

**Agenda Item: 7.**

**One Nottingham Board**

**Title of Paper: Constituency and Ward Boundary Reviews**

**Date: 14 July 2017**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 Update ON Board on the ongoing Constituency and Ward Boundary Reviews that are taking place.
- 1.2 Follow up on any further discussion/action for ON Board to take forward in response.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Board is invited to:
  - 1. Note for information that Nottingham City is the subject of both a Constituency Boundary and Ward Boundary Review and their current position.
  - 2. Discuss any possible implications for One Nottingham and the city of Nottingham as a whole, along with any potential ON Board response.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The city of Nottingham is currently subject to two ongoing and concurrent reviews: a national review by the Boundary Commission for England (BCE) of Parliamentary Constituencies in England, and a separate review by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) of electoral equality in the city.
- 3.2 The reviews are both proceeding independently and cannot take account of any proposals or outcomes from the other.
- 3.3 More details of each review and the response from Nottingham City Council are set out for information below.
- 3.4 Nottingham City Council will be submitting a formal response to the LGBCE's Warding Patterns consultation. This is being developed.
- 3.5 It should be noted that neither review would change the boundaries of the City Council as a local authority.

**4. Boundary Commission for England (BCE) Constituency Boundary Review**

- 4.1 The BCE published its initial proposals for new constituencies on 13 September 2016, including changes to existing constituency boundaries covering the City of Nottingham. These are set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.2 The rules set out in the legislation state that there will be 600 Parliamentary Constituencies covering the whole of the UK, a reduction of 50 from the existing number. This means that for England, the number of constituencies must be reduced from the current 533 to 501, including two for the Isle of Wight.

4.3 There are various criteria the BCE are working to, but the most significant is that every constituency the BCE proposes (with the exception of two covering the Isle of Wight) should contain no fewer than 71,031 electors and no more than 78,507.

4.4 The BCE has noted that the electorates of the three existing City of Nottingham constituencies are “*well outside*” the desired electoral range set out in their criteria (see *Table 1* below):

Table 1 – BCE Current Electorate

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Electorate at December 2015</b>
Nottingham North	64,727
Nottingham East	57,132
Nottingham South	65,512

4.5 In its proposals, the BCE has argued that the low electorates in Nottingham mean they have had to propose considerable changes within and around the City, with all three current constituencies needing to acquire a substantial number of additional electors to fall within the desired electoral range.

4.6 As a result the BCE has proposed the following changes to the three current Nottingham Constituencies (see *Table 2 for proposed electorate sizes*):

- The existing Nottingham South constituency should extend south-westwards to include seven wards, including the town of Beeston from the existing Broxtowe constituency, but no longer across the River Trent.
- They propose that this constituency should be called Nottingham South and Beeston BC.
- The existing Nottingham East Constituency extends eastwards to include eight wards from the existing Gedling constituency, including the town of Carlton. They propose to call this new constituency Nottingham East and Carlton.
- For Nottingham North, Bilborough ward will transfer to the proposed new Broxtowe & Hucknall constituency, but it will gain Sherwood and Berridge wards from the existing Nottingham East constituency.
- The BCE proposals have just one constituency wholly within Nottingham and four others which are partly in other Districts: the BCE proposals would therefore increase the number of MPs with constituencies covering the city from three to five, with the outcome being that the proposed Broxtowe & Hucknall and West Bridgford constituencies would also cover parts of the city.
- There are knock on implications for the city and constituencies outside the city, including part of Clifton transferring to the West Bridgford constituency.

Table 2 – BCE Proposed Electorate

<b>Boundary</b>	<b>Commission</b>	<b>Electorate at Dec 2015</b>
<b>Proposed Constituencies</b>		
Nottingham East and Carlton BC		71,152

Nottingham North BC	73,828
Nottingham South and Beeston BC	77,434

4.7 The BCE has used December 2015 electorate data, which was before the increased registration seen prior to the EU Referendum and recent General Election.

4.8 Under the BCE proposals, city constituencies would cross multiple local authority boundaries, and there would be a total of five constituencies crossing the City of Nottingham boundary, as opposed to the current three within it.

4.9 In formulating a Nottingham City Council counter proposal to submit to the BCE, officers had regard to the following:

- Maintaining the existing constituencies is not an option the BCE will consider, as all have electorates below the lowest acceptable threshold of 71,031.
- It is in the best interests of constituents in Nottingham to limit the number of constituencies that intersect the city and maintain the current MP representation along existing local authority boundaries as much as possible. This could result in the clear accountability between constituents, local authorities and MPs being eroded.
- This will ensure the existing accountability between constituents, local authorities and local MPs is maintained and reduce the confusion for Nottingham residents that would result from constituencies crossing multiple local authority boundaries.
- To stay within the BCE's proposed thresholds for constituency sizes, and reduce the impact of any changes, officers proposed two constituencies that stay within the current city boundary, and a third extending into a neighbouring district.
- BCE thresholds mean that Nottingham would always require at least three constituencies, and that at least one will always have to extend beyond the existing city boundary.

4.10 The counter proposal Nottingham City Council submitted in response to the BCE consultation is set out [here](#).

4.11 A second consultation phase, for the public to comment on all the submissions received launched on 28 February 2017. That consultation closed on 27 March 2017.

The BCE are currently considering all comments from the initial and secondary consultation, and will then decide whether to revise their proposed boundaries. A third consultation period on their revised proposals is expected in Autumn 2017.

This will be followed by the BCE making final recommendations to Parliament in September 2018.

The Government will then place before Parliament a Statutory Instrument containing those recommendations (which may not be amended by the Government), and Parliament will debate the changes. If Parliament agrees the recommended changes


	to boundaries, the new constituencies will take effect at the next scheduled General Election due in 2022 under the Fixed Term Parliaments Act.
4.12	However, given the uncertainty and lack of significant government majority following the General Election in June, it is unclear whether the BCE's eventual recommendations will be agreed by Parliament.
4.13	<b>ON Board may wish to comment on the BCE's draft recommendations when they are published in the Autumn, as appropriate.</b>

<b>5. Local Government Commission for England (LGBCE) Ward Boundary Review</b>	
5.1	In July 2016, the LGBCE wrote to the Chief Executive of Nottingham City Council to advise that Nottingham would be subject to an electoral review. The Commission is carrying out a review to deliver electoral equality for voters across the city. At December 2016, there were 204,355 registered electors in Nottingham City, an average of 3,715 electors for each of the 55 City Councillors.
5.2	In Nottingham, there are 6 wards where the number of electors per councillor deviates from the city average by +/- 10% or greater: <b>Arboretum, Bilborough, Bridge, Clifton North, Dunkirk &amp; Lenton</b> and <b>Wollaton East &amp; Lenton Abbey</b> .
5.3	In addition, two of those wards, <b>Wollaton East &amp; Lenton Abbey</b> and <b>Dunkirk &amp; Lenton</b> deviate from the average by more than +/-30%.
5.4	In <b>Arboretum, Dunkirk &amp; Lenton</b> and <b>Wollaton East &amp; Lenton Abbey</b> , the number of electors per Councillor is much lower than the City average due to relatively low registration rates. These wards have high numbers of university students and there is a strong correlation between high student numbers and low registration rates across the City
5.5	The LGBCE's review will examine and make recommendations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The total number of councillors elected to the council in the future</li> <li>○ The number of wards</li> <li>○ The number of councillors representing each ward</li> <li>○ Ward boundaries</li> <li>○ Names of wards</li> </ul>
5.6	In drawing up a pattern of electoral wards, the Commission must balance three criteria, which are set out in law: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To deliver electoral equality where each city councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the city.</li> <li>○ That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.</li> <li>○ That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.</li> </ul>
5.7	In response, Nottingham City Council has argued that the introduction of Individual

	<p>Electoral Registration (IER) has had an impact on the number of registered electors in Nottingham. Whilst the overall population of Nottingham has increased slightly, the number of registered electors has decreased significantly following the introduction of IER.</p>
5.8	<p>Overall, low levels of registration continue to be a problem in Nottingham, as in other large cities. During the annual canvass the local authority invests a lot of time and resource into the registration process; from sending forms to all households through the post to arranging canvassers to visit non-responding properties so they can assist citizens with their registration. Responding to this form is quick and easy and can be done through various different channels such as online, telephone, text message and post. However, the number of households responding remains consistently low in several wards.</p>
5.9	<p>In future, the City Council are hopeful that initiatives to increase student registration, such as auto-registration at enrolment, will result in the number of students registering in the city increasing. In addition, the recent General Election saw a significant upswing in students registering to vote in the city.</p>
5.10	<p>The Council prepared a submission on <b>Council Size</b> in which we made a “business case” for having 55 Cllrs. It covered governance arrangements, the overview and scrutiny role of councillors, and their role as representatives of wards and communities, as well as the challenges local government faces, both now and in future. This was submitted to the LGBCE in May 2017. It was well received and indications are that the LGBCE are “<i>minded to</i>” recommend that Nottingham City Council’s preferred council size of 55 Cllrs is maintained.</p>
5.11	<p>The LGBCE opened the public consultation on warding in the city on 27<sup>th</sup> June. The LGBCE are asking local people and organisations for their views as to the best pattern of wards for the city which meet the requirements set out above. Their consultation can be found at: <a href="https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk">https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk</a>.</p>
5.12	<p>The City Council now has to submit a preferred <b>Warding Pattern</b> for warding in the city; this will aim to meet the criteria set down by the LGBCE, whilst seeking to maintain as much as possible the existing well developed patterns of neighbourhood working in the city. The concept of area working based on ward-level building blocks has been accepted by partners including the Police, NHS and related health providers, local employment support and housing partner organisations, and works very effectively within the existing ward structure. Partners and citizens support ward based models of working that align with our existing wards and communities.</p>
5.13	<p><b>ON Board may wish to respond to the LGBCE public consultation as appropriate, ahead of the consultation closing on 4<sup>th</sup> September.</b></p>

## 6. Contact Details

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