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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 Warwickshire County Council ('the 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 2014.

This review is being conducted as follows:

Stage starts	Description
15 April 2014	Submission of proposals of division arrangements to the LGBCE
24 June 2014	LGBCE's analysis and formulation of draft recommendations
9 September 2014	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
4 November 2014	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

Submissions received

The Commission received a submission from the Council on council size. Subsequently, we received 28 submissions on division boundaries. These included a county-wide scheme from the Council, supported by the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council. We received an alternative scheme from the Conservative Group on the Council supported by Marcus Jones MP (Nuneaton). Stratford-on-Avon District Council, 10 town and parish councils, one councillor, two local organisations and six members of the public also made submissions. All submissions can be viewed on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Analysis and draft recommendations

Electorate figures

The Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2020, a date five years on from the scheduled publication of our recommendations. This is prescribed in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ('the 2009 Act'). These forecasts projected an increase in the county's electorate of approximately 4.4% over this period. Increases in Rugby and Stratford-on-Avon districts are forecast to exceed 6%. Whilst elsewhere in the county, general levels of growth in the electorate are predicted to be modest, in each district there are expected to be housing developments which will add significantly to the electorates of some communities. The Commission is content that the forecasts are the most accurate available at this time.

Council size

The Council currently has 62 members. The Council proposed a council size of 57. In explaining its reasons, the Council described changes it has made in order to streamline its governance structure. However, it also outlined additional responsibilities which the Council has taken on board and which mean that a council size of fewer than 57 would not enable its members to represent their communities adequately.

We were persuaded by the Council's reasoning and have therefore based our draft recommendations on a council size of 57 members. The effect of this will be to reduce by one, the number of county councillors representing each of the five district council areas.

General analysis

Having considered the submissions received on division arrangements, we recognised that throughout North Warwickshire borough and in many rural parts of the county, the Conservative Group's proposals were identical to those made by the Council. However, where differences between the two submissions occur, we have based our draft recommendations on a combination of both proposals, having regard to those submissions which made more localised proposals. In each district we have modified the proposals made by the Council and the Conservative Group in order to provide divisions which better reflect community identities, provide stronger boundaries, or give greater electoral equality. Our proposals will provide good electoral equality while reflecting community identities and transport links in the county.

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 Warwickshire County 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 **3 November 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
Warwickshire 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

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 Warwickshire County Council's electoral arrangements to ensure that the number of voters represented by each councillor is approximately the same across the authority.

2 We invited Warwickshire County Council ('the Council') to submit proposals first on council size and then on division 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 Warwickshire County Council in Spring 2015.

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 Warwickshire?

6 We decided to conduct this review because, based on the December 2012 electorate figures, 52% of divisions in the county have 10% more or fewer electors per councillor than the county average. One division, Bishops Tachbrook, has 21% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county whilst Brownsover has 21% more electors.

How will the recommendations affect you?

7 The recommendations will determine how many councillors will serve on the Council. They will also decide which division you vote in, which other communities are in that division and, in some instances, which parish council ward you vote in. Your division name may also change, as may the names of parish or town council

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

wards in the area. The names or boundaries of parishes will not change as a result of our recommendations.

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 importance of providing evidence in any comments on our recommendations, rather than relying on assertion. We will be accepting comments and views until 3 November 2014. After this point, we will be formulating our final recommendations which we are due to publish in Spring 2015. Details on how to submit proposals can be found on page 19 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
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 draft recommendations

10 Before finalising our recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Warwickshire County Council we invite views on these draft recommendations. We welcome comments relating to the proposed division boundaries, division names and parish or town council electoral arrangements. 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 Warwickshire 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 2009,² (‘the 2009 Act’) with the need to:

- secure effective and convenient local government
- provide for equality of representation
- have regard to the boundaries of district and borough wards in drawing boundaries for county divisions
- ensure that proposed county divisions do not cross external district and borough boundaries
- 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 divisions 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 Warwickshire County 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.

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

Submissions received

15 Prior to, and during, the initial stage of the review, we visited Warwickshire County Council and met with members and officers. We are grateful to all concerned for their co-operation and assistance. We received 28 submissions on division boundaries. These included a county-wide scheme from the Council, supported in full by the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council and the Kenilworth & Southam Liberal Democrat Constituency Party. An alternative scheme proposed by the Conservative Group on the Council ('the Conservative Group') was also supported in full by Marcus Jones MP (Nuneaton). Stratford-on-Avon District Council, 10 town and parish councils, one Councillor, three further local political organisations, two local community organisations and six members of the public also made submissions. All submissions can be viewed by appointment at our offices or on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk

Electorate figures

16 As part of this review, the Council submitted electorate forecasts for 2020, a date five years on from the scheduled publication of our recommendations. This is prescribed in the 2009 Act. These forecasts projected an increase in the county's electorate of approximately 4.4% over this period. Increases in Rugby and Stratford-on-Avon districts are forecast to exceed 6%. Whilst elsewhere in the county, general levels of growth in the electorate are predicted to be modest, in each district there are expected to be housing developments which will add significantly to the electorates of some neighbourhoods and communities. We are content that the forecasts are the most accurate available at this time and have used them as the basis for our draft recommendations.

Council size

17 The Council currently has 62 councillors elected from 50 single-member and six two-member divisions. It operates under a Leader and Cabinet model.

18 At the outset of the review, the Council proposed a council size of 57. The Council set out that its reduction in council size is largely based on its streamlined political management structure. This includes changes it has made or will be making to the way in which it undertakes overview and scrutiny. The Council also sees importance in enhancing the role of the 30 local area forums.

19 The Council considered that a reduction in council size to 57 will not greatly increase the number of committees that members are appointed to. However, it did indicate that members are heavily involved in working groups and scrutiny task and finish groups. It therefore argued that any greater reduction in council size would impact on members' workloads. The Council also considered that a reduction in council size to 57 will also not greatly impact on the representational role of members.

20 Having considered the Council's proposals for council size, we were satisfied by the evidence provided in relation to the management and committee structures, and their respective workloads.

21 The effect of a reduction by five in the size of the Council would be to reduce, by one, the number of councillors which represent each of the county's districts. The 2009 Act requires that no electoral division (the area represented by each councillor) shall lie partly within and partly outside any district. Having regard to the distribution of the total electorate of the county, this means that the allocation of members across the districts and boroughs in the county should be as follows:

- North Warwickshire Borough seven members;
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough 13 members;
- Rugby Borough 10 members;
- Stratford-on-Avon District 13 members;
- Warwick District 14 members.

Electoral fairness

22 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 should provide for electoral fairness whilst ensuring that we reflect communities in the area, and provide for effective and convenient local government.

23 In seeking to achieve electoral fairness, we work out the average number of electors per councillor. The county average is calculated by dividing the total electorate of the county (424,575 in 2014 and 443,465 by 2020) by the total number of councillors representing them on the council, 57 under our draft recommendations. Therefore, the average number of electors per councillor under our draft recommendations is 7,449 in 2014 and 7,780 by 2020.

24 Under our draft recommendations, only one division would have more or fewer than 10% of electors per councillor than the county average by 2020. Overall, we are satisfied that we have achieved very good levels of electoral fairness under our draft recommendations for Warwickshire.

General analysis

25 We received 28 submissions on division patterns for Warwickshire. The Council submitted a county-wide scheme which proposed four two-member and 49 single-member divisions. The Conservative Group submitted a scheme based on a uniform pattern of 57 single-member divisions. We also received 24 localised submissions as described in paragraph 15.

26 Broadly speaking, the Council's and the Conservative Group's proposals shared a number of similarities. The submissions presented identical proposals for seven single-member divisions in North Warwickshire. In each of the remaining districts, the two submissions had some common elements, but differed in a number of divisions and in the case of Rugby, Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick, also differed in that the Council's proposal included two-member divisions.

27 Four districts were also the subject of localised representations which supported either of the county-wide submissions or proposed alternative boundaries.

28 Both the Council's and the Conservative Group's submissions were supported by limited evidence of community identity. However, where possible in each scheme, parishes were used as the 'building blocks' of the proposed divisions. While the respective schemes would provide good electoral equality in most areas, both included a Kingsbury division in North Warwickshire which would have 13% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county by 2020.

29 We have considered all the evidence received in forming our draft recommendations. In making them, we seek to provide for electoral equality, reflect community identities and establish clear and identifiable boundaries. Our recommendations are for a uniform pattern of 57 single-member divisions.

30 One resident proposed a general approach to making changes to parish boundaries. The Commission has no power to recommend or make such changes, these being beyond the scope of this review.

31 One resident proposed that we recommend a greater reduction in council size than that proposed by the Council, although they did not specify a favoured council size. This respondent argued that parish councils are able to tackle many local issues but did not provide explanation of how county councillors could discharge the full range of their functions in a council of fewer than 57 members. We are not, therefore, persuaded to recommend a council size of fewer than 57 members.

32 When conducting an electoral review of a county council, we seek to provide for coterminosity between district wards and county divisions. Coterminosity is when a district ward lies wholly contained within a county division. However, our primary aim is to provide the best balance between our statutory criteria. Therefore, we often find it necessary to divide district wards between county divisions in order to achieve good electoral equality or better reflect communities; our draft recommendations increase, for the county as a whole, the number of coterminous wards from 58 to 62, 57% of the total number of wards in the five districts of the county.

33 Our draft recommendations would result in 57 single-member divisions. A summary of our proposed electoral arrangements is set out in Table 1 (on page 16).

34 We welcome all comments on these draft recommendations, particularly in relation to those areas where we have modified the proposals submitted by the Council and the Conservative Group. We also particularly welcome comments on the division names we have proposed as part of the draft recommendations.

Electoral arrangements

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

- North Warwickshire Borough (pages 9–10)
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough (pages 10–11)
- Rugby Borough (pages 11–12)
- Stratford-on-Avon District (pages 12–14)
- Warwick District (pages 14–15)

Details of the draft recommendations are set out in Table A1 on pages 23–8 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

North Warwickshire Borough

36 North Warwickshire is wholly parished and is semi-rural in nature with a number of small towns and settlements. Atherstone is the largest town in the borough.

37 The eight existing divisions in the borough are all single-member divisions. Particularly high levels of electoral inequality by 2020 are forecast in the Hartshill division, with 17% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county, and Water Orton with 20% fewer.

38 Under a council size of 57, North Warwickshire is allocated seven county councillors, one fewer than under the existing arrangements. This means that on average, county councillors for North Warwickshire divisions will represent 7% fewer electors per councillor than the county average by 2020.

39 The Council's and the Conservative Group's proposals for North Warwickshire borough were identical. Their proposed Kingsbury division would have 13% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county by 2020. Polesworth division would retain its existing boundaries under this proposal.

40 Polesworth Parish Council proposed that the village of Warton, upon which a parish ward is centred, be added to the existing Polesworth division. Making this change would result in the division having 8% more electors per councillor than the average for the county by 2020. Whilst we would normally consider this to be an acceptable level of electoral equality, it would also mean that the proposed Baddesley & Dordon division would have an electoral variance of 19% by 2020. This is not a level of inequality we would consider to be acceptable. It could not be rectified without substantial amendments to the proposals for the remainder of North Warwickshire which would have detrimental effects on electoral equality and the ability to reflect community identities.

41 Coleshill Town Council made a similar representation, proposing that Coleshill should be represented in a single division. The Town Council made reference to its own expectations of house building in the town and consequential changes in the number of electors. We are not persuaded, however, that the Town Council's estimates of electoral change by 2020 are more reliable than those produced by the County Council. Having examined the Town Council's proposal, we are not persuaded that the inclusion of the whole of Coleshill in a single division can be accommodated as part of the wider electoral arrangements for North Warwickshire.

42 The Council and Conservative Group's proposal would provide for a Kingsbury division having 13% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county by 2020. We are not persuaded that there is sufficient community evidence to support this level of electoral inequality. We note, however, that the proposal would also divide between divisions the distribution park centred on Faraday Avenue. We propose to include Middleton parish in the Kingsbury division and Lea Marston parish in the Coleshill North & Water Orton division. These divisions will have 8% fewer and 11% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county by 2020, respectively

43 Elsewhere in the borough, our recommendations reflect the submissions made to us. The Atherstone, Baddesley & Dordon, Coleshill South & Arley, Hartshill & Mancetter and Polesworth divisions we propose would have good electoral equality and follow existing district, parish and parish ward boundaries.

44 Our draft recommendations would reduce the number of coterminous wards in North Warwickshire from 16 to 11.

45 Table A1 (on pages 23–8) provides details of the electoral variances for all of our proposed divisions in North Warwickshire. The draft recommendations for North Warwickshire are shown in detail on Map 1 accompanying this report.

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough

46 The district of Nuneaton & Bedworth is unparished and is largely urban.

47 Currently, there are 12 single-member divisions and one two-member division in the borough. Particularly high levels of electoral inequality by 2020 are forecast in the Bedworth West division with 19% more electors per councillor than the average for the county, Bulkington with 16% fewer and Nuneaton Abbey with 17% fewer.

48 Under a council size of 57, Nuneaton & Bedworth is allocated 13 county councillors, one fewer than under the existing arrangements. Both the Council's and the Conservative Group's proposals for this area were for a pattern of 13 single-member divisions. In the north of the borough both submissions proposed identical boundaries for Camp Hill and Galley Common divisions while in the south they proposed identical Bedworth East and Bedworth West divisions. We consider that these divisions meet our statutory criteria. The Conservative Group, proposed different names for these divisions but we were not persuaded that the names they proposed reflect the extent and composition of these divisions and therefore propose to adopt the names Camp Hill, Galley Common, Bedworth East and Bedworth West.

49 In the remainder of Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough, we have drawn on the submissions received in forming our draft recommendations but sought to improve upon them by providing clearer and more identifiable boundaries.

50 We propose a Bulkington & Whitestone division which would include the whole of Bulkington village. This has an impact on the whole of the eastern side of the borough and consequently we are also proposing Attleborough, Nuneaton East and Weddington divisions as part of our draft recommendations.

51 Consistent with the naming of divisions described in paragraph 48, we propose Bedworth North and Bedworth Central divisions.

52 Whilst we received proposals which would divide Nuneaton town centre between divisions, we propose a Nuneaton Central division which includes the whole of the town centre. We also propose Arbury and Nuneaton West divisions which would have clear division boundaries and provide for good electoral equality.

53 Our draft recommendations would reduce the number of coterminous wards in Nuneaton & Bedworth from 13 to seven.

54 Table A1 (on pages 23–8) provides details of the electoral variances for all of our proposed divisions in Nuneaton & Bedworth. The draft recommendations for Nuneaton & Bedworth are shown in detail on Map 1 accompanying this report.

Rugby Borough

55 The borough of Rugby combines the large town of Rugby with an extensive rural area to the north, west and south. Whilst the town of Rugby is unparished, the rural areas of the borough are wholly parished.

56 Currently, there are four single-member divisions and three two-member divisions in the borough. Particularly high levels of electoral inequality by 2020 are forecast in the Admirals division with 20% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county, Brownsover with 25% more, Fosse with 42% more and Lawford & New Bilton with 16% more.

57 Under a council size of 57, Rugby Borough is allocated 10 county councillors, one fewer than under the existing arrangements. The Council proposed a pattern of six single-member divisions and two two-member divisions whilst the Conservative Group proposed 10 single-member divisions.

58 Rugby Liberal Democrats supported the Council's proposals for the borough whilst the Rugby Conservative Association supported the Conservative Group's proposals.

59 Monks Kirby Parish Council commented that divisions should not combine rural and suburban areas, fearing that suburban interests would predominate.

60 Shilton & Barnacle Parish Council asked that we consider including that parish in a division with the neighbouring parish of Bulkington. We are not able to accommodate this request, because Bulkington lies within the neighbouring district of Nuneaton & Bedworth. The 2009 Act prevents us from making a recommendation for a division which does not lie wholly within a single district.

61 Councillor Sandison (Eastlands ward) commented on the lack of coterminosity of county divisions and borough wards in the Eastlands area of Rugby town and on the naming of divisions.

62 A submission on behalf of the King's Newnham Parish Meeting stated that the parish should be included within the same division as the neighbouring parish of Church Lawford. Both the Council's and the Conservative Group's proposals would meet this request.

63 One resident proposed a pattern of four single-member and three two-member divisions for Rugby borough. This pattern would include a Rugby North & Clifton division having 14% more electors per councillor than the average by 2020.

64 For only one division did both of the county-wide submissions propose common boundaries although the Council would name this Dunsmore & Leam Valley whilst the Conservative Group proposed the name Dunsmore. We noted that both submissions would include a small part of the parish of Dunchurch, Lime Tree Avenue, in a neighbouring division. There are 75 electors in this small area, a

number which is not expected to change significantly. If we were to exclude this area from the division containing the major part of the parish, we would have to make this small area a parish ward. We normally consider parish wards of this size to be unsustainable and can see no reason to depart from that presumption in this instance. We therefore confirm, subject to the inclusion of the whole of the parish of Dunchurch, the Dunsmore & Leam Valley division, noting that the division would be coterminous with the two borough wards of Dunsmore and Leam Valley. This division would have 6% more electors per councillor than the average for the county by 2020.

65 In the rural north and west of Rugby borough we propose as part of our draft recommendations single-member Fosse and Earl Craven divisions. We have done so having regard to the locations of major developments which will have an effect on elector numbers and the character of the areas in which they are to take place, in particular in the northern part of Rugby town, in Churchover parish and at the Rugby radio masts site. We have included in our Fosse division the village of Newbold-on-Avon. We propose, however, to include the Norman Road area in a Benn & New Bilton division and the parish of Cosford in a Brownsover & Coton division. This reflects the nature of residential and industrial development at the northern end of Rugby town, close to the junction of the A446 with the M6 motorway. We also propose to include the Wentworth Road and Hudson Road area in a Caldecott division. This division also includes the northern parts of Dunchurch Road and Barby Road. This forms the area to the immediate south of the town centre.

66 We note that development at the site of the Rugby radio masts is scheduled to commence in autumn 2014 and continue beyond 2020. We consider that this area will become a major suburb of Rugby town. We therefore propose its inclusion in the Hillmorton division which also includes further parts of Rugby's southern housing areas. Our draft recommendations for the remainder of Rugby town are Admirals & Cawston, Bilton & Hillside and Eastlands divisions, each of which have good levels of electoral equality.

67 Our draft recommendations would reduce the number of coterminous wards in Rugby from nine to eight.

68 Table A1 (on pages 23–8) provides details of the electoral variances for all of our proposed divisions in Rugby. The draft recommendations for Rugby are shown in detail on Map 1 accompanying this report.

Stratford-on-Avon District

69 The district of Stratford-on-Avon forms the southern part of the county and is wholly parished. The district is largely rural in nature but Stratford-upon-Avon is its largest town.

70 Currently, there are 12 single-member divisions and one two-member division in the borough. Particularly high levels of electoral inequality by 2020 are forecast in the Stour & the Vale division with 25% more electors per councillor than the average for the county and Stratford South with 20% more.

71 Under a council size of 57, Stratford-on-Avon is allocated 13 county councillors, one fewer than under the existing arrangements. The Council's proposals for this

area were based on 11 single-member and one two-member divisions whilst the Conservative Group proposed 13 single-member divisions.

72 The Council's and the Conservative Group's proposals differed only in Stratford-upon-Avon town. In the rural area, both proposals were similar and have taken account of recent changes to parish boundaries following a Community Governance Review of the district.

73 One resident made a proposal for the district which included slightly different configurations of rural divisions. The resident also proposed an alternative division pattern in parts of Stratford-upon-Avon town. Stratford-on-Avon District Council proposed that the district should, wherever possible, be represented by single-member divisions and be coterminous with district council wards.

74 One resident proposed changes to division and district boundaries in the Vale of Red Horse area. Changes to district boundaries would be undertaken by a Principal Area Boundary Review (PABR) which is out of scope of an electoral review. The respondent also suggested that the Fosse Way be used as a division boundary; this would result in the splitting of some parishes and the creation of parish wards with too few electors to be viable. We have not therefore included this proposal as part of our draft recommendations.

75 In formulating our draft recommendations, we have had regard to the review of electoral arrangements for Stratford-on-Avon district which we completed in March 2014. We have also had regard to the Community Governance Order made by the District Council in July 2013, following a review of parishes in the rural areas of the district. Changes to the boundaries of district wards and parishes which are a result of these two reviews will not come into effect until elections are held in May 2015.

76 In the rural parts of the district we consider that the proposals made by the Council and the Conservative Group would provide for good electoral equality and reflect community identities. In basing our draft recommendations upon the submissions made to us, we acknowledge that our proposals do not provide complete coterminosity with the District Council's new rural wards. However, we consider this to be appropriate in order to ensure good electoral equality and reflect our statutory criteria. We therefore propose, as part of our draft recommendations, Alcester, Arden, Bidford & Welford, Feldon, Kineton & Red Horse, Shipston, Southam, Stockton & Napton, Stour & the Vale, Studley and Wellesbourne divisions.

77 In Stratford-upon-Avon town, we propose single-member divisions which are coterminous with the new district wards for the town and provide for good levels of electoral equality. Our draft recommendations are therefore consistent with the conclusions we reached about community identities when we conducted our review of the District Council's electoral arrangements. We propose a Stratford East division which includes Clopton and the area to the north of Banbury Road and the town centre. Our proposed Stratford South division includes the Bridge Town and Old Town areas whilst our Stratford West division includes Bishopton and the area to the west of Stratford-upon-Avon College, centred on Alcester Road.

78 Our draft recommendations would increase the number of coterminous wards in Stratford-on-Avon from 14 to 24.

79 Table A1 (on pages 23–8) provides details of the electoral variances for all of our proposed divisions in Stratford-on-Avon. The draft recommendations for Stratford-on-Avon are shown in detail on Map 1 accompanying this report.

Warwick District

80 Warwick district lies to the south of the city of Coventry and combines the towns of Warwick, Royal Leamington Spa and Kenilworth with extensive rural areas to the west, south and east. The district is wholly parished.

81 Currently, there are 13 single-member divisions and one two-member division in the borough. Particularly high levels of electoral inequality by 2020 are forecast in the Bishop's Tachbrook division with 17% fewer electors per councillor than the average for the county and Warwick South with 18% more.

82 Under a council size of 57, Warwick is allocated 14 county councillors, one fewer than under the existing arrangements. The Council's proposals for this area were based on 12 single-member and one two-member divisions whilst the Conservative Group proposed 14 single-member divisions. The submissions included identical proposals for Warwick and the southern part of Royal Leamington Spa. However, the division patterns were different in the remainder of the district.

83 Kenilworth Town Council made a detailed submission which set out its preference for coterminosity between divisions and district council wards. The Town Council questioned the County Council's electorate forecasts but we have not found evidence to persuade us to alter our initial acceptance of those forecasts. Having regard to considerations of electoral equality, the Town Council then set out alternative proposals for the creation of single-member divisions.

84 Royal Leamington Spa Town Council made no comment on the proposals for divisions, but emphasised the importance of ensuring that the boundaries of its parish wards should remain identical to and coterminous with district wards.

85 Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe Parish Council stated that it did not wish the expansion of Kenilworth to challenge the independence of the rural community.

86 Old Milverton & Blackdown Joint Parish Council argued for the maintenance of its existing electoral arrangements.

87 Whitnash Town Council stated that it wished the present Whitnash division to remain largely unchanged, retaining the name Whitnash. This was echoed by the Whitnash WI and Whitnash Residents Association. We noted that Warwick District Council is currently undertaking a Community Governance Review but has not yet made a Reorganisation of Community Governance Order for the alteration of the boundaries of Whitnash Town Council. We have no power to alter parish boundaries and so, in formulating our draft recommendations for a Whitnash Division, we have had regard to current parish boundaries.

88 Submissions made to us proposed Warwick North, Warwick West, Warwick South, Leamington Brunswick and Leamington Willes divisions which would provide good electoral equality. We have based our draft recommendations for those areas

on the submissions, having regard to our statutory criteria, making minor modifications in order to reflect district ward and parish ward boundaries.

89 We have formulated our draft recommendations for the remainder of Warwick district, having regard to the representations made to us, and our statutory criteria. Changes to the boundaries of district wards which are a result of our recent review of the district's electoral arrangements in March 2013 will not come into effect until elections in May 2015. However, our draft recommendations are based upon those boundaries.

90 As part of our draft recommendations for Kenilworth, we have combined Castle Green and the rural parishes to the west in a Lapworth & West Kenilworth division. We also propose to include the University ward of Stoneleigh parish with the northern part of Kenilworth in a Kenilworth Park Hill division. The central and southern parts of the town would form a Kenilworth St John's division.

91 We propose to include the part of Cubbington parish which lies immediately to the north-east of Telford Avenue in Leamington North division. Whilst, for the remainder of Leamington town, we have endeavoured to maintain coterminosity between our proposed Leamington Clarendon and Leamington Milverton divisions and the new district wards. However, our regard to the statutory criteria means that we have in some instances been unable to do so. As a consequence, the number of parish wards in Leamington will increase from 11 to 13.

92 We propose to include the remainder of Cubbington parish in a division largely comprising rural parishes to the east of Leamington. This division will also include the parish of Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe which lies between the towns of Leamington and Kenilworth. The division, which we propose to name Cubbington & Leek Wootton, would also include both Old Milverton parish and Blackdown parish. We also propose that the rural parishes in the west and south of the district be included within a single-member Budbrook & Bishop's Tachbrook division, noting the expected increase in the electorate of that area.

93 Our draft recommendations would increase the number of coterminous wards in Warwick from seven to 12.

94 Table A1 (on pages 23–8) provides details of the electoral variances for all of our proposed divisions in Warwick. The draft recommendations for Warwick are shown in detail on Map 1 accompanying this report.

Conclusions

95 Table 1 shows the impact of our draft recommendations on electoral equality, based on 2014 and 2020 electorate figures.

Table 1: Summary of electoral arrangements

	Draft recommendations	
	2014	2020
Number of councillors	57	57
Number of electoral divisions	57	57
Average number of electors per councillor	7,449	7,780
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10% from the average	8	1
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	0	0

Draft recommendation

Warwickshire County Council should comprise 57 councillors serving 57 divisions, as detailed and named in Table A1 and illustrated on the large maps accompanying this report.

Parish electoral arrangements

96 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 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.

97 Under the 2009 Act we only have the power to make such changes as a direct consequence of our recommendations for principal authority division arrangements. However, the respective principal authority (the district or borough council in the area) 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.

98 As part of our final recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Stratford District Council we proposed changes to the electoral arrangements for Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council. Those changes will be made effective at an election to be held in May 2015, following the making of an electoral changes order. Our draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Warwickshire County Council require no further alteration to the Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council arrangements described above.

99 Similarly, as part of our final recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Warwick District Council we proposed changes to the electoral arrangements for Cubbington Parish Council, Kenilworth Town Council, Royal Leamington Spa Town Council, Warwick Town Council and Whitnash Town Council. Those changes will be made effective at an election to be held in May 2015, in accordance with the Warwick (Electoral Changes) Order 2014. Our draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements for Warwickshire County Council require no further alteration to the town and parish council arrangements for Cubbington and Whitnash described above.

100 To meet our obligations under the 2009 Act, however, we propose consequential parish warding arrangements for the parishes of Kenilworth, Royal Leamington Spa and Warwick. We would particularly welcome comments on these proposals from the town councils concerned and local residents during this consultation stage.

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

Draft recommendation

Kenilworth Town Council should comprise 17 councillors, as at present, representing four wards: Abbey (returning four members); Park Hill (returning six members); Queens (returning one member); and St John's (returning six members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

102 As a result of our proposed electoral division boundaries and having regard to the statutory criteria set out in Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act, we propose revised parish electoral arrangements for Royal Leamington Spa parish.

Draft recommendation

Royal Leamington Spa Town Council should return 16 town councillors, as at present, representing 13 wards: Arlington (returning one member); Brunswick North (returning two members); Brunswick South (returning one member); Clarendon (returning one member); Cloisters (returning one member), College (returning one member); Leam (returning one member); Lillington (returning two members); Lime (returning one member); Milverton (returning two members); Northumberland (returning one member); Sydenham (returning one member); and Victoria Park (returning one member). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

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

Draft recommendations

Warwick Town Council should return 15 parish councillors, as at present, representing 10 wards: Aylesford (returning two members); Bridge End (returning one member); Cliffe (returning one member); Emscote (returning two members); Heathcote (returning two members); Myton (returning one member); Saltisford (returning two members); Saltisford Common (returning one member); St Nicholas (returning one member); and Woodloes Park (returning two members). The proposed parish ward boundaries are illustrated and named on Map 1.

3 What happens next?

104 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 Warwickshire County Council contained in this report. We will take into account fully all submissions received by 3 November 2014. Any received after this date may not be taken into account.

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

106 Express your views by writing directly to:

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

reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Submissions can also be made by using the consultation section of our website, www.lgbce.org.uk or by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk

107 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 representations are available to view 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.

108 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.

109 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.

110 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 Warwickshire County Council in 2017.

Equalities

111 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 Warwickshire

112 The following maps illustrate our proposed division boundaries for Warwickshire County Council:

- **Sheet 1, Map 1** illustrates in outline form the proposed divisions for Warwickshire County Council.

You can also view our draft recommendations for Warwickshire on our interactive map at <http://consultation.lgbce.org.uk>

Appendix A

Table A1: Draft recommendations for Warwickshire County Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
North Warwickshire Borough								
1	Atherstone	1	6,923	6,923	-11%	7,519	7,519	-3%
2	Baddesley & Dordon	1	7,651	7,651	-2%	7,578	7,578	-3%
3	Coleshill North & Water Orton	1	6,815	6,815	-12%	6,926	6,926	-11%
4	Coleshill South & Arley	1	7,047	7,047	-9%	7,141	7,141	-8%
5	Hartshill & Mancetter	1	7,181	7,181	-8%	7,047	7,047	-9%
6	Kingsbury	1	7,079	7,079	-9%	7,187	7,187	-8%
7	Polesworth	1	7,288	7,288	-6%	7,162	7,162	-8%
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough								
8	Arbury	1	7,110	7,110	-9%	7,449	7,449	-4%

Table A1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Warwickshire County Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
9	Attleborough	1	7,629	7,629	-2%	7,806	7,806	0%
10	Bedworth Central	1	7,237	7,237	-7%	7,452	7,452	-4%
11	Bedworth East	1	7,336	7,336	-6%	7,465	7,465	-4%
12	Bedworth North	1	6,989	6,989	-10%	7,131	7,131	-8%
13	Bedworth West	1	7,314	7,314	-6%	7,651	7,651	-2%
14	Bulkington & Whitestone	1	7,956	7,956	2%	7,842	7,842	1%
15	Camp Hill	1	7,217	7,217	-7%	8,099	8,099	4%
16	Galley Common	1	7,864	7,864	1%	8,189	8,189	5%
17	Nuneaton Central	1	7,700	7,700	-1%	7,805	7,805	0%
18	Nuneaton East	1	7,222	7,222	-7%	7,508	7,508	-3%
19	Nuneaton West	1	7,436	7,436	0%	7,217	7,217	-7%
20	Weddington	1	7,632	7,632	-2%	8,058	8,058	4%

Table A1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Warwickshire County Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Rugby Borough								
21	Admirals & Cawston	1	7,787	7,787	0%	7,926	7,926	2%
22	Benn & New Bilton	1	7,346	7,346	-6%	8,483	8,483	9%
23	Bilton & Hillside	1	7,961	7,961	2%	7,897	7,897	2%
24	Brownsover & Coton	1	7,213	7,213	-7%	8,301	8,301	7%
25	Caldecott	1	8,149	8,149	5%	8,063	8,063	4%
26	Dunsmore & Leam Valley	1	7,922	7,922	2%	8,217	8,217	6%
27	Earl Craven	1	7,756	7,756	0%	8,026	8,026	3%
28	Eastlands	1	7,809	7,809	0%	8,095	8,095	4%
29	Fosse	1	7,936	7,936	2%	7,801	7,801	0%
30	Hillmorton	1	6,510	6,510	-16%	8,342	8,342	7%

Table A1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Warwickshire County Council

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Stratford-on-Avon District							
31 Alcester	1	8,239	8,239	6%	8,421	8,421	8%
32 Arden	1	8,454	8,454	9%	8,534	8,534	10%
33 Bidford & Welford	1	7,797	7,797	0%	8,356	8,356	7%
34 Feldon	1	8,212	8,212	6%	8,403	8,403	8%
35 Kineton & Red Horse	1	7,298	7,298	-6%	7,707	7,707	-1%
36 Shipston	1	7,755	7,755	0%	7,972	7,972	2%
37 Southam, Stockton & Napton	1	7,272	7,272	-7%	7,672	7,672	-1%
38 Stour & the Vale	1	6,262	6,262	-20%	7,311	7,311	-6%
39 Stratford East	1	7,789	7,789	0%	8,201	8,201	5%
40 Stratford South	1	6,996	6,996	-10%	8,465	8,465	9%
41 Stratford West	1	7,724	7,724	-1%	7,882	7,882	1%
42 Studley	1	6,996	6,996	-10%	7,464	7,464	-4%

Table A1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Warwickshire County Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
43	Wellesbourne	1	6,959	6,959	-11%	7,603	7,603	-2%
Warwick District								
44	Budbrook & Bishop's Tachbrook	1	7,619	7,619	-2%	8,331	8,331	7%
45	Cubbington & Leek Wootton	1	7,367	7,367	-5%	7,541	7,541	-3%
46	Kenilworth Park Hill	1	8,245	8,245	6%	8,340	8,340	7%
47	Kenilworth St John's	1	7,716	7,716	-1%	7,799	7,799	0%
48	Lapworth & West Kenilworth	1	7,325	7,325	-6%	7,549	7,549	-3%
49	Leamington Brunswick	1	6,803	6,803	-13%	7,204	7,204	-7%
50	Leamington Clarendon	1	6,832	6,832	-12%	7,103	7,103	-9%
51	Leamington Milverton	1	7,216	7,216	-7%	7,652	7,652	-2%

Table A1 (cont.): Draft recommendations for Warwickshire County Council

	Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
52	Leamington North	1	8,166	8,166	5%	8,107	8,107	4%
53	Leamington Willes	1	7,252	7,252	-7%	7,328	7,328	-6%
54	Warwick North	1	7,049	7,049	-9%	7,800	7,800	0%
55	Warwick South	1	7,316	7,316	-6%	7,980	7,980	3%
56	Warwick West	1	8,070	8,070	4%	8,170	8,170	5%
57	Whitnash	1	6,831	6,831	-12%	7,187	7,187	-8%
	Totals	57	424,575	–	–	443,465	–	–
	Averages	–	–	7,449	–	–	7,780	–

Source: Electorate figures are based on information provided by Warwickshire County Council.

Note: The 'variance from average' column shows by how far, in percentage terms, the number of electors per councillor in each electoral division varies from the average for the county. 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 Commission 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

