

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE – 19 OCTOBER, 2004

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PERIODIC ELECTORAL REVIEW OF LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to invite the Committee to determine the County Council's response to the Final Recommendations of the Boundary Committee in relation to the periodic electoral review of Leicestershire County Council.

Background

2. Members will recall that the Boundary Committee issued draft recommendations in February 2004 following submission of proposals, including the County Council's own scheme, in July 2003. Members were issued with copies of the draft recommendations and accompanying MIS in February 2004.
3. The Boundary Committee has now issued its final recommendations a copy of which has been sent to all members of the Council with an accompanying explanatory note.
4. The Boundary Committee's Final Recommendations differ from the draft recommendations, the position being as follows:-
 - There should be an increase in council size from 54 to 55 members representing 52 divisions (previously 51 Divisions).
 - In Blaby District the only changes are the naming of two divisions in that Braunstone be named Braunstone Town and Enderby Meridian be named Enderby and Braunstone Town.
 - In Charnwood, Birstall and Thurmaston become two single member divisions rather than one two member division. In addition, Loughborough North is being renamed Loughborough North West.
 - In Harborough District there are no amendments to the draft recommendations.
 - In Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, the District Wards of Groby and Ratby, Bagworth and Thornton Ward (Parish of Ratby) become a single division which will be called Groby and Ratby. Markfield, Stanton and Fieldhead Ward, part of Newbold Verdon with Desford and Peckleton Ward (parish of Desford) and part of Ratby, Bagworth and Thornton Ward (parish of Bagworth) to be called Markfield, Desford and Thornton make up another Division.

Burbage is to be called Burbage Castle.
 - In the Borough of Melton there are no amendments to the draft recommendations.

- In North West Leicestershire District the only change is that Donington is renamed Castle Donington.
- In the Oadby and Wigston Borough three of the electoral divisions have been renamed as follows:

Wigston All Saints and Meadowcourt becomes Wigston Bushloe
Wigston St. Wolstan's becomes Wigston Poplar
South Wigston becomes Wigston South

5. We are now approaching the final stages of the periodic electoral review, the Boundary Committee having submitted its Final Recommendations to the Electoral Commission. However, there is still an opportunity to make representations. The Electoral Commission will not be making an order to implement the final recommendations before 26 October, 2004 and has said that it is willing to consider further representation received before that time. Having said that, any representations it is suggested, would need to provide new evidence to back up any proposed changes and the Electoral Commission will, no doubt, wish to progress the matter quickly so that the new arrangements can be implemented in good time for the County Council elections in May 2005.

Comments on the Final Recommendations

6. All members of the County Council have been invited to put forward their comments for consideration by the Constitution Committee so that these can be taken into account in determining the Council's response. Any such comments received will be reported to the Committee's meeting.

Equal Opportunities Implications

7. The aim of the review is to ensure as far as practical that each person's vote carries the same weight.

Recommendations

8. The Committee is recommended to consider the Boundary Committee's final recommendations in the light of the comments received and to determine the County Council's response to the Electoral Commission.

Background Papers

Final recommendations published by the Boundary Committee.

Circulation under Sensitive Issues Procedure

All members have been invited to comment.

Officer to Contact

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