

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT OF: Democratic Services Manager

TO: Civic Affairs Committee

15/2/2017

WARDS: All

CITY COUNCIL WARD BOUNDARIES

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The report updates the committee on the position regarding the electoral boundaries for the city council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note that one city ward (Trumpington) has met one criteria which would instigate a review by the Local Government Boundary Commission and request that the Chief Executive write to the Commission to seek clarification of the likely timing of a review
- 2.2 To receive an update at the September Committee alongside a review of the May 2017 County Council and Mayoral elections.

3. BACKGROUND

County Council Boundary Review

- 3.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) approved new County Council divisions in September 2016. For the administrative area of the city there are 12 city divisions. The city and county boundaries are therefore no longer co-terminous. Elsewhere on the agenda is a report on the required polling district review for the city divisions as a result of the changes. There are now some polling districts that have a very small number of electors.

City Council Boundaries

3.2 The LGBCE criteria for a boundary review are:

- if more than 30% of wards have an electoral imbalance of more than 10% from the electoral average ratio and/or
- one or more wards have an imbalance of more than 30%

and that the imbalance is unlikely to be corrected within a reasonable period. The fact that city boundaries are not co-terminous is not a factor for LGBCE. Many country areas have boundaries that are not co-terminous at district and county level.

The LGBCE calculate electoral equality by dividing the number of electors in a ward by the number of councillors elected to represent that ward to produce an 'electoral ratio'. High levels of electoral equality for a local authority will be a situation where a high proportion of wards across the authority have roughly the same electoral ratio and where no ward has a ratio which varies by a great degree from the average for the authority.

3.3 Cambridge has hit one of these criteria (December 2016 Register). Trumpington Ward has an electoral imbalance of 31%. Forecast housing growth in Trumpington Ward to 2020 is approx. 1,700 units to be completed. This is in addition to the approx. 1,200 housing units built so far. Four wards (Market, Newnham, Petersfield, Trumpington) have an electoral imbalance of more than 10% from the average for the authority. Note though that not all units will have registered (or registerable) electors.

The LGBCE reviews its work programme based on the figures it receives from all electoral registers (latest December 2016) and any updated data provided by Electoral Registrations Officers through the year. Cambridge City Council could be advised of a review therefore at any time. Whether we are a priority for a review will depend on the situation of other areas that may have higher electoral inequality.

3.4 The Council can request a review of its ward boundaries but LGBCE may or may not agree to this.

Numbers of Councillors

3.5 When the LGBCE reviews the city boundaries, the city council will need firstly to recommend to the Commission its preferred Council

size (ie the number of councillors). The Commission will take the city council's preferred Council size into consideration but is not bound by it and will come up with its own preferred Council size for consultation along with an invitation to submit warding proposals. This means that the Council's preferred number of councillors or boundaries may not be implemented and once the review starts the Council will have no control over this.

4. **IMPLICATIONS**

(a) **Financial Implications** – If the LGBCE decides that a review is to take place, it will advise the Council of its timescale. This would have resource implications which we do not currently have.

(b) **Staffing Implications** - see (a)

(c) **Equality and Poverty Implications**

(d) **Environmental Implications**

(e) **Procurement**

(f) **Consultation and communication**

The LGBCE undertakes a full consultation when it reviews an administrative area's boundaries.

(g) **Community Safety**

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: The following are the background papers that were used in the preparation of this report:

LGBCE technical guidance on boundary reviews

To inspect these documents contact Gary Clift on 01223 457011
www.lgbce.org.uk/policy-and-publications/guidance

Report file:

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