

REPORT TO: Council

DATE: 22 August 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise,
Community and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Leader

SUBJECT: Ward Boundary Review

WARDS: Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval to submit the attached submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE), being the Council's proposals to the Commission in relation to its views as to the most appropriate warding arrangements for the Borough from May 2020 elections.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That

- 1) the Council endorses the attached submission and that it be forwarded to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; and**
- 2) the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader, be authorised to make minor drafting amendments to the submission prior to forwarding it to the Commission.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The LGBCE (the Commission) is undertaking an Electoral Review of the Council. This review had been triggered by the fact that the electorate in the Farnworth Ward in Widnes is 33% higher than the average electorate across each of the wards in the Borough. Significant divergence in the size of one ward from the average electorate in other wards of the Borough is one of the Commission's criteria that triggers a review.

3.2 The ward boundary review process is undertaken in four stages:

1) Preliminary Period – ended May 2018

The Commission invited the Council to submit its views on what it believes is the appropriate Council size for Halton. The Commission concluded at

the end of this stage that it was 'minded' to recommend a Council size of 54.

2) Consultation on Warding Patterns: 26 June 2018 – 3 September 2018

The Commission invited the Council and other interested parties to submit to it suggestions for patterns of wards based on a Council of 54, hence this submission.

3) Consultation on Draft Recommendations: 8 November 2018 – 14 January 2019

Having considered responses to the above consultation on warding patterns, the Commission will produce draft recommendations of its own which will be subject to a further round of consultation.

4) Final Recommendations

The Commission will publish its final recommendations in March 2019. A Parliamentary Order will be made in Summer 2019 with the first (all out) elections taking place with the new warding arrangements in May 2020.

3.3 As part of this phase of the review the Commission has asked the Council for its views in relation to future warding arrangements. Attached to this report is that submission. The submission recommends the following arrangements that:

- There should be 19 wards in the borough.
- 18 of those wards would be 3 member wards.
- 1 of those wards would be a single member ward.
- That the Council size should therefore be 55.

The justification for those arrangements are contained in the submission.

3.4 The Council is requested to endorse the submission.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council has to have sufficient Elected Members to ensure:

- its governance arrangements are effective;
- its scrutiny arrangements are effective;
- that there are sufficient Members to carry out the representational role of Councillors within the Borough; and
- that any new warding arrangements:

- 1) New wards should leave each Councillor representing roughly the same number of voters as other Councillors elsewhere in the authority.
- 2) New wards should – as far as possible – reflect community interests and identities, and boundaries should be identifiable. Consider transport links, community groups and facilities, natural or physical boundaries, parishes and shared interests.
- 3) New wards should promote effective and convenient local government. Consider the number of Councillors for the geographic size of and the links between parts of the ward.

4.2 These issues have been taken into account in coming to this set of proposals.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, there will be a cost to the Council of implementing the eventual change to the pattern of wards. These costs will have to be met from existing Council resources.

6 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 There are no direct implications for the Council's priorities, however, it is clearly important that the policy issues identified in paragraph 4 are met to ensure the efficient and effective running of the Council.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 There are no specific risks associated with this report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Local Government Commission Technical Guidance Report	LGBCE website	Ian Leivesley Strategic Director Enterprise, Community and Resources