

Local Government Boundary Review – draft recommendations

Purpose

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has been undertaking an electoral review of the Council's area since Summer 2021. The Commission has a legal duty to complete reviews of local authority areas from time to time, with the previous review having taken place in 2001.
- 1.2 Council made a submission to the LGBCE in September 2021 relating to the total number of councillors required to discharge the council's functions and represent residents effectively. A further submission was made in February 2022 in relation to establishing a warding pattern for the Council's area.
- 1.3 Having considered the submissions from Council alongside those from other local stakeholders and residents, the LGBCE have published their draft recommendations for a further period of public consultation.
- 1.4 The LGBCE's proposed warding pattern is attached at Appendix 1. This report seeks approval for the Council's intended response to the ongoing consultation.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the warding pattern proposed by the LGBCE attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 To approve the administrative amendments detailed at paragraphs 4.7 to 4.10 as part of the Council's submission to the public consultation.
- 2.3 To encourage the Council's political groups to make their own submissions to the LGBCE's public consultation in relation to the overall warding pattern and ward names.

Reasons

- 3.1 In preparing the Council's submission to the LGBCE, several workshops were held with councillors to develop a warding pattern that met with the LGBCE's three statutory criteria (electoral equality, community identity, effective/convenient local government).

It is the view of those officers involved with electoral administration that the LGBCE's overall proposal for the city meets the three statutory criteria; to offer an alternative

submission at this stage in the process would likely repeat discussions held during the initial workshops, where no clear consensus emerged.

It is therefore considered expedient to note the LGBCE's overall proposal, whilst encouraging political groups and ward councillors to make local submissions as they pertain to the areas they represent.

- 3.2 The Council Constitution requires that matters relating to the variation of local government electoral areas and representation are approved by Council.

Supporting information

LGBCE Recommendations

- 4.1 The LGBCE published its draft recommendations on 31 May 2022, with the public consultation due to run until 8 August 2022.

The proposed warding pattern is available to view on the LGBCE website, together with a report summarising the consultation responses received. The proposed warding pattern has been re-produced at Appendix 1 using the council's GIS software.

- 4.2 The LGBCE has proposed that 51 councillors are split across 19 wards, comprising of one single councillor ward and four two councillor wards. The proposal also includes newly created wards and alterations to the names of existing wards.
- 4.3 The proposal incorporates a large proportion of the council's original submission. However, whilst the council favoured a uniform warding pattern of seventeen wards of three members each, the LGBCE have chosen to adopt an unequal warding pattern. This is permissible following the move to whole-council elections in January 2022.
- 4.4 It is recommended that the council makes no further representations on the relative merits of an equal or unequal warding pattern in its response to the consultation. Officers accept the rationale of the LGBCE and believe that in most cases the proposal reflects the statutory criteria. It is recommended that political groups and ward councillors make their own submissions to the consultation, should they believe that the proposal does not meet the statutory criteria in particular areas of the city.

Proposed Consultation Response

- 4.5 It is recommended that Council notes the draft recommendations of the LGBCE. This report provides opportunity for councillors to debate the proposals and fulfils the constitutional requirement for the matter to be considered by Council. The normal rules of debate will apply when considering the recommendations at 2.1 to 2.3 and amendments may be proposed and debated.
- 4.6 Since their publication, the council's Electoral Services and Information Software Support teams have reviewed the proposals to identify areas where technical amendments to the LGBCE's draft recommendations may be required. For example, where a ward boundary isolates individual properties from its community or bisects a known site for future development.

- 4.7 Three instances have been identified and are presented to Council for approval as part of the consultation submission. A summary of the proposals is detailed below and maps of the areas in question are attached at Appendix 2.

4.8 Chaddesden East and Chaddesden West: Highfield Lane

It is proposed that the boundary between Chaddesden West and Chaddesden East wards be altered to include the properties to the west of Highfield Lane (near the junction with Nottingham Road) in Chaddesden East ward, as shown in Appendix 2, Figure 1.

These properties face properties in Chaddesden East on the opposite side of Highfield Lane, with which they share a stronger community identity than the properties in Chaddesden West from which they are separated by commercial units and the nearby cemetery.

4.9 Boulton and Chellaston & Shelton Lock: near Fellow Lands Way

The boundary proposed by the LGBCE between Chellaston and Shelton Lock ward and Boulton ward includes a narrow strip of Chellaston & Shelton Lock ward which projects into Boulton ward. We propose a simpler boundary following field boundaries as shown at Appendix 2, Figure 2.

4.10 Abbey, Arboretum and Mackworth & New Zealand: Friar Gate Goods Yard

The Commission proposal divides the Friar Gate Goods Yard development area amongst three wards. Future development of the site will likely include a residential component and community identity would be enhanced by placing the area within a single ward.

We propose altering the boundaries as shown in Appendix 2, Figure 3, which places the development area entirely within Abbey ward. Abbey has below a below average electorate under the Commission's proposals so can accommodate additional electors.

An option was considered to include the area within Darley ward, but this was rejected due to the above average electorate forecast for Darley, and the large geographical size of the ward.

It was not considered feasible to include the ward in either Mackworth & New Zealand or Arboretum ward. The primary access to the development site is expected to be from the Uttoxeter New Road roundabout on the opposite side to Mackworth & New Zealand. The development is a considerable distance from the centre of Arboretum ward.

Next Steps

- 4.11 The consultation is due to conclude on 8 August 2022. Following an amendment to the previously stated timetable, the final recommendations are now expected to be published on 4 October 2022 and an order laid in Parliament shortly afterward. A whole Council election will be held on 4 May 2023, based on the new warding patterns.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 Councillors for the current wards affected by the recommendations detailed at paragraph 4.10 have been consulted and their feedback incorporated in the proposal. All councillors were notified of the publication of the LGBCE's draft recommendations and were briefed on the intended response to the consultation on 7 July 2022.
- 5.2 The Council's submission forms part of a wider public consultation being undertaken by the LGBCE which runs between 31 May and 8 August 2022.

Other options

- 6.1 To formulate an alternative warding pattern. This is not considered feasible in the timescale required to respond to the consultation and is unlikely to attract the support of a majority of councillors.
- 6.2 To not respond to the consultation.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 None directly arising.

Legal implications

- 8.1 The review is being undertaken in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The LGBCE was created under the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Climate implications

- 9.1 None directly arising.

Other significant implications

- 10.1 The outcome of the review will dramatically alter the political landscape of Derby, and will consequently have a significant impact on the future direction of Derby City Council. It is critical that the Council makes a submission to the LGBCE to ensure that its views and preferences are taken into account.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance		
Service Director(s)	Emily Feenan, Director of Legal, Procurement and Democratic Services	8 July 2022
Report sponsor	Simon Riley, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources	8 July 2022
Other(s)	James Hartshorn, Senior Electoral Services and Local Land Charges Officer	8 July 2022

Background papers:	Council – Local Government Boundary Review, council size submission, 22 September 2021 Council – Local Government Boundary Review, warding pattern submission, 28 February 2022
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - New electoral arrangements for Derby City Council Appendix 2 – Representations to the LGBCE regarding the draft warding scheme