

Mr Chris Bull
Chief Executive
Herefordshire Council
Brockington
35 Hafod Road
Hereford
Herefordshire
HR1 1SH

27 March 2012

Dear Mr Bull,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF HEREFORDSHIRE

Following my letter of 4 April 2011, I am writing to formally announce the start of the electoral review of Herefordshire Council. Herefordshire is being reviewed in order to improve the levels of electoral representation in the council, which have become imbalanced since the last review. Currently, the number of electors represented by the councillors in 30% of wards varies by more than 10% from the average for the council and the councillor in Hollington represents 34% fewer electors than the council average.

A copy of the Commission's press release, and posters advertising the start of the review are being sent to your Council. It would be much appreciated if you could publicise the start of the review by placing copies on display at local information points, and by taking such other steps as you consider appropriate to bring the review to the attention of the public and other interested parties.

Consultation on council size

During the preliminary stage of the review, the Commission received a submission from the Council proposing a council size of 54. A copy of this can be found on our website <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/west-midlands/herefordshire-unitary-authority/herefordshire-fer>

The Commission considered the Council's submission at its meeting on 13 March 2012. The Commission was of a view that the evidence provided supports the case that the number of councillors can be reduced, and is therefore consulting on a council size of 54 members. In reaching its conclusions, the Commission carefully considered the arguments made in regard to the representational role of councillors, the scrutiny arrangements, and the delegation of functions within Herefordshire Council.

The Commission now seeks views on its proposal for a council size of 54 members for Herefordshire Council during this period of public consultation.

Review timetable

The first stage of the review starts today, 27 March 2012. The Commission will initially consult on the appropriate number of councillors for Herefordshire – we refer to this as council size. The closing date for submissions on council size is **8 May 2012**. Once we have considered all the representations we receive, we will take a provisional decision on council size. It is intended that these conclusions will be publicised in June 2012 on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk, and be sent to your Council, to those organisations and individuals listed at the end of this letter, and to all those who submit representations during this stage. We will then begin a public consultation on the ward boundaries which we expect to run from 20 June 2012 to 28 August 2012.

After this date the Commission will formulate its draft recommendations, which we expect to publish in November 2012. An eight-week period of public consultation will follow this, during which time we would very much welcome your views on what is being proposed. Following this consultation period, the Commission will formulate the final recommendations; we expect to publish these in early 2013.

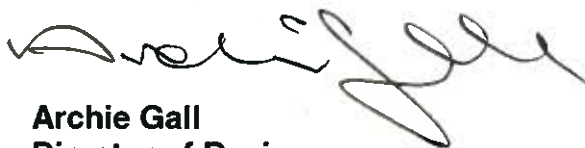
Correspondence and Enquiries

Your Council's main contacts at the Commission will be:

- Arion Lawrence, Review Officer, with specific responsibility for the day-to-day running of the review.
email: arion.lawrence@lgbce.org.uk; Tel: 020 7664 8513;
- Tim Bowden, Review Manager, who leads the team dealing with this and other reviews
email: tim.bowden@lgbce.org.uk; Tel: 020 7664 8514.

I am writing in similar terms to the organisations and individuals listed below.

Yours sincerely



Archie Gall
Director of Reviews
archie.gall@lgbce.org.uk
020 7664 8509

cc

MPs and MEPs with constituency interests in Herefordshire
Headquarters of the main political parties
West Mercia Police Authority
NHS Worcestershire
Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
Herefordshire Association of Local Councils
Parish and town councils in Herefordshire