

Gloucester City Council

Meeting:	Council	Date:	9 June 2014
Subject:	Boundary Review – Draft Council Size Submission		
Report Of:	Head of Legal and Policy Development		
Wards Affected:	All		
Key Decision:	No	Budget/Policy Framework:	No
Contact Officer:	Sue Mullins, Head of Legal and Policy Development		
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Appendices:	1. Draft Council Size Submission		
	2. Appendix 2 of Draft Council Size Submission		
	3. Draft Electoral Forecast		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Access to Information Rule 5 and Section 100B (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) were that it was necessary to finalise the Council Size Submission following the local council elections, which took place on 22 May 2014.

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to the draft Council Size Submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) as part of the review of the electoral arrangements for Gloucester City Council.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 **Council is asked to RESOLVE, subject to any amendments, that the draft Council Size Submission document at Appendix 1 be approved for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.**

3.0 Background and Key Issues

3.1 This report follows on from the Electoral Arrangements report considered by Council on 23 January 2014. By way of reminder, the LGBCE has determined that a review of the electoral arrangements for Gloucester City Council should take place because of significant electoral inequality in the Quedgeley Fieldcourt Ward. The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive met with LGBCE representatives in December 2013 to discuss the process and timetable for the review and a cross party Member Working Group (the Boundary Review Working Group (BRWG)) was set up to prepare the necessary proposals for submission to the LGBCE.

- 3.2 The first part of the LGBCE review process is to address the issue of Council size - that is, the number of Members elected to the Council. The BRWG has developed the draft submission on Council size attached at Appendix 1, assisted by officers, and this is now presented to Council for approval. The draft electorate forecast, on which the submission is based, is also included at Appendix 3. (Members are asked to note that Appendix 1 referred to in the draft Council size submission (Scheme of Delegation) is contained in another item on the agenda for the Council meeting and has not been reproduced here).
- 3.3 The initial LGBCE timetable required the proposals on Council size to be submitted by 2 June 2014, but an extension was agreed to 10 June 2014 to allow for consideration of the matter at the Council's AGM, thereby avoiding the need for an extraordinary meeting very soon after the recent elections.

4.0 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 There are no alternative options with regard to the LGBCE review and the Council must implement its recommendations.

5.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The recommendations in the report have been reached via the cross party BRWG and, in the opinion of the Working Group, the recommendations on Council size contained in the draft Council Size submission are necessary to ensure that the Council is the right size to meet future electorate needs.

6.0 Future Work and Conclusions

- 6.1 The electoral review timetable is detailed below.

Gloucester – Boundary Commission Review Timetable		
Stage	Date Start	Date Finished
Report to Council on Council size	9 June 2014	
Council size final submission due	10 June 2014	
Council size dialogue meeting with Group Leaders	June 2014	
Final Electorate Forecast due	30 June 2014	
Initial LGBCE meeting (to determine Council size)	15 July 2014	
Period for submission of warding patterns	22 July 2014	29 September 2014
LGBCE analysis and deliberation on submissions on warding patterns	September – December 2014	
Consultation on LGBCE draft recommendations for warding patterns	9 December 2014	16 February 2015
LGBCE analysis and deliberation of outcome of consultation on draft recommendations for warding patterns	February 2015 – April 2015	
Final recommendations published by LGBCE	May 2015	
All out elections	May 2016	

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications

9.1 The LGBCE is responsible for managing risks related to the completion of the review.

9.2 The Council has an opportunity to influence the size of the Council by preparing and submitting its proposals on Council size. Greater weight is likely to be attached to a submission that has been approved by Council than submissions where no Council consensus has been reached.

10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):

10.1 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

11.0 Other Corporate Implications

Community Safety

11.1 There are no community safety implications.

Sustainability

11.2 There are no sustainability implications.

Staffing & Trade Union

11.3 An officer has been seconded to a temporary Project Officer post to support the detailed work on the review. Following the completion of all relevant submissions by the Council, the officer will return to their substantive post.

12.0 Background Documents:

12.1 All background papers are available electronically.

LGBCE guidance on submissions about Council size.

<http://www.lgbce.org.uk/guidance-policy-and-publications/guidance>