

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	COUNCIL	19 APRIL 2021	14
BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW – WARDING ARRANGEMENTS			

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The Boundary Commission has indicated that it is minded to accept the council's proposal that the council should comprise 37, instead of 51 members, from the 2023 election. The review has now moved to the next stage, the Warding Arrangements.

A Working Group established by the Finance and Democracy Committee in September 2020, reconvened in February 2021 to consider warding arrangements for Fylde incorporating 37 councillors. The working group produced a draft proposal of 15 wards, each represented by two or three councillors which (with one exception) provides electoral equality within the Commission's accepted tolerance.

The Finance and Democracy Committee endorsed the proposal at its meeting held on 29th March 2021 for indicative submission to the Commission and recommended that it be approved by the Council as the final submission on warding arrangements. The initial consultation period ended on 5th April and the Commission now has the Council's indicative proposal and has confirmed it will accept the Council's final proposal on warding arrangements following the Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council approves the document at appendix 1 as the Council's final proposal to the Local Government Boundary Commission for warding arrangements

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Establishment of a cross-party working group – 28th September 2020 F and D Committee

Commendation of council size submission to council – 23 November 2020 F and D Committee

Approval of council size submission – 7 December 2021 Council

Commendation of warding arrangements submission to council – 29th March 2021

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	√
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	√
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	√

REPORT

THE REVIEW

1. Members will be aware that the Local Government Boundary Commission is carrying out an electoral review of the council. The aim of the electoral review is to recommend ward boundaries that mean each councillor represents approximately the same number of voters. The review is also intended to ensure that ward boundaries reflect the interests and identities of local communities, as well as promoting effective local government. More information about the review is available at www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/north-west/lancashire/fylde.
2. There are two elements of the review, which are council size (that is, the number of councillors) and warding arrangements. The council submitted a proposal to the Commission that the council size should be 37 councillors, instead of the present 51. The Commission is minded to accept that proposal, so the focus has now moved to warding arrangements.
3. The consultation on warding arrangements closed on 5 April. However, the Commission has agreed to receive a provisional proposal from the council, following the meeting of the Finance and Democracy Committee held on 29th March 2021, with the proposal being confirmed to follow this Council meeting.

WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

4. As with the consultation on council size, any person, group or organisation can submit a proposal for warding arrangements. Proposals must be evidence based and demonstrate how they meet the three aims of the review, as set out in paragraph 1 above. The Commission will have regard to the quality of each proposal, rather than its source. In other words, the council's proposal will only carry weight to the extent that it addresses the aims of the review.
5. In September 2020, the Finance and Democracy Committee appointed a working group consisting of¹ Councillors Buckley, Green, Nulty, Oades, Singleton and Small to work up the council's proposals to the Commission. The working group reconvened in February 2021 to consider warding arrangements for Fylde incorporating 37 councillors.
6. The Working Group have participated in three meetings over recent months (19 February and 5, 12 March) to draft a warding arrangements proposal. This proposal was submitted to the Finance and Democracy Committee held on 29th March 2021, and indicative approval was given to the submission, with the Council being invited to approve the proposals.
7. The proposal recommends the creation of fifteen new wards, each represented by two or three councillors. All the proposed wards respect existing parish boundaries and with one exception provide electoral equality within the 10% tolerance indicated by the Commission as being acceptable. In the one exceptional instance where electoral equality within that tolerance is not achieved, the proposal provides justification based on the community and coherence of that particular area.
8. The proposal is attached for approval by the Council as Fylde's final proposal for warding arrangements.

REVIEW TIMETABLE

9. The remaining stages in the Commission's review are as follows:

Commission meeting to agree draft recommendations	15 June 2021
Draft recommendations consultation opens	29 June 2021
Draft recommendations consultation closes	6 September 2021
Commission meeting to agree final recommendations	16 November 2021
Final recommendations published	30 November 2021

IMPLICATIONS

Councillor Lee substituted for Councillor Oades on two occasions when the group considered warding arrangements.

Finance	No direct implications at this stage
Legal	No implications
Community Safety	No implications
Human Rights and Equalities	No implications
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	No implications
Health & Safety and Risk Management	No implications

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Tracy Manning	mailto:Tracy.manning@fylde.gov.uk Tracy.manning@fylde.gov.uk 01253 658506	7th April 2021

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Draft submission and enclosures		Council office or within committee papers

Attached documents

Appendix 1 – Warding Arrangements submission