

## Report to COUNCIL

### WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

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**24<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

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#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider proposed new warding arrangements in response to the electoral review of the Council as detailed within this report.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The model of warding arrangements attached at **Appendix 1** which has been recommended by a cross group of elected Members be considered by Council and if approved, be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE)

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The LGBCE announced in 2019 an electoral review for the Council. In 2020, the LGBCE concluded, after consultation that it was minded to proceed with 60 elected Members for the borough. That decision concluded stage 1 of the review.
- 1.2. Subsequently, the LGBCE launched stage 2 of the review- a public consultation exercise on new warding arrangements. The deadline for submission is the 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021.
- 1.3 A cross party group of elected Members have considered the matter and various mapping models developed by officers from within the Strategy and Performance Service.

#### 2. WARDING ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1. The map at Appendix 1 and the methodology behind the warding arrangements represents the outcome of the above exercise. The LGBCE criteria includes balancing the projected 2026 electorate in each proposed ward as equally as possible, usually keeping within 5% of the average. The 2026 electorate was projected in a submission required by the LGBCE

at an earlier stage of the review, and for this work was disaggregated to household level to allow flexibility in where boundaries were drawn. In line with LGBCE recommendations, officers worked from the edges of the borough towards the centre. Officers first established broader, well-defined areas such as Saddleworth and Failsworth, where borough boundaries and other features such as Parish areas and the motorway, limit the scope for change. In this way a variety of models were produced, detailing how broader areas might be divided into wards, whilst balancing the three criteria as per the LGCE guidance. The models were shared with the working group of Members, allowing feedback and resulting refinement. This iterative process eventually generated one consensus model.

2.2 The LGBCE will review warding proposals against statutory criteria and all proposals should demonstrate how they meet these requirements:

- To deliver electoral equality where each borough councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the borough.
- That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

### **3. CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

3.1. The consultation is open to all interested parties and members of the public. The LGBCE have requested that the council publicise the consultation via usual channels. This has been undertaken.

3.2. The LGBC have emphasised that all submissions carry equal weight and all Members or groups may submit an individual submission.

### **4. NEXT STEPS**

4.1 Once the LBCE has considered all the proposals received during this phase of consultation, it plans to publish draft recommendations for new electoral arrangements. This is scheduled to take place between June and August 2021. Once the Commission has considered the representations and evidence as part of that consultation, it intends to publish final recommendations in November 2021

4.2 New electoral arrangements for the borough are scheduled to come into effect at the borough council elections in 2023.

### **5 Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. (Anne Ryans, Director of Finance)

### **6 Legal Services Comments**

6.1 These are contained within the report.

### **7 Human Resources Comments**

7.1 None

### **8 Risk Assessments**

8.1 N/A

**9 IT Implications**

9.1 N/A

**10 Property Implications**

10.1 None

**11 Procurement Implications**

11.1 N/A

**12 Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

12.1 N/A

**13 Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

13.1 The intention is to ensure that electorates in each ward are as equal as possible.

**14 Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

14.1 N/A

**15 Key Decision**

15.1 No

**16 Key Decision Reference**

16.1 N/A

**17 Background Papers**

17.1 - Appendix 1  
- Models of warding arrangements