

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 Cabinet agree to:

- a. Note the purpose and timetable set out for The Local Government Boundary Commission (for England) to undertake their electoral review of New Forest District Council.
- b. Agree to establish a Task & Finish, chaired by the Leader of the Council and supported by officers to facilitate a collaborative dialogue between the Commission and the Council.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following the work of a Task & Finish Group the Council requested the Local Government Boundary Commission to conduct an electoral review of the Council. The Commission advised that even without the Council's request, their normal timetable had identified that the Council was due for a review. The Task and Finish Group proposal included a reduction from 60 to 48 councillors on the District Council.

3. REVIEW PROCESS

- 3.1 The process of electoral review covers an examination of a council's electoral arrangements. This means:

- i. the total number of councillors elected to the Local Authority;
- ii. the number and boundaries of Wards for the purposes of the election of Councillors;
- iii. the number of Councillors for any Ward of a Local Authority; and
- iv. the name of any Ward.

- 3.2 Initially the Commission will gather information from the Council, including electoral forecasts and other electoral data. In addition, they intend to meet with all Councillors, officers, group leaders and, where applicable, Parish and Town Councils.

- 3.3 Based on the evidence from the local authority and political groups in the area, the Commission will then decide how many Councillors should be elected to the Local Authority in the future.

- 3.4 The commission will form a view on the Council size based on four factors:

- a. The governance arrangements of the Council;
- b. The Council's scrutiny functions;
- c. The representational role of Councillors;
- d. Future trends and plans for the Council;

In some cases, at the Commission's discretion, may ask the public for their views on Councillor numbers.

- 3.5 At this stage the Commission will consult the public on the following Warding Arrangements:
- a. The number of Wards;
 - b. The names of Wards;
 - c. Where the boundaries between Wards should lie;
 - d. The number of Councillors for each Ward;
 - e. The public's comments will shape draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements.
- 3.6 Based on the information from the Warding Arrangements consultation, the Commission will draft recommendations produced on future electoral arrangements. A consultation will then be undertaken to see what members of the public think of plans for their area. This will inform the final recommendations. The final recommendations will then be put before Parliament, in the form of a draft Order to be made law (40 sitting days). This is likely to take place in the summer of 2020. Parliament will either accept or reject the Commission recommendations. If they are accepted, they will be implemented in May 2023.

4. TIMETABLE

- 4.1 Timetable of arrangements can be found at Appendix 1.

5. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS

- 5.1 As Leader I would suggest that I work with a Task & Finish group of councillors supported by officers to facilitate a collaborative dialogue between the Commission and the Council.

For further information contact:

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Background Papers:

None

ELECTORAL REVIEW TIMETABLE

These timetables outline the key dates and activities for both the Council (shown in bold) and the Commission during the review process.

Preliminary Period

Briefings	Attendees		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Initial Meeting	Council Leader Chief Executive	Chair Chief Executive	25 March 2019
Officer Briefing	Council Officers involved in review	Review Manager Review Officer	12 June 2019
Group Leader Briefing	Council Group Leaders	Lead Commissioner Review Manager Review Officer	
Full Council Briefing	All Councillors	Lead Commissioner Review Manager Review Officer	
Parish/Town Council & Local Groups Briefing	Not required	Review Manager Review Officer	To be confirmed

Council Size

Activity	Involvement		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Develop council size proposal	Council Political Groups	Officers will be available to answer any technical queries on making a submission.	Spring 2019 to 18 October 2019
Submission of council size proposals	Council Political Groups	Officers will acknowledge receipt of submissions.	18 October 2019
Commission Meeting: Council Size	Not required	Commission	19 November 2019

Warding Patterns

Activity	Involvement		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Consultation on warding patterns	Council Political Groups General Public	Run consultation, collate and analyse responses.	26 November 2019 to 03 February 2020
Commission Meeting: Draft Recommendations	Not required	Commission	17 March 2020
Consultation on Draft Recommendations	Council Political Groups General Public	Publish draft recommendations. Run consultation, collate and analyse responses.	31 March 2020 to 08 June 2020
Commission Meeting: Final Recommendations	Not required	Commission	21 July 2020

Order

Activity	Involvement		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Order laid	Not required	Commission	Autumn 2020
Order made	Not required	Commission	Late 2020/ Early 2021
Implementation	Council	Not required	2023