

North Tyneside Council

Report to Council

25 November 2021

Title: Review of Council Ward Boundaries

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Cabinet Member(s): N Redfearn

Report from Service

Area: Law and Governance

Responsible Officer: Bryn Roberts, Director of Law and Governance (Tel: (0191)6435339)

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Executive Summary:

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has contacted the Council to indicate that it intends to carry out a review of the Ward arrangements and overall composition of the Council.

The previous review was undertaken in 2002, with the final recommendations being published in October 2003, and whole-Council elections taking place in 2004.

Following discussions with the Group Leaders, representations have been made to the LGBCE to indicate that an early review, with whole-Council elections no later than May 2024, would be the preferred option.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Council notes the LGBCE's intention to undertake a review.

1.3 Forward Plan:

This item first appeared on the Forward that was published on 28 October 2021.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report does not directly relate to any of the priorities in the Our North Tyneside Plan.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The LGBCE is an independent and impartial, non-departmental public body which is responsible for reviewing local government ward boundaries in England. The LGBCE has the task of periodically reviewing the boundaries of all the Parliamentary constituencies in England. In this case, the last review of local government ward boundaries was undertaken in 2002 to 2003, with the revised boundaries coming into effect in 2004.

1.5.2 The Proposed Review

On 25 August 2021, the LGBCE contacted the Council, indicating that it had decided to undertake a review of the Council. The stated purpose of the review was “... *to consider the number of councillors elected to the council, the names, number and boundaries of the wards, and the number of councillors to be elected to each ward.*”

The inception letter went on to indicate that “*the last electoral review of North Tyneside Council was undertaken in 2003. Accordingly, the Commission considers that a review of your authority should start within the next one to three years ...*”. The letter went on to outline the review process and timetable, with whole-Council elections following at the next ordinary electoral date.

Having considered the review request, the Electoral Registration Officer liaised with the Labour and Conservative Group Leaders, in order to ascertain their views on when they considered it appropriate for such a review to commence, in line with the timetable outlined by the LGBCE. Both Leaders considered that it would be beneficial to commence the review as soon as possible, in order that the whole-Council elections did not clash with the 2025 Mayoral election.

On this basis, representations were made to the LGBCE that a swift commencement was preferred, with an expressed desire that the changes were in force for the 2023 elections. By way of response, the LGBCE indicated that it could not guarantee completion in advance of the 2023 elections, but could in advance of the 2024 elections.

It was therefore agreed that a review to take effect no later than 2024 would be undertaken, and if the review could be concluded in time for implementation in 2023 then this would be considered a ‘bonus’.

1.5.3 Review Process

Having agreed, in principle, upon a timetable for the start of the review, the Council is presently awaiting confirmation of the formal review commencement date.

Upon commencement, the LBGCE will conduct its process in accordance with the following stages (shown with indicative potential timescales).

Preliminary Period

Briefings	Attendees		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Initial Meeting	Elected Mayor Chief Executive	Chair Chief Executive	December 2021
Officer Briefing	Electoral services, Geographic Information Systems, Comms	Review Manager Review Officer	January 2022

Group Leader Briefing	Council Group Leaders	Lead Commissioner Review Manager Review Officer	January 2022
Full Council Briefing	All Councillors	Lead Commissioner Review Manager Review Officer	January 2022

Council Size

Activity	Involvement		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Develop council size proposal	Council Political Groups	Officers will be available to answer any technical queries on making a submission.	January 2022 until July 2022 (6 months)
Submission of council size proposals	Council Political Groups	Officers will acknowledge receipt of submissions.	July 2022
Commission Meeting: Council Size	Not required	Commission	August 2022

Warding Patterns

Activity	Involvement		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Consultation on warding patterns	Council Political Groups General Public	Run consultation, collate & analyse responses.	10 weeks August – October 2022
Commission Meeting: Draft Recommendations	Not required	Commission	January 2023
Consultation on Draft Recommendations	Council Political Groups General Public	Publish draft recommendations. Run consultation, collate & analyse responses.	10 weeks February – April 2023
Commission Meeting: Final Recommendations	Not required	Commission	June 2023
Final Recommendations published	Not required	Commission	July 2023

Order

Activity	Involvement		Key Dates
	Council	LGBCE	
Order laid	Not required	Commission	Autumn 2023
Order made	Not required	Commission	Winter 2023
Implementation	Council	Not required	May 2024

Members will note that, throughout the process, there are points when their views will be sought on any emerging proposals, either through Council, or through their Groups, and meetings will be arranged for the purpose of ensuring that Members are kept informed of both proposals and progress. In addition, as part of the Warding Patterns element of the process, the public will have the opportunity to make representations about any proposed warding arrangements which are put forward.

1.5.4 Next Steps

Once the LGBCE confirms a start-date for the review, the briefings indicated in the table above will be arranged.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Council:

Option 1

Agree to the recommendations set out in 1.2.

Option 2

Not agree to the recommendations set out in 1.2.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

This will enable the views of the Authority to be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, in order that Whole-Council elections can be conducted by no later than May 2024.

1.8 Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report.

1.9 Contact officers:

Bryn Roberts, Director of Law and Governance (Tel. 643 5339)

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the links below:

- Local Government Boundary Commission for England – Technical Guidance [Technical Guidance | LGBCE Site](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial or other resource implications arising from this report.

2.2 Legal

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 sets out the duty placed on the LGBCE to undertake an electoral review of every principal local authority in England ‘from time to time’. The last electoral review of North Tyneside Council was undertaken in 2003.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Details of the consultation process for responding to the LGBCE’s proposals are contained in the main body of the report. Full Council will be consulted on emerging proposals in due course, and public consultation will be carried out at appropriate stages.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equalities and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management implications directly arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications directly arising from this report

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Executive ☒
- Director of Service ☒
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) ☒

- Chief Finance Officer

☒

- Monitoring Officer

☒

- Assistant Chief Executive

☒