



MEMBER WORKING GROUP REPORT TO COUNCIL

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND - ELECTORAL REVIEW OF SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

KEY ISSUE/DECISION:

To approve the Council's response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations on the electoral arrangements for Surrey County Council.

BACKGROUND:

1. In August 2010, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England ("LGBCE" or "the Commission") announced that it would be conducting an electoral review of Surrey County Council. The review was triggered by the fact that levels of electoral representation have changed since the last review was completed in 2000 and 26 wards (33%) have an electoral variance greater than 10%.
2. In September 2010, the Council set up a cross-party working group to lead on the Council's response to the Electoral Review. This working group co-ordinated the Council's responses on Council Size and Stage One of the Review, and has continued in this co-ordination role through Stage Three of the Review (responding to the Commission's draft recommendations).

APPROACH:

3. During Stage One, all interested parties (including the County Council) were invited to put forward proposals on the detailed electoral arrangements. In responding to the Review, the County Council submitted a scheme of 81 electoral divisions that it felt best met the Commission's three statutory criteria:
 - **Electoral equality.** Each councillor should represent as near as possible to the same number of electors.

- **Community identity.** Division boundaries should recognise and support strong community links, such as parishes, shared facilities and transport links.
 - **Effective and convenient local government.** Divisions should be coherent with good internal communication links. For example, ensuring the Member can effectively travel to all parts of his/her division.
4. The Electoral Review Working Group is pleased to note that having considered the submissions received in Stage One, the Commission during Stage Two developed proposals broadly based on the County Council's scheme, having regard to evidence submitted by other interested parties (including District, Borough and Parish Councils.)
 5. The Working Group has met twice between July and September to consider the Commission's draft recommendations. All Members were also asked as part of this for their local views on the Commission's proposals and these have been taken into account in drafting the attached response.
 6. The Working Group's proposed response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England is attached at Appendix 1, for the Council's consideration.

LOCAL CONSULTATION:

7. As stated above, the Commission is seeking views from all interested parties and will consider all the evidence submitted during the consultation period before preparing its final recommendations. Individual Members are therefore encouraged to also submit their own views direct to the Commission - either in support or against the draft recommendations - so the Commission is aware of all local opinions. Finally, Members may also wish to encourage other interested parties, such as parish councils and local community groups to submit views. All submissions should be sent to:

Review Officer - Surrey Review
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76–86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

Or email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

8. The Commission's deadline for responses from individuals, parish councils and local groups is **Monday 10 October 2011.**

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council's Response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations, attached at Appendix 1, be approved.

NEXT STEPS:

The Council's agreed response will be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

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Sources/background papers:

Correspondence from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England

Council's Response to the Council Size Consultation (County Council, 12 December 2010, item 15)

Council's Response to the Stage One Consultation (County Council, 22 March 2011, item 12)