

Governance and Ethics Committee

9 July 2021

Report title	Electoral Review: Local Government Boundary Commission for England Draft Recommendations	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Paula Brookfield Cabinet Member for Governance and Equalities	
Accountable director	David Pattison, Director of Governance	
Originating service	Electoral Services	
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Report to be/has been considered by	N/A	

Recommendations for decision:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the proposed approach to preparing the Council's response to the draft recommendations.

Recommendations for noting:

The Governance and Ethics Committee is asked to note:

1. The draft recommendations received from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report outlines the proposed approach on the governance arrangements for signing off the Council response to the draft recommendations.
- 1.2 To share the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGCE) draft recommendations.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Council submitted a response to the LGBCE consultation on warding patterns. The Conservative Group also submitted a response.
- 2.2 The LGBCE have reviewed and commented on all responses received and presented their proposals for Wolverhampton in a report which can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 A map to show the proposed wards against the existing wards can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.4 The LGBCE launched a public consultation on the draft recommendations on 29 June.
- 2.5 At the Governance and Ethics Committee on 24 June, a decision was made to make a request to the LGBCE to delay implementation from May 2022 to May 2023 and for the fallow year to be in May 2024. The reason for this is because between January – 1 March, there is insufficient time to carry out a polling district review with appropriate consultation, conduct site visits to assess new polling stations, book and staff new polling stations, administer the boundary changes in the Electoral Management System and prepare the poll cards to inform electors where there polling station is. There is also additional work to do to republish and redistribute the register to all organisations entitled to receive a free copy on publication. It also significantly delays much of the election preparations which would ordinarily be starting in December following the annual publication of the revised register, which leads to risk in the Returning Officer being able to meet the Electoral Commission Performance Standards for the conduct of the May 2021 poll.

3.0 Summary of recommendations

- 3.1 17 wards include changes, the most notable being St Peter's ward extending outside of the ring road along railway line taking in areas from Bushbury South and Low Hill, Heath Town, East Park and Ettingshall as parts of these communities have interests in common with the communities near the ring road.
- 3.2 3 wards are proposed to be maintained which are Merry Hill, Tettenhall Regis and Tettenhall Wightwick, which is broadly in like with the consultation responses received for wards.
- 3.3 The average number of electors per councillor is 3,175. All proposals are now within 10% of the average number of councillors. The other tests around communities of identity and

effective and convenient local government have also been considered and met within the proposals.

- 3.4 There are no proposed changes to ward names, but the LGBCE has asked for further comments in response to the Conservatives' proposal for Bilston East to be named Bilston South. Alternative name changes will be taken into consideration in response to the draft recommendations but if the LGBCE propose different names at the final stage there will not be an opportunity to change at this stage.
- 3.5 The LGBCE would like to hear more evidence on the Councils recommendation that the Bilston Campus of Wolverhampton College be included in East Park.
- 3.6 The LGBCE was not persuaded that the Liberal Democrats proposals, taken as a whole, would provide wards which reflect the identity and interests of all the communities involved.
- 3.7 The recommendations see a good balance of both the Council and Conservatives submissions. A high-level summary of the wards as presented in the report is provided below.

Blakenhall – minor change

The LGBCE accepted the Council proposal to include houses on both sides of Coton Road and Goldthorn Hill. They rejected the Council proposal to add Thompson Avenue and Conservative proposal for part of Blakenhall to be added to Ettingshall and part of Spring Vale to be added to Blakenhall.

Graiseley and Penn – minor change

The LGBCE accepted the Council proposal that both sides of Coalway should be included in Graiseley. They rejected Conservative proposal for Leighton Road, Wynn Road and Woodfield Avenue to be included in Graiseley.

Park and St Peters – significant change

The LGBCE took in elements of all proposals and modified them to to take in areas outside of the ring road from Bushbury South and Low Hill, Heath Town, East Park and Ettingshall. The LGBCE propose that St Peters ward includes the whole of Mammoth Drive, Coxwell Avenue, Fox's Lane, Cross Street North, Crown Street and Bone Mill Lane. It also includes the Albion Street area, Walsall Street and All Saints Road.

Bushbury North and Oxley – moderate change

The LGBCE accepted the Council proposal to include numbers 90-114 Elston Hall Lane in Bushbury North and to add South Street and Leverton Rise to Oxley from St Peters. They also accepted that whole of Bushbury Cemetery and Northycote Farm would lie in Bushbury North.

They accepted the Conservative proposal to include Watson Road, McLean Road and Marsh Lane Parade to be included in Bushbury North. They also accepted Conservative proposal to include Akron Gate in Oxley.

The LGBCE made recommendation to include the local shops to the north of roundabout at Kempthorne Avenue should be included in Bushbury North so any issues from this local centre can be addressed as a whole. They also included housing at the southern end of Bushbury Lane in Oxley. They are also proposing to include St Anne's Road from Oxley to Bushbury North.

Bushbury South and Low Hill – minor change

The LGBCE rejected council proposal to include Akron Gate in Bushbury South and Low Hill. They have accepted all proposals that the housing development on Bone Mill Lane be included in St Peters Ward.

Fallings Park – minor change

The LGBCE rejected Council proposal to add in south of Park Lane from Bushbury South and Low Hill. They accepted Conservative proposal to add an area to the south of Prestwood Road West and Lower Prestwood Road to Fallings Park.

East Park – moderate change

The LGBCE accepted the Council proposal to include Alcester Drive housing estate. They rejected Conservative proposal to include Oaklands Green and Stanton Road and Eastfield Road to form part of Heath Town.

They rejected the council proposal to add eastern parts of Brook Road and Vaughan Road to Bilston North.

Heath Town – moderate change

The LGBCE accepted Council proposal to add the area between the ring road and the West Coast Main Line to St Peters ward. They accepted Council proposal to include a small area between the canal and Wolverhampton Road to be moved from Wednesfield South to Heath Town. They rejected Council proposal to exclude Barbel drive and add to Wednesfield South.

They rejected Conservatives proposal to add Walsall Street area, Stanton Road and Eastfield Road to Heath Town.

The LGBCE are recommending that housing on both sides of Prestwood Road West be included in Fallings Park.

Wednesfield North and Wednesfield South – minor change

The LGBCE rejected Conservative proposal to add Orchard Road, Prestwood Avenue and Northern part of Wood End Road to Fallings Park and move residential areas around Olinthus avenue and Castlebridge Road from Wednesfield North to Wednesfield South.

They accepted a modification of the Council proposals to include Suffolk Close, Exmoor Green and Bellamy Lane Playing Fields. They did not accept Council proposal that Argil Close be included in Wednesfield North.

Bilston East and Bilston North – moderate change

The LGBCE rejected Conservative proposal to exclude Ladymoor from Bilston East and move it to Spring Vale and the area north of the high street to be moved from Bilston East to Bilston North. They rejected council proposal for Book Road and New Street to move from East Park to Bilston North. They accepted Council proposal to include Alcester Drive in East Park.

The LGBCE would like to hear further evidence on Council proposal to move Bilston Campus of the City of Wolverhampton College to East Park.

They also call for more views about the name of the Bilston East Ward as the Conservatives proposed that it be named Bilston South.

Ettingshall and Spring Vale – significant change

The LGBCE accepted all Council proposals for these wards.

They rejected Conservative proposal to include northern part of Blakenhall in Ettingshall. The LGBCE propose that the All Saints Road and area to its north and the Royal Hospital development move from Ettingshall to St Peters.

Proposed variance

Ward	Variance 2026 – no change	Proposed Variance
Bilston East	16%	8%
Bilston North	-3%	3%
Blakenhall	-7%	-5%
Bushbury North	-1%	9%
Bushbury South and Low Hill	25%	1%
East Park	-3%	-2%
Ettingshall	24%	1%
Fallings Park	-5%	-2%
Graiseley	-9%	-7%
Heath Town	0%	-4%
Merry Hill	-1%	-1%
Oxley	-4%	9%
Park	-13%	-2%
Penn	7%	3%
Spring Vale	-3%	4%

St Peters	-13%	-4%
Tettenhall Regis	2%	2%
Tettenhall Wightwick	-3%	-3%
Wednesfield North	-7%	-6%
Wednesfield South	-2%	-3%

4.0 Next steps

- 4.1 The LGBCE are meeting on 20 July to review the request and make a decision on whether to delay the implementation until May 2023. A separate paper will be circulated to the Committee once the outcome of this meeting is known.
- 4.2 The public consultation on the draft recommendations is open until 6 September. The Communications Team will be promoting this across all channels to encourage residents to respond.
- 4.3 Both working groups will be given access to the proposals on Xpress maps so that they can interact with the proposals and see existing ward and polling district boundaries.
- 4.4 The governance timescales and key dates for the next part of the review are presented in the table below.

Activity	Date
Public consultation	29 June – 6 September
Take council response to Full Council	3 September 2021
Close of public consultation	6 September 2021
Take council response to Full Council	15 September 2021 (LGBCE have agreed for council response to be received on this date after Full Council)
LGBCE publishes final recommendations	2 November 2021
Order laid in Parliament	Winter 2021
Order made	Winter 2021
Commence polling district review following ward boundary changes	January/February 2022
Implementation of ward boundaries in all out elections	May 2022 or May 2023 depending on LGBCE decision

5.0 Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report as Governance and Ethics Committee is simply requested to note the Local Government Boundary Commission for England recommendations and approve the proposed approach to responding to them. [GE/29062021/S]

6.0 Legal implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.
[DP/01072021/A]

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

8.0 All other Implications

- 8.1 There are no other implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

9.0 Schedule of Background Papers

- 9.1 [Electoral Review: Update on Phase Two, Governance Committee, 20 November 2020](#)
- 9.2 [Council Submission to Local Government Boundary Review, Governance Committee, 12 March 2021](#)
- 9.3 [Council Submission to Local Government Boundary Review, Full Council, 31 March 2021](#)
- 9.4 [Local Government Boundary Commission for England - Update on implementation of Commission recommendations, Governance and Ethics Committee, 24 June 2021](#)

10.0 Appendices

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – LGBCE draft recommendations
- 10.2 Appendix 2 – Map of existing wards and proposed changes