



Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Council 1 October 2024

Wards affected: All wards

Local Government Boundary Commission Review – Council Size Submission

Report of Director of Corporate & Streetscene Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To set out to members the council size proposal to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) as part of the full review of electoral boundaries within the district.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To approve the submission on Council size to the Local Government Boundary Commission as part of the full review of electoral boundaries within the district.
- 2.2 To approve the proposal to increase the number of members from 34 to 36.
- 2.3 To approve the creation of a Member Working Group for completion of the next stage of the review which will consider ward boundaries.

3. Background to the report

- 3.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is a parliamentary body established by statute to conduct boundary, electoral and structural reviews of local government area in England. The Commission is an independent body separate from the government and political parties. It is directly accountable to the Speaker's Committee of the House of Commons.
- 3.2 The Local Government Boundary Commission has a duty to review every English local authority from 'time to time'. They have requested a review of

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council as it is now 22 years since the last review was carried out.

3.3 There are 2 phases to the review:

Phase 1 Council Size

Before ward boundaries are considered, the LGBCE will come to a view on the total number of councillors to be elected to the council in future.

Phase 2 Ward boundaries

Ward boundaries will be considered and potentially re-drawn so they meet the LGBCE's statutory criteria. The council has an opportunity to put forward its suggestions on ward numbers / boundaries during the consultation phases. It is proposed a Working group of councillors is created to work on this process.

3.4 A draft submission based on the template provided by the Commission is attached at Appendix A. The recommended councillor size is based on officer opinion taking into account available evidence, as provided by the LGBCE and as presented to members last year.

3.5 Currently the electorate/member ratio is 2,649:1. In comparison to our nearest neighbour group of authorities (compiled by LGBCE), Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council has a relatively high number of electors per councillor. The electorate of the borough is due to increase by approximately 5% by 2030 which would give a ratio of 2784:1 which would be even higher.

3.6 If the member numbers increase to 36 as proposed, then the ratio in 2030 would be 2629:1 which would bring it closer to our comparators. Whilst there could be an argument to further increase member numbers, this would not seem proportionate given the nature of the borough, current demand of the existing members and the governance model.

3.7 Officers do not believe there would any negative consequences to the effective governance of the Council with an increase of two Councillors and it can only be a positive change.

4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules

4.1 Report to be taken in open session.

5. Financial implications [AW]

5.1 None arising directly from the report. However, should member numbers increase, the implications will be in line with the Members Allowance Scheme in place at that time.

6. Legal implications [ST]

6.1 None arising directly from the report.

7. Corporate Plan implications

- 7.1 As it relates to the number of council members, the proposal will impact upon all aspects of the Corporate Plan.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The LGBCE undertake a full consultation as part of their review including a number of stakeholders. Members are also able to submit their own individual views to the LGBCE as part of that consultation process.

9. Risk implications

- 9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 An increase in members may enable greater availability of members to the community which will be a positive impact.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 None arising directly from the proposal.

12. Corporate implications

- 12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:
- Community safety implications
 - Environmental implications
 - ICT implications
 - Asset management implications
 - Procurement implications
 - Human resources implications
 - Planning implications
 - Data protection implications
 - Voluntary sector

Background papers: None
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Executive member: Councillor S Bray