

LR101
FOR DECISION
WARD(S): GENERAL

LICENSING AND REGULATION COMMITTEE

11 February 2004

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS – DRAFT
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND

REPORT OF CITY SECRETARY AND SOLICITOR

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Boundary Committee for England has published its Draft Recommendations and the City Council has been given the opportunity to comment before 8 March 2004. This special meeting of the Licensing and Regulation Committee is requested to consider the proposals and forward its recommendations to Council on 25 February 2004.

In summary, the Boundary Committee has recommended the County Council's Option B for the Winchester District, without amendment, which means adjustment of the current six divisions to create a seventh, to be known as the 'Southern Parishes', incorporating the Wards of Boarhunt & Southwick, Denmead, Whiteley and Wickham.

In addition to consulting all district councils, the Boundary Committee has arranged for the Hampshire Association of Parish and Town Councils to disseminate information to all parish councils. A public notice has been inserted in the Daily Echo and posters displayed in the City Offices.

After considering all comments received, final recommendations from the Boundary Committee will be made to the Electoral Commission, who will determine the matter and make the appropriate Order, together with deciding when the new boundaries will come into effect.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Boundary Committee for England be informed that the City Council has no comments regarding the changes to the County Electoral Divisions for the Winchester District.

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HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS – DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOUNDARY COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Boundary Committee for England has published its draft recommendations for the County Council's electoral divisions and the City Council has been given the opportunity to comment before 8 March 2004.
- 1.2 In summary, the Boundary Committee has recommended the County Council's Option B for the Winchester District, without amendment. The main changes involve creation of a seventh division, to be known as 'Southern Parishes'.
- 1.3 It is considered that, having regard to the national guidelines with which any solution must comply, the proposals are satisfactory and address the need to reflect the increasing population within the Southern Parishes due to the new settlements in that part of the District.

2 Summary of Proposals for the Winchester District

2.1 Bishops Waltham Division

This Division would comprise the following District Wards: Bishops Waltham; Colden Common & Twyford; and Owlesbury & Curdridge.

Currently the Division also includes part of Swanmore & Newtown Ward (i.e. Swanmore village) which will be moved, so that the whole of that Ward is within the Meon Valley Division.

2.2 Itchen Valley Division

This Division would comprise the following District Wards: Itchen Valley; Kings Worthy; Sparsholt (part – i.e. Headbourne Worthy); The Alresfords; Wonston & Micheldever (part – i.e. Micheldever Parish, but now also with the addition of Wonston Parish from the Downlands Division).

Currently the Division also includes Cheriton & Bishops Sutton Ward which will be moved to the Meon Valley Division.

2.3 Meon Valley Division

This Division would comprise the following District Wards: Cheriton & Bishops Sutton; Droxford, Soberton & Hambledon; Shedfield; Swanmore & Newtown; and Upper Meon Valley.

Currently the Division consists of the following wards: Boarhunt & Southwick; Denmead; Upper Meon Valley; Droxford, Soberton & Hambledon; Shedfield; Swanmore & Newtown (part); Whiteley; and Wickham. Therefore, the changes involve additions of Cheriton & Bishops Sutton and all of Swanmore & Newtown, and moving Boarhunt & Southwick, Denmead, Whiteley and Wickham to the new Southern Parishes Division.

2.4 Southern Parishes Division

This Division would comprise the following District Wards: Boarhunt & Southwick; Denmead; Whiteley; and Wickham.

This is a new Division.

2.5 Downlands Division

This Division would comprise the following District Wards: Compton & Otterbourne; Littleton & Harestock; Olivers Battery & Badger Farm; Sparsholt (part – i.e. Crawley and Sparsholt Parishes); Wonston & Micheldever (part – i.e. South Wonston Parish).

The only change here is that Wonston Parish is moved to Itchen Valley Division.

2.6 Eastgate Division

This Division would comprise the following district wards: St Bartholomew; St John & All Saints; and St Michael.

Currently this Division consists of the following wards: St Bartholomew (part); St John & All Saints; St Luke (part); St Michael (part); and St Paul (part).

2.7 Westgate Division

This Division would comprise the following district wards: St Barnabas; St Paul; and St Luke.

Currently this Division consists of the following wards: St Barnabas; St Bartholomew (part); St Michael (part); St Luke (part); and St Paul (part).

The changes for the six Winchester Town Divisions therefore propose following the revised District Wards introduced in 2002, and thus unite all of St Bartholomew and St Michael Wards within the Eastgate Division, and all of St Pauls and St Luke Wards within the Westgate Division.

3 Conclusions

- 3.1 The Boundary Committee has applied the same rationale to this County exercise as with the District re-warding exercise undertaken during 2000-2. The aim is to have all County Councillors representing approximately the same number of electors, subject to a plus or minus variation which allows for the nature of the area, community links, etc

- 3.2 In broad terms, the review aims for a ratio of one County Councillor to represent 13,000 electors by 2006, when taken across the County as a whole. If the proposals were introduced as agreed, it would give a Countywide councillor:elector ratio of 1:12,362 (as at 2001) and 1:12,780 (as at 2006). The size of the County Council would increase from 74 to 78 Councillors.
- 3.3 An extract from the Boundary Committee's report, containing detailed information for the Winchester District, is set out at Appendix 1. The term 'coterminosity' refers to the situations where the boundaries of County electoral divisions and district wards are the same i.e. where County divisions comprise either one or more whole district wards. The higher the percentage 'coterminosity', the more this situation has been achieved. The proposals for Winchester District scores 71% which comes within the Boundary Committee's expected range of 60 – 80%. Where such arrangements cannot be achieved, parish areas become the 'building blocks' to reach a satisfactory solution. The Boundary Committee also states that sub-division of a parish area will only be proposed reluctantly and it does not occur in the Winchester District. There is no reference in the guidance to sub-dividing an unparished District Ward.
- 3.4 Having regard to the geography of the Winchester District and the varying nature of the communities therein, the Boundary Committee appears to have achieved a reasonable solution, which respects the majority of local links, whilst complying with overall guidance on the size of electoral divisions.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

4 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 4.1 Supporting one of the Council's main aims of being more open and democratic with its public.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 None, unless the Committee and/or Council require a comprehensive counter proposal to be submitted, which may require considerable work and probably an appearance at any public inquiry.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Extract from Report of Boundary Committee