

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL-ELECTORAL REVIEW

Report of the Deputy Leader

Buckinghamshire County Council is currently represented by 57 Councillors elected to 47 Divisions. (there being 10 Divisions that are currently represented by 2 councillors in each) and each Councillor represents approximately 6,800 residents.

This review was triggered by The Local Government Boundary Commission who stated that 30% of the Divisions within the County were in excess of the variance allowed of 10% of the average electorate per member. Although we made representations to the contrary the Local Government Boundary Commission informed the County Council that the review would proceed. At the same time, we had started the Bucks Debate across the County where a common message from the residents of Buckinghamshire was that we should make savings where possible. The public had heard that Transformation was making tremendous savings and there were suggestions that we as members should also lead by example. So when we discussed it at the November County Council Meeting, I proposed a recommendation that we should reduce the number of members from the next election in 2013, by 8 from 57 to 49. This was passed by the full Council and when we informed the Boundary Commission they said they were minded to agree. Therefore, by working within the Conservative Group within the County, I have come up with the reallocations of Divisions for the County taking into account the proposed Council size of 49 members. These would all be single member divisions.

If the 2010 electorate for the county of Buckinghamshire was divided between 49 members, it would give a County average of 7,787 per division.

Looking forward to the year 2017, which is the year the Commission wants us to work to, would give an average of 8,113 per member at County level. Bearing in mind that no Divisions can span over any District Boundaries, means that we have to work with different averages in each District, so taking that into account the averages in each District in 2017 are as follows:-

- Aylesbury Vale = 8,277 19 current, minus 2 = 17 members
- Chiltern = 8,147 11 current, minus 2 = 9 members
- South Bucks = 7,700 8 current, minus 1 = 7 members
- Wycombe = 8,102 19 current, minus 3 = 16 members

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council considers the proposals for changes to the County Council's electoral division boundaries, as set out in Appendix A circulated with the Blue Book, and agrees a submission to the Boundary Commission as the Council's formal response.

The Council may wish to be reminded of what happens next with the Review. Over the next three months, the Commission will consider all comments received during this stage of the Review. The next stage will then run from 19th July to 9th October

which will see the publication of the Commission's draft recommendations and evidence based submission responding to the draft recommendations (response should identify whether or not draft recommendations reflect community identity and other criteria, and if not, suggest how it can be improved upon). Following that stage, the Commission will deliberate on, and analyse, all representations received by the consultation deadline. This will be between 10th October and 17th January. The Commission will then prepare final recommendations which will be put before the Houses of Parliament. The Commission's recommendations must be implemented by draft negative resolution in the Houses. Recommendations cannot be modified once submitted to Parliament. They can only be accepted or rejected. The review will be completed in time to ensure implementation at the elections in 2013.

**BILL CHAPPLE
DEPUTY LEADER**