

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

David Buckle
Chief Executive
South Oxfordshire District Council
Benson Lane
Crowmarsh Gifford
Wallingford
OX10 8ED

20 June 2012

Dear Mr Buckle

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE

Following my letter of 27 March 2012, I am writing to formally announce the next stage of the electoral review of South Oxfordshire District Council. South Oxfordshire is being reviewed following a formal request from your Council in order to consider a reduction in council size.

A copy of the Commission's press release, and posters advertising the start of this stage 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.

A detailed technical guidance document, *Electoral reviews: technical guidance* is available on our website, at www.lgbce.org.uk. This document contains all the statutory information about the review process and information regarding the warding patterns.

Review timetable

This stage of the review begins today with a period of information gathering to develop a new pattern of ward arrangements for South Oxfordshire. Subsequent to preliminary discussions with your Council, the Commission is currently minded to recommend a council size of 36 councillors. Proposals for warding arrangements should therefore be based on this council size. We expect this information gathering stage to run from 20 June 2012 to 28 August 2012. Once we have considered all the information we receive, we will take a provisional decision on warding arrangements and communicate this with you. It is intended that the draft recommendations will be published in November 2012.

The draft recommendations will also be available on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk, be sent to your Council, to those organisations and individuals listed at the end of this letter, and to all those who submit information as representations during this stage. There will be a further eight week period of consultation on the draft recommendations before the Commission considers all representations received and formulates its final recommendations. We expect to publish the final recommendations in March 2013.

Understanding the communities of South Oxfordshire

The Commission aims to recommend a pattern of wards that achieves good electoral equality, reflects community identities and interests and provides for effective and convenient local government. We will also seek to use strong, easily-identifiable boundaries.

To further these aims, the Commission recognises the need for a good understanding of community identity in South Oxfordshire. We particularly want to develop our understanding as to which areas communities identify with and how and why. We are interested in all local information which enhances this understanding. For example –

- Economic/demographic data and mapping
- Community village usage mapping
- Local place surveys
- Partner/stakeholder details

Creating a warding pattern

All proposals for warding patterns should demonstrate how any pattern of wards aids the provision of effective and convenient local government and why any deterioration in equality of representation or community identity should be accepted. Representations that are supported by evidence and argument will carry more weight with the Commission than those which merely assert a point of view.

Please feel free to contact us at any time (details below) should you have any questions. Officers at the Commission will be happy to assist with technical aspects of your warding scheme if you require, either in person or via email or telephone. This is an open offer, which can be utilised at any point during the information gathering period.

Correspondence and enquiries

All correspondence relating to this review should be addressed to:

Review Officer (South Oxfordshire)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London
EC1M 5LG

or direct to your main contacts at the Commission who will be:

- Nicholas Dunkeyson, Review Officer, with specific responsibility for the day-to-day running of the review.
email: Nicholas.dunkeyson@lgbce.org.uk; Tel: 020 7644 8528;
- Jessica Metherringham-Owlett, Review Manager, who leads the team dealing with this and other reviews
email: Jessica.metherringham-owlett@lgbce.org.uk; Tel: 020 7644 8525.

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 South Oxfordshire.
 - Headquarters of the main political parties
 - Thames Valley Police Authority
 - NHS Oxfordshire
 - Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service
 - Parish councils, town councils and other local organisations in South Oxfordshire.

