



Review of Electoral Arrangements – Proposed Changes to Warding Patterns – Submission by Torbay Council

1. Introduction

This submission sets out a response from Torbay Council to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) invitation to put forward a recommendation on future Warding patterns for Torbay.

The review has been triggered because of electoral imbalances of the number of electors per Councillor across some of the Wards in Torbay. For example the Shipway with the Willows Ward has 30% more electors per Councillor than the average. The Council recognises the importance of electoral equality to a fair democratic process by ensuring that each vote carries the same value, whilst at the same time it must ensure that the governance of the Council is maintained at a level which can best serve the electorate.

It is recognised that the nature of such a submission will be unlikely to receive unanimous support from all Councillors. This submission has been developed by Officers, having listened objectively to representations made by Councillors, together with consideration of the LGBCE's technical guidance. The contents of the submission has been shared with with the Mayor and Group Leaders' Group, consisting of the elected Mayor, the Council's three Group Leaders and the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator. The Group Leaders have also carried out consultation on the proposals with their respective group members. Meetings were offered to all Ward Councillors, the Torbay Community Development Trust and the Chairman of the Community Partnerships to receive feedback on where they believe that communities lie and where suitable changes to boundaries could be made. All this feedback has been evaluated and where possible suggestions included in the proposals. The Council's recommendation on Warding patterns was approved by full Council).

2. Overview of Warding Pattern Submission

The Council's submission addresses the three broad areas contained within the LGBCE's technical guidance on how to propose a pattern of wards.

- **“Delivering electoral equality for voters** – this means ensuring that each local councillor represents roughly the same number of people so that the value of your vote is the same regardless of where you live in the local authority area.
- **Reflecting the interests and identities of local communities** – this means establishing electoral arrangements which, as far as possible, maintain local ties and where boundaries are easily identifiable.
- **Promoting effective and convenient local government** – this means ensuring that the new wards or electoral divisions can be represented effectively by their elected representative(s) and that the new electoral arrangements as a whole allow

the local authority to conduct its business effectively. In addition, we must also ensure that the pattern of wards reflects the electoral cycle of the Council as shown below.”

Note: for Torbay the electoral cycle is all out elections every four years.

The last review of electoral arrangements in Torbay was in 2001/2002, when the number of Councillors was retained at 36, spread over 15 Wards. It is proposed that the number of Wards and Councillors is retained at the current level of 15 Wards and 36 Councillors. As set out in its Council Size Submission (see <http://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=163&MId=6622&Ver=4>)

Based on the 1 December 2016 electoral register, the current Local Government elector to Councillor ratio is 2,767. The electorate forecasts developed as part of this exercise suggest that by 2023 the ratio for the Council's recommended number of Councillors will be an average of 2,836 electors per Councillor.

Summary of the Council's submission

The approach adopted when considering Warding Patterns size has been to follow the LGBCE's guiding principles and address them both in terms of current arrangements and likely future trends and plans. This has taken into account the change in Governance arrangements that will occur in 2019.

After considering all of the relevant factors, the Council's recommendation is that its current level of 36 elected Members should be retained across 15 Wards with the changes attached at Appendix 1 to this report. The LGBCE has already declared that it is minded to recommend 36 Councillors.

An overall strategic approach has been adopted to ensure as close as possible there is electoral equality across the whole of Torbay based on anticipated number of electors as at 2023. This document sets out the overall submission of Torbay Council, however, it is understood that individual Councillors and political groups may have their own views and they have been encouraged to submit them direct to the LGBCE for their consideration as part of the consultation process.

Justification of Proposed Changes

It has not been possible to achieve exact electoral equality across the Wards as this would result in the unnecessary splitting of communities. Ten out of the fifteen Wards have 4% or less variance based on projected electorate figures the remaining five Wards being within 5% variance. The number of registered electors in Torbay has fluctuated greatly over the past few years and there are many properties with no registered electors although they are occupied which skews the figures.

Torbay Council feels that the benefits of achieving exact electoral equality of 2,872 electors per Councillor does not outweigh the negative impact it will have on communities if more streets are changed into different Wards and established communities are split.

Current Name of Ward	Proposed Name of Ward	Reasons for Composition of Ward
Berry Head with Furzeham	Berry Head	<p>It is proposed to move the whole of Polling District JF to GE Churston with Galmpton which comprises the Furzeham area of Brixham. This is because this community has close links to the Churston with Galmpton Ward and has previously been included within the same Ward. The removal of these electors enables the Berry Head Ward to become a sustainable two Councillor Ward as there are currently too few electors in this Ward to sustain it as a three Councillor Ward (see green line on Map 1).</p> <p>It is also proposed to move the following 177 properties, 320 electors from JD to JF Polling District which will also become part of the GE Churston with Galmpton Ward to enable greater electoral equality within these two Wards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churston Way • Copythorne Close • Copythorne Road • Higher Copythorne • Higher Rydons • Rydons • Wayside • Wayside Close <p>Move 21 Burton Street from JC to SD St Marys with Summercombe as the rest of the street is in that Ward.</p> <p>The name of the Ward would then be changed to Berry Head to reflect the removal of the Furzeham area from this Ward. The area moved from the Berry Head Ward could be called Furzeham Ward in terms of the name of the Parish/Town Council District as this is the main community covered by this area.</p>

Current Name of Ward	Proposed Name of Ward	Reasons for Composition of Ward
		<p>Advice from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is that these changes will not impact on Brixham Town Council or their precept.</p> <p>Also see comments from St Marys with Summercombe.</p>
Blatchcombe	Paignton West	<p>It is proposed to move all the roads to the south side of Long Road into the Churston with Galmpton Ward. This is mainly made up of new developments which have formed their own community and Long Road creates a natural boundary for this Ward which currently runs adjacent to the GC polling district (approximately 500 electors). The main road acts as a barrier to community interaction between those on the north and those on the south side of Long Road.</p> <p>Due to the high level of development in this area the Paignton West Ward has too many electors per Councillor and by making these changes it enables more balanced representation. It also makes the Churston with Galmpton a viable three Councillor Ward following the addition of JF into that Ward (see green line on Map 2).</p> <p>Move 21 properties, 31 electors on Brixham Road at Tweenaway (Orchard End and 10-48 Brixham Road) from AE to IA Goodrington with Roselands as these properties are currently on the opposite side of the community they live in. This will impact on the Parliamentary Boundary for Torbay/Totnes but the Council will write to these people to explain the situation and offer a postal vote until the Parliamentary Boundaries are changed.</p> <p>See comments in Clifton with Maidenway below.</p> <p>It is proposed to change the name of the Ward to Paignton West as Paignton West does not mean anything to the communities in the Ward. There are several communities in this Ward (e.g. Foxhole,</p>

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		Tweenaway, Collaton St Mary etc.) so there would be too many to include community names within the name of the Ward. Paignton West accurately describes the area covered by this Ward.
Churston with Galmpton	Churston with Galmpton	See comment in Berry Head and Paignton West above.
Clifton with Maidenway	Clifton with Maidenway	<p>Only minor changes are proposed to this ward to address properties that have previously been included within the incorrect ward. It is felt that the communities within this Ward have the correct fit.</p> <p>It is proposed to move 90, 92, 93, 94 and 95 Dolphin Court, Dolphin Crescent from CC Clifton with Maidenway to FC Preston as the rest of Dolphin Crescent is part of that Ward.</p> <p>Move 154 and 156 Marldon Road from CC to AA Paignton West as the rest of the road is in this Ward. This will impact on the Parliamentary Boundary for Torbay/Totnes but the Council will write to these people to explain the situation and offer a postal vote until the Parliamentary Boundaries are changed.</p> <p>Move 133, 140 Waterleat Avenue and The Ridings, Waterleat Road, three properties, five electors from CD to AD Paignton West as the rest of the road is in this Ward. This will impact on the Parliamentary Boundary for Torbay/Totnes but the Council will write to these people to explain the situation and offer a postal vote until the Parliamentary Boundaries are changed.</p> <p>See comments in Roundham with Hyde below.</p>
Cockington with Chelston	Cockington with Chelston	It is proposed to move the boundary of Avenue Road to run along the railway line up until Chestnut Avenue and move these electors into the Torquay Town Centre Ward as it does not have sufficient electors (approximately 113 electors).

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		<p>There are only minor proposed changes to this Ward to ensure electoral equality and it is felt that the communities of Cockington, Chelston and Livermead are accurately reflected within this Ward.</p>
Ellacombe	Torquay Town	<p>See comments from Cockington with Chelston above and Ellacombe with Torwood below.</p> <p>This is one of the main areas of proposed change. It is proposed to create a new Torquay Town Ward which is made up of:</p> <p>The whole of polling district DA Ellacombe (approximately 1482 electors).</p> <p>The following streets from DC Ellacombe (approximately 541 electors) (see green line on Map 3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hatfield Road • Henbury Close • Bronshill Road • Lords Place • Netherleigh Road • Windsor Road (2-70A and 1-89) <p>The whole of polling districts LA and LB Tormohun (approximately 1759 and 1427 electors respectively).</p> <p>This is because these communities have more in connection with Torquay Town Centre than the current Ellacombe and Tormohun/Torre areas. Residents in this area are more likely to interact in their day to day lives with the Town centre area.</p>

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		<p>It is proposed that this will become a new two Councillor Ward who will represent the central area of Torquay and will help to bring together the communities surrounding Torquay Town Centre (approximately 1964 electors).</p> <p>The whole of Polling District DB and the remaining streets from DC Ellacombe will be moved to the new Ellacombe with Torwood Ward as these electors and communities relate more to this part of Torquay than the Town Centre. These residents are more likely to shop and interact within the current Wellswood Ward (approximately 1017 electors).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Saints Road • Cary Park Road • Hingston Road • Belmont Road • Carlton Road • Dunmere Road • Kenwyn Road • Windsor Road (72-114 and 91-137) • Windsor Close • Woodville Road • Windermere Road • Mount Hermon Road • Warbro Road (nos 91 to 161)
Goodrington with Roselands	Goodrington with Roselands	<p>It is proposed to move the following properties from IC Goodrington with Roselands to RD Roundham with Hyde as they form part of the St Michaels Community which falls within that Ward (approximately 140 electors):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batson Gardens (33-36 and The Store)

Current Name of Ward	Proposed Name of Ward	Reasons for Composition of Ward
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elmsleigh Road • Fisher Street 1-7 Christine Court, 21, 23, 28, 30 and 32 <p>This proposal assists with the electoral equality within this Ward and ensures that the remaining communities are kept together within the same Ward.</p> <p>See comments in Paignton West above.</p>
Preston	Preston	See comments in Clifton with Maidenway above.
Roundham with Hyde	Coverdale	<p>See comments in Goodrington with Roselands above.</p> <p>Only minor changes are proposed to this ward to address properties that have previously been included within the incorrect ward. It is felt that the communities within this Ward have the correct fit.</p> <p>It is proposed to move the following properties from RD to CD Clifton with Maidenway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1A, 3, 5, 22, 22A and 22B Winner Hill Road <p>It is proposed to move the following properties from RD to CB Clifton with Maidenway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torbay View, Colley End Park <p>It is proposed to change the name of this Ward back to the Coverdale Ward as this more accurately describes the area covered by this Ward. It was previously called Coverdale Ward.</p>

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Shiphay with the Willows	Shiphay with the Willows	<p>It is proposed to move the whole of polling district TA (excluding Hele Road which will move to Hele with Torre as the rest of this community is in that Ward) to Barton with Watcombe as the Shiphay with the Willows Ward is too large to sustain a two Councillor Ward. The Willows community is split into two distinct areas and this part of the Ward has more close links with the Barton community and use the lane by Bottom Park Lane to access the buses, pub and shops on Barton Hill Road.</p> <p>This is the area from Nightingale Park on Browns Bridge Road, including the developments off Cassiobury Way, Ascension Way, Barton Hill Way and the new development off Beechfield Avenue (e.g. Willowfield Road and Orchid Way) up to and including Barton Hill Road and the roads off of Barton Hill Road on the east side.</p> <p>Residents of the new Beechfield development site feel more connection to the Barton area than the Willows and also use the shops on Barton Hill Road.</p> <p>The communities within the rest of the Ward reflect the existing communities of the Willows and Shiphay.</p> <p>This change means that this can remain a sustainable two Councillor Ward taking into account the current and future development at the Willows and Edginswell.</p>
St Marychurch	St Marychurch	<p>There are no proposed changes to this Ward as it already has electoral equality and it is felt that the communities of St Marychurch, Babbacombe, Maidencombe and Plainmoor are accurately reflected within this Ward. This Ward also retains the whole of the coastline for this area.</p>

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St Marys with Summercombe	St Marys with Summercombe	<p>Only minor changes are proposed to this ward to address properties that have previously been included within the incorrect ward. It is felt that the communities within this Ward have the correct fit (e.g. St Marys and Higher Brixham).</p> <p>It is proposed to move the following properties from SC to JB Berry Head as the rest of the street is in this Ward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Odd numbers 17 to 27 Rea Barn Road (approximately 16 electors)
Tormohun	Hele with Torre	<p>See comments in Torquay Town and Shiphay with the Willows above and Barton with Watcombe below.</p> <p>It is proposed to move the line of the boundary in LD to the other side of The Hollow Main Avenue as this is in HC St Marychurch on the electoral register.</p> <p>The whole of polling districts LC (excluding 45 to 159A Lymington Road and the whole of Sunbury Hill which will move to LB Torquay Town), LD and LE to become part of the new Hele with Torre Ward as this more realistically reflects the communities in this area.</p> <p>The minor change to LC will help to ensure electoral equality across the Hele with Torre and Torquay Town Wards.</p> <p>The current Tormohun Ward almost stretches from one side of Torquay to the other and covers many different communities and has therefore been split.</p>
Watcombe	Barton with Watcombe	<p>See comments in Shiphay with the Willows above.</p> <p>It is proposed to move the whole of Polling District WD to LE Hele with</p>

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		<p>Torre area of Torquay as this area fits more closely with this community.</p> <p>This will also help to maintain electoral equality for this two Councillor Ward.</p>
Wellswood	Ellacombe with Torwood	<p>See comments in Ellacombe and Hele with Torre above.</p> <p>It is proposed the change the name of the Ward to Ellacombe with Torwood to reflect the combination of the Wellswood and Ellacombe Wards and that the area is also known as Torwood.</p> <p>The addition of this part of the current Ellacombe Ward will enable this to become a sustainable three Councillor Ward.</p> <p>It is proposed to move the following properties from MC/MD to LA Torquay Town as this area is part of the Strand and has more community links with the Torquay Town Ward than the Ellacombe with Wellswood Ward (407 electors):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Terrace • Montpellier Road • Torwood Street • Parkhill Road • Trinity Hill <p>This changes also helps to create greater electoral equality between these two Wards.</p>