
21. East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association - Lincolnshire County Committee (TAVR)
22. East Midlands Rural Affairs Forum
23. Eastern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority
24. Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Finance and Audit Sub-Committee
25. Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) Management Committee
26. Fields In Trust
27. First College
28. Fostering Panel
29. Gainsborough Academy
30. Gibraltar Point National Nature Reserve Joint Advisory Committee
31. Grantham Canal Partnership
32. Grantham Growth Strategic Board
33. Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership
34. Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire - Advisory and Liaison Committee
35. Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire - Trustees Board
36. Humberside International Airport Consultative Committee
37. Investors in Lincoln - Alternate Director
38. Investors in Lincoln - Director
39. Lawrance Park Community Association - Management Committee
40. Lincoln Business Improvement Group
41. Lincoln Civic Trust Limited - Council
42. Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils
43. Lincolnshire Economic Action Partnership

Electoral review: preliminary size submission for Lincolnshire County Council
Appendix A

44. Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Trading Incendi Ltd
45. Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture and Horticulture
46. Lincolnshire Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (Shared Services)
47. Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - Board of Governors
48. Lincolnshire Police and Crime Panel
49. Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership
50. Lincolnshire Sports Partnership
51. Lincolnshire Supported Housing Commissioning Partnership
52. Lincolnshire Waste Partnership
53. Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust - Biodiversity Steering Group
54. Lincolnshire Wolds AONB Member Joint Advisory Committee
55. Local Government Association - Coastal Issues Group
56. Local Government Association - Fire Service Forum
57. Local Government Association - General Assembly
58. Local Government Association - Inland Flood Risk Management Group
59. Louth United Charities
60. Manor Leas Academy
61. Mid-Lincolnshire Local Access Forum
62. Mrs Smith's Cottage Museum Management Committee
63. North Kesteven Sports Centre Management Board
64. PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London)
65. Pensions Fund Forum - Local Authorities
66. Peterborough & Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - Partner Governor
67. Priory Trust Academy
68. Public Transport Consortium
69. Regeneration and Tourism Advisory Group
70. Robin Hood, Doncaster Sheffield Finningley Airport Consultative Committee
71. Rural Services Network (SPARSE)
72. Secure Accommodation Review Panel
73. Shoreline Management Plan - Flamborough Head to Gibraltar Point
74. Shoreline Management Plan - The Wash to Norfolk Coast
75. Skegness Day Centre Limited
76. Skegness Partnership Board Limited
77. Sleaford St George's Academy Trust
78. Snipe Dales Joint Advisory Committee
79. Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology - Executive Committee
80. South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee
81. South Lincolnshire and Rutland Local Access Forum
82. Spalding Energy Community Liaison Group
83. Stamford Mercury Archive Trust
84. Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)
85. Sutton Bridge Power Station Liaison Group
86. Usher Trust
87. Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site
88. Whisby Nature Park Steering Board
89. Willoughby Memorial Trust

Electoral review: preliminary size submission for Lincolnshire County Council
Appendix B

Position amongst statistical neighbours

CIPFA Statistical Neighbours, with data from Boundary Commission at February 2014												
County Council	Total electorate		Number of Divisions		Council Size		Electors per Councillor		Area (Hectares)		Density (Electors per Hectare)	
	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank	Value	Rank
Cambridgeshire	477,850	10	60	8	69	6	6,925	13	304,624	8	1.57	9
Cumbria	383,508	16	84	1	84	1	4,566	16	676,715	3	0.57	15
Derbyshire	610,126	3	61	7	64	8	9,533	3	254,668	11	2.40	5
Devon	592,598	5	62	6	62	9	9,558	2	1,132,960	1	0.52	16
Gloucestershire	475,954	11	53	14	53	16	8,980	6	265,317	9	1.79	8
Leicestershire	522,532	8	52	15	55	14	9,501	4	208,289	14	2.51	4
Lincolnshire	556,399	6	77	3	77	3	7,226	12	592,058	4	0.94	13
Norfolk	670,802	1	84	1	84	1	7,986	8	537,078	5	1.25	11
North Yorkshire	466,426	12	68	4	72	5	6,478	15	803,761	2	0.58	14
Northamptonshire	518,867	9	57	10	57	12	9,103	5	236,397	12	2.19	6
Nottinghamshire	595,451	4	54	12	67	7	8,887	7	208,478	13	2.86	1
Somerset	411,048	15	54	12	55	14	7,474	10	345,054	7	1.19	12
Staffordshire	663,118	2	60	8	62	9	10,695	1	262,029	10	2.53	3
Suffolk	554,748	7	63	5	75	4	7,397	11	380,086	6	1.46	10
Warwickshire	422,230	14	56	11	62	9	6,810	14	197,509	15	2.14	7
Worcestershire	440,605	13	52	15	57	12	7,730	9	174,052	16	2.53	2
Average Statistical Neighbours	522,641		62		66		8,053		411,192		1.7	