



COUNCIL: 21 JULY 2021

Report of: Chief Operating Officer

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor I Moran

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SUBJECT: WEST LANCASHIRE ELECTORAL REVIEW – WARD BOUNDARY OFFICER PROPOSALS

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform Council of the current phase of the Electoral Review of West Lancashire and that a Ward Boundary Officer Proposal will be made.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Ward Boundary Officer Proposals, attached at Appendix A-C to the Report, be noted.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 West Lancashire Borough Council last underwent an Electoral Boundary Review in 1999/2000 as part of the Local Government Commission for England's programme of Periodic Electoral Reviews (PERs). The Local Government Commission for England has been superseded by the LGBCE. The 1999/2000 review resulted in a reduction in Wards and Councillors from 26 to 25 and 55 to 54 respectively.

3.2 An electoral review considers:

- the total number of councillors elected to the local authority;

- the number and boundaries of wards for the purposes of the election of councillors and;
- the name of any ward.

3.3 In February 2021 Council and political groups submitted their Council Size proposals to the LGBCE.

3.4 The LGBCE determined that it was minded for West Lancashire to be served by 45 Councillors across 15 Three Member Wards elected by Thirds.

4.0 ELECTORAL REVIEW – WARD BOUNDARY PROPOSALS

4.1 On 25 May 2021 the LGBCE began a public consultation, inviting Ward Boundary Proposals from stakeholders across West Lancashire. This consultation will run until 2 August 2021.

4.2 Political Groups on the Council have been offered assistance in drafting their proposals.

4.3 The LGBCE looks at Electoral Equality, Community Identity and Effective & Convenient Local Government in considering proposals.

4.3 As a stakeholder, 3 proposals (Appendix A-C) have been drafted by Officers and will be submitted to the LGBCE.

4.4 The proposals have been drafted based on the LGBCE's criteria. Proposal 1 (Appendix A) is based on 15 Three Member Wards, however Proposal 2 (Appendix B) and 3 (Appendix C) consist of a mix of Three and Two Member Wards. This is consistent with the LGBCE's Technical Guidance (P.22 S.4.50) which states "that whilst the electoral cycle must be considered, in all cases this consideration will not take precedence over other statutory criteria, and a uniform pattern in the number of councillors per ward will not be recommended if, in their view or as is shown in evidence provided, it results in unacceptable levels of electoral inequality, does not reflect communities or hinders the provision of effective and convenient local government".

5.0 CONSIDERATION BY THE LGBCE

5.1 The LGBCE will consider all submissions made during this phase of the Review and produce its Draft Recommendations on Ward Boundaries.

5.2 These Draft Recommendations will be put to public consultation between 2 November 2021 and the 10 January 2022.

5.3 The LGBCE will then consider any comments submitted before producing Final Recommendations which will be provisionally published on 29 March 2022. This is the end of the Review and no further changes will be made to the proposed boundaries.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Any financial and resource implications arising from conducting the review are being met from existing budgets.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers. The proposal has been produced in accordance with the Technical Guidance of the LGBCE.

9.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and or stakeholders. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is required. A formal Equality Impact Assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report, the results of which have been taken into account in the Recommendations contained within this report.

Appendices

- A: West Lancashire Officer Proposal 1
- B: West Lancashire Officer Proposal 2
- C: West Lancashire Officer Proposal 3
- D: Equality Impact Assessment