

Finance & Contracts Committee

18 March 2019

Boundary Review - Sizing Report

Director, Corporate & Commercial

Purpose

This report summarises the Royal Borough of Kingston's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission on council size as stage one as part of the Commission's review of Kingston's electoral arrangements.

Recommendation that -

1. the draft report on Council size attached **at Annex 1** be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England; and
2. The Director, Corporate and Commercial be authorised to make any final minor amendments to the report ahead of submission to the Commission in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition.

Benefits to the Community:

The review of Kingston's electoral arrangements will ensure the Council has the necessary number of Members and that its ward boundaries reflect the borough's communities. This report sets out the Council's recommendations to the Commission as to the number of Members the Council needs to ensure it is able to serve its community and deliver services.

Key Points

- A. The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) is undertaking a periodic review of Kingston's electoral arrangements. Stage One of the review focuses on the number of Members the Council requires and Stage Two looks at the ward boundaries, ward names and the number of Members per ward. This report is solely focused on Stage One - Council Size (how many Members the Council needs).
- B. The Commission has asked the Council to make recommendations to them as to the number of Members it needs by 25 March 2019. The Commission will publish its recommendation on 23 April 2019.
- C. The report sets out the Council's governance arrangements, the representational role of Members and the broader range of functions and responsibilities of Members. The report also sets out the recently strengthened role of Neighbourhood Committees.
- D. The report reflects feedback from Members drawn from the survey that was undertaken of all Councillors in January 2019 to gain an understanding of Members' workload, as well as to ask for comments on any increase or decrease in the overall number of Members.

- E. Having taken account of the above, the report recommends that Kingston Council should retain 48 Members.
- F. The Commission has asked the Council to submit various other documents and information to assist with Stage Two of the review (the design of new wards). This included a projected electorate forecast for 2025 broken down to current ward level. This is shown in Appendix 1 of the sizing report and was submitted to the Commission on 1 March 2019. The Commission has asked for a small number of clarifications which may result in minor technical amendments to the detail of the methodology but does not impact on the ward-level projected electorate forecast.

Background papers held by the Author of report - Gareth Harrington, Electoral Services Manager (Email: gareth.harrington@kingston.gov.uk) Tel: 020 8547 5026)

- Members Briefing Pack - Kingston upon Thames *LGBCE*
- Alternative Forecasting Methodology Guidance *LGBCE*
- Technical Guidance *LGBCE*
- A practitioner's guide on how to prepare an electorate forecast *LGBCE*