

To: City Executive Board

Date: Wednesday 13th April 2011 **Item No:** 7

Report of: Head of Law and Governance

Title of Report: REVIEW OF OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
DIVISION BOUNDARIES

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: This report summarises why the County Council is having an electoral review and proposes a scheme of divisions for Oxford.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Bob Price

Report Approved by:

Executive Director: n/a

Finance : Jacqueline Yates

Legal: Jeremy Thomas

Policy Framework: n/a

Recommendation: That City Executive Board:

endorse the submission of the attached scheme to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

1. Attached as appendices are the following:
 - i. Appendix I is a spreadsheet showing the proposed new divisions and their constituent polling districts;
 - ii. Appendix II is a narrative explanation of the proposals;

- iii. Appendix III is an indicative plan of the proposals

Executive Summary

2. In October 2010 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England announced that it was holding an interim electoral review of Oxfordshire County Council.
3. This interim review was outside the normal review programme and was triggered by a significant imbalance in electoral equality in a division in Witney.
4. In December the Commission announced that it had accepted the County Council's proposal that the total council size should be around 64/65 councillors (reduced from 74) and sought proposals from interested parties as to division boundaries. Each division is required to be within 10% of the average number of electors per division calculated across the whole county. Any proposals had to be based on projected electorate levels in 2016.
5. Currently Oxford is represented by 16 county councillors, two in each of eight divisions. Each division is comprised of three city council wards and therefore no ward is split between county divisions. This makes the current scheme easy to understand and administer.
6. The total number of county councillors notionally allocated to Oxford under the proposed County Council membership is 14. This means that it is not possible to keep wards wholly within a division and many will have to split.
7. The deadline for submissions to the Commission consultation was 3rd April 2011. The scheme, as appended, has been submitted as the Council's formal response subject the endorsement of the City Executive Board.
8. The Commission will consider the responses to the consultation and publish boundary proposals later in the year. Those proposals will be the subject of a further consultation exercise and a further report to the Board.

Legal Implications

9. None.

Equalities Implications

10. None .

Financial Implications

11. None.

Recommendations

That the City Executive Board:

endorse the submission of the attached scheme to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

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List of background papers: Only published works

Version number: 1