

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCES DIRECTORATE	FINANCE AND DEMOCRACY COMMITTEE	25 JANUARY 2021	6
BOUNDARY COMMISSION REVIEW – CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP			

PUBLIC ITEM

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

SUMMARY

The report proposes the continuation of the cross-party Working Group which was initially appointed by this committee to produce a council size submission. This work was successfully completed, and subsequently endorsed by the Council, and submitted during December to the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC). The following members served on the Working Group: Councillor Buckley (Chairman) and Councillors Green, Nulty, Oades, Singleton and Small.

In February, the Commission will be moving onto its second phases of work regarding Ward Boundaries. Although this involves a wider consultation than the initial council size stage of work, the council is encouraged to submit its own proposals in response to warding arrangements. It is suggested that this work could be furthered by the cross-party Working Group with advice and support from officers. There may be a final piece of work to complete in the summer months to consider the draft recommendations of the Commission.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the cross-party Working Group comprising Councillor Buckley (Chairman) and Councillors Green, Nulty, Oades, Singleton and Small be re-convened in order to develop a proposal for Warding arrangements
- (ii) That the deliberations of the Working Party be reported back to the Finance and Democracy Committee, prior to being presented to the Council for its approval (29th March and 19th April meetings)
- (iii) That the Working Party be re-convened, as necessary, in order to consider the draft recommendations of the Commission and provide feedback if required during the summer months

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Finance and Democracy Committee – 28th September – Establishment of cross-party working group to produce a council size submission

Finance and Democracy Committee – 23rd November – Endorsement of Council size submission with a recommendation to the Council to endorse the same

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

1. Members are reminded of the programme of work of the Local Government Boundary Commission on its forthcoming review work. The review timetable is set out below in table one.
2. Members are reminded that the work is dealt with in two distinct phases. The first of which was around the council size going forward with effect from 2023, in terms of the number of elected members, with the latter part focusing on warding patterns. This first phase of work has now been successfully completed and the Council's submission has made to the LGBC. Feedback is expected at the latter end of January.
3. The second phase is a wider consultation programme with both the council and its communities regarding warding arrangements.

Table One – Review Timetable

Draft council size submission	2 December 2020 (Completed)
Final council size submission <i>including checklist document</i>	16 December 2020 (Completed)
Receive electoral forecasts	5 November 2020 (Completed)
Council size Commission meeting	19 January 2021
Warding patterns consultation opens	2 February 2021
Warding patterns consultation closes	12 April 2021
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

4. At the meeting of the Committee on 28th September 2020, it was agreed to establish a cross-party working group of members in order that a submission could be prepared for the Local Government Boundary Committee with respect to the council size. This was in order to establish the council's position with respect to a proposed number of councillors going forward and to address and provide a range of information being sought by the commission.
5. The Working Group successfully completed this work and the outcome of this was reported to this Committee at its November meeting prior to the Council being invited to approve the proposal at its meeting on 7th December.
6. The Commission will move onto its second phase of work regarding Ward Boundaries in February. The aim of this piece of work is to gather feedback in order that the Commission can re-draw ward boundaries whilst ensuring that statutory criteria is met. Both the Council, together with its communities, will have an opportunity to put forward ideas in this latter phase of consultation – this stage of the review is led and conducted by the Commission. The statutory criteria for considerations in this latter piece of work are:
 - a *Deliver electoral equality for all voters*
 - b *Reflect community interests and identities*
 - c *Promote effective and convenient local government*
7. The Council is encouraged to submit its own proposals in response to warding arrangements. It is suggested that this work could be furthered by the cross-party Working Group with advice and support from officers.

8. It is therefore recommended that the Working Group, comprising its previous membership, be continued in order to develop a proposal for Warding arrangements. This proposal would initially be considered by the Finance and Democracy Committee, prior to the Council being invited to consider the same.
9. There may be a further need for the Working Group to re-convene once more during the summer months in order to consider the draft recommendations from the Commission.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	None as a result of this report
Legal	None as a result of this report
Community Safety	None as a result of this report
Human Rights and Equalities	None as a result of this report
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None as a result of this report
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None as a result of this report

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
The Boundary Commission	Live	https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/
The Member Portal	Live	https://fyldegovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/BoundaryCommissionReview