

# Crawley Borough Council

## Report to Governance Committee

26 March 2018

### Electoral Review – Ward Patterns

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – LDS/135

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#### 1. Purpose

To consider the Council's draft submission of a pattern of Wards to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE).

#### 2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the report and findings of the Working Group on a pattern of Wards for the Borough

2.2 That Full Council is recommended:

a) To endorse the Working Group's findings that the Council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England should be for a mixed pattern of Wards (10 Wards served by 3 Councillors and 3 Wards served by 2 Councillors).

b) approve the mixed pattern of Wards submission as detailed in [Appendix A](#)

#### 3. Reasons for the Recommendations

3.1 To ensure that the Council's views on a most suitable pattern of Wards are submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England in accordance with the Review timetable by proposing the pattern that the Council believes will be right for the authority from May 2019 and that meet the statutory criteria.

#### 4. Background

4.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is undertaking an electoral review of Crawley. The electoral arrangements for Crawley were last reviewed in 2002. Developments in the borough, particularly in the Three Bridges Ward since that time has led to electoral inequality between Wards that the review will address.

4.2 Reviews are conducted under the provisions of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 and cover:

- The number of Councillors to be elected to the Council (Council size)
- The number, names and boundaries of Wards
- The number of Councillors to be elected for each Ward

4.3 In deciding the above, Schedule 2 to the 2009 Act sets out the statutory criteria to which the Commission are required to have regard to, these are:

- The need to ensure equality of representation
- The need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and
- The need to secure effective and convenient local government

4.4 There are four stages to the review:

#### **Stage one - Council Size**

The first part of the review is to determine the number of Councillors to be elected to the Council in the future. At its meeting on 28 November 2017 the committee considered a submission to the LGBCE proposing that the number of Councillors for Crawley be 39.

#### **Stage two - Initial Consultation – response required by 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018 the LGBCE announced the number of Councillors that it is minded to recommend for Crawley is 36. Proposals for a pattern of Ward boundaries are invited on this basis. The deadline for responses is 9<sup>th</sup> April.

#### **Stage three - Draft Recommendations – response required by 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018**

Taking into account the responses received to the consultation in stage two LGBCE will develop their draft recommendations. These will be published on 5<sup>th</sup> June and comments on the recommendations must be received 13<sup>th</sup> August.

#### **Stage four - Final Recommendations**

The Final Recommendations will be published sometime in October and will come into force for the elections in May 2019.

### **5. Pattern of Wards**

5.1 At its meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016 the Committee established an Electoral Review Working Panel to undertake the detailed work relating to the Review and to make recommendations to the Committee prior to any proposals being submitted to the LGBCE.

5.2 Following the work of the Panel, a document setting out a proposal for a pattern of Wards has been developed and is included at Appendix A. This proposal has been prepared based on the statutory criteria.

5.3 In drawing up a pattern of electoral Wards, three statutory criteria must be met:

- To deliver electoral equality where each Borough Councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the Borough;

- That the pattern of Wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities;
  - That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government
- 5.4 The Panel gave careful consideration to developing a pattern of Wards that meets all of the statutory criteria and came to the conclusion that it was essential for the size of the Wards to be a mixture of 3 and 2 Councillors.
- 5.5 The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 states that the LGBCE must have regard to the scheme of elections used by councils when making its recommendations. The Act says that the Commission should have regard to the desirability of councils that elect by thirds having a uniform pattern of three Councillor Wards.
- 5.6 The Panel were concerned that due to the differing sizes of communities in Crawley that a uniform pattern of Wards would not reflect the interests and identities of local communities. The submission, therefore, seeks to provide evidence of the need for Crawley to have a mixed pattern of Wards.
- 5.7 Two alternatives to the Working Panel's scheme have been proposed. The first scheme has been developed by the Councillor Crow and this is attached at Appendix B. The second which has been developed by the Councillor Lunnon and it proposes an alternative boundary for the Broadfield Ward, which is attached at Appendix C.

## **6. Implications**

- 6.1 The Electoral Review is a statutory process which is governed by the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The LGBCE is an independent body established by parliament under the same Act. The LGBCE is responsible for undertaking this Review following statutory considerations. The Submission follows the guidance provided by the Commission. The LGBCE's final recommendations will be laid in Parliament in November 2018.

## **7. Background Papers**

[LGBCE - Electoral Reviews technical guidance](#)

[LGBCE - Have your say on Council size](#)

[LGBCE - A practitioners guide on how to prepare an electorate forecast](#)

[Report to Governance Committee - 28th November 2017](#)

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