

Executive summary

Final recommendations on the future electoral arrangements for Lincoln in Lincolnshire

The Boundary Committee for England is the body responsible for conducting electoral reviews of local authorities. A further electoral review of Lincoln is being undertaken to provide improved levels of electoral equality across the city. It aims to ensure that the number of voters represented by each city councillor is approximately the same. The Electoral Commission directed the Boundary Committee to undertake this review on 2 June 2004.

Current electoral arrangements

Under the existing arrangements, six wards currently have electoral variances of more than 10% from the city average. The development that the City Council forecast during the last review for the five-year period between 1996 and 2001 was not realised. There has been some growth on the fringes of the city although the electorate has actually decreased since the last periodic electoral review, particularly in Abbey ward which has resulted in it having a particularly poor variance, with 21% fewer electors per councillor than the city average. However, in Hartsholme ward, more development was undertaken than expected, which has resulted in it having 23% more electors than the city average.

Every review is conducted in four stages, as outlined in the table below.

Draft recommendations

We based our draft recommendations primarily on our own proposals in order to secure an improved level of electoral equality in the city. We also sought to draw on the existing arrangements where we considered community identity was reflected and where we could secure good levels of electoral equality. We also adopted three of the City Council's proposed wards. Our proposals retained a pattern of three-member wards across the city.

Responses to consultation

At Stage Three we received three submissions from the City Council, the Lincoln Independent Alliance Party and a local resident. The City Council proposed revisions to all but two of our proposed wards. Lincoln

Stage	Stage starts	Description
One	3 August 2004	Submission of proposals to us
Two	16 November 2004	Our analysis and deliberation
Three	21 June 2005	Publication of draft recommendations and consultation on them
Four	13 September 2005	Analysis of submissions received and formulation of final recommendations

Independent Alliance Party proposed a decrease in council size and the local resident objected to our proposals in the Hartsholme area.

Analysis and final recommendations

Electorate figures

The City Council forecast an increase of 1% between 2003 and 2008 across the city. At Stage Three we received no further comments as to the accuracy of these figures and are therefore satisfied that they are the best estimates that can be made at this time.

Council size

At Stage One we proposed the retention of the current council size of 33 members. At Stage Three the Lincoln Independent Alliance Party proposed that the current council size be reduced to 30 members representing 10 wards. However, we were not sufficiently persuaded by the arguments put forward to reduce the council size at this time.

General analysis

We noted that we received little community identity argument throughout the review and we therefore have looked to significantly improve upon the current levels of electoral equality. Following consultation we noted that the City Council's proposals in the north of the city secured improvements in the levels of electoral equality

and we are therefore adopting them as part of our final recommendations. However, in the south of the city we note that its proposals would slightly worsen the levels of electoral equality and given that it provided no specific community identity arguments we do not propose adopting its proposals. We also note a local resident's proposal for a single-member ward covering the Hartsholme estate. However, we noted that the proposal did not provide for a good level of electoral equality and do not therefore propose adopting it as part of our final recommendations.

What happens next?

All further correspondence on these final recommendations and the matters discussed in this report should be sent to the Electoral Commission through the contact details below. The Commission will not make an Order implementing them before **6 July 2006**. The information in the representations will be available for public access once the Order has been made.

**The Secretary
The Electoral Commission
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London SW1P 2HW**

**Fax: 020 7271 0667
Email: implementation@electoralcommission.org.uk**

These contact details should only be used for implementation purposes.

Further information

The full report is available to download at www.boundarycommittee.org.uk.