

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12

COUNCIL

Date **1 MARCH 2012**

Title **Boundary Commission Fenland Electoral Review – Council Size Submission**

1. PURPOSE/SUMMARY

For Council to note and approve Fenland’s Council Size submission to the Boundary Commission for the Fenland Electoral Review (FER)

2. KEY ISSUES

- The submission at Appendix 1 sets out the Council’s response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) request for us to submit a proposal regarding future Council size. This was the result of the Council triggering LGBCE criteria in relation to electoral equality.
- This submission has been developed following extensive Member consultation through the establishment of a cross-party Member Working Group consisting of all Group Leaders and the Deputy Leader, Member Focus Groups and a Member Survey.
- This submission also responds to LGBCE criteria in relation to Council Size to ensure appropriate and robust justification was provided within the proposal for the future size of the Council.
- This submission proposes the future size of the Council consists of 40 Councillors. Evidence to support this proposal is set out at Appendix 1.
- The Boundary Commission have described the process the Council has followed as ‘exemplary’ and commented the draft report was of high quality.
- Submission of this Council Size report to the Boundary Commission brings phase 1 of the process to a close and the Council will be notified of the Commission’s decision on the Council’s future size on 13 March 2012.
- Phase 2 of the process will commence following the outcome of the Council Size decision and will consist of drawing the Council’s new ward boundaries to achieve electoral equality. The Council will be required to submit a proposed scheme to the Boundary Commission regarding future ward boundaries. Members will be at the forefront of this process through another period of extensive consultation, led by the Member Working Group.
- There is potential for a phase 3 of the process following confirmation of the Council’s new ward boundaries. A Community Governance Review may be required to realign Town and Parish boundaries with District Council ward boundaries.
- Arrangements regarding future Council size and ward boundaries will come into effect from the May 2015 election.

3. RECOMMENDATION(S)

For Council to note and approve Fenland's Council Size submission to the Boundary Commission for the Fenland Electoral Review (FER).

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference No. (if applicable)	
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Melton – Leader of the Council Councillor Seaton – Deputy Leader of the Council
Report Originator	Carol Pilson, Head of Policy and Communications Anna Goodall, Head of Legal and Governance
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Background Paper(s)	