

County Council

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	19 July 2018
Officer	Debbie Ward - Chief Executive
Subject of Report	Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Dorset Council Review
Executive Summary	<p>As part of Local Government Reorganisation preparations and the work to establish a new council for the Dorset area the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) initially led a boundary review with the aim of achieving new electoral boundaries following an election on 2 May 2019. Electoral arrangements decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many councillors are needed. • How many wards there should be. • Where their boundaries are and what they should be called. • How many councillors should represent each ward. <p>MHCLG led the start of the review in anticipation of the agreement of the Structural Change Order (SCO) to create two new unitary councils for Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) took over the review when the SCO came into force on 25 May 2018.</p> <p>A Task and Finish Group was established by the Dorset Area Joint Committee on 15 November 2017 to oversee and co-ordinate the review. The membership of the Task and Finish Group was drawn from the existing Dorset area councils, and the review work was supported by district and county council officers.</p> <p>The first phase of the review considered the forecasting of the electorate across the Dorset area for the five years to 2023, that there should be 82 councillors, and a fall-back position if the review was unable to be completed in time for the establishment of the new council. The decision about council size enabled detailed work to be undertaken in the second stage of the review to divide the new council area into new wards. It also then takes account of the need both to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors represent equal numbers of electors (or within +/- 10% of the average electorate)

- That wards reflect a sense of community identity, and
- Provide for effective and convenient local government.

The [submission](#) was agreed by the Joint Committee at its meeting on 18 January 2018 and it was submitted to MHCLG on 31 January 2018.

The second phase of the review included thorough engagement with 92 of the 174 existing councillors to form the proposed wards of the new Dorset Council. The development of the proposed wards has followed clear criteria and listened to all local member comments in arriving at a final proposal. Views from members which were not incorporated into the final proposal, because they are not compliant with the guidance, were also made available as part of background information for the submission so that there was a full picture of the engagement. The Dorset Area Joint Committee considered the [second submission](#) on warding arrangements at its meeting on 15 May 2018, and it was submitted to MHCLG on 16 May 2018.

LGBCE started public consultation on its draft recommendations on 3 July 2018 for eight weeks until 27 August 2018. At the end of the consultation all responses and submissions will be analysed before final recommendations are formed and published on 23 October 2018.

Each of the Dorset area councils have been encouraged to consider and support the draft recommendations within the consultation, which mirrors closely the second submission. It is important that all feedback, whether positive or negative, is received in order for LGBCE to determine the strength of views expressed. The consultation document is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

The report asks Council to support the draft recommendations within the consultation, but would also ask the response to highlight in terms of access to convenient local government, the importance of consistent administrative and statistical boundaries. This review provides the opportunity for the wider statistical boundaries detailed at Appendix 2 to be applied, which align with current Clinical Commissioning Group and health boundaries and could therefore make it easier to work with health partners in the future with an area based focus.

This review will require engagement with Town and Parish Councils who have been notified of the consultation as key stakeholders by the LGBCE directly. Through separate local engagement, members will get the opportunity to feed into the local council responses. In addition, individual representations to the consultations can be made through the consultation portal at consultation.lgbce.org.uk, by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to the commission.

<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p><u>Equalities Impact Assessment:</u> No equalities impact assessment has been completed for this report as it does not contain a new strategy, policy or function.</p> <p>However, the outcome of the electoral review has the aim of ensuring electoral equality across electoral wards for the new Dorset Council. This equality, and its impact, is at the heart of the review of the Boundary Commission.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Use of Evidence:</u> All evidence relied upon in this report is drawn from the work of the Governance Task and Finish Group, Dorset Area Joint Committee, and the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. The information is supported by a robust member-led approach.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Budget:</u> There are no specific budget implications with this report.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Risk Assessment:</u> Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council’s approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW</p> <hr/> <p><u>Other Implications:</u> Other issues to be aware of through the wider consideration of the review are that the outcome should positively impact on communities and the economy in Dorset to provide equality of opportunities and electoral representation.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the County Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Support the recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commission for the electoral arrangements for Dorset Council from 2 May 2019, subject to the inclusion of Appendix 2 in the response. (2) Provide any feedback to be considered by as part of the review, specifically in relation to the impact on services and communities currently served by Dorset County Council. (3) Note that individual representations to the consultations can be made through the consultation portal at consultation.lgbce.org.uk, by emailing reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by writing to the commission.
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>To actively contribute to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England review of electoral arrangements for the new Dorset Council from 2 May 2019.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Consultation Document from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England. Appendix 2 – Wider Statistical Boundary Map.</p>

Background Papers	<p>Dorset Area Joint Committee – 18 January 2018: Dorset Area – Council Size Submission and subsequent Dorset Area Submission – Correction Sheet. (Submitted on 31 January 2018)</p> <p>Dorset Area Joint Committee – 15 May 2018: Dorset Area Ward Arrangements. (Submitted on 16 May 2018)</p>
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