

## COUNCIL

26 JUNE 2019

### Local Government Boundary Commission Submission

**Cabinet Member(s):** Councillor Bob Deed, Leader of the Council  
**Responsible Officer:** Stephen Walford, Chief Executive

**Reason for Report:** To consider the cross-party Working Group's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England which will be considering the number of Councillors required for Mid Devon District Council from 2023.

**RECOMMENDATION:** that the Council agrees the submission at Appendix A.

**Financial Implications:** there are no direct financial implications.

**Legal Implications:** there are no direct legal implications.

**Risk Assessment:** that there are an insufficient number of Councillors to provide representation to the constituents of Mid Devon District Council.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** areas of the District could be disadvantaged through a reduced number of Councillors which could impact adversely on representational opportunities for constituents.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** inability to fulfil aspects of the plan due to an inadequate number of Councillors.

#### 1.0 Introduction/Background

- 1.1 In January 2019 the Local Government Boundary Commission for England commenced an Electoral Review process of Mid Devon District Council. This is a two part process which starts with a review of the number of Councillors known as the Council size. The second part of the review is to look at ward boundaries and will be conducted in the latter part of 2019 once the Council size review has taken place.
- 1.2 During the review of the ward boundaries, representatives from the Boundary Commission will visit local communities and hold two phases of public consultation. Current Councillors of Mid Devon District Council, together with representatives of town and parish councils, will be able to attend these sessions to put forward their views on any possible ward boundary changes.
- 1.3 Representatives from the Boundary Commission held briefing sessions with Officers and Councillors to explain the process and also to invite submissions from those who wished to put them forward. Submissions can come from individual Councillors, political groups or full Council.
- 1.4 It was agreed that a cross-party submission from full council would be considered. This report recommends that submission.

## 2.0 Working Group

- 2.1 Prior to the district council elections in May this year, all Councillors were invited to put their names forward to participate in a cross-party working group to consider the information required prepare a submission.
- 2.2 Eight Councillors opted to be part of the group (Cllrs Richard Chesterton, Polly Colthorpe, Derek Coren, Bob Deed, Clive Eginton, Frank Letch, Ray Radford, Margaret Squires and Nikki Woollatt) and have met on four occasions. The submission enclosed for Council consideration is the outcome of those meetings.
- 2.3 The purpose of the working group in drafting the submission was to ensure a robust evidence-based response was provided to the LGBCE in order that the views of the council be considered by the LGBCE when determining the future number of councillors needed to form the council.
- 2.4 Note that the results of the LGBCE review will inform the next set of district council elections i.e. any such changes will not take effect until 2023.
- 2.5 Members should also note that, while an indication has been given that the council may seek to undertake some form of governance evaluation, the previous change in member numbers (from 40 to 42) occurred when the council operated under the committee system of governance (1998). Hence it can be considered that the number of members, or indeed justification for that number, is a separate matter to that of the model of governance in operation at the council.
- 2.6 The deadline for receipt of all submissions is 19 July 2019.

**See Appendix A – MDDC LGBCE submission 260619, attached.**

**Contact for more information: Kathryn Tebbey, Monitoring Officer**

### **List of Background Papers:**

Details of how the review process operates can be found at the Local Government Boundary Commission website here: <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/how-reviews-work>