



Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Despatched: 12.10.15

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
20 October 2015 at 7.00 pm
Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

AGENDA

Membership:

Chairman: Cllr. Pett Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Ms. Tennessee
Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Clack, Layland, London and a vacancy

	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 July 2015 as a correct record.	(Pages 1 - 4)	
2. Declarations of Interest Any interest not already registered		
3. Actions from the previous meeting (if any)		
4. Governance Review with Invitation Speaker Cllr. Fran Wilson, Leader of Maidstone Borough Council, invited to speak on Maidstone Borough Council's decision to return to the committee system of governance.	(Pages 5 - 10)	Christine Nuttall Tel: 01732 227245
5. Appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for parish polls	(Pages 11 - 14)	Nicola P Fletcher Tel: 01732 227188
6. Progress of Individual Electoral Registration	(Pages 15 - 20)	Christian Everett Tel: 01732 227243
7. Further Limited Consultation Period on the KCC Boundary Review	(Pages 21 - 32)	Christian Everett Tel: 01732 227243
8. Electoral Review of Sevenoaks District Council	(Pages 33 - 52)	Christine Nuttall Tel: 01732 227245
9. Work Plan	(Pages 53 - 54)	

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing this agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items

which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:

The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2015 commencing at 6.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Pett (Chairman)

Cllr. Ms. Tennessee

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Clack, Layland and Ms. Tennessee

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Halford and London

Cllr. Firth was also present.

1. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee held on 26 February 2015 be approved and signed as a correct record.

2. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations were made.

3. Actions arising from the last meeting

There were none.

CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA ITEMS

With the agreement of the Committee, agenda item 6 was brought before agenda item 4.

4. KCC Boundary Review - Response to Consultation

The Electoral Services Manager presented a report which advised that on 12 May 2015 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) had issued a consultation document on its draft proposals for new county council division boundaries for Kent County Council (KCC). The review was being conducted as KCC currently had high levels of electoral inequality where some councillors represented many more or many fewer voters than others. The aims of the review were to improve electoral equality, reflect community identities and provide for effective and convenient local government. There was proposed to be a reduction of one division and one member for representation within the Sevenoaks District.

The consultation period was due to end on 6 July (an eight-week period) which would not have allowed time for a formal response from this Council without special meetings of Governance Committee and Full Council being called. The Chief Executive had written to the LGBCE who had agreed to an extension to 22 July (the day after full Council on 21 July 2015) on the basis that a draft of what would be considered by Council on that date

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Governance Committee - 13 July 2015

could be sent to them by 6 July and notified on 22 July of any changes made at Council. To this effect the report had been considered by the Legal & Democratic Advisory Committee on 2 July 2015 in order to inform the Portfolio Holder for Legal and Governance and allow a holding response to be sent. The [minute](#) from that meeting was tabled along with the [holding response](#) which had been sent, expressing that meeting's preference for alternative option 3.

Members considered and discussed all the proposals, in particular whether they agreed with the preference given in the holding response.

With regards to the alternative option 3 it was noted that it made sense for the denser population centres of Swanley and Sevenoaks to be clearly represented by single County Council members while Westerham would fit neatly into an "A25 corridor" division together with Brasted and Sundridge with Ide Hill. The suggested Sevenoaks Rural North East division, in this option, appeared a cohesive area. It was agreed that the Rural designations of Sevenoaks Rural South and Sevenoaks Rural North East helped to provide distinction for these areas from Sevenoaks Town.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Council that Council confirm the holding response sent to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England on 3 July 2015 with alternative option 3, along with the alternative proposed division names also detailed on that map, as the preferred option.

5. Overview of Governance Committee

The Chief Officer Legal and Governance presented a report which provided details of the role of the Committee and its terms of reference including in considering constitutional changes and making recommendations on those to Council. The report summarised the work of the Committee over the two previous municipal years.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

6. The Local Authorities (Standing Orders)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2015 - Appointment and Dismissal of Senior Officers

The Chief Officer Legal & Governance introduced a report which advised that, due to recent legislative changes, the Council was required to amend its standing orders with regard to the dismissal of its Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer or Section 151 Officer (the statutory officers) no later than the first ordinary meeting of the Council falling after 11 May 2015.

The Chief Officer Legal & Governance advised that previously disciplinary action had to be in accordance with a report of a designated independent person, who had to be appointed jointly by the Council and the statutory officer. This joint appointment process could cause delays. There was now instead to be a panel appointed which would include the two independent persons appointed for the Member Conduct regime.

In response to questions the Officer confirmed that there was no limit to the number of further appointments which could be made to the panel which could also include Members or non-Members. Any Members would have to be appointed on a politically proportional basis. Further clarification on how the panels would work in practice was expected in any future guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That Full Council be recommended to approve the amendments to Officer Employment Procedure Rules (Appendix M of the Constitution) and paragraph 6 of the Constitution entitled “Functions of the Full Council” within Part 2 – The Council and District Council Members, in relation to the dismissal of statutory officers, attached as an appendix to the report.

7. Work Plan

The Chairman tabled an article from the Leader of Maidstone Borough Council on their move from the Cabinet to the Committee system of governance. It was agreed to invite her to the meeting of the Committee on 20 October 2015 to discuss governance arrangements while an appropriate Officer from that Council would be invited to attend the meeting on 13 April 2016. It was suggested that representatives from Canterbury could be invited to each meeting too.

The Committee considered the role of Member surveys and it was suggested a survey could be carried out towards the end of the year, but Members raised concern that it may take longer for new Members to become familiar with the way the Council worked before taking part in a survey.

An item would be added for the meetings in October and April for considering the boundaries of the Council wards and whether there was inequality in the number of voters per councillor. The Committee would also consider the effect if the total number of District Councillors were to be reduced.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 6.46 PM

CHAIRMAN

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS WITH INVITATION SPEAKER CLLR FRAN WILSON

Governance Committee – 20 October 2015

Report of Chief Officer Legal and Governance

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: The Governance Committee is tasked with continuing to investigate possible future Governance arrangements in general. Cllr Fran Wilson, Group Leader and Leader of Maidstone Borough Council, has been invited to speak to the Governance Committee on Maidstone Borough Council's decision to return to the committee system of governance.

This report supports the Key Aim of Effective Use of Council Resources

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Firth

Contact Officer(s) Christine Nuttall Ext 7245

Recommendation to Governance Committee:

That Members continue to investigate possible future Governance arrangements in general.

Reason for recommendation: Following a recommendation of Council on 1 April 2014 the Governance Committee is tasked with continuing to investigate future Governance arrangements in general to allow the newly elected administration in 2015 to consider future governance.

Introduction and Background

1. Cllr. Fran Wilson, (Lib Dem) who is Group Leader and Leader of Maidstone Borough Council has been invited to speak to Sevenoaks District Council's Governance Committee on Maidstone's Borough Council's return to a Committee System of governance.

2. In May 2013 Sevenoaks District Council introduced new governance arrangements (sometimes referred to as a Hybrid Model) following Members concerns with the previous arrangements in the following areas:

Perception of remoteness/inaccessibility of portfolios; feeling of disengagement from the influence and decision-making; lack of training and development (succession planning for future Cabinet members); and the need to streamline the system to match the resource available.

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3. Following implementation of the new governance arrangements a full review took place and was reported back to Full Council in April 2014. A Governance Committee Working Group was set up who reported back to the Governance Committee through out the municipal year. In that year two Member surveys took place which resulted in changes to the new system that had been implemented. In addition, during that period the option of returning to the Committee System was considered.
4. The present system that has evolved through the reviews of the new Hybrid Model has resulted in seven Cabinet Advisory Committees. Each Cabinet Advisory Committee comprises 12 elected Members appointed in line with political proportionality rules, including the relevant Portfolio Holder. Each Cabinet Advisory Committee's terms of reference are as follows:
 - undertake policy initiation and development;
 - consider such other matters as are referred to it by the Portfolio Holder;
 - at the request of either Cabinet or the Audit Committee carry out specific research and development projects and to submit recommendations to Cabinet;
 - develop and approve its annual work plan ensuring that there is efficient use of the Committee's time; and
 - the Cabinet Member be requested to provide a report to each meeting outlining their activities since the previous meeting any decisions they intend to take in the following three months.
5. The Scrutiny Committee has a fixed membership with all members of the Committee being independent of the Cabinet Advisory Committees.
6. The above so called Hybrid Model over the Committee System was chosen as the most appropriate system to overcome the concerns that had been expressed by Members. However, Annual Council in May 2014 resolved that the Governance Committee should continue to investigate future Governance arrangements in general in order to allow the newly elected administration in 2015 to consider future governance which this report aims to explore.

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of the Committee System and the Leader and Cabinet System

7. A decision as to whether or not to return to a committee system is a decision for Full Council. In considering the arrangements the following factors have been identified by other authorities considering change:

The Committee System

Advantages

- All councillors have a broader role as members of several committees and are directly involved in taking decisions provided wider representation of local interests.
- Themed committees enable more Members to become specialists in subject/service areas.
- Style of Leadership is consensual and all committees have cross-party membership.

Disadvantages

- Resources – the ongoing costs to support a committee system have been estimated to be higher by those authorities that have already looked into changing. There would also be a need for considerable officer and member time to be spent in preparing for and implementing a new committee system.
- If the Council agrees to move to a committee system and passes a resolution to this effect the change would take effect from the next Annual Council meeting that follows the resolution and then the local authority may not pass another resolution changing back to the Cabinet system until the end of the period of 5 years beginning with the date the original resolution was passed.
- Operating under a committee system will mean that the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) would need to review the new arrangements and make proposals for changes to Members Allowances.
- Operating under a committee system is a very different model of decision making as compared with executive arrangements. As a result the authority would need to review how it engages with and supports Members. New arrangements will need to be implemented which adequately support Members to operate effectively under the committee system.
- The speed of decision making can be slower.
- Committees are subject area based which could create silos with less strategic overview and involvement from other parts of the council.
- Potential increase in Member and Officer workload to reintroduce and support the committee system

Leader and Cabinet System

Advantages

- The system is more aligned to the Cabinet and Select Committee system of governance operated by central government which could make it more easily understandable to members of the public.

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- A Cabinet can look at issues in the round and prevent decisions being taken in 'silo'
- Decision making is allocated to a relatively small group of councillors. This allows clarity of accountability and speed of decision-making. It also tends to mean that individual decisions are often subject to greater Member consideration by portfolio holders and collectively by the Cabinet informally than in a committee system.

Disadvantages

- Decision making powers are allocated to a relatively small group of councillors and it excludes other councillors from any real decision making except in regulatory functions and where major decisions have to be taken in Full Council.
- There is a perception that it is less democratic as not all councillors have the opportunity to be involved in decision making.
- There is also a perception that it is less consultative with scrutiny unable to successfully influence Cabinet decision making.

Other Councils

10. The leader cabinet system is seen in most English authorities and is the standard approach which the majority of councils currently operate.
11. All Councils in Kent are working under some form of cabinet governance model. Only Tandridge District Council over the border in Surrey is working under the Leader and Committee System as a result of their population falling under the threshold for the previous requirement to change to the Cabinet system of governance. However, Canterbury City Council returned to the Committee system at the Annual Council meeting in 2015 as well as Maidstone Borough Council.
12. A number of Councils in Kent including Sevenoaks District Council have adopted a Hybrid Model which overcomes some of the disadvantages associated with the Cabinet Model. This is still a Leader Cabinet Model and so does not require Secretary of State approval.

Key Implications

Financial

It is likely that there will be additional net cost implications if a change of governance to the Committee System were to take place. At this point in time no quantification of such costs has been made and there would be additional costs of preparing detailed proposals for which financial provision would need to be allocated.

Legal Implications

The Local Government Act 2000 gave effect to the Government's plans to change the way that local authorities made decisions. The central feature of the new system was a

division between executive elected members, who would make decisions and non-executive elected members who would scrutinise those decisions. The aim of separating the roles of executive and non-executive elected members was to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability. The Government gave local authorities three main alternative decision-making models:

- A directly elected Mayor and Cabinet;
- A Leader and Cabinet; or
- A directly elected Mayor and Council Manager

Sevenoaks District Council adopted the Leader and Cabinet Model.

The Localism Act 2011 gives Councils greater freedoms over their governance arrangements allowing them to choose which governance system they operate from the following options:

- Leader and Cabinet Executive;
- Mayor and Cabinet Executive;
- A Committee System;
- Other Arrangements approved by the Secretary of State

The Act is clear that a local authority with committee based governance arrangements may appoint one or more committees as the authority's overview and scrutiny committee or committees and so any desire to return to the Committee system of governance could include the elements of an authority's current scrutiny system.

Equality Assessment

The decision recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

The Governance Committee through its working group has undertaken work to look at the practicalities and appropriateness of moving to the Committee System or a Hybrid model. The Hybrid model over the Committee System was chosen as the most appropriate system to overcome the concerns that had been previously expressed by Members.

Annual Council in May 2014 resolved that the Governance Committee continue to investigate future Governance arrangements in general to allow the newly elected administration in 2015 to consider future governance which this report aims to explore.

Background Papers:

[Local Government Association Guidance entitled "Rethinking governance".](#)

[Localism Act 2011](#)

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[Cllr Fran Wilson publication "Committee system best for everyone"](#)

Christine Nuttall
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance

APPOINTMENT OF A DEPUTY ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER AND A RETURNING OFFICER FOR PARISH POLLS

Governance Committee – 20 October 2015

Report of Chief Officer Legal and Governance

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Council - 3 November 2015

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Firth

Contact Officer(s) Nicola Fletcher, Ext. 7188

Recommendation to Governance Committee: That it be recommended to Council

- (a) that the Chief Officer for Corporate Support be appointed Deputy Electoral Registration Officer for the Sevenoaks District Council, and
- (b) that the Chief Executive be appointed as Returning Officer for any polls held under the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987.

Recommendation to Council:

- (a) that the Chief Officer for Corporate Support be appointed Deputy Electoral Registration Officer for the Sevenoaks District Council, and
- (b) that the Chief Executive be appointed as Returning Officer for any polls held under the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987.

Reason for recommendation: Legislation allows District Councils to appoint an officer of the Council as a deputy to the Electoral Registration Officer to act in the absence of the Electoral Registration Officer and to appoint a Returning Officer to administer any polls held under the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Under section 8(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 the District Council must appoint an Officer to the position of 'Electoral Registration Officer'. This position is responsible for maintaining the Electoral Register for the area. In 2013, the Chief Executive was appointed as the Electoral Registration Officer.

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- 2 Under section 52(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 the Council may appoint a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer who is able to perform and exercise any of the duties and powers of the Electoral Registration Officer.
- 3 One of the roles of the Electoral Registration Officer is to hold a hearing in respect of any reviews of registration or any objections received for an application to be included on the Register of Electors. Reviews and objections can be made at anytime during the life of the Register. The objections may be in relation to an existing elector as well as new applications. For objections, the legislation provides that these hearings must be held no earlier than the third day and no later than the seventh day after the notice of objection was received. If a hearing is not held within this timescale then the Council will be in breach of the legislation.
- 4 Since the Council does not currently have a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer then there is a risk the Council could be in breach of the legislation if the Electoral Registration Officer (Chief Executive) is absent for a period when a hearing needs to take place. Therefore it is recommended that a permanent appointment is made to this post in order to remove that risk.
- 5 Rule 4(1) of the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 states that the Council shall appoint an officer of the Council to be Returning Officer to conduct any polls.
- 6 At present the Council does not have an officer appointed to this role, however, the Chief Executive has been appointed as Returning Officer for District and Parish elections. Traditionally, the Chief Executive has been appointed to all Returning Officer roles.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications to this appointment.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The appointment of the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer will mitigate risks in the event that the Electoral Registration Officer is unavailable as his deputy will be able to undertake his duties.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

It is recommended that Council appoints a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer to reduce the risks of not being able to administer electoral register hearings within the statutory timescale as the Deputy Electoral Registration Officer will have the same powers. It is recommended that Council appoints a Returning Officer for polls held under the Parish

and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 to enable any such poll to be administered if required.

Background Papers:

[Representation of the People Act 1983, Sections 8 and 52](#)

[The Parish and Community Meetings \(Polls\) Rules 1987](#)

Christine Nuttall
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance

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PROGRESS OF INDIVIDUAL ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

Governance Committee – 20 October 2015

Report of Chief Officer Legal and Governance

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Firth

Contact Officer(s) Christian Everett, Ext.7243

Recommendation to Governance Committee:

To note the progress of Individual Electoral Registration.

Introduction and Background

1. Individual Electoral Registration (IER) was introduced by the Cabinet Office in June 2014. This new system requires individual residents to provide their National Insurance Number (NINo) and Date of Birth (DoB) upon registering to vote. In doing so the system is more secure and reduces potential electoral fraud.

Annual Canvass 2015

2. In the period 3 August 2015 to 1 December 2015, Electoral Services are carrying out a statutory canvass of residential households to obtain current information on residency. This is the first ever full IER canvass. Every residential property has received a Household Enquiry Form (HEF) that seeks up to date information on residency. Any non-responders receive a reminder HEF and further, a door-knock from a personal canvasser who will encourage the return of information.
3. An automated online/Freephone/text service for the return of the information is available. This provides an alternative means to sending back the form and saves in return postage fees.
4. Each new resident listed on the HEF is required to complete a statutory Invitation to Register (ITR) form. Non responses to the ITR in the canvass period are also subject to reminder forms and a personal door-knock. The personal canvassing of ITRs is from 16 October 2015 to 6 November 2015. The ITR can be completed online.
5. The personal canvassing of HEFs commenced on 18 September 2015 and will be complete by 6 November 2015. 69% of HEFs were responded to, so canvassers are door-knocking on 31% of residential properties.

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6. On 1 December 2015 the revised 2016 Register of Electors will be published by using information obtained in the canvass. All electors registered under IER on the existing register, will continue to be so.

Public Engagement

7. During the canvass, Electoral Services are visiting all 27 Care Homes in the district to provide a personal service and help facilitate the registration process.
8. A recent Order laid by the Minister responsible for IER requires the removal of any existing non-IER registered electors upon publication of the register on 1 December 2015. These electors have not responded to their previous ITRs. This currently represents 3.5% of existing registered electors.
9. The legislation requires that each non-IER registered elector must be sent a further ITR after 31 October. Since there is no guarantee of a response, the Minister has offered funding to specifically target these electors in addition to the ITR.
10. The Communications team have undertaken extensive work on the Council's website; making the annual canvass information prominent with a banner and link on the main homepage. Additionally, press releases have been sent to local media with a quote from the Portfolio Holder on the importance of registering to vote and publicity posters have been sent to Parish Clerks, libraries, leisure centres, schools, post offices, prominent businesses, churches, village halls and local pubs.

Projected cost of the IER Canvass

11. 2015 sees the first ever full IER Canvass. Nearly 50,000 residential properties have been sent a HEF. New residents within each household must also complete an ITR. In both cases legislation requires a reminder form and a personal canvass for non responders.
12. New legislation requires that both the HEF and ITR are printed double sided on A3 paper. Each must be housed within its own outgoing envelope, complete with a return envelope, thus making the new system more secure. The additional size and weight of the statutory forms and envelopes attracts additional postage costs.
13. A specialist electoral print supplier has had to be used to keep abreast of the variations of the forms, the statutory wording on the forms and the sheer volumes involved.
14. Canvassers, although paid at the same rate as previously, are visiting more properties due to double canvassing of HEFs and ITRs.
15. Appendix A sets out the detail of a currently projected overspend of £55,800 on the cost of the canvass.

Government Spending Review

16. Cabinet Office is currently undertaking a spending review on the cost of IER and the canvass. On 24 November Cabinet Office will release a paper indicating their decisions on IER spending for the next four years.

Key Implications

Financial

We are forecasting an over spend of £56k for the current financial year. A £40k growth item is being submitted for the 2016/17 budget.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

The implication of not funding the IER canvass to the required level creates a risk of not complying with our statutory obligations of canvassing residential properties.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

New legislation to canvass residential properties under IER introduces an additional financial burden on local authorities. A £40k growth item is proposed for the 2016/17 budget.

Appendices

Appendix A – Table and explanation of additional canvass costs.

Background Papers:

[Governance Committee - 26 February 2015, item 4 Individual Electoral Registration](#)

Christine Nuttall
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance

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Appendix A

Budget Category	Budget	Current forecast	Variance to budgets
	£	£	£
External Printing	-	35,400	35,400
Internal Printing	18,800	2,800	-16,000
Postage	16,600	25,700	9,100
General Postage	12,000	22,000	10,000
Canvassers	26,100	47,500	21,400
Other savings		-4100	-4100
Total	73,500	129,300	55,800

- Previously the forms were printed internally. Due to the complexity of the forms, these need to be printed externally by a specialist electoral print company
- There will be less internal printing
- The increase in postage costs are due to the additional size and weight of statutory forms and the introduction of additional statutory confirmation letters
- Although the payment rate remains the same as previous years, Canvassers will be visiting significantly more properties

The above is based on assumptions of historic response rates between initial and reminder forms and on levels of required personal canvassing.

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FURTHER LIMITED CONSULTATION PERIOD ON THE KCC BOUNDARY REVIEW

Governance Committee – 20 October 2015

Report of	Chief Officer Legal and Governance
Status:	For Consideration
Also considered by:	Legal & Democratic Services Advisory Committee – 8 October 2015
Key Decision:	No

Portfolio Holder	Cllr. Firth
Contact Officer	Christian Everett, Ext.7243

Recommendation to Legal & Democratic Advisory Committee:

To note the further information from the Local Government Boundary Commission which accords with the recommendations made by Full Council on 21 July 2015.

Recommendation to Governance Committee:

To note the further information from the Local Government Boundary Commission which accords with the recommendations made by Full Council on 21 July 2015.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Electoral representation across the County Electoral Divisions in Kent remain imbalanced, therefore the Local Government Boundary Commission (LGBC) implemented a review in 2015 which sought views on alternative boundary schemes, with the view to reducing the number of Divisions in the Sevenoaks District by one.
- 2 The LGBC's aim is for an average number of electors per councillor of 14,288 for each County member in total. It is this figure that any division proposal must look to in order to achieve consistent electoral equality. The LGBC also invited comments on any revision of County Division names.
- 3 Members discussed several alternative schemes as devised by The Electoral Services section. The final recommendation was approved at Full Council on 21 July 2015 and it is represented under Appendix A.

Further Limited Consultation

- 4 The LGBC has identified a scheme which accords with the recommendations made by Full Council on 21 July 2015. This scheme had not been made publicly available

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during the previous consultation period, therefore the LGBC are implementing a further limited consultation period which extends from 29 September 2015 to 26 October 2015. Final recommendations will be published on 19 January 2016.

- 5 The scheme is represented under Appendix B. This shows a letter from the LGBC to KCC explaining the further consultation, a news release from the LGBC on the further consultation and the relevant map for the scheme.

Key Implications

Financial

There are no financial implications

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal or risk implications to this further consultation

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

Members are recommended to note the further information contained in Appendix B. Final recommendations will be made available in January 2016.

Appendices

Appendix A – Proposed scheme approved by Full Council

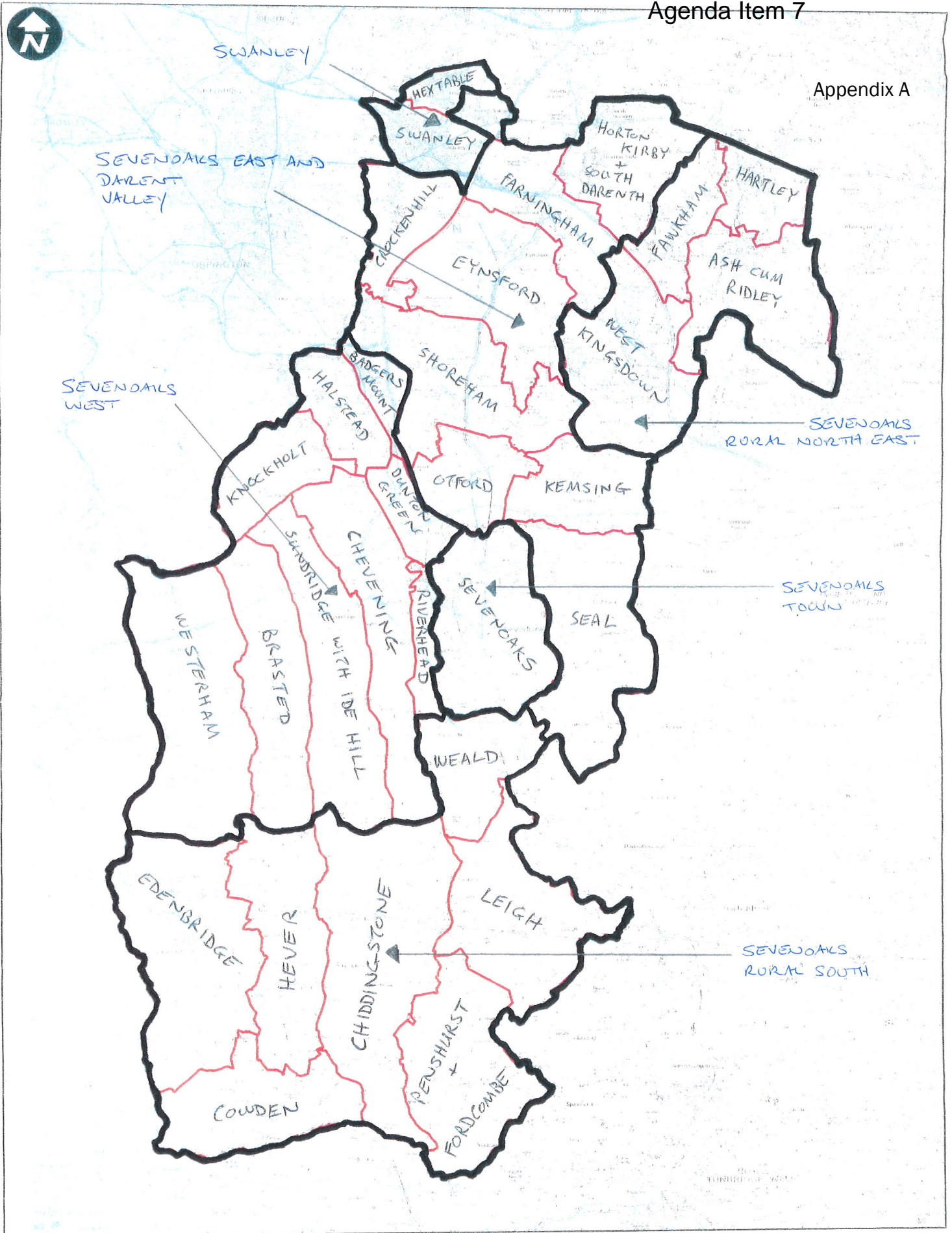
Appendix B – Viable alternative scheme supplied by the LGBC

Background Papers:

[Legal & Democratic Advisory Committee. 2 July 2015. Item 6.](#)

[Governance Committee. 13 July 2015. Item 6.](#)

Christine Nuttall
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance



Sevenoaks Parishes

ALTERNATIVE 4
 SWANLEY VILLAGE, DUNTON GREEN
 & SEAL - CHANGE FROM ALTERNATIVE 3.

Scale: 1:100,000

Date: May 2015



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The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England

News Release

Embargoed until: 00:01, 29 September 2015

Extra chance to have say on Sevenoaks council boundaries

The independent Local Government Boundary Commission for England has opened a new phase of public consultation in its review of Kent County Council's electoral division boundaries.

The consultation focuses on new proposals for county division boundaries in Kent.

Local people have until **26 October 2015** to have their say on the proposals before the Commission finalises its recommendations for new electoral divisions for the whole county.

Earlier this year, the Commission held a public consultation on proposals for new division boundaries across Kent. The Commission has listened to the views put to it during consultation and now proposes to make changes to the plans to reflect local evidence. Due to the significance of the proposed changes in Sevenoaks, the Commission is re-opening its consultation with local people to see what they think of the new recommendations for the district.

The consultation is limited to the Commission's new proposals in Sevenoaks. Details of the recommendations, including maps of the proposals, are available on the Commission's website at www.lgbce.org.uk or at the dedicated review page for the electoral review of Kent at www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/kent/kent-county-council.

Professor Colin Mellors, Deputy Chair of the Commission, said: "We listened carefully to all the views put to us on new electoral division boundaries earlier this year and have made changes to the original recommendations. We are now asking local people to have their say on the revised proposals for Sevenoaks.

"There were some strong arguments made to us that an alternative pattern of divisions in Sevenoaks might better reflect local community interests and identities. That is why we are now putting these recommendations forward for consultation.

"We are asking local people to log on to our website to tell us what they think about these proposals before we publish final recommendations for the whole county in January 2016."

Residents can have their say in writing:

The Review Officer (Kent)
LGBCE
14th floor, Millbank Tower
London SW1P 4QP

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Or email: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

For further information contact:

Press Office: 0330 500 1250 / 1525

press@lgbce.org.uk

ends/

Notes to editors:

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is responsible for reviewing local authority electoral arrangements, defining boundaries for local elections and the number of councillors to be elected, as well as conducting reviews of local government external boundaries and structures.
2. The Commission is carrying out an electoral review of Kent County Council to provide for 'electoral equality'; that means each county councillor representing approximately the same number of electors. The Commission must also have regard to community identity and interests and providing effective and convenient local government.
3. The types of questions the Commission is asking residents at this stage are:
 - a. Do the proposed electoral divisions in Sevenoaks reflect local communities?
 - b. How do you think the proposals can be improved whilst maintaining electoral equality?
 - c. Are the names of the proposed divisions right?
4. Residents have from 29 September until 26 October 2015 to have their say about where division boundaries in Sevenoaks should be drawn. The Commission will consider all submissions and aims to publish its final recommendations in January 2016. Once the Commission agrees its final recommendations it will lay a draft order in both Houses of Parliament. Parliament will then have 40 days in which to consider the recommendations. If both Houses are satisfied with the recommendations, the draft order will be 'made' and the new divisions will come into effect at the county council elections in 2017.
5. The Commission is satisfied that it has received sufficient evidence to finalise new electoral division boundaries for the rest of Kent and aims to publish a full set of final recommendations for Kent County Council in January 2016.

Mr David Cockburn
Head of Paid Service
Kent County Council
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XQ

29 September 2015

Dear Mr Cockburn,

ELECTORAL REVIEW OF KENT: FURTHER LIMITED CONSULTATION FOR SEVENOAKS

Following consultation on draft recommendations for Kent, I am writing to inform you of the Commission's decision to undertake a further period of limited consultation in **Sevenoaks** prior to publication of its final recommendations.

During the consultation on the draft recommendations for Kent, the Commission received 157 submissions, including 23 for Sevenoaks and support for a significantly different division pattern in Sevenoaks.

In light of the representations received during the recent consultation, the Commission is proposing to make significant alterations to its draft recommendations in the Sevenoaks area of the county. We are therefore inviting further comment on this alternative proposal. Copies of all representations can be found on the Commission's website - <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/current-reviews/south-east/kent/kent-county-council>

This period of further limited consultation commences today, **29 September 2015**, and closes on **26 October 2015**. During this period the Commission welcomes comments on the proposed recommendations for divisions in Sevenoaks.

Electorate information for the area subject to further consultation can be found at the end of this letter. The Commission's final recommendations for the whole county, including that area subject to further limited consultation, will now be published on 19 January 2016. Enclosed with this letter is a map illustrating the Commission's further proposals for Sevenoaks.

Sevenoaks

In Sevenoaks the draft recommendations were for the single member divisions of Darent Valley, Sevenoaks East, Sevenoaks North East, Sevenoaks Rural, Sevenoaks West and Swanley. These divisions would have 3% more, 1% fewer, 1% fewer, 7% more, 3% fewer and 10% more electors than the county average by 2020, respectively.

In response to the draft recommendations the Commission received 22 submissions commenting specifically on the Sevenoaks area. There was some support for the proposals for Swanley division. The remainder of the submissions were in opposition to the proposals for Swanley, Sevenoaks Town and the parish of Westerham. We received a full alternative proposal for Sevenoaks from Sevenoaks District Council.

The Commission carefully considered the evidence received for the Sevenoaks area and noted the alternative proposal from Sevenoaks District Council. The Commission identified this proposal as meeting its three statutory criteria. Given that the proposed pattern of divisions has not been consulted on previously, the Commission decided to conduct this period of further limited consultation to seek the views of local residents and organisations.

Further Consultation

The Commission is now undertaking a further period of limited consultation on the electoral divisions in Sevenoaks. The Commission would like to hear whether you support its proposed changes and the reasons for your views.

Representations must be submitted to the Commission by **26 October 2015**. The Commission has not finalised its recommendations and, in light of further evidence, may make further revisions to its proposals in Sevenoaks. We therefore encourage those who have a view on the proposals to write to us, whether they agree with them or not. All representations received during the consultation period will be taken into account and the Commission will then consider whether or not to further amend its proposals prior to the publication of its final recommendations.

Representations should be made in writing to reviews@lgbce.org.uk or:

Review Officer (Kent)
Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor, Millbank Tower
Millbank
London
SW1P 4QP

Any respondents who submit comments during this period of the review, and do not want all or any part of the response or name made public, must state this clearly in the response. Any such request should explain why confidentiality is necessary, but all information in responses may be subject to publication or disclosure as required by law (in particular under the Freedom of Information Act 2000). Following the conclusion of this

further consultation, the Commission will consider any further evidence received and prepare its final recommendations forwarding arrangements in Kent

If you have any queries, please contact Mark Cooper on 0330 500 1272, or mark.cooper@lgbce.org.uk

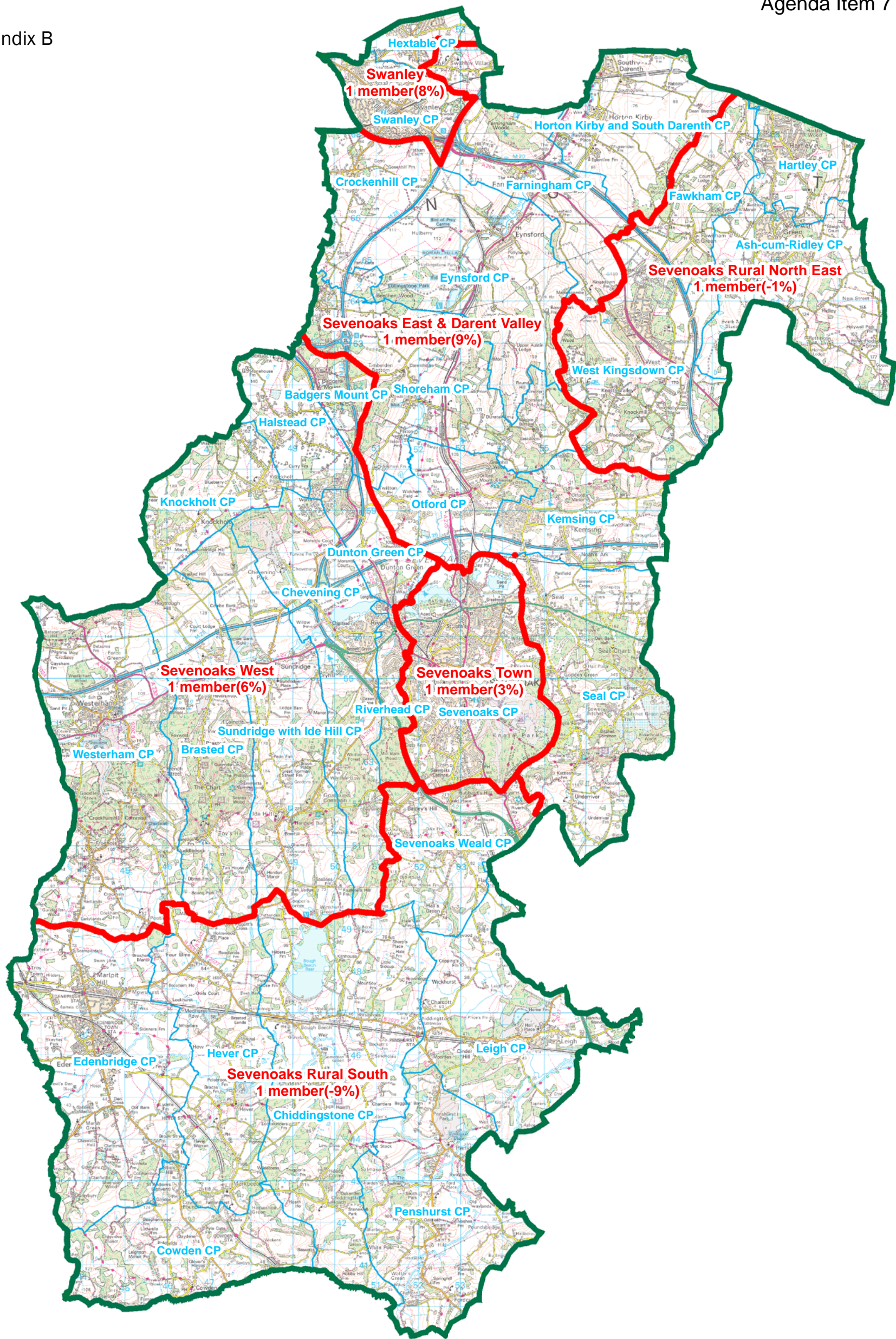
Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area, obscuring the name and any handwritten notes or dates.

Jolyon Jackson CBE
Chief Executive
Jolyon.jackson@lgbce.org.uk
0330 500 1290

ELECTORATE INFORMATION – divisions subject to further consultation

Division name	Number of councillors	Electorate (2014)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %	Electorate (2020)	Number of electors per councillor	Variance from average %
Sevenoaks East & Darent Valley	1	16,034	16,034	19%	15,629	15,629	9%
Sevenoaks Rural North East	1	14,628	14,628	8%	14,154	14,154	-1%
Sevenoaks Rural South	1	13,203	13,203	-2%	13,006	13,006	-9%
Sevenoaks Town	1	14,692	14,692	9%	14,715	14,715	3%
Sevenoaks West	1	14,749	14,749	9%	15,102	15,102	6%
Swanley	1	15,442	15,442	14%	15,416	15,416	8%



Sevenoaks Further Draft Recommendations

Legend

- Sevenoaks District
- Further Draft Recommendations
- Parishes

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ELECTORAL REVIEW FOR SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Governance Committee – 20 October 2015

Report of Chief Officer Legal and Governance

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

This report supports the Key Aim of Effective Use of Council Resources

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Firth

Contact Officer Christine Nuttall Ext 7245

Recommendation to Governance Committee:

That members' views on the possibility of an electoral review of this Council be given.

Reason for recommendation: To give Officers an indication of any initial work to be done prior to the next meeting of the Committee if there is a view that an electoral review of this Council could be pursued.

Introduction and Background

- 1 At the previous meeting of this Committee on 13 July 2015 it was agreed that "An item would be added for the meetings in October and April for considering the boundaries of the Council wards and whether there was inequality in the number of voters per councillor. The Committee would also consider the effect if the total number of District Councillors were to be reduced".
- 2 If the Council wished to pursue any changes to the current arrangements it would have to be carried out as an Electoral Review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). This report sets out the processes that are used in such a review together with some indicative base data for this Council and for other Kent Shire District Councils.
- 3 The last such review of this Council was concluded in 2001. This abolished all the previous wards of the District Council and created the 26 wards that are in existence now. It introduced more multi-member wards from previously single-member wards (eg combining Dunton Green and Riverhead; Seal and Weald) and increased the number of District Councillors from 53 to 54. The changes were implemented at the 2003 local elections.

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LGBCE Processes

- 4 Electoral Reviews consider the overall number of councillors, the names, number and boundaries of wards and the number of councillors to be elected to each. They are carried out primarily to improve electoral equality (that is ensuring, as far as is reasonable, that the ration of electors to councillors in each ward is the same). A copy of the Commission's detailed technical guidance for such reviews is available from their website:

https://www.lgbce.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/10410/technical-guidance-2014.pdf
- 5 The Commission will initiate a review if more than 30% of a Council's wards have an electoral imbalance of more than 10% from the average ratio for that council; one or more wards have an imbalance of more than 30% and these imbalances are unlikely to be corrected by foreseeable changes to the electorate within a reasonable period. Such reviews can also be carried out at a local authority's request, for example to look at the council size (total number of councillors). The Commission has to implement any changes by way of a Statutory Instrument.
- 6 The Commission use the following statutory criteria in conducting any electoral review:
 - The need to secure equality of representation
 - The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
 - The need to secure effective and convenient local government
- 7 The Commission will take into account any changes to the number and distribution of electors that is likely to take place within 5 years following a review, and the council will be required to provide both current and projected electoral statistics on a polling district basis (polling districts are the building blocks for both Parish and District Council wards).
- 8 For requested reviews, before deciding whether to agree to the request, the Commission will meet with the Council's Chief Executive and Leader to establish the reason for the request; the likely scope of any review; and the commitment and capacity of the council to meet the information requirements.

Council size

- 9 There is wide variation in council size across England, not only between different types of authority but also between councils of the same type. The Commission recognises that local government is diverse and their aim is to secure a council size which is right for that particular authority.
- 10 Broadly speaking the Commission will take a view on the right council size by reference to:
 - The governance arrangements
 - The scrutiny function and responsibilities to outside bodies; and
 - The representational role of councillors in the local community

- 11 In cases where the authority's proposal would mean the council size differs significantly from similar authorities, the Commission will require particularly strong evidence. A copy of the Commission's publication "Have your say on: council size", which includes summarised case studies, is attached at Appendix A.

Base Data

- 12 Appendix B gives electorate data by District Council ward based on the current Electoral Register and the projections to 2020 that had been made by Kent County Council as part of their recent Electoral review. It is unlikely that the Commission will initiate a review themselves as the electoral variances indicated are not in excess of the LGBCE criteria (see 5 above). On this basis, the Council would have to request a review if it wished to pursue one.
- 13 In terms of council size, Appendix C gives electorate data for the 12 Kent Shire District Councils, based on 2013 data and 2020 predicted data used in the recent Kent County Council electorate review. This indicates that Sevenoaks, at some 1,630, has the lowest number of electors per councillor of the 12 authorities. Two authorities stand out as being significantly different to the others – Canterbury and Shepway whose ratio is around 2,850 electors per councillor. Both these authorities were subject to electoral reviews concluding in 2014 and saw a significant reduction in their council size (Canterbury reducing from 50 to 39, Shepway from 46 to 30).
- 14 Within the electorate data used for the Kent County Council Review it is notable that Sevenoaks is the only one of the 12 authorities projected to have a slightly reducing electorate, with all the others predicted to grow larger.

Timescales

- 15 Appendix D shows the various stages of an electoral review and indicates likely timescales for each part. This is taken from the LGBCE Technical Guidance referred to above.

Key Implications

Financial

None – an initial view only at this stage as to whether to pursue a review.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Legal responsibility for any review lies with the LGBCE.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Agenda Item 8

Conclusions

Members' views are sought on the possibility of requesting an Electoral Review of the Council.

Appendices

Appendix A – LGBCE publication: Council Size

Appendix B – Current District Ward electorate data

Appendix C – Kent Shire District electorate data

Appendix D – LGBCE Review Timetable

Background Papers:

Appendices to report

LGBCE website – <https://www.lgbce.org.uk/>

Christine Nuttall
Chief Officer for Legal and Governance

The
Local Government
Boundary Commission
for England



Have your say on: council size

Helping you to make the strongest possible case to the Commission

Getting started

If you have an opinion on the number of councillors who should represent your area, there are three important things to remember before you get in touch:

1. Give your reasoning

The Commission takes its decisions on the basis of the evidence and argument put to us. It's important that you tell us **why** you are putting forward your view. Just giving your view without explanation and reasoning is unlikely to persuade the Commission.

2. Make it relevant

Make sure you consider the types of issues we think are relevant to deciding the number of councillors for your area. This guide takes you through the three main areas we look at before we come to a conclusion. You can add any further issues you think are relevant but you should bear in mind the areas set out in this guide.

3. Get in touch

The Commission gives equal weight to all responses to consultation regardless of whom they are from but we need to record them all and consider them together. We also publish all consultation responses so you can see the basis on which we took our decisions. You don't need to write a lot, but if you follow the advice above and elsewhere in this guide, you should be able to make a good case.

Contents

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Quick briefing: Have your say on council size	page 10

About the consultation

In the first stage of every electoral review, the Commission will decide how many councillors - in total - should be elected to your local authority in the future. We call this stage 'council size'.

The council size stage of the review includes a period of public consultation during which we will ask local people and organisations how many councillors they think should represent their council in the future. This guide is designed to help you take part in the consultation by outlining the types of issues we will look at before taking a decision.

We have an open mind about the size of every council and will make recommendations based on the evidence presented to us during the review and the characteristics of the individual authority. We don't compare councils with each other and we don't set any targets or thresholds.

When we hold a public consultation on council size, we will usually publish the number of councillors we are 'minded' to recommend as a starting point for consultation. This gives local people a basis on which to tell us whether they agree with this view or whether there should be more, fewer, or the same number of councillors than our proposal.

Useful links

You will be able to find the number of councillors we are 'minded' to recommend for your area on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk.

You may also find the guidance we provide to councils on this issue, which can be found [here](#) useful.

Our detailed technical guidance on all aspects of an electoral review can also be found [here](#).

You can look at the evidence we've already considered during the review via our dedicated web page for your review on our [website](#). You will be able to read the arguments that have already been put to us about council size, you can comment on them and add your own.

Hints and tips for your submission

Below, you will find the broad areas the Commission will look at as it considers council size. You don't have to answer all or any of the questions - they are just a guide to prompt you about the kinds of issues on which we will take our decisions.

The council's governance and decision-making

We want to ensure that the council has the right number of councillors to take decisions effectively on behalf of your area.

If the council has too few members, it might not be able to take important decisions quickly and the council could lack democratic accountability in some areas of its work. Similarly, too many councillors could also lead to inefficient decision making and would not provide the kind of effective local government the Commission tries to encourage.

- Do you think the council could take decisions effectively for your area with more, fewer, or the same number of councillors as we are proposing in this consultation?
- Are there any ways in which your council has changed in recent years which means it requires more or fewer councillors to take decisions? Are there any changes likely to take place in the future which would affect the number of councillors representing it?

Committees and scrutiny

Local authority committees have important responsibilities. They take decisions on planning, licensing and other community issues. It's also important that councillors are able to hold their colleagues to account for the decisions they take in your area: a function often undertaken by scrutiny committees and other council bodies.

- What impact do you think your proposal for the number of councillors for your area will have on its responsibilities to decide planning, licensing and other important local issues?
- Does your proposal mean there would be the right number of councillors represented on local partnerships, trusts and other organisations (e.g. charities, services delivered with other agencies such as the NHS or Police) where the council has a stake on behalf of your community?

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Councillors' representational role

We want to make sure we provide the right number of councillors to represent all local communities across your area in an effective way. We accept that councillors will take different approaches to the way they represent their constituents so we will assess this issue in fairly broad terms.

- To what extent are councillors represented on local committees/forums? If so, how might your proposal affect their ability to deliver those responsibilities?
- What kind of impact would an increase or decrease in councillors have on the service local people expect from their councillor?
- How many councillors do you think your council needs so that all the diverse communities in your area are represented effectively by their council?

This is not – and is not intended to be – an exhaustive list of the issues the Commission will consider when coming to a conclusion on the number of councillors for an authority.

Previous examples

This section lists examples of submissions we have previously received from local authorities on council size.

Every council is different and we would not expect arguments in favour of a reduction or increase in the number of councillors to be the same for different authorities. They are included here simply to give you an idea of the kind of evidence the Commission has previously considered.

Case study: Hartlepool Borough Council

In July 2010, the Commission consulted on the council size for Hartlepool Borough Council as part of an electoral review to deal with electoral imbalances between local wards. During the consultation, the directly elected Mayor of Hartlepool proposed a reduction in the number of councillors from 47 to 32 members.

The Mayor's submission focused on changes, supported by statistical evidence, to the decision making processes at the council which meant that fewer councillors were required to deliver effective and convenient local government to local people. The evidence included:

- The impact of the mayoral arrangement and executive functions on streamlining the council's decision making process.
- The attendance of members of the council under the current committee arrangements.
- The Mayor's plans to reshape committees and decision making structures within the council for the future.

The Commission found the Mayor's evidence persuasive and, in its final recommendations, proposed that the council should have 33 members in future.

You can find the Mayor's submission on our website:

http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_documents/lgbce/submissions/hartlepool/mayor-hartlepool-cs-sub-2010-08-31.pdf

Case study: Slough Borough Council

In April 2011 the Commission considered the number of councillors to serve Slough Borough Council in the future. The council provided evidence to the Commission about the role of local councillors in their communities and that trends in Slough meant that an increase in the number of councillors (by one) was justified. The submission:

- Provided details of increases in casework for members of the council in recent years.
- Explained the complex nature of a councillor's representational role in Slough.
- Illustrated a direct relationship between the development of the borough and the work of the council and its members.

The Commission found the evidence persuasive and, for the purposes of its draft recommendations, indicated it was minded to increase the size of Slough Borough Council by one councillor to 42.

Slough Borough Council's submission can be viewed on the Commission's website at:

http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_documents/lgbce/submissions/slough-fer/slough-info-gathering-submissions/2011-09-26_sloughbc.pdf

Case study: Vale of White Horse District Council

In early 2012, the Commission considered the number of councillors who should represent the district council in the future. The Commission received evidence that proposed a reduction of 13 councillors.

The Commission received a submission that proposed 38 councillors for Vale of White Horse and provided arguments, backed up with evidence, that such a reduction would complement the Commission's criteria which are set out elsewhere in this guide.

- The submission described how its streamlined decision making processes – through the Cabinet – handle much of the council's business and that several councillors are not required to sit on any committees.
- The submission described how 38 councillors would allow the council to deliver effective and convenient local government in the immediate and long term by assessing future trends.
- The Commission also heard evidence about how technology had helped elected members represent communities more effectively and that they could continue to do so with larger wards.

The Commission found the evidence persuasive and subsequently recommended that the council should have 38 councillors in future. The Commission believed that its arguments complemented its statutory criteria.

You can read the full submission on our website at:

http://www.lgbce.org.uk/_documents/lgbce/submissions/vale-of-white-horse/vale-of-white-horse-council-submission-cs-2012-03.pdf

What happens next?

Once the Commission has considered all the evidence and taken its decision on the future size of the council, we will publish the decision on our website and immediately open a new phase of consultation. The next part of the consultation will ask you where you think new ward boundaries should be drawn in your area as we put together draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements.

You will find all the advice you need to take part in any other stages of the electoral review on our website at www.lgbce.org.uk or go directly to our consultation portal at consultation.lgbce.org.uk .

How you can have your say

Website: you can keep track of the electoral review for your area through our website at www.lgbce.org.uk. We set up a dedicated web page for each review where you will find details of its timetable, our reports, maps, proposals and guidance.

Email: You can make a submission to us directly through our website or by emailing: reviews@lgbce.org.uk.

Write: to us at:

Local Government Boundary Commission for England
3rd Floor, Layden House
76-86 Turnmill Street
London
EC1M 5LG

Interactive consultation portal: we have built a dedicated consultation portal as part of our website which allows you to have your say during any part of our consultation. Just log on to our website at www.lgbce.org.uk or go directly to consultation.lgbce.org.uk to have your say. Later in the review, you can return to the portal to have a look at our interactive maps.

Agenda Item 8

Quick briefing: Have your say on council size

The first part of any electoral review is for the Commission to take a view on the total number of councillors who should represent the authority in the future. We call this issue 'council size'.

We will normally propose a certain number of councillors for your area as a basis for consultation. We will then ask for your views and whether you think there should be more, fewer, or the same number of councillors as our suggestion.

If you would like to take part in the consultation, there are a few things you should remember:

1. Give your reasoning – tell us **why** you think there should be more, fewer, or the same number of councillors in the future. We can only agree to your proposal if we are persuaded that such a move would deliver effective local government for your area.
2. Keep it relevant – think about the criteria below which we will consider before we take our decisions.
3. Get in touch – we aren't necessarily looking for long responses to the consultation but we'd like you to set out your views so that we can consider them alongside all our other submissions and publish them on our website.

Below are some of the things we'll consider before we come to a conclusion.

The council's governance and decision-making

Will your proposal mean that the council has the right number of councillors to take decisions efficiently and effectively on behalf of your area now and in the future?

Committees and scrutiny

Will your suggestion on council size mean that there will be the right number of councillors to represent the council on local bodies and partnerships as well as having enough councillors to hold the council's executive decision makers to account?

Councillors' representational role

Does your proposal take into account local councillors' responsibility to represent all your area's diverse communities? Are there any trends in the way councillors represent local people that might affect the total number of councillors needed to represent your area?

Find out more

On our website at www.lgbce.org.uk you will find a web page dedicated to the review of your area. You will also find our consultation portal which is continuously updated throughout the review where you can have your say directly at consultation.lgbce.org.uk.

Our website also includes useful information on evidence we've already received about your area as well as consultation submissions from other areas that you can use while compiling yours.

Or simply email us at reviews@lgbce.org.uk.

Current District Ward electorate data

Appendix B

Polling district	District ward	Electorate 2020	Sept 2015	Members	Electors per Member 2020	Electors per Member Sept 2015	Variance 2020	Variance Sept 2015
AA AC AD	Ash and New Ash Green	4,581	4,679	3	1,527	1,560	-6.32	-5.82
AF AG AH CI CJ	Brasted, Chevening and Sundridge	4,919	5,056	3	1,640	1,685	0.59	1.77
AM BB BC	Cowden and Hever	1,555	1,624	1	1,555	1,624	-4.60	-1.93
AN CH	Crockenhill and Well Hill	1,490	1,561	1	1,490	1,561	-8.59	-5.74
AO BN	Dunton Green and Riverhead	4,180	3,684	2	2,090	1,842	28.22	11.23
AP AS AU	Edenbridge North and East	3,603	3,787	2	1,802	1,894	10.52	14.34
AQ AR AT	Edenbridge South and West	3,132	3,199	2	1,566	1,600	-3.93	-3.41
AV	Eynsford	1,459	1,496	1	1,459	1,496	-10.49	-9.66
AW BE BF	Farningham, Horton Kirby and South Darenth	3,695	3,852	2	1,848	1,926	13.34	16.30
AX CS CT CU CV	Fawkham and West Kingsdown	4,769	4,895	3	1,590	1,632	-2.48	-1.47
AE AY BI	Halstead, Knockholt and Badgers Mount	2,735	2,787	2	1,368	1,394	-16.11	-15.85
AB AZ BA	Hartley and Hodsoll Street	4,804	4,861	3	1,601	1,620	-1.76	-2.15
BD	Hextable	3,282	3,387	2	1,641	1,694	0.67	2.26
BG BH	Kemsing	3,217	3,306	2	1,609	1,653	-1.32	-0.18
AJ BJ	Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway	1,849	1,742	1	1,849	1,742	13.43	5.19
BK CF CG	Otford and Shoreham	3,522	3,583	2	1,761	1,792	8.03	8.18
AI AK AL BL BM	Penshurst, Fordcombe and Chiddingstone	1,936	2,021	1	1,936	2,021	18.77	22.04
BO BP BQ CD CE	Seal and Weald	3,130	3,179	2	1,565	1,590	-3.99	-4.02
BV BW	Sevenoaks Eastern	2,924	3,067	2	1,462	1,534	-10.31	-7.40
BX BY CA	Sevenoaks Kippington	3,389	3,696	2	1,695	1,848	3.95	11.59
BR BS BT	Sevenoaks Northern	3,164	3,237	2	1,582	1,619	-2.95	-2.26
BU BZ CB CC	Sevenoaks Town and St John's	4,914	4,815	3	1,638	1,605	0.49	-3.08
CK CL CO	Swanley Christchurch and Swanley Village	4,796	4,462	3	1,599	1,487	-1.92	-10.19
CM	Swanley St Mary's	3,103	3,209	2	1,552	1,605	-4.82	-3.11
CN CP	Swanley White Oak	4,606	4,779	3	1,535	1,593	-5.81	-3.80
CQ CR	Westerham and Crockham Hill	3,268	3,460	2	1,634	1,730	0.24	4.47
		88,022	89,424	54	1,630	1,656		

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Kent Shire District electorate data

APPENDX C

	Electorate 2013	Electorate 2020	Members	Electors per Member 2013	Electors per Member 2020	Variance 2013	Variance 2020
Ashford DC	90,547	97,913	43	2,106	2,277	7.73	9.98
Canterbury CC (***)	112,806	118,221	39	2,892	3,031	47.98	46.41
Dartford BC	73,145	85,468	44	1,662	1,942	-14.95	-6.18
Dover DC	84,714	94,440	45	1,883	2,099	-3.69	1.37
Gravesham BC	73,940	76,285	44	1,680	1,734	-14.03	-16.26
Maidstone BC	118,976	127,097	55	2,163	2,311	10.67	11.61
SEVENOAKS DC	88,748	88,022	54	1,643	1,630	-15.92	-21.27
Shepway DC (***)	82,485	85,603	30	2,750	2,853	40.66	37.82
Swale BC	98,399	102,257	47	2,094	2,176	7.11	5.09
Thanet DC	96,438	101,472	56	1,722	1,812	-11.90	-12.48
Tonbridge & Malling BC	90,997	98,347	54	1,685	1,821	-13.79	-12.03
Tunbridge Wells BC	81,456	82,218	48	1,697	1,713	-13.18	-17.27
	1,092,651	1,157,343	559	1,955	2,070		

(***) NOTE:

Canterbury CC reduced its size from 50 to 39 following a review in 2014

Shepway DC reduced its size from 46 to 30 following a review in 2014

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LGBCE**APPENDIX D****Stages for electoral reviews**

Stage	Action	Duration(*)
Preliminary Period	Informal dialogue with local authority. Focus on gathering preliminary information including electorate forecasts and other electoral data. Commissioner-level involvement in briefing group leaders on the issue of council size. Meetings also held with officers, group leaders, full council and, where applicable, parish and town councils. At the end of this process, the council under review and its political groups should submit their council size proposals for the Commission to consider.	Up to 6 months in advance of formal start of review
Council size decision	Commission analyses submissions from local authority and/or political groups on council size and takes a 'minded to' decision on council size.	5 weeks
Formal start of review		
Consultation on future warding/division arrangements	The Commission publishes its initial conclusions on council size. General invitation to submit warding/division proposals based on Commission's conclusions on council size.	12 weeks
Development of draft recommendations	Analysis of all representations received. The Commission reaches conclusions on its draft recommendations.	12 weeks
Consultation on draft recommendations	Publication of draft recommendations and public consultation on them.	8 weeks
Further Consultation (if required)	Further consultation only takes place where the Commission is minded to make significant changes to its draft recommendations and where it lacks sufficient evidence of local views in relation to those changes.	Up to 5 weeks
Development of final recommendations	Analysis of all representations received. The Commission reaches conclusions on its final recommendations.	12 weeks

(*) Time periods shown are the expected typical duration of stages. They are not standards or undertakings. The progress of a review will be determined by the nature of the issues to be addressed and the availability of information to underpin sound decision-making, not by a determination to complete a review within any given period.

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Governance Committee Work Plan 2015/16

20 October 2015	13 April 2016	Summer 2016
<p>Review of governance arrangements – request guest speaker political representatives from Canterbury or Maidstone Borough Councils to examine how committee system has embedded</p> <p>Further limited consultation on the KCC Boundary Review</p> <p>Review of Sevenoaks District Council ward boundaries</p> <p>Appointment of a Deputy Electoral Registration Officer and Returning Officer for parish polls</p> <p>Progress of Individual Electoral Registration</p>	<p>Review of governance arrangements – request guest speaker Officer representatives from Canterbury or Maidstone Borough Councils to examine how committee system has embedded</p> <p>Review of Sevenoaks District Council ward boundaries</p>	

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