

NAME OF COMMITTEE	SPECIAL COUNCIL
DATE	15 July 2014
REPORT TITLE	Electoral Review – Draft Warding Arrangements
Report of	The Political Structures Working Group
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

To consider a report that presents the recommendations of the Political Structures Working Group in respect of the draft warding arrangements as proposed by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

Financial implications:

None directly arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Council **RESOLVES** that the draft response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England proposals on the future electoral arrangements for West Devon Borough Council (as outlined at Appendix 2) be endorsed, subject to inclusion of any further comments which are agreed during this meeting.

Officer contact:

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Lead Member contact:

Cllr James McInnes, Chairman of the Political Structures Working Group (email: cllr.james.mcinnnes@westdevon.gov.uk).

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Political Structures Working Group is a standing body of Members appointed at the Annual Council meeting to undertake a comprehensive review of the workings of both the political structure and decision making processes. The Group has no decision-making powers and is required to present its recommendations to the Council.
- 1.2 The Group last met on Monday, 7 July 2014 to consider the LGBCE proposals in respect of the draft warding arrangements for the Borough Council. At the

request of the Working Group, all Members of Council were invited to attend and contribute to the debate at this meeting.

1.3 In its deliberations, the Group was specifically asked to consider:-

- The need for electoral equality.
- Whether or not the proposed wards reflect the interests and identities of local communities and if not, why not?
- Whether or not the proposed pattern of wards would help the Council deliver effective local government to local people and if not, why not?
- Whether the proposals could be improved whilst maintaining electoral equality?
- Whether or not the proposed ward names were right?
- Whether or not the Council had any alternative proposals which were backed up by demonstrable evidence?

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

2.1 Electoral Review – Warding Arrangements

2.1.1 On 29 April 2014, the Council received a letter from the LGBCE which introduced its draft recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for the Council (as attached at Appendix 1).

2.1.2 At the meeting on 7 July 2014, a number of Members expressed their concerns regarding these draft recommendations and felt that the Council should not offer its support to these proposals.

2.1.3 In light of the detailed discussions which ensued at this meeting, a proposed draft response to the LGBCE proposals is attached at Appendix 2. The Council is asked to endorse the draft response, which will then be sent to the LGBCE before its prescribed deadline of 21 July 2014.

2.1.4 It is also important to stress that the Commission has not finalised its conclusions and therefore wishes to encourage Members (both individually and/or collectively), town and parish councils, community groups and residents who have a view to write to the Commission (via email at: reviews@lgbce.org.uk) before 21 July 2014.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	All
Statutory powers:	Local Government Act 2000 Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
Considerations of equality and human rights:	None directly related to this report
Biodiversity considerations:	None directly related to this report
Sustainability considerations:	None directly related to this report
Crime and disorder implications:	None directly related to this report
Background papers:	The LGBCE report outlining its draft recommendation on the future electoral arrangements for WDBC dated 29 April 2014.
Appendices attached:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. LGBCE Draft Recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for WDBC; and2. Proposed WDBC response to the draft recommendations.

STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status			Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership	
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Electoral Review	Failure to agree a recommendation on a set of warding arrangements will result in the Council losing its voice during this stage of the process.	3	2	6	↔	Council agreement on a way forward will ensure that the Council has had an input and makes a formal submission during this stage of the process.	Democratic Services Manager

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔