

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2024



<p>Title of Report</p>	<p>LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND - RESPONSE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND'S DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS</p>	
<p>Presented by</p>	<p>Councillor Keith Merrie Infrastructure Portfolio Holder</p>	
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>LGBCE technical guidance</p> <p>Council Report – Council Size Submission – 30 January 2024</p> <p>Council Report – Council's submission on the draft warding arrangements – 7 May 2024</p>	<p>Public Report: Yes</p>
<p>Financial Implications</p>	<p>There are no financial implications arising from the contents of this report. However, if the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) recommendations are approved, there will be a need to include an additional sum within Member allowances and other support budgets to reflect the increase in the number of Councillors from 38 to 39. This will be a cost pressure recognised in budget preparations for the financial year 2027/28.</p>	
	<p>Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes</p>	
<p>Legal Implications</p>	<p>The LGBCE has functions under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. It may at any time conduct a review of the area of the Council and recommend whether a change should be made to the electoral arrangements. The Council is required to co-operate with the Commission and must provide any information that it may reasonably require in connection with its functions (Section 56). The Council has provided information to the LGBCE as part of the first two stages of the review process.</p> <p>As part of the review, the Council and others may make submissions proposing electoral arrangements as part of the LGBCE process.</p> <p>Legal advice has been provided by the Legal Services Team throughout the process.</p>	
	<p>Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes</p>	

Staffing and Corporate Implications	There are no implications at this stage.
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes
Purpose of Report	To seek Council's approval to the proposed response to the draft recommendations of the LGBCE for the electoral arrangements for North West Leicestershire.
Recommendations	<p>THAT COUNCIL:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. APPROVES AND AGREES THE SUBMISSION OF THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE", ATTACHED AT APPENDIX B. 2. DELEGATES TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE SUBMISSION OF THE "NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND" TO THE LGBCE. 3. NOTES THAT PROPOSALS ON THE DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS MAY ALSO BE PROVIDED TO THE LGBCE BY ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, EXTERNAL BODY, GROUP OR ORGANISATION WISHING TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE CLOSE OF THE CONSULTATION ON 11 NOVEMBER 2024.

1.0 BACKGROUND

11. In 2022, the LGBCE informed the Chief Executive of the Council of its intention to carry out an Electoral Review of the council. The last electoral review of North West Leicestershire was undertaken in 2013.
- 1.2 The review process began in mid-2023. Any changes that are made regarding council size and ward boundaries will come into effect for the local government elections in May 2027.
- 1.3 In the first phase of the review, the size of the council was considered. On 30 January 2024, the council made a formal submission which supported the size of the council remaining at 38 councillors, with a preference for single-member wards. On 12 March 2024 the LGBCE made a determination that the council should remain at the same size, at 38 Councillors, and noted the preference for single-member wards where possible, taking the statutory criteria into account as set out at 2.1 below.
- 1.4 On 19 March 2024, the public consultation on future warding arrangements commenced. This consultation ran until the 27 May 2024 and following this LGBCE considered all the responses received and visited the district to formulate its draft recommendations. These were published on 3 September 2024 and a public consultation on the recommendations will run until the 11 November 2024. The draft recommendations can be found at appendix A. The council is a consultee in this process.

2.0 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 In considering the warding pattern for an authority, the LGBCE has regard to the statutory criteria set down in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. These are:
- the need to secure equality of representation (taking future growth into account);
 - the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
 - the need to secure effective and convenient local government.
- 2.2 As the LGBCE developed its draft recommendations for North West Leicestershire, it found that a 39-councillor warding pattern, allocating an extra councillor to Ashby de la Zouch, would allow a recommendation of a uniform pattern of single-councillor wards that would better reflect its statutory criteria than a 38-councillor pattern. Therefore, the draft recommendations are based on a 39-member council. This approach is consistent with the LGBCE's guidance where it explains that it may be necessary to make a small alteration to council size to achieve a better balance of the statutory criteria.
- 2.3 The draft recommendations propose changes to most ward boundaries, with two remaining the same.
- 2.4 The Electoral Review Working Party (ERWRP) met on 13 September 2024 to consider the draft recommendations and consider the approach for all members to input into the response. It was agreed that all members be invited to submit any comments to officers for inclusion and these would be considered by the working party before consideration by Council.
- 2.5 The ERWP met again on 11 October 2024 to consider the draft response, including comments received from a number of Members, to provide any further comments for inclusion in the response and agreed the document for Council's consideration.
- 2.6 The final response, agreed by the ERWP for consideration, is attached at appendix B.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The LGBCE will consider all the representations and submissions received before the closing date of 11 November 2024 and will formulate its final recommendations on the warding proposals.
- 3.2 The LGBCE will then finalise and publish the new wards in early 2025, with the order then being laid before Parliament in Spring 2025.
- 3.3 New wards are scheduled to come into effect at the 2027 District and Parish elections.

Council Priorities:	A well-run council
Policy Considerations:	The LGBCE is a parliamentary body established by statute to conduct boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government areas in England.
Safeguarding:	There are none at this stage.
Equalities/Diversity:	There are none at this stage.
Customer Impact:	The Commission will work to achieve electoral equality and will consider representations made to it by other public authorities, community groups, residents associations, electors, political and other stakeholders during later stages. There will be an impact to those communities where wards will need to change so that electoral equality can be achieved.
Economic and Social Impact:	There are none at this stage.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	There are none at this stage
Consultation/Community Engagement:	The LGBCE is responsible for running any consultations during the review.
Risks:	If the council does not submit proposals on the warding arrangements, the LGBCE will take any other representations into account in formulating the final electoral arrangements.
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