

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Council 17 December 2015

Subject: **ELECTORAL REVIEW OF HAMPSHIRE DIVISIONS: DRAFT
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Report of: **Chief Executive Officer**

SUMMARY

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is carrying out a review of Hampshire County Council electoral division boundaries to deliver electoral equality across the county. Following a submission by the Council during the initial consultation period, the Commission has now published a draft recommendations report. Any new comments regarding the proposals must be made by 11 January 2016.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council notes the draft recommendations report on the review of Hampshire County Council electoral division boundaries.

INTRODUCTION

1. On 24 August 2014, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) advised Hampshire County Council that a review under Section 56(2) of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 would be undertaken as it is considered significant electoral inequality exists. The aim is to seek to correct imbalances which occur where some county councillors represent many more, or many fewer, electors than their colleagues across the county.
2. The consultation period began on 26 May 2015 and members will recall that a report detailing a formal response from Fareham Borough Council was approved at the meeting held on 30 July 2015.
3. The LGBCE has now published its draft recommendations for Hampshire County Council divisions and invites any new comments to be submitted by 11 January 2016. Final recommendations will be published on 5 April 2016 and it is intended that the new electoral arrangements will come into effect in time for the County elections in 2017.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

4. The LGBCE has considered all representations made during the consultation period and makes the following comments that are relevant to Fareham:

Summary of Electoral Arrangements

	2014	2021
Number of councillors	78	78
Number of electoral divisions	75	75
Average number of electors per councillor	13080	13846
Number of divisions with a variance more than 10% from average	21	0
Number of divisions with a variance more than 20% from the average	3	0
Draft recommendation: Hampshire County Council should comprise 78 councillors serving 72 single-member divisions and three two-member divisions.		

A table showing draft recommendations for each district is shown on the following pages.

Division name	Number of Cllrs	Variance 2021	Description	Detail
Fareham Crofton	1	-4%	This division comprises the Hill Head and Stubbington areas which are located on the coast of the Solent. It also comprises a small area of Fareham Town.	We received two submissions that proposed a Fareham Crofton division with an electoral variance of 16% fewer electors per councillor. We consider this to be an unacceptably high electoral variance. To reduce this variance we have included electors situated between Bishopsford Road, Longfield Avenue, Peak Lane and The Avenue from Fareham Town division. While electors in this area are nearly two miles from the centre of Stubbington, we consider this division will ensure good electoral equality while still reflecting local communities.
Fareham Portchester	1	2%	This division comprises the suburb of Portchester which is located between the M27 and Portsmouth Harbour.	This division is largely based on the county-wide proposals received for Fareham Borough. It was argued that The Ridgeway and adjoining roads should be included in Fareham Town division as these roads share closer links with Fareham. We do not consider this to be a suitable arrangement and propose The Ridgeway and adjoining roads remain in Fareham Portchester division. This would better reflect the Portchester community which is separated from Fareham by the A27 dual carriageway. Fareham Portchester reflects the statutory criteria and therefore forms part of our draft recommendations.
Fareham Sarisbury	1	-3%	This division comprises the Burridge, Sarisbury and Swanwick areas. The division borders the River Hamble to the west.	This division is based on identical county-wide and borough-wide proposals received for Fareham Borough. Fareham Sarisbury division is identical to the existing arrangements in this area.

Fareham Titchfield	1	-6%	This division comprises the Catisfield, Heathfield and Titchfield areas and part of Locks Heath.	This division is largely based on borough-wide proposals for Fareham Borough. We consider that using the railway line instead of Blackbrook Road in the north-east of the division provides for a clearer boundary and better reflects communities. We also propose using part of The Avenue as it also provides for a clearer boundary in this area. Fareham Titchfield division will have good electoral equality by 2021 and forms parts of our draft recommendations.
Fareham Town	2	-8%	This division comprises Fareham Town which is located at the north-west tip of Portsmouth Harbour.	This division is largely based on county-wide proposals received for Fareham Borough. We also received borough-wide proposals which divided the centre of Fareham into two single-member divisions. However, this would require accepting changes in the adjoining Fareham Portchester division which we have not adopted as they do not use clear division boundaries or reflect local communities. We consider this two-member division reflects communities in this part of the borough and provides for reasonably good electoral equality.
Fareham Warsash	1	-1%	This division comprises the Warsash area which is located at the mouth of the River Hamble and Titchfield Common to the east.	This division is based on identical county-wide and borough-wide proposals received for Fareham Borough. Fareham Warsash division is identical to the existing arrangements in this area, and the proposals received all supported the retention of the existing arrangements. This division also reflects our statutory criteria.

RISK ASSESSMENT

5. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

6. The Commission has stated that it has an open mind about the draft recommendations but any suggestions regarding the proposed pattern of divisions will be considered using the same criteria as the initial consultation:
 - Electoral equality, each local councillor representing a similar number of voters
 - Community identity; reflects the identity and interests of local communities
 - Effective and convenient local government; helping your council discharge its responsibilities effectively.
7. Having considered the draft recommendations for Fareham, it is considered that all points for consideration were submitted in the initial representation and no further comments are necessary.

Background Papers:

None

Reference Papers:

Details of the review are available at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/hampshire/hampshire-county-council>

<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/5188>

Interactive maps of the current division boundaries across the county. There is a facility to draw boundaries and upload documents to the site.

Electoral reviews, technical guidance www.lgbce.org.uk/guidance-policy-and-publications/guidance

Draft recommendations report

http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/26862/Hampshire-draft-recommendations-2015-11-17-FINAL.pdf

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