
Local Government Boundary Review - Summary Report

Committee considering report:	Council on 4 July 2017
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Jones
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	1 June 2017
Report Author:	Andy Day
Forward Plan Ref:	C3319

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Members in relation to the review of the district's boundaries and to the need to review some of the previously approved warding patterns based on greater clarity of the projections used to inform the predicted total number of electors.
- 1.2 The Boundary Review Steering Group, which met on 1 June 2017, are recommending minor changes to the following warding patterns (as set out in Paragraph 2.2 of Appendix A) to those agreed by Council at its meeting on 23 March 2017.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That, in accordance with the Council Rules of Procedure 4.9 and 4.16, the Council's decision of 23 March 2017 in relation to proposed new warding patterns and new ward names be rescinded.
- 2.2 That, based on a further review of the electorate forecast figures, the new warding patterns and names (Appendix C refers) be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission in accordance with Phase 2 of the Boundary Review.
- 2.3 Notwithstanding the proposed changes, the Council reaffirm that it would still like the Local Government Boundary Commission to look at whether the Greenham ward should be two single Member wards based on a view that there would be two distinct communities of the Racecourse development and the proposed new Sandleford development.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** N/A
- 3.2 **Policy:** N/A
- 3.3 **Personnel:** N/A
- 3.4 **Legal:** This review is being conducted in accordance with the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

3.5 **Risk Management:** N/A

3.6 **Property:** N/A

Executive Summary

4. Introduction / Background

- 4.1 At its meeting on 23 March 2017, the Council approved its proposed warding patterns and new ward names as part of Phase 2 of the review of the district's boundaries.
- 4.2 As part of the Local Government Boundary Commission's (LGBC) consultation a small number of Parish Councils asked for clarification of some of the future projections which had been used by the Council to support the review. These projections were the subject of consultation with officers of the Boundary Commission before they were formally submitted in early December 2016. However, forecasting the future number of electors is not an exact science and is one that involves a number of assumptions. A new methodology has now been produced.
- 4.3 Since the submission of the forecast figures in December 2016 there have been a number of factors that have led the Council to have to review these. The original number of elector figures was taken as at September 2016. The ratio applied to future electors per household was 1.75 at this point. Since submitting the forecasts in December 2016 the number of electors has increased from 124,492 to 130,217 and the ratio now used is 1.8.
- 4.4 Another issue which has necessitated a further review is the Lakeside planning application which was approved on appeal in February 2017 and will see 325 properties built on a site in Theale. Given the ratio of 1.8 electors to each property this will increase Theale's electorate by 585 electors. This would mean that based on the Council's original warding patterns Theale would be +22%. This is not acceptable position. There was also a planning application allowed on appeal in North Newbury but this decision has not impacted on the approved tolerance levels.
- 4.5 Finally, the Council approved its Housing Sites Allocation Development Plan Document on 9 May and this has helped to provide a degree of clarity in predicting future housing numbers and electors.
- 4.6 The number of proposed changes to the approved warding patterns is relatively small accepting that changes to one ward will impact on another. The original submission had four wards in excess of the + or - 10% tolerance level. The new proposals will see three wards in excess of the 10% ratio but in the case of two of these they will only be 11% (ie 1% over the tolerance level). The new proposals therefore provide greater electoral equality.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The LGBC intend to have a second round of consultation for a shorter 4 week period starting on 13 June. Given this approach the opportunity has been taken to review the Council's own submission which has led to a small number of changes.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The changes in the number of electors coupled with other factors outside of the Council's control has necessitated a review of the forecasting figures. This review

has resulted in some of the previously approved warding patterns being amended, the result of which will see greater electoral equality.

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix A - Supporting Information
- 7.2 Appendix B - Equalities Impact Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix C - Proposed Warding Patterns