

CHESHIRE EAST

Council

Date: 2nd April 2009
Report of: Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer
Title Boundary Committee – Electoral Review

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To report to the Council the work of the Electoral Review Task Group concerning the preparation of a proposal on the future size of Cheshire East Council to be made to the Boundary Committee for England.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 That the Council consider and approve the Submission on Council size to the Boundary Committee prepared by the Task Group, in particular the proposal for the future number of Members for Cheshire East Council.

3.0 Implications for Transitional Costs

- 3.1 There are no implications for Transitional Costs.

4.0 Financial Implications for 2009/10 and beyond

- 4.1 None at this stage.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Legislation requires the Boundary Committee to follow specific procedures when conducting an electoral review, and sets out the statutory criteria which the Committee must take into account in making its recommendations to the Electoral Commission. The review proceeds in several stages involving full public consultation. The first stage addresses the question of Council size, ie the total number of Councillors to be elected for the local authority area.

6.0 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 The deadline for submissions on Council size is 6 April. Failure to make the submission by this date would mean that the Council's proposal on Council size would not be taken into account by the Committee.

7.0 Background and Options

- 7.1 The electoral arrangements for the Cheshire East Council were established under the Cheshire (Structural Changes) Order 2008 on the basis of a multiple of three members for each County Council electoral division. It was expected that this arrangement would be used for the election to the Shadow Council only and the

electoral arrangements would be reviewed prior to the next full elections (in May 2011).

- 7.2 On 24 February, the Boundary Committee initiated a review of Cheshire East Council's electoral arrangements. It is conducting a similar review in Cheshire West and Chester. The Committee has decided that it shall settle the matter of the future size of the Council before it considers any of the other matters to be dealt with by the review. This stage of the review calls for proposals to be made to the Committee which will consider them, before making a decision on Council size. Submissions may be made by any individual, group or organisation. Submissions made on or before 6 April will be considered by the Boundary Committee.
- 7.3 A Task Group of Shadow Council Members has considered the issue of Council Size and reached a conclusion on a proposal for the future size of Cheshire East Council which can be supported by arguments relating to the appropriate workload for Council Members. This has regard to the structure of the Council's decision-making, regulatory and scrutiny processes. The Task Group also has assessed the capacity of Members to conduct work on behalf of those individuals and communities whom they represent, to implement proposals for local area working and to give leadership to their communities. The case is set out in full in the attached submission. Also attached is Appendix A (which will not be part of the formal submission) which demonstrates that the recommended Council size is within the range of experience with comparable Unitary Authorities.
- 7.4 Key stakeholders have been advised of the content of the Submission and invited to support the approach. Any responses received will be reported to Council in supplementary information.
- 7.5 It is expected that the Boundary Committee will issue its decision on Council Size in May, and simultaneously, invite proposals for electoral boundaries for the Cheshire East Council. It is further expected that the review will be completed and outcomes brought into effect in the spring of 2010.

8.0 Overview of Day One, Year One and Term One Issues

- 8.1 Responses to the Boundary Committee's Electoral Review will be required periodically during Year One, and the new electoral arrangements will be applied during Term One i.e. for the elections in May 2011.

9.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 9.1 To enable the Council to make a considered submission on the future size for Cheshire East Council, and to comply with the Boundary Committee's deadline of 6 April 2009.

For further information:-

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Background Documents:-

Electoral reviews - Technical guidance, Boundary Committee for England, February 2008

Documents are available for inspection at:
Legal and Democratic Services
Westfields
Sandbach

Electoral Ratios (2008 Data)			
	Electors	Members	Electors Per Member
Warrington UA	154835	58	2670
North East Lincolnshire UA	116591	42	2776
South Gloucestershire UA	200463	70	2864
North Lincolnshire UA	125697	43	2923
Shropshire	230143	74	3110
Medway UA	184220	55	3349
Cornwall	414142	123	3367
Cheshire West and Chester Current	251270	72	3490
Cheshire East Proposed	286759	82	3497
Cheshire East Current	286759	81	3540
Wiltshire	345019	98	3521
East Riding of Yorkshire UA	266070	67	3971
Bristol, City of UA	303045	70	4329