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| NAME OF COMMITTEE | Annual Council |
| DATE | 9 May 2013 |
| REPORT TITLE | Electoral Review of South Hams – Draft Warding Arrangements |
| Report of | Political Structures Working Group |
| WARDS AFFECTED | All |

Summary of report: To consider a report which seeks to make a recommendation to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) on alternative warding arrangements for South Hams District Council.

Financial implications: None arising directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Council agrees that either Option A (Cllr Hicks' Submission) or Option B (Cllr Pannell's Submission) be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England as the Council's preferred new pattern of warding arrangements.
2. That, based upon this decision, delegated authority be granted to the Head of Corporate Services, in consultation with the Leader of Council, to prepare the Council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England before the deadline of Tuesday, 4 June 2013.

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Member contact: Cllr Tucker, Leader of Council cllr.tucker@southhams.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The LGBCE is responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, administrative boundaries and structure.

- 1.2 Members will recall that the Council resolved at its meeting on 20 September 2012 that *'the Council's submission to the LGBCE recommends that, to come into effect for the May 2015 Local Elections, the Council size (e.g. number of Members elected) should be 30 Members (or thereabouts)'* (Minute 38/12 refers).
- 1.3 At the conclusion of the consultation phase on Council size, the LGBCE met on 12 March 2013 to confirm its views. The Chief Executive was then informed on 26 March 2013 of the LGBCE decision to adopt a Council size of thirty Members for the purposes of the consultation on warding arrangements (letter attached at Appendix A).

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Next Stage of the Review

- 2.1 This stage of the review began upon the receipt of the letter on 26 March 2013 and runs until 4 June 2013. The LGBCE has extended a general invitation to all interested parties to propose a new pattern of warding arrangements for the Council, with proposals being based upon a Council size of thirty Members.
- 2.2 The LGBCE has provided an indicative timetable for the review and the remaining stages are as follows:
- 26 March 2013: Beginning of information gathering stage on warding arrangements;
 - 4 June 2013: End of information gathering stage on warding arrangements;
 - 9 July 2013: LGBCE meeting to agree draft recommendations on warding arrangements;
 - 20 August 2013: Publication (and beginning) of public consultation on draft recommendations;
 - 11 November 2013: End of public consultation on draft recommendations;
 - January 2014 (date to be confirmed): LGBCE meeting to confirm final recommendations on warding arrangements; and
 - February 2014 (date to be confirmed): Publication of final recommendations.

Political Structures Working Group Deliberations

- 2.3 All Members were invited to consider submitting their alternative warding proposals to a Political Structures Working Group meeting which was held on 15 April 2013.
- 2.4 Proposals were received from four Members. With all Members having been invited to attend and partake during the Working Group meeting, a lengthy debate ensued on each of these proposals.
- 2.5 The Working Group concluded that there was merit in two of the four proposals being formally presented to the Council for consideration. In so doing, the Working Group also requested that the Members who had submitted these proposals review them in an attempt to overcome some of the concerns raised at the meeting.

- 2.6 The Members have reviewed their submissions and the final versions are attached at Appendix B (Cllr Hicks' Submission) and Appendix C (Cllr Pannell's Submission).
- 2.7 During its deliberations, the Working Group also wished to again reaffirm the point that all Members, local town and parish councils, community groups and residents were perfectly entitled to submit their own patterns of warding arrangements for the Council to the LGBCE (www.lgbce.org.uk) before the deadline of 4 June 2013.
- 2.8 Once the Council has reached a view on its preferred pattern of warding arrangements for the Council, then it is recommended that the Head of Corporate Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Leader of Council, to finalise the Council's Submission to the LGBCE before the deadline of 4 June 2013.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There is provision within the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which established the ability for the LGBCE to conduct an Electoral Review.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The risk management implications are shown at the end of this report in the strategic risks template.

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| Corporate priorities engaged: | All |
| Statutory powers: | Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. |
| Considerations of equality and human rights: | Not affected by this report |
| Biodiversity considerations: | Not affected by this report |
| Sustainability considerations: | Not affected by this report |
| Crime and disorder implications: | Not affected by this report |
| Background papers: | Council Constitution Political Structures Working Group Agenda – 15 April 2013 |
| Appendices attached: | Appendix A: LGBCE letter to the Chief Executive dated 26 March 2013 Appendix B: Option A (Cllr Hicks' Submission) Appendix C: Option B (Cllr Pannell's Submission) |

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 | Reaching a decision on a preferred option | Failure to reach a decision on a preferred option may result in the LGBCE producing a more unacceptable pattern of warding arrangements for the Council. | 4 | 3 | 12 | ↔ | By the Council being able to reach a decision on a preferred option which is reasoned and justified. | Head of Corporate Services |

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔