



INFORMATION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	23 SEPTEMBER 2019	10
ELECTORAL REVIEW			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

The Local Government Boundary Commission has a duty to conduct electoral reviews of local authorities in England. Reviews are conducted from 'time-to-time' which is generally once every 12-16 years (three or four elections). It is some time since Fylde Council had its last review, in 2000, and therefore the Local Government Boundary Commission has given notice to the Council of its intention to conduct a review commencing in 2020. Reviews can also be triggered by other means such as variances in the number of electors per member across the Borough in differing wards. Fylde does have some significant variances that would have triggered a review within a short period of time.

The primary purpose of the electoral review is to consider the total number of councillors elected to the council, as well as the names, number and boundaries of the wards, and the number of councillors to be elected to each ward.

An initial Electoral Review timetable for Fylde has been provided by the Commission and is attached for information, the intention is to have the new arrangements in place for the 2023 Borough elections.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Director of Resources

The Local Government Boundary Commission, www.lgbce.org.uk

WHY IS THIS INFORMATION BEING GIVEN TO THE COMMITTEE?

To inform and provide members with the timetable for the electoral review process.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Background

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission has a duty to conduct electoral reviews of local authorities in England. Reviews are conducted from 'time-to-time' which is generally once every 12-16 years. It is some time since Fylde Council had its last review, in 2000, and therefore the Local Government Boundary Commission has given notice to the Council of its intention to conduct a review commencing in 2020.

2. The purpose of the electoral review is to consider the total number of councillors elected to the Council, as well as the names, number and boundaries of the wards, and the number of councillors to be elected to each ward. The number of elected members necessary to operate a modern 21st century council is determined by a multitude of factors that the commission will consider including: governance arrangements; community leadership; strategic leadership; engagement; partnerships; and service delivery arrangements.
3. The initial Electoral Review timetable has been drafted by the Commission and is attached for information.
4. The first part of the review will seek a view from the council on the number of councillors needed to manage the business of a district council, this typically involves internal consultation with the council/political groups with a requirement to make an evidence based case for the number of elected members. The second stage of the review will examine the number, name and geographical size of the wards, this will involve consultation with the council and all external stakeholders.
5. The Commission will work closely with the Council to ensure a thorough and active engagement process with the Council and others. The Commission is cognisant that each individual local authority is a unique political entity and as a consequence there is no set formula or preconceived ideas about the arrangements going forward including the number of councillors.
6. The final decision on the number of elected members and the wards will be put before parliament by the Commission with the changes implemented at the next local election in 2023.

Opportunities

7. The aim of the review is not just to propose boundaries that are fair for voters and reflect community ties but to also help councils align their local leadership ambitions with their decision making arrangements.
8. Decision making arrangements have changed at Fylde since the last review with the move from a cabinet based system to a committee structure more recently.
9. The way services are commissioned, designed and delivered are constantly evolving and councillors representational role have changed since the last review at Fylde in 2000, these factors will be material considerations in determining the appropriate number of elected members for a small district authority.
10. The process allows Councils to take a strategic view about the number of councillors needed to manage the business of the council, provide accountability and represent the people in a 21st Century council.
11. The review will review ward boundaries to reflect the shape of local communities that have changed over time due to development and the movement of people. It will look forward at future estimated population figures as a part of this consideration.