

LGBCE (22-23) 05 Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on 21 June 2022, at 09:00 am. All Commissioners and officers attended the meeting via Teams.

Commissioners Present

Professor Colin Mellors OBE (Chair)
Peter Maddison QPM
Amanda Nobbs OBE
Andrew Scallan CBE
Susan Johnson OBE
Steve Robinson

LGBCE Officers Present:

Jolyon Jackson CBE	Chief Executive
Lynn Ingram	Director of Corporate Services
Alison Evison	Review & Programme Manager
Richard Otterway	Review Manager (item 8)
Ben Meredeen	Review Officer (item 4)
Rebecca Pritchard	Review Officer (item 5)
Paul Nizinskyj	Review Officer (item 6)
Tom Rutherford	Review Officer (item 7 & 10)
Paul Kingsley	Review Officer (item 9)
Angela Hendry	Office Manager/HR Lead (minutes)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Richard Buck, Rich Otterway and Glynn McDonald.

Declarations of interest

Susan Johnson declared an interest in item 3, Barnsley & Sheffield PABR Request and took no part in the discussions of that item.

Minutes of LGBCE's meeting held on 17 May 2022

The minutes were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Actions

The following actions were reported on:

- Health & Safety update to the ARC meeting with revised policy coming to November ARC.
- Universities and Electoral Reviews coming to October meeting once the GIS, Data & Information Officer has settled into his role.
- Council Size changes, the Chief Executive is awaiting suggestions on where to publish.
- ARC Terms of Reference considered by ARC who have suggested an amendment.

1. Chair's Report

The Chair reported on discussions with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on recruitment of a replacement Commissioner to start in January 2023.

2. Operational Report – LGBCE(22-23)030

The Chief Executive presented the Operational Report for June 2022, and the Commission noted its content.

- A Breckland consent case is being considered by the team.
- The Board agreed to consider draft recommendations of Tunbridge Wells at its July meeting.
- The Commission Board agreed a six-week further consultation period for Wychavon and Malvern Hills. The Board agreed an extraordinary meeting on Monday 12th September 2022 at 9:30am with the papers circulated on Friday 9th September.
- The Commission Board noted the amendments to the review programme to accommodate the departure of two Review Officers.
- The Chief Executive reported on the meeting with the GLA Chief Executive.
- The Commission Board agreed the following Lead Commissioner allocations:
 - Susan Johnson for Dudley
 - Amanda Nobbs for Derbyshire
 - Peter Maddison for Gloucestershire
 - Andrew Scallan for Worcestershire.

3. Principal Area Boundary Review Request: Barnsley & Sheffield PABR – LGBCE(22-23)031

Susan Johnson left the meeting and took no part in the discussion on this agenda item.

The Commission Board agreed the recommendation to proceed with a Type One PABR review between Barnsley & Sheffield Councils. The Lead Commissioner will be Andrew Scallan who will then be the lead Commissioner for the Barnsley Electoral review.

Susan Johnson returned to the meeting.

4. Malvern Hills Further Draft Recommendations – LGBCE (22-23)032

The review of Malvern Hill Council had commenced on 19 January 2021. According to the latest available electoral figures, 23 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 19 January 2021, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 31 and the Draft Recommendations being considered had been prepared on the basis of such a council size.

Following publication of the draft recommendations, 97 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations and to undertake a period of further consultation across the whole district.

In preparing the further draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Further Draft Recommendations proposed a pattern of 4 three-, 8 two-, and 3 single-member wards in total.

The Board considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the advice of officers and the submissions received.

Agreed

It agreed a period of consultation on Further Draft Recommendations across the whole district. .

5. Maidstone Draft Recommendations – LGBCE(22-23)033

The review of Maidstone Council had commenced on 18 January 2022. According to the latest available electoral figures, 31 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 18 January 2022, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 48 and the Draft Recommendations being considered had been prepared on the basis of such a council size.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations proposed a pattern of 7 three-, 12 two-, and 4 single-member wards in total.

The Board considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the advice of officers and the submissions received.

As a result of this further consideration and, on the basis of the evidence, the Commission agreed to move away from its original opinion on council size and, instead, agreed a council size of 49 as this provided for a better pattern of wards across the local authority.

It agreed the Draft Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Draft Recommendations for Maidstone Council as presented.

6. Slough Draft Recommendations – LGBCE(22-23)034

The review of Slough Council had commenced on 20 January 2022. According to the latest available electoral figures, 13 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 20 January 2022, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 42 and the Draft Recommendations being considered had been prepared on the basis of such a council size.

In preparing the draft scheme, the team had taken into consideration both the submissions it had received and the statutory criteria. The Draft Recommendations proposed a pattern of 21 two-member wards in total.

The Board considered the recommendations in detail informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the advice of officers and the submissions received.

It agreed the Draft Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Draft Recommendations for Slough Council as presented.

7. Wychavon Final & Further Draft Recommendations – LGBCE(22-23)035

The review of Wychavon Council had commenced on 19 January 2021. According to the latest available electoral figures, 32 per cent of wards/divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 19 January 2021, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 43 and had subsequently, on 14 December 2021, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 175 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in the north of the district and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Board for consideration.

It was also considered that there was sufficient evidence to undertake a period of further limited consultation focusing on the proposals for the southern area of Wychavon before the Board published its Final Recommendations.

The Board considered the Further Draft and Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations. It agreed to a period of further limited consultation in the south of the district.

It agreed the Further Draft and Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations with a period of further limited consultation focusing on the southern part of Wychavon Council.

8. Brighton & Hove Final and Further Draft Recommendations – LGBCE(22-23)036

The review of Brighton & Hove Council had commenced on 17 August 2021. According to the latest available electoral figures, 14 per cent of wards/divisions had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 17 August 2021, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 54 and had subsequently, on 18 January 2022, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 246 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

The Board considered the Final and Further Draft Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations. Based on the evidence received, the Board agreed to a period of further limited consultation focusing on the areas of North, Central and Eastern Brighton.

Agreed

It agreed a period of further limited consultation focusing on the areas of:

- North Brighton area
- Central Brighton area
- Eastern Brighton area.

9. Blaby Final Recommendations – LGBCE(22-23)037

The review of Blaby Council had commenced on 17 August 2021. According to the latest available electoral figures, 33 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 17 August 2021, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 36 and had subsequently, on 18 January 2022, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 20 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, it had been judged that there was insufficient evidence to change the Draft Recommendations, with the exception of a ward name change and two parish ward name changes, and therefore, they were proposed as the Final Recommendations for Blaby Council.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of 3 three-, 13 two-, and 1 single-member wards in total.

The Board considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for Blaby Council as presented.

Agreed

The Board agreed to the laying of a draft Order before Parliament giving effect to its final recommendations for Blaby Council.

10. Blackpool Final Recommendations – LGBCE(22-23)038

The review of Blackpool Council had commenced on 17 August 2021. According to the latest available electoral figures, 5 per cent of wards had variances greater than 10 per cent.

At its meeting on 17 August 2021, the Board had been minded to agree a council size of 42 and had subsequently, on 18 January 2022, agreed Draft Recommendations.

Following publication, 20 submissions had been received commenting on the Draft Recommendations which had been considered carefully in the context of the statutory criteria.

Taking all of the submissions into account, for the reasons highlighted in the team's report, it was felt that there was sufficient evidence to move away from the Draft Recommendations in some aspects and these changes were reflected in the Final Recommendations put to the Board for consideration.

The Final Recommendations proposed a pattern of 21 two-member ward in total.

The Board considered the Final Recommendations in detail, informed by the statutory criteria and taking into account the submissions received following publication of the Draft Recommendations.

It agreed the Final Recommendations as presented.

Agreed

Final Recommendations for Blackpool Council as presented.

Agreed

The Board agreed to the laying of a draft Order before Parliament giving effect to its final recommendations for Blackpool Council.

11. ARC Chair's Report on meeting of 20th June

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee highlighted key items from the meeting that took place on 20 June 2022.

- Discussed the matter of the Commissioners' pay last month which had resulted from an issue with the contractor. It is not expected that this issue will occur again.
- Actions list has been amended to include additional column to show a revised due date and an explanation on why the original due date has slipped. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that the Commission Actions list has also been amended to include this column.

- Considered as part of the Risk Register the issue of volatility in the workforce and the need to focus on the development of new staff who have joined during the pandemic, particularly Review Officers on tours.
- Considered the Policy update list. HR policies being reviewed and there will be an update to the Board later in the year.
- Considered the Driving at Work Policy and the Risk Assessment form which should be completed by anyone driving on Commission business.
- Considered ICT acceptable use of IT equipment.
- Received a Health & Safety update with the formal policy due in November.
- Considered new Assurance Framework which will evolve over the coming months and will inform how we manage governance.
- Considered a review of budget forecasting prepared by the Director of Corporate Services and the Finance Lead.

There was a suggestion to review the instructions to shape best practice for driving on Tours.

12. Draft ARC May Minutes – LGBCE(22-23)039

Noted the minutes of the May meeting

13. Risk Register – LGBCE(22-23)040

The Compliance Lead introduced the report. Details regard the Risk Management Group's June meeting were provided.

- Risk 2B – Failure to have a resilient workforce This was last reviewed in August 2021, there was no change to its current risk score or trend status. The group agreed to include the Mental Health First Aider and Mental Health Portal as an assurance. The Leadership Team will consider how many staff away days we should have and what format they should take. The group was satisfied with the controls and assurances in place for this risk, therefore no change was made to the risk score or trend status.
- Risk 4A – Failure to manage budget – This risk was last reviewed in July 2021, and there was no change in its current risk score or trend status. A new control was identified, to refresh and review monitoring processes and was added to the register. An action was identified to review all the controls and assurances for this risk. The group was satisfied with the controls and assurances in place for this risk, therefore no change was made to the current risk score or trend status.
- Risk 3B – Legal challenge against Commission – This risk was last reviewed in November 2021 and there was no change to its current risk score or trend status. The group discussed the Commission's internal processes and identified a new assurance which is the internal audit process for electoral reviews and this has been added to the risk register. The work covered by the

EDI Working Group has also been added. The group was satisfied with the controls and assurances in place for this risk, therefore no change was made to the risk score or trend status.

- Risk 2D - Failure of external contracts and business systems – This risk was last reviewed in October 2021 and there was no change to its current risk score or trend status. An action identified in the previous review was a staff awareness session on the Commission’s Business Continuity Plan and this will be delivered in the second quarter of this year. The group was satisfied with the controls and assurances for this risk, therefore no change was made to the current risk score or trend status.

14. AOB

The Commission Board agreed to hold the delayed Policy meeting on Thursday 7 July 2022, 11:00am to 14:00pm.

Close of Business