

To: City Executive Board

Date: 18 October 2010 **Item No:**

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: Electoral Review of Oxfordshire County Council
division boundaries

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To ask the Board to agree an initial response to the Boundary Commission on its electoral review of Oxfordshire County Council.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price

Report approved by:

Finance: Jackie Yates
Legal: Jeremy Thomas

Recommendation(s): The City Executive Board is recommended to agree its response as follows:

- a) that the City Council commends the status quo of two members per city division, totalling 16, and comments that it would be perverse to change that as a consequence of attempting to put right an anomaly in Witney;
- b) that whatever scheme is approved that the co-terminosity between wards and divisions should be maintained.

1. Background and supporting information

1.1 The Boundary Commission for England has commenced an Electoral Review of Oxfordshire County Council. This is outside the normal programme of periodical electoral reviews and was triggered by an anomaly in the size of electoral divisions in Witney.

1.2 The County Council has asked that the divisions within Witney be reviewed and not the remainder of the County, but the Commission has rejected this approach and is carrying out a full review.

1.3 Set out below is the timetable for the review. The Commission has asked for initial responses on council size by 22nd November. This review will not affect any ward boundaries.

Start of Electoral Review	12 October 2010
Consultation on Council Size (Submit proposal on Council size)	6 weeks – until 22 November 2010
Commission publish recommendation on Council Size	January 2011
Stage 1 Consultation: possible electoral arrangements (Submit proposals on divisions)	12 weeks: 11 January – 4 April 2011
Stage 2 Commission’s deliberation of proposals and publication of draft recommendations	10-14 weeks
Stage 3 Consultation: Commission’s Draft Recommendations (Comment on draft recommendations)	12 weeks
Stage 4 Commission’s deliberation of comments and submissions	10-14 weeks

2. Risk

2.1 As the Board is merely responding to a consultation there are no significant risks to report.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The City Executive Board is recommended to agree its response as follows:

a) that the City Council commends the status quo of two members per city division, totalling 16, and that it would be perverse to change that in consequence of attempting to put right an anomaly in Witney;

b) that whatever scheme is approved that the co-terminosity between wards and divisions must be maintained.

Name and contact details of author:

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List of background papers:
2010 from the Local Government Boundary Commission commencing review.

Letter dated 31st August