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Summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is an independent body that 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 Aylesbury Vale District 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 April 2013.

This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
23 April 2013	Consultation on council size
23 July 2013	Submission of proposals for warding arrangements to LGBCE
2 October 2013	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
14 January 2014	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
9 April 2014	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

Draft recommendations

We proposed a council size of 59 members comprising 15 single-member wards, 10 two-member wards and eight three-member wards. During the consultation period on a warding pattern for Aylesbury Vale, we received 23 submissions. We received district-wide submissions from the Aylesbury Vale District Council ('the Council') and the Liberal Democrats. All submissions can be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Our draft recommendations for Aylesbury Vale sought to reflect the evidence of community identities received while ensuring good electoral equality and providing for effective and convenient local government.

Submissions received

During the consultation on the draft recommendations for Aylesbury Vale, we received 49 submissions. These included district-wide comments from the Council and Liberal Democrat Group. Of the remaining submissions, five were from district and county councillors, two were from political groups, one was from a local organisation, 12 were from parish and town councils, and 27 were from members of the public.

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

Analysis and final recommendations

Electorate figures

Aylesbury Vale District 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 7.8% over this period. This represents a high level of growth, predominantly in the town of Aylesbury and its immediate hinterland. 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.

General analysis

We have considered all submissions received during the consultation on our draft recommendations. As a result, we have amended our proposed wards of Wendover & Halton and Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville, and we have made a change to a ward name in the district.

Our final recommendations for Aylesbury Vale are that the Council should have 59 members representing 15 single-member wards, 10 two-member wards and eight three-member wards. Only one of the wards will have a variance of more than 10% from the average for the district by 2019. Having taken into account the evidence we have received during consultation, we believe that our final recommendations will ensure good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and providing for effective and convenient local government.

What happens next?

We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for Aylesbury Vale District Council. An Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament and will be implemented subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. The Order will provide for new electoral arrangements which will come into force at the next elections for Aylesbury Vale District Council in 2015.

We are grateful to all those organisations and individuals who have contributed to the review through expressing their views and advice. The full report is available to download at www.lgbce.org.uk

Our final recommendations can also be viewed 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 Aylesbury Vale District 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 Aylesbury Vale District Council as well as other interested parties inviting the submission of proposals on warding arrangements for the Council. The submissions received during the consultation on warding patterns informed our *Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Aylesbury Vale District Council*, which were published on 14 January 2014. Consultation on our draft recommendations took place until 8 April 2014.

What is an electoral review?

3 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.

4 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 Aylesbury Vale?

5 We decided to conduct this review because based on December 2012 electorate data, 33% of the district's wards currently have a variance of more than 10%. Of these, one ward – Bierton – has an electoral variance of -37%.

How will the recommendations affect you?

6 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 and, in some instances, which parish or town council wards you vote in. Your ward name may change, as may the names of parish or town council wards in the area. If you live in a parish, the name or boundaries of that parish will not change as a result of our recommendations.

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

What is the Local Government Boundary Commission for England?

7 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
Alison Lowton
Sir Tony Redmond
Dr Colin Sinclair CBE
Professor Paul Wiles CB

Chief Executive: Alan Cogbill
Director of Reviews: Archie Gall

2 Analysis and final recommendations

8 We have now finalised our recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Aylesbury Vale District Council.

9 As described earlier, our prime aim when recommending new electoral arrangements for Aylesbury Vale 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 2009 (‘the 2009 Act’),² 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

10 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.

11 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.

12 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (‘the 2009 Act’). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different divisions or wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single division or ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

13 These recommendations cannot affect the external boundaries of Aylesbury Vale District 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

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

therefore able to take into account any representations which are based on these issues.

Submissions received

14 Prior to, and during, the initial stages of the review, we visited Aylesbury Vale District Council ('the Council') and met with members and officers. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 23 submissions during the consultation on warding patterns, including district-wide comments from the Council and Aylesbury Vale Liberal Democrats. All of the submissions may be inspected at our offices. All representations received can also be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk.

Electorate figures

15 The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2019, a period five years on from the scheduled publication of our final recommendations in 2014. This is prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ('the 2009 Act'). These forecasts were broken down to polling district level and projected an increase in the electorate of approximately 7.8% by 2019. The forecasts provided by the Council took into account planned developments across the district, as well as population forecasts made by the Office for National Statistics.

16 Having considered the Council's forecasts, we consider them to be the best available at this time and have used them as the basis of our final recommendations.

Council size

17 Aylesbury Vale District Council currently has 59 councillors elected from 36 district wards. The Council proposed to retain the existing council size of 59 elected members. In support of its proposal, the Council argued that any reduction would hinder members' ability to carry out their representational duties, and place unnecessary pressure on Cabinet members to take up work that committees would no longer be able to complete.

18 Having considered the evidence received, we considered that the Council had made a strong case for a council size of 59 and consulted publicly on this council size. This consultation ended on 3 June 2013. In response, we received 13 submissions. Of these, one was from a parish meeting, two were from parish councillors, and the remaining 10 were from members of the public.

19 We carefully considered the information provided during the consultation period. Those who proposed a reduction in council size cited the potential cost savings of doing so, or a general belief that fewer elected members in a council was desirable. Those who supported retaining 59 councillors argued

either that the current system was functioning well, or that the projected housing growth in Aylesbury Vale made reducing council size unwise.

20 We considered that the Council's proposal to retain a council size of 59 members still represented the strongest body of evidence received on council size. We were therefore minded to adopt a council size of 59 elected members as the basis of this electoral review.

Electoral fairness

21 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.

22 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The district average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the district (137,208 in 2014 and 147,939 by 2019) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 59 under our final recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our final recommendations is 2,326 in 2013 and 2,507 by 2019.

23 Under our final recommendations, one of our proposed wards will have an electoral variance of more than 10% from the average for the district by 2019. We are therefore satisfied that we have achieved good levels of electoral equality for Aylesbury Vale.

General analysis

24 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, we received 49 submissions, including district-wide comments from Aylesbury Vale District Council ('the Council') and Aylesbury Vale Liberal Democrats (the 'Liberal Democrats').

25 In the Aylesbury town area, we received submissions objecting to the inclusion of Bierton with Broughton parish with areas of Aylesbury town. We received submissions objecting to placing Buckingham Park in a multi-member ward. We also received submissions objecting to our proposed Central & Walton and Watermead wards, as well as the proposed parish warding arrangements for Aylesbury town.

26 In Wendover and the rural south, we received submissions objecting to our proposed Stoke Mandeville & Wendover ward, highlighting stronger links between Wendover and Halton than between Wendover and Stoke Mandeville. We received submissions supporting the warding arrangements for Aston Clinton and Haddenham & Stone.

27 In the rural west, we received a submission objecting to the proposals for Calvert village, and a submission supporting our proposed Quainton ward.

28 In the rural east, we received submissions objecting to our proposal to create a two-member Pitstone & Cheddington ward. We also received submissions objecting to our proposed two-member Newton Longville ward.

29 In Buckingham and the rural north, we received submissions objecting to our proposal to include part of north Buckingham in a ward with parishes to its north.

30 Having considered the evidence received, we are adopting as final our draft recommendations in the majority of the district. However, we have made some changes to warding arrangements in the Wendover and Aston Clinton area in order to better reflect community identity. We have also changed the name of our proposed Newton Longville ward to Great Brickhill & Newton Longville. We have also amended parish warding arrangements in Aylesbury town to provide for more effective and convenient local government.

31 Our final recommendations would result in 15 single-member wards, 10 two-member wards and eight three-member wards. We consider our recommendations provide for good levels of electoral equality while reflecting our understanding of community identities and interests in Aylesbury Vale.

Electoral arrangements

32 This section of the report details the proposals we have received, our consideration of them, and our final recommendations for each area of Aylesbury Vale. The following areas of the authority are considered in turn:

- Aylesbury Town (pages 8–11)
- Wendover and rural south (pages 11–12)
- Rural west (pages 12–13)
- Rural east (pages 13–15)
- Buckingham and rural north (pages 15–16)

33 Details of the final recommendations are set out in Table A1 on pages 23–5 and illustrated on the large map accompanying this report.

Aylesbury Town

34 Aylesbury is the largest town in Aylesbury Vale and is also the county town of Buckinghamshire. It is entirely parished, with the vast majority of the urban area in the parish of Aylesbury.

35 Our draft recommendations for Aylesbury town were for one single-member ward, five two-member wards and five three-member wards. We based our draft recommendations on the Council's scheme. We proposed to

amend its proposed Elmhurst ward, and to amalgamate its proposed Holman's Bridge and Gatehouse wards in order to improve electoral equality.

36 During consultation on our draft recommendations, we received seven submissions specifically relating to this area, along with the district-wide submissions from the Council and Aylesbury Vale Liberal Democrats.

37 In the north of Aylesbury town, we received submissions relating to our proposed Gatehouse ward from the Council and Buckingham Park Parish Council. Buckingham Park Parish Council argued that its parish was a distinct area and had little in common with Aylesbury town. The Council proposed a single-member Holman's Bridge ward and a two-member Gatehouse ward, slightly amended from its proposal during the earlier consultation on warding arrangements.

38 We do not consider the proposal made by Buckingham Park Parish Council for a Buckingham Park ward comprising solely that parish to be viable. Such a ward would have 36% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. We do not consider that this is an acceptable level of electoral equality, and so are not proposing to adopt it as part of our final recommendations.

39 Although we note that Buckingham Park Parish Council disputed the electorate projections for the parish, having consulted with the Council we still consider that the initial electorate projections for the parish are the best available at this time, and have used them as part of our final recommendations.

40 The Council proposed a single-member Holman's Bridge ward comprising Buckingham Park parish and that area of our proposed Gatehouse ward east of Meadowcroft and north of Whaddon Chase. We consider that properties on either side of the proposed boundary in Aylesbury town form part of the same community. We consider that adopting the Council's proposal in this area would divide communities between wards, and so we do not propose to adopt it as part of our final recommendations.

41 We are therefore confirming as final our draft recommendations for the Gatehouse area.

42 We received two submissions objecting to our proposal to include Bierton with Broughton parish in a ward with Oakfield. Bierton with Broughton Parish Council proposed instead a ward comprising Bierton with Broughton and Hulcott parishes. However, such a ward would have 24% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. We do not consider that the evidence received justifies such a high level of electoral inequality, and accordingly have not adopted this as part of our final recommendations.

43 We also received submissions arguing that the Oldhams Meadow parish ward of Bierton with Broughton parish should be included in our proposed Oakfield & Bierton ward. Oldhams Meadow is part of a contiguous

development with its main road access running north-west into Elmhurst ward and south onto Aylesbury Road.

44 We carefully considered all submissions relating to this area. We consider that Aylesbury Road, as a main road leading out of Aylesbury town, represents a strong boundary between communities. Conversely, while the parish boundary represents an administrative boundary, we have concerns that using it as a ward boundary will unnecessarily divide a community. Therefore, we have decided to confirm as final our draft recommendations to include the Oldhams Meadow area in Elmhurst ward.

45 In the centre and south of Aylesbury, the Liberal Democrats reiterated their case for single-member wards in the area covered by our Central & Walton and Mandeville & Elm Farm wards, citing differences in community identities within these areas.

46 We considered the arguments made by the Liberal Democrats. In the Central & Walton area, we proposed a two-member ward in our draft recommendations. This was because the proposed boundary between two single-member wards would have divided properties on and around Highbridge Road and Prince's Road, which we consider form part of the same community.

47 In developing our final recommendations, we explored using more coherent boundaries in this area, such as the middle of Walton Road. However, such a boundary would create wards with 20% more and 22% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. We do not consider that the community evidence provided justifies such a high level of electoral inequality. We are therefore confirming as final our draft recommendations for Central & Walton ward.

48 In Mandeville & Elm Farm, the Liberal Democrats reiterated their proposal for three single-member wards. They argued that a three-member ward united disparate communities with few links, separated by the railway line. However, we consider that pedestrian access between areas either side of the railway line is strong, and that dividing the area into three single-member wards would divide areas with similar identities. We also noted that this proposal was based on the assertion that 'three-member wards are not generally desirable'. We have no view on whether single- or multi-member wards are preferable, and we do not consider a general preference for either to be a factor in drawing up warding arrangements in this review. We are therefore confirming as final our draft recommendations in Mandeville & Elm Farm.

49 Elsewhere in Aylesbury town, we have decided to confirm our draft recommendations as final.

50 Our final recommendations for Aylesbury town are for the single-member Watermead ward, the two-member Bedgrove, Central & Walton, Elmhurst, Southcourt and Walton Court & Hawkslade wards and the three-member

Coldharbour, Gatehouse, Mandeville & Elm Farm, Oakfield & Bierton and Riverside wards. These wards are forecast to have 4% fewer, 2% more, 1% fewer, 3% more, 5% fewer, 7% fewer, 8% fewer, 1% fewer, 6% fewer, 1% fewer and 5% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

Wendover and rural south

51 This area comprises the towns and villages to the south-east of Aylesbury including Wendover and Aston Clinton, and the rural area to the south-west which includes the smaller towns of Haddenham, Waddesdon and Long Crendon.

52 Our draft recommendations for Wendover & the rural south were for three single-member and three three-member wards. We based our draft recommendations on a combination of the Council and Liberal Democrat schemes.

53 During our consultation, we received 33 submissions relating to this area. Of these, 31 concerned the warding arrangements in the Wendover and Aston Clinton area, of which three were supportive and 28 opposed, including a petition containing 97 signatures.

54 Submissions opposing our draft recommendations primarily focused on the proposal to place Wendover and Halton parishes in separate wards. Halton Parish Council identified that residents of their parish primarily use Wendover for their local facilities. It noted shopping, medical and educational links, as well as the fact that Wendover and Halton share ecclesiastical links. These arguments were echoed in other submissions. Submissions also highlighted the links brought by RAF Halton. Aylesbury Constituency Conservative Association cited regular parades through the two parishes as demonstrating such links. A member of the public also cited employment links brought by the RAF and the number of employees that live in both parishes.

55 In support of our draft recommendations, Aston Clinton Parish Council said it agreed with the recommendations, citing links particularly between the parishes of Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp. It also noted some links between Aston Clinton and Weston Turville, and Aston Clinton and Halton.

56 Having visited the area, we noted that Wendover and Halton are of relatively similar character, and that the geographical location of RAF Halton provides an extra link between residents of the two parishes. Local bus services also provided a link between the two parishes and Stoke Mandeville village. We also observed that Aston Clinton and Halton are relatively distant, and of a different character.

57 We consider that the most appropriate warding arrangement in this area would be for a three-member Wendover & Halton ward and a three-member Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville ward. Although a ward comprising

Wendover and Halton parishes would have 12% fewer electors per councillor, we are of the view that sufficient evidence has been received to justify this electoral variance. We have therefore decided to move away from our draft recommendations and adopt a three-member Wendover & Halton ward, and a three-member Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville ward. This ward would comprise the parishes of Aston Clinton, Buckland, Drayton Beauchamp and Weston Turville and the Stoke Mandeville village area of Stoke Mandeville parish.

58 Elsewhere in the rural south of Aylesbury Vale, we received submissions from Dinton with Ford & Upton and Westcott parish councils, expressing support for our proposed Haddenham & Stone and Waddesdon wards respectively.

59 The Liberal Democrats reiterated their proposal for a single- and a two-member ward to cover the Haddenham & Stone area. In support of this they argued that it would ensure better representation for smaller villages in the ward. They also asserted that 'the people of Stone generally do not want to be in the same ward as Haddenham'. However, we did not receive further evidence to support this assertion.

60 Given the support of local parish councils, and the lack of evidence to the contrary, we are confirming as final our draft recommendations in the remainder of the rural south.

61 Our final recommendations for Wendover and the rural south are for the single-member Long Crendon, Oakley and Waddesdon wards, and the three-member Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville, Haddenham & Stone and Wendover & Halton wards. These wards are forecast to have 5% more, 4% fewer, 6% fewer, 8% more, 1% fewer and 12% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

Rural west

62 This area includes the parishes of Brill, Grendon Underwood, Marsh Gibbon, Quainton, Steeple Claydon and the surrounding area. It is an entirely parished, relatively sparsely populated rural area.

63 Our draft recommendations for the rural west were for four single-member wards. We based our draft recommendations on the Council and Liberal Democrat schemes.

64 We received two submissions relating to this area. One, from a local resident, concerning our proposed Marsh Gibbon and Steeple Claydon wards and another from Quainton Parish Council, concerning our proposed Quainton ward.

65 The local resident argued that the village of Calvert, which is currently split across the parishes of Calvert Green, Charndon and Steeple Claydon, should be contained in a single district ward.

66 We explored whether it would be possible to include the part of Calvert village in Steeple Claydon parish in our proposed Marsh Gibbon ward. However, with only eight properties from the Calvert settlement in Steeple Claydon parish, this would require the creation of a parish ward with very few electors which would not be conducive to effective and convenient local government.

67 We explored whether it would be possible to combine our proposed Marsh Gibbon and Steeple Claydon wards in order to unite Calvert in a two-member ward. Such a ward would have good electoral equality, with 2% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. However, we considered that the area covered by such a ward would be geographically large, and would not secure effective and convenient local government in the area. We are therefore adopting as final our draft recommendations in Marsh Gibbon and Steeple Claydon.

68 Quainton Parish Council supported our draft recommendations. Accordingly, we are also confirming our proposed Quainton ward as final, along with our proposed Grendon Underwood & Brill ward, on which we received no submissions.

69 Our final recommendations for the rural west are for the single-member Grendon Underwood & Brill, Marsh Gibbon, Quainton and Steeple Claydon wards. These wards are forecast to have 7% more, 4% more, 1% more and 1% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

Rural east

70 This area includes the villages of Pitstone, Stewkley and Wing, along with the other rural parishes between the towns of Aylesbury, Leighton Buzzard and Milton Keynes.

71 Our draft recommendations for the rural east were for four single-member and two two-member wards. We based our draft recommendations on the Council and Liberal Democrat schemes, with amendments in Pitstone and Newton Longville in order to provide wards which better reflect our statutory criteria.

72 We received three submissions specifically relating to this area – two from district councillors and one from a parish council. This area was also discussed in the district-wide submissions made by both the Council and the Liberal Democrats.

73 We received submissions from Councillor Cashman (Cheddington ward), Councillor Davies (Pitstone ward) and the Liberal Democrats objecting to the proposal for a two-member Pitstone & Cheddington ward. These submissions argued that a multi-member ward would cover too large a geographic area, and that a single-member ward better aided relations with and accountability

to parishes in the area. They argued that although Pitstone and Ivinghoe are contiguous, they have historically been different parishes.

74 We also received a submission from Marsworth Parish Council supporting our proposed Pitstone & Cheddington ward, noting that the change was required 'following the expansion of Pitstone'.

75 We do not consider any of the arguments for single-member wards in Pitstone & Cheddington to be persuasive. As stated in paragraph 48, we have no opinion on whether, as a matter of principle, single- or multi-member wards are preferable in this area. We note the arguments regarding the creation of large geographical wards; however, a single-member Cheddington ward without Pitstone parish would still have the same distance between its eastern and westernmost edges. In addition, in order to traverse by road a single-member ward without leaving it, the distance would actually be greater without the inclusion of Pitstone parish. Furthermore, we do not consider the argument that Pitstone and Ivinghoe are in different parishes and therefore require being in different district wards to be convincing. We are therefore confirming as final our draft recommendations for Pitstone & Cheddington.

76 In Newton Longville, the Council and Liberal Democrats both argued for two single-member wards covering the area. In our draft recommendations, we proposed a two-member ward due to the single-member alternatives either having poor electoral equality or requiring the creation of an unviable parish ward in Stoke Hammond parish. In addition to this, the ongoing Newton Leys development in Stoke Hammond parish made it impossible to predict where community links would eventually lie in that area.

77 In drawing up our final recommendations, we considered the arguments for single-member wards. The submissions received argued that the Newton Leys development would most likely eventually form its own parish council, thus negating the creation of an unviable parish ward. The Liberal Democrats argued that its geographic position would lead to it associating more with Newton Longville parish. However, we note that no further reasoning has been supplied to us in support of this view.

78 We consider there is insufficient community evidence to support dividing the existing Stoke Hammond parish between wards. While we note the comments made by the Liberal Democrats that the Newton Leys development will associate more with Newton Longville, we consider that until the development is complete and inhabited, it is not appropriate to create such a division in a parish. Therefore, we are confirming as final our draft recommendations in Newton Longville, save for renaming the ward, at the Council's request, Great Brickhill & Newton Longville, to better reflect community identities in the ward.

79 Our final recommendations for the rural east are for the single-member Edlesborough, Stewkley, Wing and Wingrave wards, and the two-member Great Brickhill & Newton Longville and Pitstone & Cheddington wards. These wards are forecast to have 4% fewer, 8% more, 1% more, 4% fewer, 4%

more and 1% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019 respectively.

Buckingham & rural north

80 This area includes the towns of Buckingham and Winslow and the surrounding smaller villages.

81 Our draft recommendations for Buckingham and the rural north were for three single-member and three two-member wards. We based our draft recommendations on the Council's scheme, with a small amendment in the Buckingham town area.

82 The submissions received from the Council and Liberal Democrats expressed support for our draft recommendations. We also received three submissions specifically relating to this area, all opposing our proposals for Buckingham town.

83 Those objecting to our proposals for Buckingham town focused on our recommendation to include the Moreton Drive area in Luffield Abbey ward. Buckingham Constituency Labour Party argued that residents in the Moreton Drive area had very little in common with Maids Moreton parish. Councillor Whyte (Buckingham East division) also argued that deviating from the parish boundary would 'confuse responsibility for parish matters'. Those opposing the recommendations also questioned the accuracy of the electorate projections in Buckingham.

84 We have discussed the electorate projections for Aylesbury Vale with the Council, and are content that the figures we have used in our final recommendations still represent the best available at this time.

85 As discussed in paragraph 122 of our draft recommendations report, we are unable to create two two-member wards comprising only elements of Buckingham parish without creating wards with high levels of electoral inequality. For example, to amend our draft recommendations to include the Moreton Drive area in Buckingham North ward would result in a Buckingham North ward with 17% more electors per councillor than the district average by 2019. Although Councillor Whyte argued that this is only a 'slight imbalance', we consider this to be a very high level of electoral inequality, for which there is insufficient community evidence to justify.

86 We still consider, therefore, that it is necessary for part of Buckingham parish to be included in a ward with neighbouring parishes in order to provide acceptable levels of electoral equality. Therefore, we are confirming our draft recommendations for Buckingham town as final.

87 We received no comments relating to other areas in the rural north, and as such are confirming our draft recommendations for the remainder of the rural north as final.

88 Our final recommendations for Buckingham and the rural north are for the single-member Great Horwood, Luffield Abbey and Tingewick wards, and the two-member Buckingham North, Buckingham South and Winslow wards. These wards are forecast to have 7% more, 1% fewer, 7% more, 10% more, 8% more and equal to the average number of electors per councillor by 2019 respectively.

Conclusions

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

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Final recommendations	
	2013	2019
Number of councillors	59	59
Number of electoral wards	33	33
Average number of electors per councillor	2,326	2,507
Number of wards with a variance more than 10% from the average	10	1
Number of wards with a variance more than 20% from the average	2	0

Final recommendation

Aylesbury Vale District Council should comprise 59 councillors serving 33 wards as detailed and named in Table A1 and illustrated on the map accompanying this report.

Parish electoral arrangements

90 As part of an electoral review, we are required to have regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act). The Schedule provides that if a parish is to be divided between different wards it must also be divided into parish wards, so that each parish ward lies wholly within a single ward. We cannot recommend changes to the external boundaries of parishes as part of an electoral review.

91 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make changes to parish electoral arrangements where these are as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority warding arrangements. However, Aylesbury Vale District Council has powers under the Local Government and

Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to conduct community governance reviews to effect changes to parish electoral arrangements.

92 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for the parishes of Aylesbury, Buckingham and Ivinghoe.

93 As a result of our proposed electoral ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Aylesbury parish.

94 We are amending our parish warding arrangements for Aylesbury town. Aylesbury Town Council argued that it was unnecessary to increase the number of parish councillors as the current number serve the community well. Therefore, our final recommendations for the parish of Aylesbury town are that it should comprise 25 parish councillors.

Final recommendation

Aylesbury Town Council should return 25 parish councillors, as at present, representing 13 wards: Bedgrove (returning three members), Central (returning two members), Coppice Way (returning one member), Elmhurst (returning two members), Gatehouse (returning three members), Hawkslade (returning one member), Mandeville & Elm Farm (returning three members), Oakfield (returning two members), Oxford Road (returning two members), Quarrendon (returning two members), Southcourt (returning two members), Walton (returning one member) and Walton Court (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

95 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Buckingham parish.

96 Due to our obligations under the 2009 Act, we can only propose amended parish electoral arrangements as a consequence of our recommendations. Therefore, we are amending our draft recommendations to propose Buckingham Town Council retain a council size of 17 parish councillors.

Final recommendation

Buckingham Town Council should return 17 parish councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Buckingham North (returning seven members), Buckingham South (returning eight members), Fishers Field (returning one member) and Highlands & Watchcroft (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

97 As a result of our proposed ward boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Ivinghoe parish.

Final recommendation

Ivinghoe Parish Council should return seven parish councillors, as at present, representing two wards: Ivinghoe (returning five members) and Ivinghoe Aston (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

3 What happens next?

98 We have now completed our review of electoral arrangements for Aylesbury Vale District Council. A draft Order – the legal document which brings into force our recommendations – will be laid in Parliament. The draft Order will provide for new electoral arrangements which will come into force at the next elections for Aylesbury Vale District Council in 2015.

Equalities

99 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

Final recommendations for Aylesbury Vale

100 The following map illustrates our proposed ward boundaries for Aylesbury Vale District Council:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed wards for Aylesbury Vale District Council.

You can also view our final recommendations for Aylesbury Vale District Council on our interactive maps at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Table A1: Final recommendations for Aylesbury Vale District 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	Aston Clinton & Stoke Mandeville	3	7,863	2,621	13%	8,119	2,706	8%
2	Bedgrove	2	5,090	2,545	9%	5,129	2,565	2%
3	Buckingham North	2	5,230	2,615	12%	5,498	2,749	10%
4	Buckingham South	2	4,116	2,058	-12%	5,426	2,713	8%
5	Central & Walton	2	4,822	2,411	4%	4,967	2,484	-1%
6	Coldharbour	3	6,922	2,307	-1%	6,922	2,307	-8%
7	Edlesborough	1	2,389	2,389	3%	2,401	2,401	-4%
8	Elmhurst	2	5,060	2,530	9%	5,177	2,589	3%
9	Gatehouse	3	6,575	2,192	-6%	7,480	2,493	-1%
10	Great Brickhill & Newton Longville	2	4,623	2,312	-1%	5,215	2,608	4%
11	Great Horwood	1	2,657	2,657	14%	2,676	2,676	7%
12	Grendon Underwood & Brill	1	2,680	2,680	15%	2,694	2,694	7%

Table A1 (cont.): Final recommendations for Aylesbury Vale District 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 %
13	Haddenham & Stone	3	7,303	2,434	5%	7,446	2,482	-1%
14	Long Crendon	1	2,627	2,627	13%	2,627	2,627	5%
15	Luffield Abbey	1	2,479	2,479	7%	2,479	2,479	-1%
16	Mandeville & Elm Farm	3	6,851	2,284	-2%	7,043	2,348	-6%
17	Marsh Gibbon	1	2,507	2,507	8%	2,603	2,603	4%
18	Oakfield & Bierton	3	5,540	1,847	-21%	7,468	2,489	-1%
19	Oakley	1	2,382	2,382	2%	2,400	2,400	-4%
20	Pitstone & Cheddington	2	4,978	2,489	7%	5,073	2,537	1%
21	Quainton	1	2,533	2,533	9%	2,533	2,533	1%
22	Riverside	3	3,821	1,274	-45%	7,878	2,626	5%
23	Southcourt	2	4,636	2,318	0%	4,764	2,382	-5%
24	Steeple Claydon	1	2,462	2,462	6%	2,478	2,478	-1%
25	Stewkley	1	2,700	2,700	16%	2,712	2,712	8%

Table A1 (cont.): Final recommendations for Aylesbury Vale District 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 %
26	Tingewick	1	2,637	2,637	13%	2,672	2,672	7%
27	Waddesdon	1	2,354	2,354	1%	2,354	2,354	-6%
28	Walton Court & Hawkslade	2	4,574	2,287	-2%	4,682	2,341	-7%
29	Watermead	1	2,406	2,406	3%	2,416	2,416	-4%
30	Wendover & Halton	3	6,652	2,217	-5%	6,652	2,217	-12%
31	Wing	1	2,514	2,514	8%	2,524	2,524	1%
32	Wingrave	1	2,408	2,408	4%	2,408	2,408	-4%
33	Winslow	2	4,817	2,409	4%	5,023	2,512	0%
	Totals	59	137,208	-	-	147,939	-	-
	Averages	-	-	2,326	-	-	2,507	-

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Aylesbury Vale District 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 district. 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 district, 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 borough or district council
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