

**To the Chair and Members of the
ELECTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES COMMITTEE**

ELECTORAL REVIEW UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 This report provides an update on the current review being undertaken by the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC).

RECOMMENDATION

2. Members are asked to note the content of the report.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER

3. The outcome of the Boundary Review will lead to a reduction in the number of Councillors and it is likely that there will be changes to Ward Boundaries.

BACKGROUND

4. At its meeting on 25th Council proposed a Council size of 54 Councillors plus the Elected Mayor to carry out these functions. This represents a reduction of 9 Councillors.
5. The Boundary Commissioners met on 13th August to consider the initial proposals it had received for council size from the Council, the Intervention Commissioners and the former elected Mayor, Peter Davies. The Commission recognised that the Council's case for 54 Councillors was well made. However, it needed to be "convinced about the Council's proposal for an additional Scrutiny Committee and the need to involve such a high proportion of Councillors in that function".
6. The Intervention Commissioners had made a proposal of a Council size of between 43 and 48. The Commission found the case for such a reduction to be persuasive and concluded that the Council could operate effectively with a Council size of 48. The Commission was not persuaded by the proposal from the former elected Mayor Peter Davies that the Council could operate with 21 Councillors.
7. On 3 September 2013, the LGBC reached a "*minded to*" decision that the Council could operate effectively with 54 or 48 Councillors and commenced a 6 week period of public consultation that ended on 14th October.
8. In light of the observations made by the LGBC in respect of the Council submission approved by Council on 25 July, the cross-party member working group met to provide additional information to support the earlier submission during the consultation period; this included proposals developed by the cross party member working group establish at Council on 25 July to review and refresh the delivery of the Overview and Scrutiny function having regard to best practise. The LGBC indicated that it would accept representations that had broad cross party support. This was helpful to the Council as it avoided the need to convene an additional Council meeting to approve the Council submission.

Next Steps

9. The outcome of this consultation is expected to be formally announced on 26th November when the LGBC will make known the intended number of Councillors that the Council will have from the all-out Borough Council elections in 2015. This information will be reported orally at the meeting.
10. After the LGBC publish its proposal on the total number of councillors it will then begin to gather information to help draw up new ward boundaries. The Commission aims to publish its draft recommendations for a new pattern of wards for Doncaster in May 2014 when it will consult local people again. Final recommendations are due to be published in October 2014 and the new electoral arrangements would come into effect for the council elections in 2015. The review timetable on the LGBC website for Doncaster gives the following information.

Date	Activity
26 November 2013 – 3 February 2014	Consultation on new ward boundaries
13 May 2014- 28 July 2014	Consultation on draft recommendations
14 October 2014	Final recommendations published

OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REASON FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

11. This report is for noting only so there are no other options to consider.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY PRIORITIES

12. None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 consolidated the electoral review provisions previously contained in the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The process for the review is summarised in the guidance published by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England which is available on both the Commission's and the Council's website. The terms of reference for this committee include the making of recommendations to Full Council in respect of electoral reviews.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The cost of the electoral review is met by the Council. The costs to date are limited to officer time and the hosting of material on the Council's website. Some publicity to encourage participation by the public and others at key stages will be required

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

15. The Review is being carried out by the LGBC who as a public body is required to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

CONSULTATION

16. The LGBC encourage comments on their proposals from all who live in the Borough.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

17. Report to the Elections and Democratic Structures Committee - 9 July 2013

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