

 <b>Licensing &amp; Regulatory Committee</b> <b>13 November 2017</b>		<b>Agenda Item No.</b> <b>3</b>
<b>Title</b>	Revised proposals for new constituency boundaries in the West Midlands	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Graham Leach Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer <a href="mailto:graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk">graham.leach@warwickdc.gov.uk</a> 01926 456114	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006?</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	Licensing & Regulatory Committee 31 October 2016	
<b>Background Papers</b>	Boundary Commission for England "Revised proposals for new Constituency Boundaries in the West Midlands" <a href="http://www.bce2018.org.uk">www.bce2018.org.uk</a>	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	No
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	No
<b>Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken</b>	No
The proposals are from outside party which the Council is responding to.	

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	22/10/2017	Chris Elliott
Head of Service		
CMT		
Section 151 Officer	24/10/2017	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	24/10/2017	Andrew Jones
Finance	24/10/2017	Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holder(s)	1/11/2017	Andrew Mobbs
<b>Consultation &amp; Community Engagement</b>		
<b>Final Decision?</b>	Yes	
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		

## 1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The report brings forward a proposed response from Warwick District Council to the Boundary Commission for England on "Revised proposals for new Constituency Boundaries in the West Midlands".

## 2. **Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Licensing & Regulatory Committee notes the proposed Parliamentary Constituencies proposed for the West Midlands region that would cover the District, as set out at Appendices 1,2 and 3 of the report.
- 2.2 As the relevant Committee, the Licensing & Regulatory Committee makes the formal response to the Boundary Commission for England's (BCE) Consultation, on behalf of the Council, as follows:
- (i) Warwick District Council does not object to the proposals as laid out in the revised proposals for new constituency boundaries in the West Midlands and in doing so:
    - (a) welcomes the retention of Warwick and Leamington in a single constituency; and
    - (b) accepts with regret the proposals for Kenilworth, which face their fourth reshuffle in 35 years (having been part of Warwick and Leamington, Rugby and Kenilworth, Kenilworth and Southam).
  - (ii) Warwick District Council proposes one minor but important change that the boundary for the Coventry South & Kenilworth constituency should be amended to the south of Kenilworth so that it follows the current Town Boundary (as set out at Appendix 4), thus removing a potential of a new development of circa 100 homes which is anticipated to be completed before the next general election being in another constituency. This would also reflect the proposed Warwick District Council Ward Boundary changes.
  - (iii) Warwick District Council highlights the developments H43 and H08, of ultimately 4000 houses within its Local Plan, as identified in the plan at Appendix 6 to the report, which would more readily identify with the Coventry South & Kenilworth constituency than the Warwick & Leamington constituency, but acknowledges that the BCE are not permitted to consider growth as part of their remit.
  - (iv) Warwick District Council highlights that the base data for the review has significantly altered from December 2015 to the present with the register of electors (within England) having grown from then to the General Election in June 2017 by 1.439 million electors, which means to achieve electoral equality, each constituency would need to be circa 78,000 electors. Warwick and Leamington Constituency has increased by 6793 electors in this time (which is 2.5 times the average national increase) and Kenilworth & Southam has increased by 2,400 (just below the national average of 2712). Therefore not take account of this growth, within the original terms of reference and one which will cause significant electoral inequality in some areas of the Country.
  - (v) Warwick District Council informs the Commission that between now and the next scheduled General Election, the District will have increased by

8258 homes (as outlined within our adopted Local Plan) which equates to circa 13,000 new electors within Warwick District.

- 2.3 The Committee asks officers to send copies of its comments to Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, all Parish & Town Councils in Warwick District, the other District and Borough Council's in Warwickshire, Solihull Borough Council and the two MPs who currently represent Warwick District, encouraging them to make similar submissions, especially with respect to the boundary south of Kenilworth.

### 3. **Reasons for the Recommendation**

- 3.1 The Boundary Commission for England is undertaking a review of all Parliamentary Constituencies within England with a view to submitting proposals before Parliament for adoption in 2018. The current proposals for the West Midlands Region can be inspected on the dedicated national website [www.bce2018.org.uk](http://www.bce2018.org.uk).
- 3.2 This is the second round of consultation, following the proposals that were published in October 2016. The revised proposals, set out at Appendices 1-3, take account for some of the concerns previously raised by Warwick District Council in October 2017.
- 3.3 The proposed boundaries are based on the current Warwick District Council Ward Boundaries and for most of the District this does not cause any potential issues. However, as illustrated at Appendix 4 to the report, the proposed boundary to the south of Kenilworth would cut through Kenilworth Cricket Club grounds and the proposed housing development in the Local Plan that will wrap around it. It is expected that this housing site would be developed by the time of the next scheduled General Election. If this is not changed it will replicate the problem that currently exists within Hopton Crofts in Leamington, although this new issue would affect significantly more properties, where officers have received complaints from residents at each General Election that has been called on the current boundary. It is therefore proposed that the Boundary should be moved to the Kenilworth Town Boundary to the south of the proposed housing site. This would align with a proposal that will emerge at the second stage of the current Boundary Review of the Council's ward boundaries to align the Town, District and County Division boundaries.
- 3.4 Near the proposed constituency boundaries between Coventry South & Kenilworth and Warwick & Leamington there is the significant development at Kings Hill (site H43) and site H08 at Oak Lea Farm, Finham of a combined development circa 4,000 new homes (6,320 new electors). It is anticipated that these communities would look towards Coventry as their community and therefore it would be appropriate for them to be part of the Coventry South and Kenilworth constituency now, thus potentially negating the need to review this boundary soon. Plans illustrating the development sites within Warwick District, in comparison to the new Boundaries are set out at Appendices 5, 6 and 7 to the report.
- 3.5 The primary outstanding concern, from the previous submission by this Council, is the base data used for modelling the new constituencies. Officers are aware from figures available nationally, that the electorate used by the Boundary Commission to establish these boundaries is significantly lower than the electorate for the 2017 General Election. In addition, by the time the

consultation closes, the data the Commission are using will be over two years old.

- 3.6 There is also no account given for growth across the country because of developments. These do create flaws within the allocations which could see the need to review constituency boundaries again soon because the constituencies could be so far away from electoral equality. This said officers are aware that the Commission is following the rules established by its remit which is different to the regulations covering a Warding arrangement for Councils. This is an area of concern that Parliament may wish to consider and in turn that the Commission may wish to highlight to Parliament.
- 3.7 It is considered appropriate that the District Council should keep its neighbouring authorities and the current MPs representing Warwick District aware of its comments on the revised proposals. This is especially important regarding the Boundary to the south of Kenilworth.
- 3.8 All of the maps detailed in Appendices 1 to 7 are available electronically and may be easier to navigate than the hard copies.

#### 4. Policy Framework

##### 4.1 Fit for the Future (FFF)

The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

The FFF Strategy has 3 strands – People, Services and Money and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

<b>FFF Strands</b>		
<b>People</b>	<b>Services</b>	<b>Money</b>
<b>External</b>		
<b>Health, Homes, Communities</b>	<b>Green, Clean, Safe</b>	<b>Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment</b>
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Improved health for all Housing needs for all met Impressive cultural and sports activities Cohesive and active communities	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Area has well looked after public spaces All communities have access to decent open space Improved air quality Low levels of crime and ASB	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Dynamic and diverse local economy Vibrant town centres Improved performance/productivity of local economy Increased employment and income levels
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
The proposed comments from this Council seek minor amendments to the proposed boundaries to enable a cohesive community not divided	Nil	Nil

by a Boundary.		
<b>Internal</b>		
<b>Effective Staff</b>	<b>Maintain or Improve Services</b>	<b>Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term</b>
<u>Intended outcomes:</u> All staff are properly trained All staff have the appropriate tools All staff are engaged, empowered and supported The right people are in the right job with the right skills and right behaviours	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Focusing on our customers' needs Continuously improve our processes Increase the digital provision of services	<u>Intended outcomes:</u> Better return/use of our assets Full Cost accounting Continued cost management Maximise income earning opportunities Seek best value for money
<b>Impacts of Proposal</b>		
Nil	Nil	Nil

4.2 **Supporting Strategies** - Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies but this report does not impact on them.

4.3 **Changes to Existing Policies** - The report does not propose any changes to existing policies.

4.3 **Impact Assessments** – There are no proposed changes to policies or introduction of any policies therefore no impact assessment has been undertaken.

## 5. Budgetary Framework

5.1 The report does not impact on the budgetary framework for the Council or the Budget of the Council.

## 6. Risks

6.1 The primary risk associated with the report for this Council is in relation to the proposed housing development around Kenilworth Cricket club and the potential for this to be split between two Parliamentary constituencies. For this not to be amended would see a repetition of the current position in the Hopton Crofts area of Leamington, if not worse, where a small community is divided by a political boundary and therefore could lead to a confused community divide by a political boundary but living within the same Town.

## 7. Alternative Option(s) considered

7.1 The Council could decide upon a variety of other courses of decision including not commenting on the proposals. However, it is considered that the Council should respond highlighting these issues especially considering the parallel but unrelated review of its own current Ward Boundaries, which have highlighted the significant growth in the District and the challenges this will bring.