

Cheltenham Borough Council Council 21st February 2022 Council Size Submission

Accountable member	Councillor Rowena Hay, Leader of the Council
Accountable officer	Paul Jones, Executive Director, Finance and Assets
Ward(s) affected	All
Key/Significant Decision	Yes
Executive summary	This report identifies the work carried out by the Electoral Boundary Review Group and puts forward to Council a council size proposal for a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) based on a Council size of 40 members.
Recommendations	Council approves the submission of Appendix 2 to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on the proposed council size.

Financial implications	Members allowances based on 40 members is currently built into the base revenue budget. Any deviation away from that number could have an adverse or positive impact on the base budget. Contact officer: paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk
Legal implications	The Commission's work is governed by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The Commission conducts periodic reviews of local authority arrangements. The authority has a duty to support the Commission's work and to provide input to that work. Following initial information gathering the Commission will publish draft recommendation which will eventually be subject to parliamentary consideration and approval. Contact officer: legalservices@onelegal.org.uk
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	There are no direct HR implications arising from this report. Contact officer:clare.jones@publicagroup.uk
Key risks	There is a risk that the Commission may not agree with the Council's preferred council size proposals and, as set out above, the Commission's decision would be legally binding.
Property/Asset Implications	There are no direct Property/Asset implications arising from this report Contact officer: Gemma.Bell@cheltenham.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) wrote to the Council in July 2021 setting out the electoral review timetable. The initial task for the Council is to develop thoughts on the proposed council size (i.e. the number of elected members) alongside assembling five-year forecast electorate data.
- 1.2. Importantly, this stage provides the opportunity to consider the number of elected members and to reflect, from first principles, on the role and contribution of elected members in modern local governance.
- 1.3. An all member survey was conducted to help evidence a draft submission to the Council size review which was considered by a cross-party working group on Monday 7th March 2022, prior to full Council consideration at this meeting.

2. COUNCIL SIZE

- 2.1. The initial stage of an Electoral Review is to determine a preferred council size. This is the number of Councillors required to deliver effective and convenient local government.
- 2.2. The electoral boundary review group met on Monday 7th March 2022 to look at council size and concluded, based on the results of the member survey, that Council puts forward a council size proposal for a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) based on a Council size of 40 members.

3. WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1. The second stage of the review is to submit proposals to the Commission on warding patterns.
- 3.2. The electoral boundary review group will meet to look at warding patterns and model a number of possibilities.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1. If the proposal is agreed by Full Council it will be submitted to the Commission as the Council's submission. However, if this is not agreed then it will be for individual members or political groups to make their own submissions.
- 4.2. It should be noted that even if the proposal is agreed by Full Council this does not prohibit any member or group from making their own submission.

Report author	Contact officer: Paul Jones, paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 264365
Appendices	1. Risk Assessment 2. Council size submission

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	LGBC do not agree with the Council's proposal.	ED Finance and Assets	11 th March 2022	2	2	4		Officers will work with the Commission to put forward a strong case based on the evidence provided within its submission.	17 th May 2022	ED Finance and Assets	

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