

Agenda Item No: 13 **Report No:** 59/15
Report Title: Electoral Review Update
Report To: Council **Date:** 23 April 2015
Ward(s) Affected: All
Report By: Catherine Knight, Assistant Director of Corporate Services
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Purpose of Report:

To update Council on progress with the Electoral Review.

Officers Recommendation(s):

- 1 To confirm the membership of the cross-party Electoral Review Working Group;
 - 2 To confirm the scope for the Electoral Review Working Group to consider council size; and
 - 3 To note the timescale of reporting for the submission on council size.
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Reasons for Recommendations

- 1 To achieve the outcomes of the Electoral Review and to ensure the timetable is met.

Information

2 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 25 February 2015, full Council agreed that Lewes District Council would undertake an Electoral Review as part of the wider review of all East Sussex authorities.
- 2.2 The Electoral Review will examine and decide the electoral arrangements for:
 - The total number of councillors to be elected to the Council ie. council size.

- The names, number and boundaries of District wards.
- The number of councillors to be elected from each ward.

2.3 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) will be giving a presentation to councillors on the Electoral Review prior to this full Council meeting at 1.30pm on 23 April 2015.

3 Working Group

3.1 It is proposed that the membership of the Working Group to consider council size be representative of all political Groups and comprises Councillors Rob Blackman, Sarah Osborne, Philip Howson and Ruth O’Keeffe.

3.2 The Working Group will look at the first key issue which is the number of councillors required to run the Council to ensure appropriate levels of governance, scrutiny and community leadership, to come into effect at the next District Council elections scheduled for May 2019.

3.3 An Electoral Review survey has been circulated to all councillors to complete. The survey captures the time spent on Council duties and enables members to give their views on what size the Council should be in the future.

3.4 The Working Group will meet to consider the findings of the survey and other considerations needed to formulate our submission on council size. The Group will then put forward its recommendations to Cabinet and Council for consideration.

4 Timetable

4.1 The timetable for the submission of draft proposals on council size to the LGBCE is 10 July 2015, with final proposals due by 7 August 2015.

4.2 To meet the timetable, the Working Group will make recommendations on council size to Cabinet on 6 July 2015. The draft submission will then be sent to the LGBCE. The final proposals will be taken to full Council for approval on 16 July 2015.

4.3 Following that, the second key stage of the Review will be carried out by the LGBCE to consider and consult on proposals for ward patterns, starting from 22 September 2015. Effective proposals on ward boundaries will need to address electoral equality for voters, community interests and identities, and convenient and effective local government.

Financial Appraisal

5 Part funding of the joint Project Manager required until 2017.

Legal Implications

6 None over and above those set out in the body of this Report.

Sustainability Implications

7 There are no significant effects as a result of this Report.

Risk Management Implications

8 If the recommendations are not implemented, the main risk will be that the Council fails to meet its legal duties and the requirements of the Electoral Review are not met.

Equality Screening

9 An Equality Analysis was undertaken on 13 January 2015. The assessment identified only positive impacts as the purpose of the Review is to provide electoral equality and to ensure fair representation at local government elections.

Background Papers

10 None

Appendix

11 None