

Tuesday, 25 February 2025

Report of the Leader of the Council

Local Government Boundary Commission for England's Review of Tamworth Borough Council Electoral Wards

1. Exempt Information

None

2. Purpose

This report sets out the process and timetable for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's (LGBCE) review of all electoral wards within Tamworth Borough Council.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Council endorses the contents of this report.
2. Council endorses the establishment of a member working group and its terms of reference.

4. Executive Summary

In November 2021, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) wrote to the then Chief Executive advising that an electoral review of Tamworth Borough Council would be undertaken. No further communication was received until 29 October 2024 when the commission contacted Stephen Gabriel, Chief Executive to advise that the decision had been taken to commence the review to be concluded in time for the borough elections in 2028.

The purpose of an electoral review is to consider the number of councillors elected to the council, the names, number and boundaries of the wards and the number of councillors to be elected to each ward.

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 sets out the duty placed on the LGBCE to undertake an electoral review in every principal local authority in England 'from time to time'. The last electoral review of Tamworth Borough Council was undertaken in 2000 and the new electoral arrangements implemented in 2004.

Several briefings with members and officers have taken place through December 2024 and January 2025.

There are five principal areas of work within the review:

1. Preparing and submitting a council size proposal for consideration by the LGBCE.
2. Preparing electorate forecasts, mapping, and details of our housing developments. Preparing five-year electorate forecasts broken down to polling

district level. This reflects the statutory duty to consider forecasts for five years from the end of the review.

3. Preparing and submitting a warding pattern during the first public consultation and responding to the LGBCE draft recommendations.
4. Supporting the LGBCE in publicising the review by sharing details of interested parties and supporting meeting with community and residents' groups.
5. Implement the changes as detailed in the parliamentary order.

5. The review process

In advance of the first public consultation, there will be a preliminary period of around six months during which the LGBCE will gather information from the Council. This will also include several briefings of officers, group leaders and councillors.

The following briefings have taken place to date:

- Council Leader Briefing – 18 December 2024
- Group Leaders Briefing – 16 January 2025
- All Councillor Briefing – 22 January 2025
- Key Officer Briefing – 30 January 2025

The review has been split into two parts, the council size submission (how many councillors should the council have) and the warding pattern consultation (what are the wards and where are the boundaries).

The table below details timescales, deadlines, and responsibilities at each stage of the process.

Activity	Council	LGBCE	Key Dates
Develop council size submission	Councillors and Officers	LGBCE will be available for queries on making the submission.	February to July 2025
Submission of council size proposal	Councillors and Officers	LGBCE will acknowledge receipt of submission.	12 September 2025
LGBCE decision on council size	Not required	LGBCE.	21 October 2025
Consultation on warding patterns	Councillors, Officers, General Public	LGBCE to publish draft recommendations and run consultation, collate, and analyse responses.	28 October 2025 to 19 January 2026
LGBCE decision on draft warding pattern recommendations	Not required	LGBCE.	21 April 2026

Activity	Council	LGBCE	Key Dates
Consultation on draft warding pattern recommendations	Councillors, Officer, General Public	Publication of draft recommendations and run consultation, collate, and analyse responses.	12 May 2026 to 20 July 2026
LGBCE meeting to decide on final recommendations	Not required	LGBCE.	20 October 2026
Final Recommendations Published	Not required	LGBCE to publish Final recommendations, reports and mapping.	3 November 2026
Order Laid and Made in Parliament	Not required	LGBCE.	
Implementation	Council	Not required.	Tamworth Borough Council to hold elections on new wards boundaries on Thursday 4 May 2028.

An officer project working group has been established, with the terms of reference available in **Appendix 1**. This group includes officers from Electoral Services, Governance, Planning, Communications, Partnerships, and GIS. The action plan developed by the working group, found in **Appendix 2**, outlines how Tamworth Borough Council will address the review's requirements.

A cross-party working group has been established with the objective of overseeing the progress of the LGBCE's review throughout the borough. This group will serve as a forum for discussion and preparation of any council size submission on behalf of the council. Additionally, it will contribute to the development of ward patterning during the initial public consultation and prepare a response to the LGBCE regarding their draft recommendations on warding patterns. At each stage of the review, the cross-party working group will present recommendations to Council. The terms of reference for this group are available in **Appendix 3**. The initial meeting of this group was held on 12 February 2025.

Progress will be regularly reported to CMT Programme Board and elected members will be updated via group meetings. Reports will be taken to Full Council as appropriate. Full Council is required to approve the proposed council size and warding pattern before submitting it to the LGBCE. This is scheduled for early September 2025.

Devolution and local government reorganisation may impact on these processes and indeed the project may be postponed or aborted. Officers are regularly engaging with commission staff to seek clarity on the continuation of the project.

Options Considered

The council could choose to take an informal approach on the submissions and responses to the LGBCE, however this might mean the LGBCE have several submissions supplied from different groups and members.

At the group leaders meeting, it was suggested that a cross-party approach was the preferred method.

In terms of the submission of a council proposal on warding patterns, there is no requirement on the council to submit a response. The Council could agree to let individual councillors and political parties submit their own responses.

It is therefore proposed, that the council fully engages in the process, will submit a response at each stage of the process and support the commission in the consultation.

Resource Implications

Reduction or increase in council size could impact council budgets from 2028/29 due to a change to councillor allowances due to the number of councillors changing.

The process requires considerable resources and officer time, which must be balanced with delivery of essential and business as usual activities.

Legal/Risk Implications

The review is a legal requirement under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

Compliance with LGBCE guidelines is essential to avoid potential issues.

There is a risk as time progresses that a significant amount of officer and member time will be spent on this work unnecessarily if the process is stopped due to devolution/ local government reorganisation. This is mitigated by regular contact by officers with the commission.

Equalities Implications

An Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment can be found at **Appendix 4**.

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

There are no direct environmental or sustainability implications as a direct result of this report.

Background Information

[The Local Government Boundary Commission for England | LGBCE](#)

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List of Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference for Officer Project Working Group

Appendix 2 - Overview of the Project Plan

Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference for Cross Party Working Group

Appendix 4 - Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment

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