



Essex County Council

Boundary Review Committee

14:00	Thursday, 27 July 2023	Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

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Essex County Council and Committees Information

All Council and Committee Meetings are held in public unless the business is exempt in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members of the public will be able to view and listen to any items on the agenda unless the Committee has resolved to exclude the press and public from the meeting as a result of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

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Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.

Committee: Boundary Review Committee

Enquiries to: Joanna Boaler, Head of Democratic Services

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

Membership

(Quorum: 3)

Councillor Tom Cunningham	Chairman
Councillor Lewis Barber	
Councillor Mark Durham	
Councillor Jaymey McIvor	
Councillor Pat Reid	
Councillor Stephen Robinson	
Councillor Kerry Smith	
Councillor Holly Whitbread	

Agenda item 2

Report title: Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission	
Report to: Boundary Review Committee	
Report author: Joanna Boaler, Head of Democracy and Transparency and Paul Turner Director, Legal and Assurance	
Date: 27 July 2023	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Joanna Boaler email joanna.boaler@essex.gov.uk or Paul Turner email paul.turner@essex.gov.uk	

1. Background and purpose of the report

- 1.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission) is an independent body established by Parliament in 2020 to undertake local government electoral reviews. An electoral review examines and proposes new electoral arrangements for the whole local authority. The review looks at the total number of councillors to be elected to the council, known as council size, the names, numbers and boundaries or divisions and the number of councillors to be elected to each division.
- 1.2 As previously reported, the Commission decided to review ECC as it meets criteria for electoral inequality as 21 (30%) of our 70 divisions have an electoral variance outside 10% from the average. Four divisions have a variance of more than 20% and one division has a variance of more than 30%. The Local Government Boundary Commission has a responsibility to review local authorities from time to time and Essex's last review took place in 2004. Therefore the Commission have decided to undertake a review of Essex County Council.
- 1.3 The Commission has currently looking at a number of district councils in Essex. ECC divisions cannot cross a district boundary but they do not always need to align with district ward boundaries.
- 1.4 The electoral review has two distinct parts, Council Size and Division Boundaries. The first part has concluded and ECC's submission was approved by Council in December 2022. We are now in the second part relating to division sizes. By 31 July 2023 we are, alongside other organisations and the public invited to present the Commission our suggestions for divisions and the communities that would underpin them to be implemented at the May 2025 ordinary elections.
- 1.5 In December this Council agreed the draft submission of a Council size of 77 councillors and sought a single member division review. These have been accepted by the Commission. However, following receipt of the finalised expected housing figures, it was agreed at the July 2023 meeting that 78 Councillors would be a better Council size, we have now written to the Local

Government Boundary Commission seeking a revised Council size of 78 councillors.

- 1.6 Following the member briefing by the Commission in the summer of 2023 a cross party member working group was been set up to support the review. This Group was formally constituted at the July 2023 Council meeting. The responsibility of this group is to make submissions to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England with respect to the review of the ECC divisions.
- 1.7 All ECC members have been consulted throughout the process and have been sent lists of polling districts into divisions, any feedback received has been considered and taken into account.
- 1.8 The final submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission will ensure it reflects the views members have made, any we have received from the public or other local authorities and of course according to the principles set by the Commission, which are mainly that elector numbers should be as equal as possible and boundaries should reflect communities where this is achievable.
- 1.9 Given the tight time frame, the draft submissions for the Committee to consider are being worked upon but were not ready at the time of issuing the agenda for the meeting. Submissions will be circulated to the Committee and placed on the website at the earliest possible opportunity.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Agree the submissions for the 12 districts/78 divisions. [draft submission to follow]

List of background papers:

Spreadsheet showing forecast elector numbers agreed with the Commission.