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Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. The broad purpose of an electoral review is to decide on the appropriate electoral arrangements – the number of councillors, and the names, number and boundaries of wards or divisions – for a specific local authority. We are conducting an electoral review of Poole Borough Council to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the authority.

The review aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same. The Commission commenced the review in July 2013.

This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
23 July 2013	Consultation on council size
22 October 2013	Invitation to submit proposals for warding arrangements to LGBCE
8 January 2014	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
15 April 2014	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
25 June 2014	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

Submissions received

The Commission received 31 submissions during its initial consultation on council size. These submissions put forward comments on our structured consultation on council sizes of 38 and 42 respectively. During consultation on warding arrangements, we received 206 submissions including a borough-wide scheme from the Council. A large majority of these submissions put forward comments on the Broadstone and Creekmoor areas. All submissions can be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Analysis and draft recommendations

Electorate figures

Poole Borough Council ('the Council') submitted electorate forecasts for 2019, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2014. These forecasts projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 3.6% over this period. During the consultation on warding patterns a resident queried whether the Council's figures had taken full account of development in East Hamworthy ward. Following discussions with the Council, it recommended that an additional 428 electors be included in its projections for this area. Following consideration of the evidence we supported this revision. We are content that the

forecasts are the most accurate available at this time and have used these figures as the basis of our draft recommendations.

Council size

Poole Borough Council currently has a council size of 42. During the preliminary stage of the review we received two proposals on council size from the Council (for 42 members) and a joint submission from the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups on the Council (for 38 members). Given the conflicting nature of the evidence we carried out a structured consultation on 38 and 42 members.

We received 31 submissions during consultation on council size. However, the new evidence received was limited, so we revisited the evidence received during the preliminary stage from the Council and the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups. While the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups put forward some evidence to support a reduction in council size, we were not persuaded that they had fully justified how a reduction would work in practice. Therefore, on balance, we were not persuaded that a reduction in council size should be recommended and therefore adopted a council size of 42 as part of our draft recommendations.

General analysis

Having considered the submissions received during consultation on warding arrangements, we have developed proposals based largely on the Council's proposals. However, we are moving away from its proposals in the Broadstone, Creekmoor and Hamworthy areas. In the Broadstone and Creekmoor areas we received a large number of submissions, which were in some cases of conflicting nature. The Council proposed three two-member Broadstone East, Broadstone West and Creekmoor wards. We had concerns about the Council's proposed Broadstone West ward, particularly the proposal to transfer an area to the north of Beechbank Avenue to the ward. In addition, we noted that the proposal by the Conservative Group on the Council for two three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards provided an alternative and secured slightly better electoral equality. On balance, we considered that the Conservative Group proposals provided better electoral arrangements and are adopting them as part of our draft recommendations.

Finally, we noted that there was support for a four-member Hamworthy ward, combining the existing two two-member Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards. However, while the legislation does not provide an upper limit regarding the number of councillors that may be returned from each ward, we take the view that wards returning more than three councillors result in a dilution of accountability to the electorate. It should be noted that there are currently no principal authority wards or divisions in England returning more than three councillors. We therefore rejected this proposal. We examined the other proposals but noted that these secured poor electoral equality. Therefore, we are retaining the existing Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards.

What happens next?

There will now be a consultation period, during which we encourage comment on the draft recommendations on the proposed electoral arrangements for Poole Borough Council contained in the report. **We take this consultation very seriously and it is therefore important that all those interested in the review should let us have their views and evidence, whether or not they agree with these draft proposals.** We will take into account all submissions received by **24 June 2014**. Any received **after** this date may not be taken into account.

We would particularly welcome local views backed up by demonstrable evidence. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations. Express your views by writing directly to us at:

Review Officer
Poole Review
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76–86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG
reviews@lgbce.org.uk

The full report is available to download at www.lgbce.org.uk

You can also view our draft recommendations for Poole Borough Council on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

1 Introduction

1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body which conducts electoral reviews of local authority areas. This electoral review is being conducted following our decision to review Poole Borough Council's electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

2 We wrote to the Council as well as other interested parties, inviting the submission of proposals first on council size and then on warding arrangements for the Council. The submissions received during these stages of the review have informed our draft recommendations.

3 We are now conducting a full public consultation on the draft recommendations. Following this period of consultation, we will consider the evidence received and will publish our final recommendations for the new electoral arrangements for Poole Borough Council in autumn 2014.

What is an electoral review?

4 The main aim of an electoral review is to try to ensure 'electoral equality', which means that all councillors in a single authority represent approximately the same number of electors. Our objective is to make recommendations that will improve electoral equality, while also trying to reflect communities in the area and provide for effective and convenient local government.

5 Our three main considerations – equalising the number of electors each councillor represents; reflecting community identity; and providing for effective and convenient local government – are set out in legislation¹ and our task is to strike the best balance between them when making our recommendations. Our powers, as well as the guidance we have provided for electoral reviews and further information on the review process, can be found on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Why are we conducting a review in Poole?

6 We decided to conduct this review because based on the December 2011 electorate figures, 38% of its wards exceeded the 10% variance.

How will the recommendations affect you?

7 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which ward you vote in, which other communities are in that ward. In addition, your ward name may change.

8 It is therefore important that you let us have your comments and views on the draft recommendations. We encourage comments from everyone in the community, regardless of whether you agree with the draft recommendations or not. The draft recommendations are evidence based and we would therefore like to stress the

¹ Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

importance of providing evidence in any comments on our recommendations, rather than relying on assertion. We will be accepting comments and views until 24 June 2014. After this point, we will be formulating our final recommendations which we are due to publish in autumn 2014. Details on how to submit proposals can be found on page 23 and more information can be found on our website, www.lgbce.org.uk

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

9 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body set up by Parliament under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Members of the Commission are:

Max Caller CBE (Chair)
Professor Colin Mellors (Deputy Chair)
Dr Peter Knight CBE DL
Sir Tony Redmond
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Alan Cogbill
Director of Reviews: Archie Gall

2 Analysis and draft recommendations

10 Before finalising our recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Poole Borough Council we invite views on these draft recommendations. We welcome comments relating to the proposed ward boundaries and ward names. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

11 As described earlier, our prime aim when recommending new electoral arrangements for Poole is to achieve a level of electoral fairness – that is, each elector’s vote being worth the same as another’s. In doing so we must have regard to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009², with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- provide for equality of representation
- reflect the identities and interests of local communities, in particular
 - the desirability of arriving at boundaries that are easily identifiable
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries so as not to break any local ties

12 Legislation also states that our recommendations are not intended to be based solely on the existing number of electors in an area, but also on estimated changes in the number and distribution of electors likely to take place over a five-year period from the date of our final recommendations. We must also try to recommend strong, clearly identifiable boundaries for the wards we put forward at the end of the review.

13 In reality, the achievement of absolute electoral fairness is unlikely to be attainable and there must be a degree of flexibility. However, our approach is to keep variances in the number of electors each councillor represents to a minimum. We therefore recommend strongly that in formulating proposals for us to consider, local authorities and other interested parties should also try to keep variances to a minimum, making adjustments to reflect relevant factors such as community identity and interests. As mentioned above, we aim to recommend a scheme which provides improved electoral fairness over a five-year period.

14 These recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Poole Borough Council or result in changes to postcodes. Nor is there any evidence that the recommendations will have an adverse effect on local taxes, house prices, or car and house insurance premiums. The proposals do not take account of parliamentary constituency boundaries, and we are not, therefore, able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Submissions received

15 Prior to, and during, the initial stage of the review, we visited Poole Borough Council (the ‘Council’) and met with members and officers. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. During the preliminary period the Council put forward proposals for the retention of the existing 42–member council. In addition, we received a joint submission from the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups on the Council for 38 members. We received a further 31 submissions

² Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

during consultation on council size. During the consultation on ward boundaries we received 206 submissions, including submissions from the Council and the Conservative Group on the Council. All representations received can also be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

16 As part of this review, the Council submitted electorate forecasts for the year 2019. The Council forecast an increase of 3.6%, slightly lower than the Office for National Statistics forecasts for population.

17 However, during the consultation on warding patterns a resident queried whether the Council's projections had taken full account of the development of the Twin Sails regeneration area in Hamworthy East ward. He cited the fact that building had already commenced on the old Pilkington Tiles site and suggested that across the Twin Sails area there would be an additional 2,000 homes.

18 We noted that there were planning applications for significant development in the area and asked the Council for clarification. The Council stated that at the time it submitted its forecasts, the Pilkington Tiles site had not been granted planning permission. However, it confirmed that since then the site had been granted permission and indeed cleared, with Commission officers noting that construction has commenced during their tour of the area. The Council therefore proposed the addition of 428 electors to this area by 2019. In addition, the Council stated that if the current improvement in the economic climate continued then an additional 1,400 electors might be expected in the development of the Hamworthy Power Station site. However, the Council acknowledged that this development had not been granted permission.

19 Having considered the evidence, we decided to support the revision to the Council's electorate forecasts, with an additional 428 electors in Hamworthy East. However, we do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to support the inclusion of the Hamworthy Power Station site in the projections.

20 With the inclusion of the additional electors, the Council forecast 4% growth. We are satisfied that these figures are the best available at the present time and these figures form the basis of our draft recommendations.

Council size

21 The Council currently has 42 members elected from 16 borough wards, comprising six two-member and 10 three-member wards. During preliminary discussions on council size, we received two submissions. These were from the Council (proposing the retention of 42 members) and a joint submission from the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups on the Council (proposing a reduction to 38 members).

22 The Council outlined its governance and management structure and model of leadership, stating that while its constitution allows for nine portfolio holders in the Cabinet, plus the Leader, more recently it has been running with six portfolio holders plus the Leader. It added that these roles are generally considered to be full-time.

23 It stated that a considerable amount of regulatory work, particularly planning, is delegated to officers, with only significant planning applications referred to the Planning Committee. However, all members are involved in committee work in some way, with all non-executive members sitting on a least one committee, plus their own area committee. It acknowledged that the type of work has changed and that austerity pressures have led to demands to streamline the Council's democratic structures. However, it considered that while the number of meetings may decline a little, as an active unitary authority, this was not expected to have a dramatic effect on the work members do.

24 The Council outlined members' representational role, stating that they undertake this role in different ways, with most working directly with electors, passing issues on to officers where their information or technical skills are required. Its survey of members in April 2013 concluded that workloads have increased since the last review, particularly time spent on email correspondence, and there was a feeling that the localism agenda would increase demand from constituents and therefore workload.

25 Finally, it stated that it generally considers itself a 'lean' organisation, but acknowledged that there has been a decrease in the operation role of the education authority and responsibilities for some services and facilities had been devolved. In addition, it has pursued shared services with other local authorities where appropriate. However, it did not consider that this had reduced the role of members and that its approach had created significant pressure and responsibility for members.

26 The Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups stated that the bulk of decisions are made by the Leader, Cabinet or individual Portfolio holders, with relatively few significant decisions made by Council. They added that most cabinet meetings last about 40 minutes, with few extending beyond an hour. In addition, the need to generate cost savings has led to functional adjustments within the Council and shared working with neighbouring councils, and partnership working. As a result many decisions are made outside council and are simply ratified by Council.

27 They questioned whether a Cabinet member's role is a full-time job, arguing that if it was, other aspects of their role would not get done. They also said that at least one Cabinet member has a full-time job.

28 They argued that the Overview and Scrutiny committees make recommendations to Cabinet or Council but do not make any decisions. And while meetings last between two and three hours, time is frequently spent on 'information only' items or listening to officer presentations with little focus on real priorities. They therefore questioned how effective they are as part of the Council's governance.

29 In addition, they noted a trend for establishing working parties was often generated by the councillors themselves, more because of personal interests than essential governance or workings of Council. They added that members are responsible for the committee structure and therefore have the power to address workload issues, adding that inefficient ways of working are not justification for maintaining the current council size. They argued that in addition to considering the duration of meetings, note should be given to the number cancelled through lack of business. They concluded that the Council would be more efficient with fewer

committees focusing more on policy and strategic issues rather than focusing so much on work which is within the realm of delegation to officers.

30 The Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups acknowledged the importance of councillor representation on outside bodies, but that the current 'list' overstates the workload. They acknowledged that while casework is at the heart of a councillor's representational role, new technologies have significantly improved the efficiency enabling faster and more immediate responses, both with residents and relevant officers. In addition, residents are able to bypass councillors, using the website or 'Report It' service. They concluded that this points to a reduction in workload through both time saving and a decrease in the volume of cases.

31 Finally, they argued that the Localism Act has not actually changed councillor involvement in the local community, but rather it has re-emphasised the importance of local communities and established the right for communities to make their own decisions. They acknowledged that the Council is establishing Neighbourhood Forums, but considered these would not necessarily impact councillors' roles in terms of involvement within the community but rather upon decision-making processes and ways of working.

32 They therefore concluded that a 10% cut (four councillors) could be justified without detrimental impact on councillor workload. They considered that this was in line with public wishes for greater efficiencies and effectiveness of the Council.

33 We noted the evidence and argument received and considered it somewhat conflicting, particularly around the impact of changes in IT and partnership working on councillor workload. In addition, we noted that there was not agreement on whether the current governance and decision making and overview and scrutiny is appropriate. On this basis we decided to carry out consultation on 38 and 42 members.

34 We received 31 submissions during consultation on council size. Six supported the existing council size of 42 members, with arguments suggesting that a reduction in councillors would reduce the level of representation for residents and also potentially increase member workload, therefore reducing the pool of people prepared to stand in elections. One respondent argued for a general increase in council size.

35 The remaining 24 submissions argued for a reduction in council size. There was a mixture of support for a specific reduction to 38 members and more general comments about a reduction in council size. While a number of submissions argued strongly that the Council had too many members, no respondent put forward detailed proposals for how a council size of 38 members would function.

36 We considered that the evidence in support of a reduction generally reiterated the arguments put forward by the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups. We did not consider that any respondent put forward particularly strong evidence during the consultation to argue how the Council would function under a council size of 38 members. Therefore, because of the limited additional evidence received we revisited the evidence received during the preliminary stage from the Council and the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups on the Council.

37 As stated above, we considered that the evidence received was somewhat conflicting, particularly around the impact of changes in IT and partnership working on councillor workload. However, while the Liberal Democrat and Poole People Party groups put forward some compelling evidence to suggest that the Council may not be totally 'fit for purpose', we were not persuaded that they have fully considered how a reduction would work in practice. We noted that the Council suggested that workload will increase with the localism agenda. Therefore, on balance, we were not fully persuaded that a reduction in Council size should be recommended. We therefore decided to retain council size of 42 members as the basis for warding arrangements.

38 During consultation on warding patterns we received no substantial submissions relating to council size. We therefore decided to base our draft recommendations on a council size of 42.

Electoral fairness

39 As discussed in the introduction to this report, the prime aim of an electoral review is to achieve electoral fairness within a local authority.

40 Electoral fairness, in the sense of each elector in a local authority having a vote of equal weight when it comes to the election of councillors, is a fundamental democratic principle. It is expected that our recommendations will provide for electoral fairness, reflect communities in the area, and provide for effective and convenient local government.

41 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The borough average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the borough (116,169 in 2013 and 120,809 by 2019) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 42 under our draft recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our draft recommendations is 2,766 in 2013 and 2,876 by 2019.

42 Under our draft recommendations, all of our proposed wards will have electoral variances 10% or less from the average for the borough by 2019. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral fairness for Poole.

General analysis

43 During consultation on warding arrangements we received 206 submissions, including a borough-wide scheme from the Council. The large majority of submissions made comments on the proposals for the Broadstone and Creekmoor areas.

44 In the remainder of the borough, we note that with the exception of the Bournemouth West Labour Party and number of representations making general observations about the proposals received, there was general support for the proposals to the east of Holes Bay and the A349. The Council provided very limited argument to support its proposals, but we note that its wards in this area secured good electoral equality. We are therefore basing our draft recommendations on its wards in this area, subject to two minor amendments to strengthen ward boundaries.

45 We also note that the Council proposed combining the existing two-member Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards to create a four-member Hamworthy ward. It argued that this area is surrounded by water on three sides and on a fourth its access to the rest of borough runs outside the borough boundary. In addition, it argued that electors were often 'confused' about the existing boundary between the two wards. Finally, it argued that the range of potential housing development could be better accommodated in electoral equality terms in a four-member ward. A number of respondents expressed support for the four-member ward. A number of those who supported it also provided alternate options in the event that a four-member ward was not acceptable.

46 We note the Council's four-member ward and the argument it has put forward. While we note its limited geography, with water on three sides and no direct road links to the north, our policy is not normally to propose wards of this size. While the legislation does not provide an upper limit regarding the number of councillors that may be returned from each ward, we take the view that wards returning more than three councillors result in a dilution of accountability to the electorate. It should be noted that there are currently no principal authority wards or divisions in England returning more than three councillors.

47 We have therefore examined alternate options, including those put forward locally. Councillor White and Councillor Chandler put forward proposals for two two-member wards and a single- and three-member ward, respectively. However, we note that both Councillor White's and Councillor Chandler's proposals would result in a ward with variance of over 10% by 2019, with 15% fewer and 14% fewer electors than the borough average, respectively. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify these poor levels of electoral equality. We are therefore retaining the existing Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards, which would have 5% fewer and 6% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

48 In the Broadstone and Creekmoor areas we note that there were a number of options put forward. The Council proposed the creation of three two-member wards, while the Conservative Group proposed modifications to the existing three-member wards. The large majority of submissions we received related to the options put forward in this area. There was support and objections to both sets of proposals. Although we considered the evidence finely balanced, we had particular concern about the Council proposal to transfer an area of housing to the north of Beechbank Avenue from Creekmoor to Broadstone ward. Our tour of the area led us to conclude that this area was best retained in the Creekmoor ward.

49 We are therefore adopting the Conservative Group's proposal to transfer the Twin Oaks and Edwina Drive area from Broadstone to Creekmoor. We note that there was considerable objection to this, but consider that it provides better levels of electoral equality.

50 Our draft recommendations are for six two-member wards and 10 three-member wards. We consider that our draft recommendations provide for good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and interests where we have received such evidence during consultation.

51 Finally, a number of respondents expressed concerns about the impact of warding changes on house prices, polling districts and school catchment areas.

While we acknowledge these issues concern people, as our Guidance states, there is no evidence that our recommendations have any adverse effect on house prices, polling districts or school catchments. In addition, they do not affect local taxes or result in changes to electors' addresses or postcodes. We therefore do not take any evidence based on these factors into account.

52 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations. We also welcome comments on the ward names we have proposed as part of the draft recommendations.

Electoral arrangements

53 This section of the report details the submissions we have received, our consideration of them, and our draft recommendations for each area of Poole. The following areas of the authority are considered in turn:

- Broadstone, Creekmoor, Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West (pages 13–18)
- Alderney, Branksome East, Branksome West, Canford Heath East, Canford Heath West, Merley & Bearwood and Newtown (pages 18–20)
- Canford Cliffs, Oakdale, Parkstone, Penn Hill and Poole Town (page 20)

54 Details of our draft recommendations are set out in Table A1 pages 26–7 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Broadstone, Creekmoor, Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West

55 The existing wards of Broadstone, Creekmoor, Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards lie to the west of the borough, to the west of the A349 and Holes Bay. The Council put forward proposals for two-member Broadstone East, Broadstone West and Creekmoor wards with 7% fewer, 6% fewer and 1% more electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. It also put forward proposals for a four-member Hamworthy ward with 5% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019.

56 The Council's Broadstone East ward would comprise the area of the existing Broadstone ward to the east of Broadstone Way and Higher Blandford Road, with the addition of the existing Creekmoor ward to the east of Broadstone Way, north of Sopers Lane and west of Southbrook Farm. Its Broadstone West ward would comprise the remainder of the existing Broadstone ward with the addition of part of the existing Creekmoor ward to the north of Beechbank Avenue. Its Creekmoor ward would comprise the existing ward less the areas transferred to Broadstone East and Broadstone West wards.

57 The Council's Hamworthy ward would combine the existing two-member Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards to create a four-member ward. It cited the geography of the area, arguing that it is surrounded by water on three sides and the access to the north of the ward is outside the borough boundary. In addition, it argued that electors were often 'confused' about the existing boundary between the two wards. Finally, it argued that the range of potential housing development could be better accommodated in electoral equality terms in a four-member ward.

58 The Conservative Group on the Council supported the four-member Hamworthy ward, but objected to the two-member Broadstone East, Broadstone West and Creekmoor wards and instead proposed two alternate options that both amended the existing three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards. Its first option would transfer an area of the existing Broadstone ward around Lytham Road, Twin Oaks Close and Edwina Drive to Creekmoor ward. As a result, its three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards would have 3% fewer and 6% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. Its second option would transfer a smaller area of the existing Broadstone ward, Edwina Drive and electors on the east side to the south of York Road. This would produce three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards which would have equal to the average and 9% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

59 The Conservative Group stated that it opposed the creation of three two-member wards in this area, arguing that this proposal divides an 'homogenous estate into two' along Beechbank Avenue which has access to local shops, library and community centre in Creekmoor. It also stated that it had 'canvassed Broadstone and a large majority [...] of people approached are against the proposals to split Broadstone into two wards'. It stated that dividing the area would 'diminish [its] unity' and that the Broadstone West ward would be without local facilities which would be concentrated in the Broadstone East ward. In addition, it argued that these proposals would mean revised warding arrangements for 'over 8,000 voters [...] causing unnecessary confusion'.

60 It also stated that it had put forward its second option, retaining the Twin Oaks Close area in Broadstone ward, in response to local concerns that the area has a 'strong affinity' with Broadstone.

61 Councillors Brooke, Godfrey and Slade (all representing Broadstone ward) put forward a joint submission expressing support for the creation of three two-member Broadstone East, Broadstone West and Creekmoor wards and stating 'following extensive consultation and door to door surveys [...] this proposal has overwhelming support from the residents who are potentially affected by such a change to the boundary'.

62 They stated that the north, east and west boundaries of Broadstone are well established and defined and therefore unlikely to change. They argued that this only leaves amendments to the southern boundary with Creekmoor. They stated that the Council's proposal provided a more logical and distinctive boundary than the current one and ensured the retention of a single Broadstone community rather than one which is divided.

63 They acknowledged that these proposals used Beechbank Avenue as a boundary, but argued that it 'is a busy link road [which] no one lives on'. They also argued that these proposals keep the Broadstone community 'intact' and the Waterloo community in Creekmoor ward. In addition, they argued that the proposals would transfer part of the existing Creekmoor ward (the area to the west of York Road) that is actually part of the Broadstone community back into Broadstone, with '99.5% support' from the people they surveyed. This area has 'no access [...] across Broadstone way into Creekmoor and residents look to Broadstone for their services and community activities'.

64 They stated that the boundary between the proposed Broadstone East and Broadstone West wards is distinctive but would not impact the 'community's cohesiveness'.

65 They made particular reference to the Twin Oaks area stating that they have received 'a 100% response supporting staying within Broadstone'. Finally, they also outlined the range of facilities within Broadstone, arguing these create a sense of 'identity and [...] belonging'.

66 Councillor Brooke (Broadstone ward) submitted a separate response requesting that the comments of local residents are considered. He also stated concern about any proposal that would split the Broadstone community

67 Robert Syms MP (Poole) objected to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area. Poole Conservatives and Lady Dagnall (Deputy Chairman Political Poole Conservative Association) objected to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area, adding that the area should remain as two three-member wards. Poole Conservative Association also objected to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area, putting forward the same alternative options and arguments as the Conservative Group on the Council.

68 Mid Dorset & North Poole Conservative Association and Mid Dorset & North Poole Conservative Association – Broadstone Branch objected to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area and expressed support for either of the Conservative Group's alternative proposals amending the existing three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards as an alternative. They did, however, both state a preference for the second option as this retains the Twin Oaks area in Broadstone ward. Mid Dorset & North Poole Conservative Association – Broadstone Branch also submitted 65 slips signed by residents objecting to 'the proposal to split Broadstone in two halves'.

69 Councillor Atkinson, Leader of the Council (Penn Hill ward), put forward two submissions objecting to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area.

70 The three Creekmoor ward councillors – Burden, Butt and Rampton – put forward separate submissions objecting to the Council's proposal for the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area. Councillors Burden and Rampton both expressed support for minimal change to the existing wards, putting forward similar arguments to the Conservative Group.

71 Councillor Butt objected to the proposal to transfer parts of Creekmoor to Broadstone, stating that she sought to minimise change to electors and sought to 'honour [the Commission's] minimal change requirement criteria'. In addition, she expressed concern about the impact on access to polling stations and school catchment areas. She also argued that people in Hillbourne and Waterloo have no 'affinity with Broadstone shopping centre' and have 'long established excellent provision' at the Waterloo shopping parade, Creekmoor Neighbourhood Centre and Pergin Crescent, adding those areas transferred to the Broadstone wards would not naturally venture to Broadstone. She put forward identical options for amendments to

the existing Broadstone and Creekmoor wards as the Conservative Group on the Council.

72 Councillor Haines (Canford Cliffs ward), Councillor Pawlowski (Canford Cliffs ward), Councillor Parker (Penn Hill ward), Councillor Potter (Oakdale ward), Councillor Rampton (Penn Hill ward), Councillor Sorton (Canford Cliffs ward), Councillor Stribley MBE (Parkstone ward) and Councillor Woodcock (Parkstone ward) all expressed opposition to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area, expressing a preference for minimal change to the existing wards. A number of these respondents put forward similar arguments to the Conservative Group. Councillor Chandler also objected, but requested no change.

73 Seventy-nine members of the public objected to any proposal to move any of the roads around Pinesprings Drive into a Creekmoor ward. One member of the public requested that the area to the north of Beechbank Avenue be transferred to a Broadstone ward.

74 Nine members of the public objected to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area and expressed support for the minimal change proposed by the Conservative Group. Five members of the public objected to the creation of three two-member wards for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area and expressed support for minimal change. Twenty-five members of the public requested no change to the existing Broadstone and Creekmoor wards.

75 Seven members of the public expressed support for the Council's proposals for three two-member Broadstone East, Broadstone West and Creekmoor wards. Three members of the public stated that Edwina Drive should remain in Broadstone ward, while 15 residents on Twin Oaks Close argued their area should stay in Broadstone ward. Twenty-five residents in the roads to the west of York Road expressed support for proposals to transfer their area from Creekmoor to a Broadstone ward.

76 Councillor Chandler (Hamworthy West ward) expressed support for the Council's proposal for a four-member Hamworthy ward putting forward a similar argument to the Council. However, he also put forward an alternate warding pattern in the event that a four-member ward was rejected. He proposed a single-member ward comprising Turlin Moor and the area to the north of the line and another ward comprising the remainder of the Hamworthy peninsula. These wards would have 14% fewer and 3% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

77 Councillor White also expressed support for the Council's four-member Hamworthy ward. He too put forward an alternate warding pattern in the event that a four-member ward was rejected. He proposed amendments to the existing wards. His revised Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards would have 15% fewer and 4% more electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. Finally, he rejected any proposal to amend the existing boundary around Lulworth Avenue.

78 Councillor Atkinson (Oakdale ward) stated that the existing Hamworthy East and Hamworthy wards should be retained. Councillor Butt (Creekmoor ward), Councillor Sorton (Canford Cliffs ward) and Councillor Wilkins (Hamworthy West ward) all expressed support for a four-member Hamworthy ward. The Conservative Group on the Council and Poole Conservative Association both supported a four-member Hamworthy ward, but in the event that this wasn't acceptable to the

Commission expressed support for Councillor White's alternate arrangements. Finally, three local residents expressed support for a four-member Hamworthy ward.

79 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note the different proposals for the Broadstone and Creekmoor area and also the proposal for a four-member ward for Hamworthy.

80 We note that in the Broadstone and Creekmoor area both the Council's proposal and the Conservative Group's proposals secure reasonable levels of electoral equality.

81 A number of respondents expressed concerns about the impact of warding changes on house prices, polling districts and school catchment areas. While we acknowledge these issues concern people, as our Guidance states, there is no evidence that our recommendations have any adverse effect on house prices, polling districts or school catchments. In addition, they do not affect local taxes or result in changes to electors' addresses or postcodes. We therefore have not taken these arguments into account. We also note Councillor Butt's comments about seeking 'minimal change', but must be clear that we start a review with no pre-determined view of its outcome, including whether the existing wards best reflect the statutory criteria or not.

82 We also note that a large number of submissions were received regarding the transfer of the area around Pinesprings Drive to a Creekmoor ward that neither suggested warding pattern actually proposed.

83 The Council's submission transferred a number of areas of the existing Creekmoor ward to its new Broadstone wards. We note that there is some support from residents in the area to the west of York Road to be transferred to Broadstone, where they would be in Broadstone East ward under this proposal. In addition, the Council's proposal retains the Twin Oaks Close and Edwina Drive areas in a Broadstone ward, which a number of respondents also expressed a preference for. However, under these proposals the area to the north of Beechbank Avenue is transferred to Broadstone West ward, which the Conservative Group argued would divide a homogenous estate which access services in Creekmoor.

84 The Conservative Group on the Council argued that the Council's proposals divide the Broadstone area into two wards and its statement that the people it had canvassed objected to this - although it was not entirely clear whether those objected would be affected. Contrary to this, the Broadstone ward councillors argued that the Council's proposals actually avoided the division of Broadstone, we assume with reference to proposals to retain the Twin Oaks Close area in a Broadstone ward and transfer the area to the west of York Road to Broadstone.

85 Our tour of the area confirmed that the area to the north of Beechbank Avenue, while having road links into the Council's proposed Broadstone West ward, appears to be divided from the properties to the north. We observed that this area has good road links into the Creekmoor shops, and that its links to the Broadstone shopping area are good too. Our tour confirmed that the Edwina Drive area has good links into the Creekmoor ward and the Twin Oaks Close area had good links into both the Broadstone and parts of the Creekmoor area. The area to the west of York Road also has links into Broadstone, but has road links into parts of Creekmoor too.

86 The Council's proposals would result in Broadstone East and Broadstone West wards with 7% fewer and 6% fewer electors than the average by 2019, respectively, while its Creekmoor ward would have 1% more electors.

87 The Conservative Group put forward two options. While its second option minimises changes to the existing wards, transferring only Edwina Drive and part of York Road to a revised Creekmoor ward, the resulting electoral equality remains quite poor, with a Creekmoor ward with 9% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019. Its first option additionally transfers the Twin Oaks Close area and results in Broadstone and Creekmoor wards with 3% fewer and 6% fewer electors than the average for the borough by 2019, respectively.

88 On balance, given the evidence received, although we see some merit in the Council's proposals, and note that it avoids separating the Twin Oaks Close area from Broadstone, and places the area to the west of York Road in a Broadstone ward, we also have concerns that it separates the area to the north of Beechbank Avenue from Creekmoor. We have discounted the Conservative Group's second option because it does not secure good levels of electoral equality for the Creekmoor ward. However, we do consider that its first option secures good levels of electoral equality and its levels of electoral equality are better than the Council's proposals. We are therefore adopting the Conservative Group's proposed three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards as part of our draft recommendations.

89 In the Hamworthy area, we acknowledge the support for a four-member ward. Our views on four-member wards are set out in paragraph 46 above. We have received no persuasive evidence in the course of this review to warrant changing our view.

90 We have therefore examined alternate options, including those put forward by Councillor White and Councillor Chandler. However, both Councillor White's and Councillor Chandler's proposals would result in a ward with variance of over 10% by 2019, with 15% fewer and 14% fewer electors than the borough average, respectively. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify these poor levels of electoral equality. Our tour of the area confirmed that the boundaries of the existing Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards use good boundaries. We are therefore retaining the existing Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards, which would have 5% and 6% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

91 Our two-member Hamworthy East and Hamworthy West wards would have 5% fewer and 6% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. Our three-member Broadstone and Creekmoor wards would have 3% fewer and 6% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

Alderney, Branksome East, Branksome West, Canford Heath East, Canford Heath West, Merley & Bearwood and Newtown

92 The existing wards of Alderney, Branksome East, Branksome West, Canford Heath East, Canford Heath West, Merley & Bearwood and Newtown are in the north-east of the borough, to the north of the A35, Ashley Road and Dorset Way. The Council proposed no changes to the existing Merley & Bearwood ward. It proposed

only minor changes to the remaining wards, to improve electoral equality. The Council put forward very limited community identity evidence to support its proposals.

93 The Council's proposals create two-member Branksome East, Branksome West, Canford Heath East and Canford Heath West wards with 6% more, 2% more, equal to the average and 4% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. It proposed three-member Alderney, Merley & Bearwood and Newtown wards with 2% more, equal to the average and 4% more electors than the borough average, respectively.

94 The Bournemouth West Labour Party put forward alternative proposals for the area covered by the existing Alderney, Branksome East, Branksome West and Newton wards. It argued that the ward boundaries should follow the centre of Ringwood Road and Sea View Road.

95 A local resident argued that the residential area in the west of Newton ward, to the east of the industrial estate, should be transferred to Oakdale ward where residents use schools and other local facilities.

96 The remaining responses in this area put forward very limited comments on the Council's proposals for this area. Those comments that put forward views were supportive of the Council's amendments in this area, but did not provide any strong evidence.

97 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We note that the Council put forward only minor amendments to the existing wards. With the exception of a couple of respondents, those that commented expressed general support for these amendments.

98 We have examined the proposal put forward by the Bournemouth West Labour Party and consider that its three-member Alderney and Branksome wards would have poor electoral equality, with variances of 9% more and 10% more than the borough average by 2019, respectively. In addition, its proposals left an area to the west of Ringwood Road and Sea View Road in a ward with a long north-south extent that did not appear to be reflective of community identity. Therefore, we are not proposing adopting this proposal.

99 We also considered the proposal to transfer part of the existing Newton ward to Oakdale ward. However, this amendment would result in Newton and Oakdale wards with 8% fewer and 12% more electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. We do not consider there to be sufficient evidence to justify such poor electoral equality and are therefore not adopting this amendment.

100 However, we do propose a minor amendment to the boundary between Canford Heath East and Canford Heath West wards to ensure the whole of the Canford Heath business park is included in a single ward Canford Heath West. This amendment does not affect any electors.

101 In the remainder of the area we are adopting the Council's proposals without amendment. Our two-member Branksome East, Branksome West, Canford Heath East and Canford Heath West wards would have 6% more, 2% more, equal to the average and 4% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively. Our three-member Alderney, Merley & Bearwood and Newtown wards with 2% more,

equal the average and 4% more electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

Canford Cliffs, Oakdale, Parkstone, Penn Hill and Poole Town

102 The existing wards of Canford Cliffs, Oakdale, Parkstone, Penn Hill and Poole Town lie to the south of the borough. The Council proposed relatively minor amendments to the existing wards. The most significant amendment was to its Canford Cliffs and Penn Hill ward where it proposed transferring the Lilliput area and properties around Parkstone golf course to the Canford Cliffs ward to secure good electoral equality. The Council put forward very limited community identity evidence to support its proposals. Its three-member Canford Cliffs, Oakdale, Parkstone, Penn Hill and Poole Town wards would have equal to the average, equal to the average, 5% more, 4% more and 1% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

103 As with the area to the north, we received very limited comments on the Council's proposals for this area. Those comments that put forward views were supportive of the Council's amendments in this area, but did not provide any strong evidence.

104 We have given careful consideration to the evidence received. We consider that the Council's proposals provide good levels of electoral equality and generally use strong boundaries. In addition, there was general support for its proposals.

105 However, we did have a concern that its proposals divided an area of housing to the north of Parkstone cemetery. Although we identified that this housing access out of different roads, Copeland Drive to the north and Wedgwood Drive to the south, our tour confirmed that the housing as a very similar type and we considered it would be best included in a single ward. Placing this whole area in Parkstone ward would improve electoral equality in Penn Hill ward from 4% more electors than the borough average in 2019 to 3% more, while worsening it in Parkstone from 5% more to 6% more. On balance, although this worsens electoral equality, we consider it provides a clearer boundary.

106 Subject to this amendment we are adopting the Council's proposals without change. Our three-member Canford Cliffs, Oakdale, Parkstone, Penn Hill and Poole Town wards would have equal to the average, equal to the average, 6% more, 3% more and 1% fewer electors than the borough average by 2019, respectively.

Conclusions

107 Table 1 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2013 and 2019 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2013	2019
Number of councillors	42	42
Number of electoral wards	16	16
Average number of electors per councillor	2,766	2,876
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	1	0
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Draft recommendation
 Poole Borough Council should comprise 42 councillors serving 16 wards, as detailed and named in Table A1 and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

3 What happens next?

108 There will now be a consultation period of 10 weeks, during which everyone is invited to comment on the draft recommendations on future electoral arrangements for Poole District Council contained in this report. We will take into account fully all submissions received by 24 June 2014. Any received after this date may not be taken into account.

109 We have not finalised our conclusions on the electoral arrangements for Poole and welcome comments from interested parties relating to the proposed ward boundaries, number of councillors, ward names and parish electoral arrangements. We would welcome alternative proposals backed up by demonstrable evidence during Stage Three. We will consider all the evidence submitted to us during the consultation period before preparing our final recommendations.

110 Express your views by writing directly to:

Review Officer
Poole Review
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76–86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

Submissions can also be made by using the consultation section of our website, <https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk> or by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk

111 Please note that the consultation stages of an electoral review are public consultations. In the interests of openness and transparency, we make available for public inspection full copies of all representations the Commission takes into account as part of a review. Accordingly, copies of all Stage Three representations will be placed on deposit locally at the offices of Poole Borough Council and at our offices in Layden House (London) and on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk A list of respondents will be available from us on request after the end of the consultation period.

112 If you are a member of the public and not writing on behalf of a council or organisation we will remove any personal identifiers, such as postal or email addresses, signatures or phone numbers from your submission before it is made public. We will remove signatures from all letters, no matter who they are from.

113 In the light of representations received, we will review our draft recommendations and consider whether they should be altered. As indicated earlier, it is therefore important that all interested parties let us have their views and evidence, **whether or not** they agree with the draft recommendations. We will then publish our final recommendations.

114 After the publication of our final recommendations, the changes we have proposed must be approved by Parliament. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in draft in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements to be implemented at the next elections for Poole Borough Council in 2015.

115 This report has been screened for impact on equalities; with due regard being given to the general equalities duties as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. As no potential negative impacts were identified, a full equality impact analysis is not required.

4 Mapping

Draft recommendations for Poole

116 The following maps illustrate our proposed ward boundaries for Poole Borough Council:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Poole Borough Council.

You can also view our draft recommendations for Poole Borough Council on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lqbce.org.uk>

Appendix A

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Poole Borough Council

	Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2013)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
1	Alderney	3	8,537	2,846	3%	8,843	2,948	2%
2	Branksome East	2	5,870	2,935	6%	6,078	3,039	6%
3	Branksome West	2	5,668	2,834	2%	5,887	2,944	2%
4	Broadstone	3	8,076	2,692	-3%	8,370	2,790	-3%
5	Canford Cliffs	3	8,279	2,760	0%	8,609	2,870	0%
6	Canford Heath East	2	5,551	2,776	0%	5,764	2,882	0%
7	Canford Heath West	2	5,318	2,659	-4%	5,509	2,755	-4%
8	Creekmoor	3	7,888	2,629	-5%	8,150	2,717	-6%
9	Hamworthy East	2	4,875	2,438	-12%	5,476	2,738	-5%
10	Hamworthy West	2	5,245	2,623	-5%	5,419	2,710	-6%
11	Merley & Bearwood	3	8,336	2,779	0%	8,610	2,870	0%
12	Newtown	3	8,631	2,877	4%	8,937	2,979	4%
13	Oakdale	3	8,313	2,771	0%	8,618	2,873	0%
14	Parkstone	3	8,828	2,943	6%	9,147	3,049	6%

Table A1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Poole Borough Council

Ward name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2013)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2019)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
15 Penn Hill	3	8,537	2,846	3%	8,845	2,948	3%
16 Poole Town	3	8,217	2,739	-1%	8,547	2,849	-1%
Totals	42	116,169	–	–	120,809	–	–
Averages	–	–	2,766	–	–	2,876	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Poole Borough Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each ward varies from the average for the borough. The minus symbol (-) denotes a lower than average number of electors. Figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Appendix B

Glossary and abbreviations

AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)	A landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard it
Constituent areas	The geographical areas that make up any one ward, expressed in parishes or existing wards, or parts of either
Council size	The number of councillors elected to serve on a council
Electoral Change Order (or Order)	A legal document which implements changes to the electoral arrangements of a local authority
Division	A specific area of a county, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever division they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the county council
Electoral fairness	When one elector's vote is worth the same as another's
Electoral imbalance	Where there is a difference between the number of electors represented by a councillor and the average for the local authority
Electorate	People in the authority who are registered to vote in elections. For the purposes of this report, we refer specifically to the electorate for local government elections

Local Government Boundary Commission for England or LGBCE	The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for undertaking electoral reviews. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England assumed the functions of the Boundary Committee for England in April 2010
Multi-member ward or division	A ward or division represented by more than one councillor and usually not more than three councillors
National Park	The 13 National Parks in England and Wales were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949 and can be found at www.nationalparks.gov.uk
Number of electors per councillor	The total number of electors in a local authority divided by the number of councillors
Over-represented	Where there are fewer electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Parish	A specific and defined area of land within a single local authority enclosed within a parish boundary. There are over 10,000 parishes in England, which provide the first tier of representation to their local residents
Parish council	A body elected by electors in the parish which serves and represents the area defined by the parish boundaries. See also 'Town council'
Parish (or Town) council electoral arrangements	The total number of councillors on any one parish or town council; the number, names and boundaries of parish wards; and the number of councillors for each ward

Parish ward	A particular area of a parish, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors vote in whichever parish ward they live for candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the parish council
PER (or periodic electoral review)	A review of the electoral arrangements of all local authorities in England, undertaken periodically. The last programme of PERs was undertaken between 1996 and 2004 by the Boundary Commission for England and its predecessor, the now-defunct Local Government Commission for England
Political management arrangements	The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 enabled local authorities in England to modernise their decision making process. Councils could choose from two broad categories; a directly elected mayor and cabinet or a cabinet with a leader
Town council	A parish council which has been given ceremonial 'town' status. More information on achieving such status can be found at www.nalc.gov.uk
Under-represented	Where there are more electors per councillor in a ward or division than the average
Variance (or electoral variance)	How far the number of electors per councillor in a ward or division varies in percentage terms from the average

Ward	A specific area of a district or borough, defined for electoral, administrative and representational purposes. Eligible electors can vote in whichever ward they are registered for the candidate or candidates they wish to represent them on the district or borough council
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