

Meeting: Council

Date: 20 July 2017

Wards Affected: All Wards

Report Title: Review of Electoral Arrangements – Submission by Torbay Council on Warding Patterns

Is the decision a key decision? Yes

When does the decision need to be implemented? as soon as possible

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1. Proposal and Introduction

- 1.1 Further to Council Minute 161/2/17, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has commenced their formal review of the number of Councillors and is currently consulting on proposed warding patterns based on an indicative number of Councillors for Torbay of 36, ensuring where possible that there is an equal number of electors per Councillor across Torbay.
- 1.2 This report sets out the proposed Council response in respect of the new warding patterns for Torbay from 2019.

2. Reason for Proposal

- 2.1 The Council has an opportunity to influence the review and put forward its suggested proposals on warding patterns to the LGBCE.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 That the Proposed Changes to Warding Patterns – Submission by Torbay Council set out in Appendices 1 and 5 to the submitted report be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.
- 3.2 That the Assistant Director Corporate and Business Services be requested redraw the 15 Ward maps using GIS to show the changes to the warding patterns reflected in Appendices 1 and 5 to the submitted report.

- 3.3 That the Assistant Director Corporate and Business Services be authorised to make any technical amendments to address any anomalies identified when redrawing the Ward maps.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Review of Electoral Arrangements - Proposed Changes to Warding Patterns – Submission by Torbay Council
Appendix 2: Detailed breakdown of proposed changes to Warding Patterns
Appendix 3 Map 1
Appendix 4 Map 2
Appendix 5 Map 3
Appendix 6: Feedback on Warding Patterns

Background Documents

Council report on Review of Electoral Arrangements – Submission by Torbay Council on Council Size -

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=163&MId=6622&Ver=4>

LGBCE Review - <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/devon/torbay>

4. Background Information

- 4.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has commenced its formal public consultation on warding patterns for Torbay based on a proposed number of 36 Councillors. Full details of which can be found at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-west/devon/torbay>
- 4.2 Torbay Council currently has 36 Councillors and an Elected Mayor up until 2019, the Council will be moving to a Leader and Cabinet system of governance. The Council reviewed the number of Councillors it felt necessary to enable the Council to manage its business and for Councillors to perform the tasks and responsibilities expected of them and run the Council from 2019 in February 2017 and submitted a proposal to the LGBCE for it to remain at 36. The 36 Councillors represent 15 Wards with either two or three Councillors representing electors within these Wards.
- 4.3 This has been accepted in principle by the LGBCE and they are now consulting on how Torbay should be split into Wards to ensure that the statutory criteria for the determination of electoral reviews may best be satisfied.
- 4.4 Meetings were held with Ward Councillors, Torbay Community Development Trust and the Chairman of the Community Partnerships with a view to receiving feedback

in respect of where communities lie and where suitable changes could be made. Members also emailed their feedback which has all been collated and included at Appendix 6. All feedback has been reviewed and where possible the changes have been included in the proposed response.

- 4.5 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is conducting formal consultation with the public and key stakeholders.
- 4.6 The approach used by the Council has been to take a strategic view across the whole of Torbay to ensure as close as possible that there is electoral equality of around 2,800 electors per Councillor. Detailed rationale for each Ward and proposed changes are set out in Appendices 1 to 5. Population statistics and electoral registration statistics, together with information from the adopted Torbay Local Plan and intelligence from the Planning Department have been used to evaluate projected population and electorate figures for 2023, which is the data used to calculate the average number of electors per Councillor. The forecasts and the forecasting methodology have been submitted to and agreed by the LGBCE. These agreed numbers will then be used throughout the remainder of the review process.
- 4.7 It is acknowledged that some Ward Councillors may not be happy with the proposed changes and members of the public may be confused with the proposed changes. However the final decision lies with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England who has been issuing press releases and communications throughout the process. These have also been published through the Council's communication channels.